



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Hill Street
13 Hill Street
Wrexham
LL11 1SN**

Date of inspection: March 2013

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

Cylch Meithrin Hill Street is a registered nursery group that is part of the provision of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. It meets in the mornings for four sessions a week during the autumn term, and for five sessions a week during the spring and summer terms.

The group is situated on the top floor of a building that is under the management of the Youth Centre committee in Wrexham town centre. The group serves an area that is a mixture of privileged and underprivileged homes. Three-year-old children are funded by the Local Authority in the group in the spring and summer terms following their third birthday. Children who reach the appropriate age in the summer receive their early education in the school.

The nursery group was established nearly 40 years ago in order to provide Welsh-medium early education to children in the Wrexham area. Thirty-one per cent of all children in the group come from non-Welsh speaking homes. Without exception, they move to Welsh-medium education in one of Wrexham's Welsh-medium schools.

During the inspection, there were 19 children on roll, including 15 children below the three-year-old funding age. Not all parents choose to send their child to the group daily, although the opportunity is there for them if they wish. There are no children with statements identifying special needs or children from a minority background in the group at present. However, there is appropriate provision for them whenever it is necessary.

The group is led by an experienced leader who has been in her post for a quarter of a century. She has been assisted by an experienced assistant for 7 years and by a member of the committee as an 'extra pair of hands' at times. They all have the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3.

The nursery was inspected by Estyn in 2006. The setting was inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in 2011.

Summary

The setting's current performance	Good
The setting's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- teaching is good;
- children are happy and enjoy the learning experiences that are provided;
- children receive good care in an inclusive learning environment;
- the atmosphere is warm and welcoming;
- practitioners discharge their responsibilities effectively; and
- there is a very good relationship between children and practitioners.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of:

- practitioners' commitment to ensure the best education for all pupils;
- effective leadership;
- good team work; and
- the staff's commitment to continuous professional development.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve provision to extend children's skills further, particularly their information and communication technology skills
- R2 Use the observations that are made on children's development to improve their skills
- R3 Develop the knowledge of practitioners and the management committee of self-evaluation processes and skills and strategic planning

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Judgement
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Standards: Judgement

There is no report on children's progress, standards in the development of their skills, the Welsh language and wellbeing because there were not enough relevant children at the time of the inspection to report on them without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners provide a range of interesting and relevant activities that gain children's interest across the six learning areas. Regular experiences are provided for them to experiment with new experiences and to become independent learners. There is a good balance between activities that are chosen by the child and those that are led by adults. Planning is based suitably on the Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7 year olds in Wales.

Appropriate attention is paid to promoting children's learning skills, especially oral, reading and early writing skills. However, there are not adequate opportunities to develop children's information and communication technology skills in addition to the daily use of computer programs.

Provision for developing the Welsh language is one of the group's strengths. Regular encouragement is provided for children to develop Welsh skills in their learning and play through a range of suitable activities under the guidance of practitioners who set a firm linguistic example.

Practitioners plan interesting activities that give good opportunities to children. They have a taste of Welsh language and Welsh celebrations, in addition to experiences about other cultures. These experiences contribute to the development of children's awareness of cultural diversity and of their role as global citizens.

There is a constant emphasis on encouraging children to recycle and care for their environment.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is consistently good. Practitioners have a sound knowledge of children's development and they are aware of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They communicate effectively in various class and small group activities. They use praise and encouragement regularly. During activities, practitioners observe well and intervene appropriately in order to ensure that children receive necessary support.

Practitioners understand the importance of learning through play and provide suitable opportunities for children to practise their skills. The continuous provision is stimulating and draws children to learn new skills. Children are supported sensitively without intrusion during these activities. Children also make appropriate use of resources and equipment to support learning. Practitioners create a happy and supportive learning environment for all children.

Practitioners know the children well and assess and record their progress regularly. Practitioners make relevant observations about children's progress and response and keep them in an individual progress file. In addition, they collect examples of all children's work in a useful booklet that is shared with children's parents. The system is new and has not yet been embedded fully in practice, in order to ensure the best outcomes in skills across the curriculum.

Information transfer forms are completed for the primary schools, which facilitates the move from one institution to the other.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a very caring and orderly community. Policies and arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing are in place. Induction arrangements, along with daily contact with parents/carers, ensure that children settle in well. Children are happy at the setting and are comfortable in the company of adults. Adults and children show respect for each other. Clear expectations are set and these promote good behaviour.

Children's needs are identified early and appropriate and effective provision is arranged for them, including specialist information and guidance services. The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding that meet requirements and they are not a cause for concern.

Suitable learning experiences promote children's personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are encouraged to interact with each other and to take full advantage of learning experiences that are provided for them.

There are no pupils with additional learning needs in the group at present, but systems and procedures are appropriate to meet the needs of any pupil when needed, including a lift to facilitate access.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community in which all children have equal entitlement to the curriculum and to all provision. A family atmosphere is created in which children develop positive values and attitudes.

There is no difference between boys and girls and activities are suitable for all.

There is an adequate supply of good quality resources in the classroom, including large play resources that are used weekly as there is no outdoor play area.

However, there are not enough appropriate resources to support information and communication technology skills.

The room is of adequate size, and it offers a pleasant ethos and learning environment for children. A suitable kitchen and storeroom is adjacent to the room. There is no outdoor play area for the group. However, every effort is made to ensure that children have opportunities to move around, to develop their physical skills and foster an awareness of their world and their surroundings. Regular use is made of the nearby playing field when the weather and individual support allows.

The small garden that has been created in a very limited space on the building's ground floor helps to promote children's awareness of planting and growing flowers and vegetables.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The setting is led in an appropriate and effective way by the senior practitioner.

The sessions have a clear structure and each member of staff has a prominent role. Suitable policies, such as child protection and ensuring equal opportunities, are in place. Practitioners co-operate well as a team and share agreed values regarding children's learning and development.

The management committee, which includes all parents, fulfils its responsibilities conscientiously when raising money. Members are very supportive and have established a good relationship with practitioners. Regular meetings are held and records have begun to be kept of discussions which form the basis of further planning. They are beginning to plan strategically for the future although this is manifested orally and not in documentation.

Practitioners respond appropriately to relevant national and local priorities, for example, the Framework for the Foundation Phase in Wales, eating healthily and global citizenship.

They attend suitable courses on aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum and children's development and childcare. They use the training that they receive effectively in their work. Procedures to evaluate their work and identify their further professional development are developing appropriately and have a good influence on provision.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners have sound knowledge of the setting's strengths and aspects that need improvement. They discuss regularly and consider children's interests, and some opinions of parents and carers and other partners.

Although self-evaluation processes are of a more informal nature, they have led to improvements in aspects of continuous provision. For example, practitioners have

created booklets of children's work to share with parents. As a result, parents are more aware of their children's development across the six learning areas of the Foundation Phase and of possible steps for further development.

With the assistance of the local authority's liaison teacher, practitioners have completed a more formal evaluation of the quality of provision. However, not enough attention is paid to evaluating children's achievement.

The improvement plan that has arisen from this includes suitable areas for development in provision. Expenditure needs to be linked clearly to planning.

Practitioners are open to new ideas and are ready to try new ways of working. They make appropriate use of opportunities that are provided to work together and share experiences with another setting in the area. A number of similar groups have visited the group in order to share the good practice that is seen here.

Partnership working: Good

The relationship with children and parents is very positive and contributes significantly towards creating a sense of a happy and effective learning community.

A range of partnerships contributes effectively to children's achievements and wellbeing. There is a good relationship with parents/carers. Parents/carers are informed regularly about their children's achievements, wellbeing and development through informal discussions at the beginning and end of sessions. They receive a suitable written report on their children's progress in the six learning areas at the end of their child's time at the group.

There are stronger links with one local primary school than with the other. Teachers visit the group before transition and this ensures that children settle in quickly and happily. Links with the other school are more informal and are developing appropriately to ensure that children settle in well.

The constructive working relationship with the local authority's liaison teacher promotes the setting's development further.

Community links are used effectively to support children's learning through visits such as to the fire brigade and the post office.

Resource management: Good

The setting is staffed appropriately and effective use is made of practitioners' experience. They have rich oral Welsh language and they have a store of suitable nursery rhymes and poems in order to support all aspects of the curriculum. Parents also praise staff very highly.

Staff are used effectively during sessions. Good use is made of the talents of every one. This is evident in the caring and stimulating atmosphere in the group and the meaningful support that is given to all children in the continuous provision and focus groups.

All resources are managed well. The treasurer and the senior practitioner have a clear understanding of the budget and they respond to needs as necessary, although this is not highlighted in the improvement plan

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on parent questionnaires as only a small number of responses was received (fewer than 10).

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Owenna Davies	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>
National Childminding Association (NCMA)	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

National (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.