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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanbedr
Neuadd y Pentref
Llanbedr
Gwynedd
LL45 2LD
United Kingdom**

Date of inspection: March 2014

by

**Mr Eifion R Morgan
Reporting Inspector**

for

**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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Context

Cylch Meithrin Llanbedr was established in 1978 and serves the coastal village of Llanbedr and the surrounding rural area. Llanbedr is some three miles south of Harlech.

The Cylch meets in the village hall five mornings a week from 9 a.m. to 11.30 during school term times. The hall is multipurpose, requiring most resources to be set up and cleared away for each session.

About half of the children come from English speaking homes. There are no children from minority ethnic backgrounds or currently is any child considered to have additional learning needs. The area is not considered to be prosperous but no child comes from a socio-economic disadvantaged home.

The setting is run by a voluntary committee and is an educational provider as a member of the Gwynedd Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. It is also a registered member of Mudiad Meithrin and was in receipt of a Cylch Rhagorol award in 2013.

The setting provides for children between the age of 2½ and 4 years. The Thursday session is for children aged 3-4 years old. Children move on to the next stage of their education in the September following their 4th birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 11 children on the register, of whom 8 were 3 year olds and funded.

The hall used by the setting is a spacious and children's work on the walls provides a colourful and interesting background. Staff set out an interesting and appropriate range of activities for the children. Semi-permanent play areas also provide useful additions. In all, this is an attractive learning environment and all children are soon actively involved as soon as they arrive. There is a separate kitchen and toilets. When the weather is favourable, children have access to a small outdoor play area and also benefit from using the school yard of the adjacent primary school. Good links are in existence and most children move on to the adjacent Ysgol Gynradd Llanbedr.

The leader and assistant are present for each session. Both are experienced and appropriately qualified. Both have attended relevant courses including child protection, healthy eating and first aid. Both are fluent Welsh speakers.

The setting was inspected by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in January 2014. There were no major recommendations. The last Estyn inspection was in 2007 and the recommendations have been addressed.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the setting is good because of:

- the progress made by the children and the standards they achieve;
- children's wellbeing;
- the care, support and guidance provided for the children;
- children's behaviour and attitudes;
- partnership with parents;
- quality of the teaching.

Area for improvement includes:

- the provision of suitably differentiated work to provide the children with tasks matched to their ability.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because of:

- the track record of bringing about improvement;
- the collaborative working of the staff;
- the active support of the management committee;
- parental and community support;
- the support provided by the L.A. support teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin.

Recommendations

To further improve the setting needs to:

R1 further refine its assessment procedures so as to identify each child's skills development and identify the next steps in children's learning.

R2 plan suitably differentiated work to provide individual children with tasks matched to their ability.

R3 improve the provision for developing children's ICT skills.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

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

All children make realistic progress and achieve good standards. Children's competence in the Welsh language is variable but all make good progress bearing in mind their "starting point". Children's practical and manipulative competence is developing well, as are their personal and social skills.

All children have good communication skills with those learning Welsh understanding more than they speak. Children have good listening skills relative to their age. All children take part and enjoy singing, particularly action songs and rhymes. Such activities make a valuable contribution to helping children develop their competence in the Welsh language. Older and more able children have good mark-making skills, including the ability to write letters and numbers that are recognisable, such as writing their names. Older and more able children enjoy listening to stories and following the stories in their reading books.

Older and more able children have well developed numeracy skills, whilst all children are developing appropriate counting skills such as when counting the number of children present at registration. At best children count accurately to 20 and can undertake simple numeracy problems, including addition and subtraction. Many children name common two-dimensional shapes and use mathematical language, including "tall" and "short", "big" and "small". Play activities in their "shop" with toy cash registers develops children's perception of money.

Most children experience playing with a programmable toy and are beginning to acquire the necessary programming skills. However, their experience of digital technology is limited.

Children are developing their understanding of the world around. They understand that plants need water to grow and know the range of animals and plants that are to be found in the woodland. Children have good creative skills and cut and glue different shapes and colours as part of their designs. Children's thinking skills are developing and this is having a positive effect on the standards they achieve.

All children show good personal and social skills relative to their age. They play happily together, share equipment and show tolerance.

All children make good progress in developing the Welsh language and sufficient to enable them to attend the local Welsh medium school. Children are familiar with Welsh traditions and cultural activities associated with St David and Santes Dwynwen.

Wellbeing: Good

Children are well motivated and enjoy attending the setting. Their enthusiasm is evident as they enter and are soon involved in the good range of activities set out for them. Most children show high levels of self-esteem and respect each other. Children share equipment and are sufficiently confident to select their favourite activities.

All children enjoy their time in the setting and several are willing to communicate with the inspector talking about what they are doing.

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

The setting provides children with a wide range of stimulating and interesting experiences across all areas of learning. Visitors and visits to the rich local environment enhance children's learning and suitably broaden their experiences.

All children are immersed in the Welsh language both in terms of conversation, question and answer sessions and in singing rhymes and songs. Children's numeracy skill development is an integral part of the curriculum and good opportunities are planned so that children use their number skills. Opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills are more limited. Good opportunities are planned for children to develop their creative skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Overall, however, planning is not sufficiently focused on providing activities that sufficiently challenge children and to help them progress to the next stage of their learning.

Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh culture and heritage. They know about Welsh festivals, such as St. David and Santes Dwynwen, as well as other cultures.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners are experienced and have a good understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Learning experiences stimulate children and the staff use a suitable range of teaching strategies to interest children. In the main, resources are well used and practitioners support children well. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-selected activities. Staff are good language models and this ensures that children are immersed in the Welsh language.

Children are regularly and comprehensively assessed and observations recorded. Staff have a detailed knowledge of children's progress. In the best examples of assessment of children's progress reference is made to their acquisition of skills. This is seen in numeracy in particular. The outcomes of assessment are not always used sufficiently when planning future activities, however, new assessment procedures have been in place since December. The next steps in children's learning are not always clearly planned for so that children are sufficiently challenged to progress to the next phase in their education.

Parents are aware of their children's progress and are satisfied with the information they receive.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting's provision for ensuring the health and wellbeing of the children, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The setting also encourages sustainability, such as its paper recycling scheme and the use of junk material in model making.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and the setting is a calm, supportive environment for the children. This contributes well to their emotional health and wellbeing. Children's physical development is provided for in the outside play area where there is opportunity for active play such as riding their tricycles and ball play.

The setting provides the children with a safe environment. The door to the hall is permanently locked so no one can enter or leave unannounced. The outside play area is fenced and the children are supervised by adults. Visits are well planned and parents attending ensure a good ratio of adults to children. Risk assessment is always undertaken.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

A notable feature of the activities arranged by the setting are the visits to the local environment. In these visits children come to appreciate the wonders of nature.

The setting fosters values such as honesty, respect and fairness and promotes principles that help children distinguish right from wrong.

Children understand the simple rules of behaviour established in the setting. Children relate well to each other and are becoming increasingly responsible, such as helping to "clear away" and "tidy up".

Due emphasis is given to learning about the culture of Wales and other peoples.

There are no children currently present who have been identified with additional learning needs. However, children with such needs have been present in the past and the setting has appropriate policies and procedures in place if and when the need arises.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children are respected as individuals and have equality of access to all aspects of the setting's provision. Children are valued and their views taken into account when planning the curriculum. The setting is appropriately staffed with well qualified adults who teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum.

The setting is an attractive learning environment. It is well resourced with equipment well matched to the needs of the children. Children's work is appropriately displayed and it improves the general ambience of the setting. The setting successfully promotes children's tolerant attitudes and successfully promotes the elimination of any form of oppressive or antisocial behaviour.

There is an ample supply of high quality resources well matched to the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and to children's development. The children benefit from a play and garden area adjacent to the main teaching room. Outside there are a range of static equipment provided for the children.

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

The setting displays a strong sense of purpose that promotes and sustains improvement. Staff work together very well, planning collaboratively and sharing aims and objectives for the setting. The work is clearly focused on providing the best possible provision for the children and developing their personal, social and academic potential. Staff are well supported by the parents who respect the contribution made by the setting to developing their children.

Relationships are very good. This includes relationships with the community, the parents and the management committee.

Overall, the outcomes for the children are good and staff are always seeking ways to improve the provision. Policies and initiatives including national and local priorities are implemented consistently.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners have worked at the setting for the last 14 years and have good knowledge of the setting and how it has evolved. Over the years positive action has been taken to improve the provision and consequently children's progress and achievement.

A positive culture of self-evaluation pervades all aspects of the work of the setting focused on improving the provision for the children. Practitioners are open to new ideas and share ideas. Children's views and those of their parents and carers are taken into account and this ensures that all are fully committed. Scrutiny of children's work, their standards of achievement and wellbeing have consistently improved over the years.

Partnership working: Good

The wide range of partnership activities make an effective and significant contribution to children's good achievement and in particular their wellbeing.

The setting takes active steps to involve parents and carers in all the setting's activities. Parents are welcomed to the setting at any time including visits before their child begins attending. There are regular fund raising activities when the setting reports on the good support of parents and people from the local community. The setting has benefited substantially from such events. There are Christmas concerts and end of term open mornings attended by parents and carers. Parents also support the setting on visits, such as was observed during the inspection when children visited the local post office. Parents also value the reports they receive on their children's progress.

The setting has good and effective links with the receiving primary school. Children regularly visit and use the resources available for the young pupils in the school. The school yard is used for physical activities such as playing with 3 wheeled toys.

The work of the management committee is very valuable and contributes very well to the success of the setting. The committee has a very good knowledge of the working of the setting and is highly supportive of its work.

The local authority advisory teacher and the support provided by the Mudiad Meithrin is very valuable in terms of advice and suggestions. Local organisations are involved as necessary in that they can be contacted when necessary.

Overall, partnership working is effective and makes a good contribution to children's development.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed and deployed effectively to support learning. Over the past years staff have prioritised their spending in line with perceived requirements so as to improve the provision.

The setting has consequently evolved into an effective learning community where children feel valued and respected. Financial decisions are monitored by the management committee.

All decisions are focused on improving the provision for the children and the work of the local community recognised as a valuable contribution.

Overall, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Yn dynodi'r meincnod – mae hwn yn gyfanswm o'r holl ymatebion hyd hyn ers mis Medi 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the setting.	10	6 60%	4 40%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n foddlon â'r lleoliadyngyffredinol.
		80%	19%	0%	0%		
My child likes this setting.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn hoffi'r lleoliad hwn.
		85%	15%	0%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the setting.	10	8 80%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fymhlentyn gymorth i ymgartreftu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn y lleoliad.
		86%	13%	0%	0%		
My child is making good progress at the setting.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn y lleoliad.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
Children behave well in the setting.	10	4 40%	5 50%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae plant yn ymddwyn yn dda yn y lleoliad.
		70%	26%	1%	0%		
Teaching is good.	10	9 90%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r raddysgu yn dda.
		79%	17%	0%	0%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	10	9 90%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		82%	15%	0%	0%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	10	6 60%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Caiff fymhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		73%	22%	0%	0%		
My child is safe at the setting.	9	8 89%	1 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn ddiogel yn y lleoliad.
		85%	14%	0%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs.	10	7 70%	2 20%	1 10%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn yn cael gymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		65%	24%	1%	0%		
I am kept well informed	10	8	2	0	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyso

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'ngryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'ngryf	Don't know Ddimyngwybod	
about my child's progress.		80%	20%	0%	0%		n am gynnyddfymhlentyn.
		63%	30%	5%	1%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the setting with questions, suggestions or a problem.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n gysurus ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwni'r lleoliad, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problemau.
		80%	18%	1%	0%		
I understand the setting's procedure for dealing with complaints.	10	7 70%	2 20%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Rwy'n deall trefn y lleoliad a rhyngwyf i ferdllo â chwynion.
		62%	29%	3%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to school.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fymhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda a rhyngwyf i ferdllo i'w rhoi yn ysgol.
		71%	23%	1%	0%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	10	7 70%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gangynnwysteithia neu euymweliadau.
		62%	30%	4%	0%		
The setting is well run.	10	9 90%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae'r lleoliad yn cael i'w redeg yn dda.
		82%	16%	1%	0%		

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Eifion R Morgan	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 partnership's 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>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (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.