



A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Talsarnau
Neuadd Gymuned Talsarnau
Talsarnau
Gwynedd
LL47 6TA**

Date of inspection: June 2014

by

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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 Talsarnau is a registered nursery setting that provides Welsh medium pre-school education for the children of Talsarnau village and the surrounding area. It meets in the community hall that is adjacent to the local primary school.

Sixteen children between the ages of two and a half and four years attend the setting. Currently, the local authority funds places for six of the three-year-old children. The setting provides five weekly sessions of two hours for 39 weeks a year. Approximately half of the children are from homes where Welsh is the main spoken language.

The setting admits children of all abilities and backgrounds. During the inspection, there were no children identified as having additional learning needs or were from a minority ethnic group.

A leader and one practitioner teach children. Both are appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

The setting was inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) in May 2013 and by Estyn during July 2008.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because:

- learning experiences successfully meet the needs and interests of children across the full ability range;
- provision for ensuring that children acquire the necessary literacy and numeracy skills is good;
- good teaching encourages children's engagement and enjoyment in learning;
- systematic assessment leads to more effective planning for children's future development;
- practitioners ensure that the setting is a comfortable and safe place for children to learn and play; and
- the setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to all the learning experiences.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leader has a clear vision and high expectations for the setting's development;
- staff work very closely as a team and share common values about learning;
- the management committee undertakes its responsibilities very conscientiously;
- practitioners are continuously self-evaluating and exploring ways to improve;
- a good range of partnership activities makes a positive contribution to children's achievement and wellbeing; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

1. Increase the variety of resources that are in the role-play area.
2. Provide more guidance in the handbook on how parents can help their children at home.

What happens next?

The setting will form an action plan showing how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Interesting and stimulating learning experiences successfully meet the needs and interests of children across the full ability range and encourage them to learn effectively and to make good progress across all areas of learning. Long-term plans, which are based on a series of themes, ensure that the curriculum builds systematically upon children's current knowledge, understanding and skills. A good example of this is the range of stimulating activities children have when following the current theme on 'The Seaside.' This enables nearly all children to make good progress towards meeting the Foundation Phase Outcomes and to play an active part in their learning.

The practical and open-ended nature of the learning experiences provides valuable opportunities for children to form positive relationships with each other and to nurture a sense of respect and tolerance towards others. Practitioners encourage every child to take risks, to experiment with new experiences and to investigate their environment confidently. This contributes substantially to their development as independent learners.

Provision for developing children literacy school is good. When taking part in whole class sessions, for example, when discussing their 'treasure bag,' children are encouraged to listen carefully to the views of others and to contribute constructively to the discussion. The regular opportunities that children have of listening to stories and handling books independently, contribute significantly to their development as readers. However, there is not enough variety of resources in the role-play area for promoting children's oral and reading skills.

There are appropriate opportunities in most areas of learning, both inside and outdoors, for children to experiment with mark making and to develop their early writing skills. Many children use electronic tablets very imaginatively for practising their control skills.

Provision for Welsh language development is comprehensive with children who are learning the language being strongly encouraged to use Welsh as much as they can. Practitioners develop children's awareness of the traditions and the cultural celebrations of Wales in a meaningful and interesting way.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase and have high expectations for children's learning. The stimulating, challenging and exciting environment created encourages children's engagement, participation and enjoyment. Learning experiences are skilfully adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, including the more able and talented and those with additional learning needs. Practitioners know when it is appropriate to intervene in children's learning and they do so sensitively and skilfully to encourage children to challenge themselves as they learn. A good balance is maintained between child-selected and practitioner directed activities. Imaginative use is made of a variety of resources to appeal to children's interest and improve learning. Clearly focused adult support makes a significant contribution to the quality of children's learning.

Systematic observation and recording of children's learning, enables practitioners to keep a close eye on every child's progress and to plan more effectively for their future development. Should parents want to discuss their child's progress or wellbeing, practitioners are always accessible to them at the start and end of all sessions. At the end of their child's time in the setting, parents receive a photographic record, which includes a compact disc, of their child's progress in the six areas of learning. This ensures they have current information about their child's achievements, wellbeing and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Practitioners take great care of children and ensure that the setting is a comfortable, homely and safe place for them to learn and play. Children are encouraged to look at the setting as a community where people learn to live together in harmony. Practitioners know the children well and provide clear guidance for them during sessions. Healthy eating habits, as well as hygienes, for example washing their hands, and daily physical activity, are successfully promoted and well supported by parents.

During their daily involvement with children, practitioners strongly emphasise the need for everyone to be kind to each other, to be honest and fair and to behave in a responsible manner. This greatly helps the children to learn to differentiate between right and wrong. Regular opportunities for children to undertake responsibilities and to make their own decisions about their learning contribute well towards their personal and social development.

Effective induction arrangements help children to settle down quickly at the setting. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children satisfy the requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners have a good understanding of how to access professional help for children and parents. There are effective processes for the early identification of children with additional learning needs, so that and additional support can be provided for them if necessary.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community, where all children have equal access to all the areas of learning and activities provided for them. There is a strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes and ensuring that children and staff are free from harassment. The setting has enough practitioners, who have sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Practitioners succeed in creating a stimulating environment in which every child is able to take full advantage of learning experiences and to develop positive values and attitudes.

There is an ample supply of good quality resources, which enable practitioners to fulfil the requirements of the Foundation Phase successfully. Resources in the community such as the local park are used effectively by staff to support learning in the classroom.

The buildings and accommodation are of good quality and are accessible to all children and parents, including the disabled. The spacious classroom provides a comfortable and stimulating environment for teaching and learning. Practitioners make the best possible use of the outdoor area to enrich children's learning experiences and to promote their physical skills.

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

The leader has a clear vision for the setting's development. She conveys high expectations and supports and challenges everyone to do their best. The positive ethos, which permeates through the setting, ensures that children and staff feel appreciated.

The leader and practitioner work very closely as a team, they have shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships. They ensure the successful implementation of the Foundation Phase. Their willingness to act upon local authority advice and to undertake national priorities and new ventures, such as assessment for learning, is strength.

The leader has established clear aims and policies, which concentrate on children's needs. The positive relationship with children, parents and the primary school's staff contributes substantially towards creating a sense of community. There is an appropriate performance management system which helps staff to evaluate and improve their practice and to identify their professional needs.

The management committee undertakes its responsibilities very conscientiously and plays an active role in the setting's development. The committee shares information with parents through newsletters and meetings and supports the leader in her work. Committee members ensure that any complaints are resolved immediately and that the setting complies with legal requirements.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation is securely embedded and has been a key instrument for raising standards and improving provision. Through continuous self evaluation, practitioners are well aware of the setting's strengths and areas to be developed. The self evaluation report analyses the setting's current situation in detail and uses the information effectively to set priorities for improvement. It sets a clear structure to implement improvements and ensures firm arrangements have been established to evaluate the impact of the improvements on standards and provision.

The leader appreciates the views of parents and provides regular opportunities for them to express views about the setting. The setting responds punctually and positively to any comments made by individual parents.

Partnership working: Good

A good range of partnership activities makes a positive contribution to children's achievement and wellbeing. The leader takes positive steps to include parents in all the setting's activities and through newsletters and e-mail, ensures they have up-to-date information about all aspects of the setting's work. Although the parents' handbook includes useful information about the setting's policies and procedures, it does not provide enough guidance on how parents can help their children at home.

The setting has very close links with the primary school and there are effective arrangements for transferring children to the Foundation Phase at the end of their time in the nursery. There is also a productive relationship with the community with a number of local people visiting the setting.

The setting collaborates effectively with a good number of the local authority's support services to co-ordinate and deliver learning experiences and to ensure there is appropriate support for children and parents. Regular visits and professional advice provided by the support teacher, enables the leader to update her professional knowledge and understanding and to try out new initiatives.

Practitioners work together very effectively, they share information about children and know who and when to contact should they require additional support for children.

Resource management: Good

Staff and resources are managed very skilfully by the leader and the management committee ensuring that the setting runs smoothly and effectively. Practitioners receive strong support by a programme of continuous professional development provided mainly by the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin. This enables them to acquire new knowledge and skills and to deliver the Foundation Phase successfully.

The setting is developing well as a strong learning community. Practitioners are open to new ideas and are prepared to experiment with different ways of working and to share their knowledge with others within the setting.

The leader and the management committee have a thorough understanding of their budget and prioritise their spending in line with the setting's developmental needs. Financial decisions are carefully evaluated by the leader and the management committee to make sure that they have a positive effect on standards and children's progress and wellbeing. The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholders' satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on parental questionnaires as only a small number of responses were received.

Responses to discussions with children

Children say that they are happy in the setting and are confident to turn to any adult to ask for advice and support.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Wil Williams	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)

If available, the data report can be found on our website alongside this report.

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>

National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
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.