



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 Yr Eglwys Newydd
The Scout Hall
Penlline Road
Whitchurch
Cardiff
CF14 2AD**

Date of inspection: July 2012

by

**Nicholas Jones
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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About the cylch

Cylch Meithrin Yr Eglwys Newydd is a Welsh medium cylch based in the scout hall, Whitchurch, Cardiff. All the children attending the cylch come from the village and the surrounding area. The area is recognised as neither privileged nor socially or economically disadvantaged.

The cylch has been located in this building since 2006. It shares the use of the building and part of the outdoor area with other agencies.

The cylch reports that around a third of the children come from homes where Welsh is spoken. The children represent the full range of ability and the cylch accepts children with additional learning needs.

Two children in the current group are recognised as having additional learning needs. The cylch receives assistance from outside agencies to support children that have additional needs. One child attending at present is from an ethnic minority background and no children come from socially disadvantaged homes.

The cylch is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales for a maximum of 24 children and it accepts children from two and a half years old. There are currently up to 42 children attending the cylch at different times during the week. Twenty-two of these are funded three year olds. The Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority support the cylch.

The joint leaders have been in post since March 2011. Five members of staff assist them on a full time or part time basis. All the staff are suitably qualified.

An informative booklet provides parents and carers with details of the cylch. Parents and carers bring their children into the cylch and this provides for a meeting with the staff if needed. The cylch is open for five mornings a week between 9.30am and 12 mid-day. It currently opens for two afternoons between 12.45pm and 2.45pm.

The management committee oversees the work of the cylch.

The cylch was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in April 2010. Estyn inspected the cylch in 2006.

Summary

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| The cylch's current performance | Good |
| The cylch's prospects for improvement | Good |

Current performance

The performance of the cylch is good because:

- the children's standards are good;
- the learning experiences are planned well;
- all children are supported well and benefit from a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum;
- the teaching is effective and concentrates well on Foundation Phase outcomes;
- nearly all adults speak Welsh well and this has a positive effect on the children's early understanding of the language;
- the leaders lead and manage the cylch well;
- there is a positive relationship between adults and children;
- there are effective links with the local school, the Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority; and
- the staff work effectively together and everyone contributes purposefully to the success of the cylch.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leaders and staff provide a clear direction for the work of the cylch;
- changes and developments over the last year show that the cylch has a good record of improving for the sake of the children;
- the management committee monitor and challenge the leadership effectively;
- all the staff have positive and active attitudes towards development and training; and
- good support links are used consistently.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the cylch needs to:

- R1 ensure that assessments lead directly to individual children's targets; and
- R2 develop effective long term plans to target improvements within appropriate timescales.

What happens next?

The cylch will produce an action plan in order to show how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The entry standards of nearly all children when they start at the cylch are good. Nearly all children achieve good standards and make good progress in all areas of learning considering their starting points. There is no significant difference in the standards of different groups of children in the cylch.

Nearly all children make positive progress in developing their literacy skills in the Welsh language. Very few children are reluctant to communicate in Welsh and nearly all children have a good understanding of the language. Nearly all the children have well-developed listening skills. Nearly all the children enjoy and are eager to contribute to stories that are read to them.

Many children answer questions enthusiastically, which shows clearly their developing understanding of the Welsh language. Most children respond sensibly to group discussions and they have a good understanding of how the weather changes, the characteristics of many animals and where they live. Another notable feature of the children's developing competence is that nearly all children discuss letters, colours and numbers with confidence in Welsh.

Many children choose to look at books independently. They hold books appropriately and study pictures and print with interest. They recognise the main characters in a story and discuss the content of a story enthusiastically with each other and adults.

Nearly all children are beginning to develop their writing skills and a notable feature of their early writing is that they understand the purpose of writing through completing practical tasks successfully. They see the purpose of mark making and they make sense of their early writing effectively. Most children are beginning to form reasonably recognisable letters of the alphabet and numbers independently.

Nearly all children are developing their numeracy skills well through the practical use of number, using mathematical language such as 'smaller than' or 'larger than', 'long' and 'longer' and through using two and three-dimensional shapes. Nearly all children can group objects by colour.

Most children use electronic equipment well. They use the computer with confidence through controlling the necessary equipment. Nearly all children create interesting pictures with paint and participate enthusiastically with interest in outdoor activities. They have a firm awareness of Welsh songs, nursery rhymes and prayers, which they sing enthusiastically.

Nearly all children are fully engaged in every activity and concentrate and persevere for significant periods of time. They make decisions and work well independently inside the building and use the available equipment well in the outside area. Nearly

all the children participate enthusiastically in the wide range of activities available to them, which develops their creative skills successfully.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children, relative to their age, have a good understanding of how they can keep healthy. They know, for example, when they need to wash their hands and do so with little prompting. Nearly all children have a firm understanding that a healthy diet incorporates fruit and vegetables.

Nearly all the children's attitude to learning is good. They show interest in their work and in the activities planned for them. Nearly all children sustain good concentration for significant periods of time and make decisions independently.

All children relate well to each other, to adults and visitors. They are courteous, considerate and willing to share resources. All children take a full part in the life and activities of the cylch through offering suggestions about their work. They take worthwhile opportunities to suggest their own ideas and these are, when possible, used in the children's tasks and activities.

Nearly all children have a good understanding of their community and they discuss the people of their community effectively and with confidence.

Nearly all children are happy; they feel that they are well cared for and that they are free from any form of harassment.

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

The curriculum is planned well to meet the philosophy of the Foundation Phase curriculum and to achieve the identified outcomes of children's learning. The curriculum builds effectively on children's previous knowledge and experiences and incorporates interesting opportunities for the development of skills across the curriculum.

Time is set aside every fortnight for the staff to meet to plan the curriculum. This provides the children with useful and stimulating activities. The curriculum is flexible and is matched appropriately to the children's interests.

Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creativity. An effective aspect of children's learning experiences is the provision made for children to acquire the Welsh language. For around two thirds of the children, Welsh is not the natural language of communication. However, through coherent opportunities, the staff speak Welsh to the children consistently and this promotes a good understanding of the language. The provision for developing the children's information technology skills is good and there is well-planned provision of technological resources available.

Children have good opportunities to develop their thinking skills through structured activities, which focus on every area of learning in their turn.

There are regular and effective opportunities provided for children to learn about their locality, the history and culture of Wales, like the celebration of St. David's Day. Good opportunities are also provided for children to acquire knowledge and understanding of other cultures and traditions, such as during their study of the Chinese New Year and Diwali. Such activities help children to develop a good understanding of the wider world and raise their awareness of age appropriate global citizenship effectively.

The purposeful provision includes opportunities for all children to develop respect for each other; opportunities to form good relationships with each other and with adults; and to become tolerant of each other.

All children have appropriate opportunities in an extensive outdoor area to look after plants, plant seeds and recycle. This begins their understanding of plant growth and sustainability effectively.

Teaching: Good

The staff have a good, practical knowledge of children's development and a clear understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Phase. There is a positive relationship between all the staff and the children.

The staff have high expectations of the children and these expectations are put into practice well. The staff's active role in planning the curriculum ensures the best use of their expertise. When a focus activity is introduced, the staff make good and regular references to the learning objective and the success criteria of the activity.

The system of sharing responsibilities means that staff have a detailed knowledge of a small number of children and as such are well aware of their achievements and progress. There is a good balance between adult directed and child-selected activities. Staff know the children well and provide interesting and stimulating tasks for them, which challenges them effectively to improve.

Staff model language well to the children's development levels and use effective questioning to develop children's thinking and communication skills. The standard of nearly all the staff's Welsh is good and appropriate to the needs of the cylch. The staff provide a stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors, which successfully ensures every child's involvement and enjoyment.

Assessment procedures and recording children's achievements are completed regularly. These are transferred effectively on to the parents and the children's next school. However, assessments do not lead directly to individual children's targets and to the next steps in their learning. The records of the children's achievements are available to parents at any time.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The cylch's provision for ensuring children's health and wellbeing is good. Nearly all children enjoy their time at the cylch. They arrive showing a sense of anticipation and are keen to get involved. They partake enthusiastically in activities set out for them. The broad curriculum, which consists of visits and visitors, develops and extends children's experiences well.

Follow-up work in the classroom shows the wide range of experiences that arise from their activities. Visits to the community and visitors to the cylch develop children's knowledge and understanding of their own community effectively.

The cylch's provision for ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Values, such as honesty, fairness, respect and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered through the day-to-day activities and accepted without question. Nearly all children know and accept the social norms of living together, sharing and accepting the views of others and being members of a community. Individual children, through the 'helpwr heddiw' system, accept specific responsibilities, like tidying resources and equipment, which develops their self-esteem. The cylch is an organised unit, where children value each other and in turn, the staff value them.

Children's cultural development is good, which incorporates Welsh customs and traditions. It extends to other cultures when the children celebrate events like the Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Staff have received regular and appropriate training. Staff undertake thorough risk assessments routinely.

The cylch has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

The cylch is secure, where the entrance door is bolted and only opened by a member of staff, consequently no one can enter or a child leave unaccompanied. Good care is taken when children are being collected to ensure they are in the care of their parents or of a known carer.

Regular reviews of children's progress ensure that any child suspected of requiring additional help is noted and their progress is monitored closely. The additional learning needs co-ordinator is familiar with the necessary procedures for supporting such a child. Where necessary external agencies are involved and support is provided if needed. At present, two children have additional learning needs.

Learning environment: Good

The cylch, through its day-to-day activities and the approach adopted by the staff promotes a very positive ethos. Staff know the children well and their individuality is recognised. All children have equal access to a broad curriculum including the extensive outside area.

The homely atmosphere and the friendship provided by the staff ensures that a tolerant attitude pervades the cylch. The cylch employs positive behaviour strategies

that successfully eliminate any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour. All children enjoy equality of opportunity.

The cylch's staff are well qualified and experienced and there is a very favourable adult to child ratio. Staff expertise is used well both in planning and in supervising activities. The cylch uses its resources very well to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum and the needs of the children. The resources are accessible to children and this promotes the children's sense of independence and responsibility. The building and outside area are used very effectively and the environment is stimulating and challenging for the children.

The local area is used effectively on a regular basis, through walks to the village and visits to nearby businesses. This contributes well to children's understanding of the world around them.

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

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in full and work together well as a team, sharing values, aims and objectives. The leaders involve all staff in planning and this ensures the best use of their expertise. The leaders are actively involved, giving clear directions and they accept advice from outside agencies in order to improve. There is a positive ethos and a commitment to provide the best possible experiences for all children. The leaders and all staff focus effectively on the needs of all children.

The staff receive relevant and appropriate training and this impacts well on the quality of provision. Effective links with the parents and carers are in place. They are kept well informed of their children's achievements and progress and this helps them to support their children's learning.

The leaders take good account of relevant legislation and guidance and they meet legal requirements in full. The management committee meets regularly and the committee monitors and challenges the leadership effectively.

The leaders have strategic plans in place; however, the self-evaluation systems do not lead to effective long-term development plans, which have appropriate and challenging timescales noted.

The cylch has taken good account of national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum.

Improving quality: Good

The cylch is self-evaluative and identifies areas for improvement effectively. These are implemented well for the benefit of the children. The leaders discuss the process with confidence, understanding and clarity and they can show that the process has been very effective over the last year.

Areas for improvement have been identified and prioritised by the cylch efficiently. The planning is operational, however, it does not highlight the cylch's long-term targets in enough detail. These include reflecting and revisiting the context of learning, developing the use of Welsh and improving the learning environment. Future plans focus on promoting diversity and providing more artistic opportunities for the children.

Staff make good use of training opportunities and professional learning experiences, including vocational qualifications, which impact well on children's learning and wellbeing.

Partnership working: Good

Nearly all parents and carers, in the questionnaire replies and during discussions, expressed their satisfaction with the cylch. They are appreciative of the standards of care and the quality of education available. They value the open door policy and the opportunities they have to meet staff on a daily basis.

By the time the children leave the cylch; all parents feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The links with the local school, the Mudiad Meithrin and the local authority are good.

The support provided by the staff of the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin benefits the cylch greatly. The advice and suggestions have helped in moving the cylch forward and have contributed to good standards, effective provision and purposeful leadership.

Resource management: Good

The cylch's staff teach effectively and they work together well. Planning is completed collaboratively and this results in the most being made of individual expertise for the benefit of every child.

The cylch is resourced very well and the resources available are used very effectively to provide for the aims of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The resources are also accessible to the children and this encourages independence and has a positive impact on their learning.

The cylch provides good outdoor experiences, which are planned very effectively. The leaders lead efficiently and use support agencies purposefully.

The cylch provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifteen parents and carers responded to the questionnaires.

All the parents and carers who responded to knowing about the practices of the cylch strongly agree and agree that:

- the children behave well;
- their children are safe;
- their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular physical exercise; and
- that their children are well prepared for moving on to school.

Nearly all parents and carers note that:

- their children were helped to settle in well;
- there is a good range of activities including trips and visits;
- their children like the cylch;
- their children are making good progress;
- the teaching is good;
- they understand the cylch's procedures for dealing with complaints; and
- the cylch is well run.

Most parents and carers feel that:

- overall, they are satisfied with the cylch;
- they are comfortable approaching the cylch with questions, suggestions or problems;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect; and
- their children receive appropriate additional support if needed.

Many parents and carers state that:

- they are kept well informed of their children's progress by the cylch.

These responses compare favourably with national benchmark comparisons.

Responses to discussions with children

Nearly all children are enthusiastic when they arrive and meet with their peers.

Nearly all of them are self-confident from knowing that they are supported well and that they are provided with very interesting tasks.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

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| Mr Nicholas Jones | 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

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| 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 | Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government. |
| Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) | 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. |
| Foundation Phase | 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. |
| Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP) | Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012. |
| Local authority advisory teacher | These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings, which provide education for three and four year olds. |
| Mudiad Meithrin | 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. |
| National Childminding | This is a professional membership association working |

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| Association (NCMA) | 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. |