



*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**

**Meithrinfa Ddydd Camau Bach  
Mudiad Meithrin Integrated Centre  
Boulevard San Brieu  
Aberystwyth  
Cardiganshire  
SY23 1PD**

**Date of inspection: June 17, 18 2013**

**by**

**Branwen Llewelyn Jones  
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:

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

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## Context

Meithrinfa Ddydd Camau Bach is situated in a purpose built nursery in the Mudiad Meithrin Integrated centre in Aberystwyth. It opened in August 2004 and is registered as a private nursery under the Children Act of 1989. A subsidiary company of Mudiad Meithrin owns the nursery and appoints its management committee. Mudiad Meithrin's headquarters are situated above the nursery. There are also training and conference facilities on that floor. Cylch Meithrin Ti a Fi also uses a room on the bottom floor. The nursery is registered to provide for up to a hundred and five children between birth and four years of age through the Welsh language. After school clubs are provided for children between four and eleven years of age. It is a day nursery and is open for fifty one weeks a year from 8.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m. The cylch meithrin is held on five mornings a week from 9.00 until 11.30 in accordance with the recognised guidelines of Mudiad Meithrin.

At the time of the inspection seventy four children between two and four years of age were registered. Of these, thirty two children between the ages of two and a half and three years of age were registered on a full or part time basis. There were six funded children at the time of the inspection. Two of these come from Welsh speaking families and four from English speaking backgrounds. There were no children for whom English is a second language. The nursery welcomes children from different ethnic backgrounds. At the time of the inspection there were no children between three and four years of age who were identified as having additional learning needs. The area is described as one which is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

It is a purpose built nursery and there is ample room for the children to enjoy a variety of interesting activities both indoors and outdoors. There is a large main room for the children of three years of age, a sensory room, a multi-purpose hall and an art room. The nursery is well equipped with a kitchen, store rooms and suitable toilets. The outdoor environment includes a sensory garden, an outdoor play area which has a roof and a soft surface play area.

The manager is responsible for the daily running of the setting and was appointed three months ago. She has an NVQ level 3 qualification. Four practitioners are employed to work with the three year old children and all have appropriate qualifications in early years education. The manager does not work directly with the children but both leaders do. The last inspection by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales was on 4 October, 2012. The setting was inspected by Estyn in June 2007

## Summary

<b>The Setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

Current performance is good because:

- children's achieve well and make good progress from their starting point;
- children feel happy and safe in the setting;
- they enjoy interesting experiences;
- children are actively involved in their learning;
- teaching is good, and
- assessment by observation is used effectively to plan the next steps.

### Prospects for improvement

The provider's prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is a developing culture of professional reflection which is based on self-evaluation;
- the standard of leadership is good;
- the setting demonstrates a commitment to continuous professional development, and
- practitioners work effectively as a team.

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve children's skills in the Welsh language

R2 Ensure the teaching is not over-directed

R3 Make more use of the outdoor area to develop children's skills in all areas of learning

R4 Improve the system of recording observational assessments to make it more manageable

### **What happens next?**

The setting will produce an action plan to indicate how these recommendations will be achieved.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

Every child achieves well according to his/her starting point and stage of development and each child makes good progress in all the areas of learning of the Foundation Phase. The majority understands and follows instructions correctly and answers questions appropriately. With the encouragement of adults the majority speaks in full sentences. They all listen with interest to stories, concentrating well and recite together parts they know. The majority develops a wide vocabulary and children use this during role play. The majority has a good knowledge of language patterns but not all use them consistently.

They enjoy singing songs very much and enunciate clearly. The majority enjoys browsing through books and all choose books voluntarily, handling them like readers. All enjoy mark-making both indoors and in the outside area and they experiment confidently with a wide range of materials. Every child uses mathematical language correctly when comparing the length, height or size of objects when playing. The majority uses fingers to count and recognises common shapes. All develop their information and communication technology skills well through using a computer and appropriate programmes and by using the compact disc player. Every child shows good creative skills when engaged in role play and in their art work. The majority demonstrates good creative skills during role play, when responding to music through dance and in art work. All develop good levels of independence, self-confidence and self-control. The majority concentrates for extended periods while playing or exploring outdoors and all enjoy their learning.

### Wellbeing: Good

The children enjoy their experiences in the setting. The close and warm relationship between the adults and the children makes them feel safe and happy. The self-confidence and contentment of the children show that they are appreciated and respected and they, in turn, respect and like the adults. They show concern for one another, the practitioners and visitors. They are always well-mannered and all show consideration towards others. The majority makes friends in the nursery and they are very fond of one another.

Everyone understands that eating healthily, dental hygiene and keeping fit are important for their health and they name healthy foods and things they should not eat. They enjoy eating snacks together every day and they behave well at the table. Every child goes to the toilet independently and then washes his/her hands afterwards.

All have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning and take an active and energetic part in their learning experiences both indoors and outdoors and behave well. All make decisions and choices about their learning and almost all are very confident. They all enjoy their visits to the park and shops in the local community.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

The standard of planning is good. Practitioners discuss the week's provision and results. They discuss all children's achievements, progress and needs and consider observational assessments. They include children in planning by asking them about their interests and what they like doing. They use all this information well to inform the next cycle of provision; as a result, planning responds well to children's interests and needs. A wide range of interesting and active learning experiences are planned which enable children to make good progress towards meeting the outcomes of the Foundation Phase. Planning is flexible and practitioners adapt it to meet children's interests. Adults build on children's knowledge, understanding, skills and interests well and in a way that is meaningful to them.

Practitioners give children good opportunities to develop into enthusiastic, confident and independent learners and to develop good creative, physical, linguistic and mathematical skills. They promote the development of good creative skills by providing opportunities to paint original pictures of their observations. Children receive good opportunities to explore their natural environment by exploring their natural environment in the park, the campus and by exploring in the park and planting and growing seeds. They learn about sustainable development by collecting left over food and paper and plastic for recycling.

By being involved in their interesting experiences and co-operating within the setting's close learning community children have good opportunities to develop a strong relationship with others. They show respect and tolerance towards all, including people from other cultural backgrounds.

Practitioners encourage the children to speak Welsh at all times and extend their language through rhymes, songs and stories which contain rich language and a wide vocabulary. They celebrate the Welsh culture in a range of ways, including holding a St David's Day concert and celebrating Saint Dwynwen's day and through visiting places in Wales which are linked with the theme, for example, Pentre Bychan.

### **Teaching: Good**

Practitioners have a good knowledge of children's development and current developments in the area and this gives a good foundation and clear direction to the provision. They understand the requirements of the Foundation Phase and they have high expectations of all children according to their stage of development. Behaviour

is managed in a very sensitive and positive way and, as a result, children learn lifelong attitudes, including showing respect, sensitivity and kindness towards others. Practitioners use a range of interesting teaching strategies to stimulate children effectively.

Overall practitioners make effective use of questioning to extend children's learning but the questioning is not always sufficiently challenging to extend children's thinking skills. Teaching is at its best when children choose what they would like to do and receive sufficient time to explore and enjoy their experiences. Staff intervene effectively overall in children's play to extend their learning. The organisation is flexible at times and gives children good opportunities to make decisions and choices about their learning which develops well their independence. However the organisation is sometimes over-directed. Practitioners know and understand the children well and have close relationships with all. The children enjoy learning experiences outdoors but their experience of these is insufficient.

Practitioners know and understand the children very well. They assess through observing the children at their learning experiences identifying significant things and discussing their findings with one another but the system is unwieldy. Practitioners feed the information that is gathered into the next cycle of planning. They keep continuous records of children's progress which include useful and thorough information that gives a clear picture of all children's achievements. Parents receive reports about their children's achievements and progress when they leave to go to school.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Practitioners have created a homely and inclusive atmosphere in the setting and children feel very comfortable and happy. All children are appreciated and practitioners show respect for their ideas and interests.

They develop children's awareness of the importance of eating healthily and of keeping fit by providing snacks of cereal, milk and toast through weekly physical exercise sessions. Children's curiosity about their own lives and beliefs and those of other children are developed well through celebrating the Chinese New Year and Diwali, dressing up in clothes of other cultures and through stories. Children say a prayer before going home. They develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them through the good opportunities they have to visit the park and looking after the caterpillars.

Staff nurture well the morals and values they believe are necessary to the development of the responsible child. The children learn about the importance of fairness, honesty and truth by following the personal example of staff. The provision enables the children to socialise well, to take responsibility, to display initiative and to develop a good understanding of living and sharing within their small community. They have opportunities to make choices and decisions and all enjoy their activities.



There are effective arrangements in place to support children's health and wellbeing which contribute well to their general development and wellbeing and support their learning. Their learning experiences support well their personal, spiritual, social and cultural development.

The setting has an appropriate child protection policy and practitioners are aware of its contents and the steps to be taken. All staff have received training in child protection and the necessary procedures are well established and meet fully safeguarding regulations. These are implemented appropriately and ensure the safety of children at all times. The provision for children with additional learning needs, when necessary, is good and all children have access to all the learning experiences which are provided.

### **Learning environment: Good**

There is a warm and inclusive ethos in the setting. Adults show affection and kindness towards everyone and all children are valued. Practitioners know the children and their needs and interests well and they respond to these by using their good knowledge of children's backgrounds. All children have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and practitioners place a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. As a result of the affection and respect for the child and the values and standards shown by staff, children develop tolerance, positive attitudes towards their learning and very good behaviour. Children show interest in and kindness towards their peers, adults and visitors.

There is a good supply of resources of a high standard which is used effectively to support learning and teaching. The ratio of adults to children is good and staff are well qualified. They address the requirements of the Foundation Phase successfully and children have interesting experiences which respond well to their interests and their stage of development. The building is a purpose built nursery and has very good facilities. The room gives them ample space in which to enjoy their experiences. The hall is used for snacks and the sensory room and the outdoors are used for different experiences.

The setting has positive policies and procedures that are known to all for dealing with problems of aggressive behaviour, promoting equal opportunities and human rights. These are monitored and implemented effectively. The group is registered with the CSSIW and has implemented all the recommendations made in the last report.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The leaders give clear direction to the setting's life and to the process of improvement and create a positive and happy ethos. They co-operate well with the manager and practitioners and they share clear principles and objectives which are based on knowledge of child development. These are seen to be implemented through the active learning experiences which are provided for children.

All practitioners undertake their responsibilities effectively showing firm commitment to their role to the benefit of the children. The leaders and manager work well together to plan strategically for the setting's future. They share values, aims and objectives they wish to promote through personal example and regular discussion. They have high expectations of themselves, of staff and of children together with targets which ensure good standards of achievement. Progress towards achieving them is monitored regularly.

The manager is aware of everything that happens in the setting and she understands and undertakes her role effectively. She knows the setting's performance well and uses robust information to make effective decisions. She fulfills her legal duties fully. Leaders fulfill national and local priorities according to the requirements of the Welsh Government and the local authority, for example, the requirements of the Foundation Phase.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The setting makes good use of its self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation report leads to strategies for improvement which ensure positive advantages for all children. The leaders consult with staff, parents and carers to inform the self-evaluation. They use information received from parents to gather opinion and identify areas to be developed. They also make effective use of the support of the local authority's Foundation Phase advisory teacher and staff implement her recommendations effectively.

Following the self-evaluation process, a setting improvement plan is produced which shows a good awareness of the setting's performance and which focuses on raising standards through setting targets to improve provision.

Practitioners have an annual interview with the manager to evaluate performance and identify professional development needs. They attend in-service training courses provided by the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin regularly in order to develop new teaching methods. The positive effect of this can be seen on teaching and children's wellbeing as they implement what they have learned.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting co-operates well with others to present learning experiences. The leader works very closely and effectively with the local authority's Foundation Phase advisory teacher. Positive results of this partnership can be seen in the improvements in provision and standards. The nursery works effectively with the Mudiad Meithrin officer also to improve provision.

The setting works closely with stakeholders, especially parents, and is very willing to consult with them and receive suggestions from them. There is also a very good partnership with the school which facilitates their transition when children leave.

**Resource management: Good**

Practitioners are deployed well in order to make the most effective use of their expertise and ensure good provision. Staff use indoor resources effectively in order to provide interesting experiences for children. They measure the effect of resources on learning and teaching and plan for resource needs in the future. They do not, however, use the outdoors continuously to develop children's skills in every area of learning.

Overall, leaders make the best use of the setting's resources and of funding to offer the best provision. The setting prioritises its expenditure in order to respond to its targets for improvement. Financial decisions are evaluated effectively by the manager in order to ensure positive outcomes in raising standards. The nursery 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 were received.

#### Responses to discussions with children

All children are comfortable when talking to a visitor and they say that they are very happy in the group. They talk about their friends and say that they know what to do if they are unhappy or worried about something.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Branwen Llewelyn Jones	Reporting Inspector

### Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

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

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	<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>
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	<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>

<b>National Childminding Association (NCMA)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.