



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanbedr
Village Hall
Llanbedr
LL45 2LD**

Date of inspection: July 2018

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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Context

Cylch Meithrin Llanbedr is a Welsh-medium setting. It meets in Llanbedr village hall, near Harlech in Gwynedd local authority. The setting provides education five mornings a week between 9.00am and 11.30am during term time.

The setting is registered to admit up to 13 children at any given time and admits children between two and four years old. All three and four-year-old children currently receive funded early years education. Nearly all children come from white British backgrounds and very few speak Welsh as their first language. There are currently no children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs three qualified practitioners, including the leader. The leader began in post in September 1999. The setting was last inspected by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in June 2018 and by Estyn in March 2014.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children make consistent progress in their literacy and numeracy skills
- Most children are willing to share resources and work enthusiastically with their peers
- Practitioners plan effective learning experiences to challenge children towards beneficial improvements in their literacy and numeracy skills
- Purposeful teaching makes improvements to children's standards
- The provision and the use of the Welsh language by practitioners are excellent
- Practitioners' diligent and sensible care creates a happy and engaging environment
- A successful learning environment inside the building stimulates children towards improving their standards intelligently

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader and management committee set a robust and clear direction for the setting's work
- There is active support on the part of the management committee
- Regular self-evaluation procedures lead to setting useful targets to make improvements
- Practitioners are keen to develop professionally and attend appropriate training by external agencies
- Conscientious use of support services, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin, supports provision and leadership successfully
- There are beneficial partnerships with parents and carers, the community and the local school
- Funding is used sensibly to ensure improvements in provision inside the building

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's willingness to listen purposefully to practitioners' suggestions in order to maintain consistent behaviour and commitment throughout the session
- R2 Time plenary sessions and introductions to focus tasks better in order to maintain children's interest effectively
- R3 Improve provision to ensure that children develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively
- R4 Improve provision in the outdoor area

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

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

Most children make consistent progress in their skills from their starting points, which are similar to the expected average. They achieve well over time in their literacy and numeracy skills.

Most children speak clearly and talk confidently to adults and other children, by using English and a little Welsh. As a result, they explain and clarify their decisions and ideas enthusiastically during activities. For example, they discuss the ingredients of an apple crumble sensibly with each other and a practitioner before preparing it. A very few children use mature language during spontaneous play and focus tasks. This includes discussing the different sizes of the three bears' porridge bowls and spoons and which objects are likely to sink or float in the water.

Most children show an interest in books and enjoy their content. They discuss characters and events confidently with adults and peers, and handle books like natural readers. A majority of children sit quietly and follow stories that have been discussed sensibly. They share stories with each other and respond with interest to the content of the story. As a result, they recreate events intelligently in the small world area and describe which chairs belong to different characters in the home area confidently.

Many of the children make marks purposefully. They enjoy early writing experiences and use a variety of media. They experiment with paint, crayons and their fingers in oats to make patterns and letters that are in their names. As a result, a majority of children recognise their own names correctly and a few form the letters of the alphabet and numbers independently. Many children explain the purpose of writing in the correct contexts, for example when making marks on paper and blackboards to record the items on the menu in the mud kitchen.

Many children use mathematical language effectively in the correct contexts. Most count, recognise and name numbers up to 10 well. A minority of children count beyond 10 confidently and a few count from 10 down to zero skilfully. They do this while ordering tractors in the soil in the outdoor area, count the octopus' tentacles, putting buttons into dough and using an abacus and numbers on a string.

Most children choose relevant equipment and materials to solve mathematical problems effectively. They fill and empty bowls, buckets and jugs carefully with soil, sand, oats or water, and identify correctly when they are full or empty. They organise themselves into a line confidently before going to the nearby field and number their place in the line intelligently. They also group different types of objects by size, shape and colour correctly, particularly when building towers in the construction area and picking up leaves with tongs. Many children compare two- and three-dimensional shapes correctly and are able to explain that a circle is flat on paper but round when describing a ball.

Children do not use ICT equipment purposefully enough. As a result, their use of educational software and apps through the medium of Welsh to develop their ICT skills and thinking skills is currently suitable.

Many children develop good thinking and creative skills through engaging activities. These activities have a positive effect on their learning and the standard that they achieve. For example, they place grass seeds and soil in a stocking to make 'Mistar Pen Gwair' (Mister Grasshead) and use scissors to cut his 'hair' as the grass grows.

Nearly all children enjoy listening to music and respond enthusiastically to familiar Welsh nursery rhymes and songs, and sing happily around the piano. Most children use their physical skills effectively, for example as they race each other on the field, kick and throw balls and roll tyres from one place to another.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Nearly all children are eager to please and hold enthusiastic conversations with practitioners as they arrive at the setting and during their time there. Overall, they behave appropriately and respect the views of others. A majority listen carefully to practitioners. However, a minority of children respond too slowly to practitioners' suggestions. As a result, they quite often ignore practitioners' requests to comply during tidy-up time or at the beginning of a new activity.

Most children are willing to share resources and work enthusiastically with others. They show positive attitudes towards new experiences, such as counting twigs, before placing them in the water and planting flowers in wellingtons. A majority of children show motivation when responding to challenges and show an interest in their learning. As a result, a majority concentrate conscientiously during activities. However, a minority of children are not willing enough to work and concentrate purposefully on tasks promptly.

A majority of children are beginning to make sensible choices during free play. They express an opinion and make personal choices effectively, for example when deciding to move from the building to the outdoor area to experience new activities. However, a minority are too reliant on practitioners' instructions to apply themselves fully to tasks, such as literacy tasks across the areas of learning.

Nearly all children have a sound awareness of hygiene. They understand that it is important to stay healthy and the need to avoid infection through clean habits after using the toilet, messy play and outdoor activities. As a result, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly without much prompting by an adult.

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

The leader and practitioners work well together to provide interesting activities across all areas of learning. Their dedication engages children's interest effectively, on the whole. As a result, children develop as intelligent learners and they make sound progress in terms of their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, they motivate the children to engage in practical learning by role-playing in the mud kitchen and enquiring and investigating in the insects hotel.

Practitioners provide an engaging curriculum, which reflects the ethos of the foundation phase purposefully. Their planning to provide sensible learning experiences is efficient and meets the children's needs and interests well. Planning focuses on providing interesting experiences and has recently been based on assessment findings. As a result, practitioners challenge individuals effectively against the next steps in their learning.

All practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to express their personal ideas to contribute to further activities. This includes choosing books independently to discuss in the reading corner, choosing nursery rhymes to sing and expressing their personal views on ingredients to make crumble with apples and fruit. These activities add positively to children's daily enthusiasm as they learn through play and educational activities.

Provision for the Welsh language is beneficial to the children. Practitioners are excellent language models. They support the children who are beginning to learn the language exceptionally well. Practitioners encourage children to use the language as much as possible through daily activities and reinforce their development highly successfully. They question children very purposefully in the indoor and outdoor learning areas. As a result, most children's understanding of the language is developing positively and they respond with familiar vocabulary and phrases in a short space of time.

Provision to develop children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills is effective. Activities, which include language and mathematics challenges, are prominent in all areas of learning and stimulate children to perform at their best consistently. Practical examples of this can be seen as children discuss weather features, money when going to the shop, and farm animals. As a result, nearly all children's knowledge and understanding of day-to-day life are developing soundly.

The setting promotes children's awareness of Welsh traditions, celebrations and culture successfully. These activities include celebrating St David's Day and St Dwynwen's Day, travelling on a train and a bus to see the coast and visiting Harlech castle.

Provision to develop ICT skills is appropriate and provides suitable opportunities for children to use electronic equipment. However, practitioners do not plan purposefully to develop children's skills effectively and consistently enough across the learning areas.

Practitioners focus on developing children's physical skills well and make the best possible use of the outdoor areas that are available. They provide appropriate opportunities for children to run energetically, roll tyres and kick and throw balls to each other to improve their skills and physical development. Practitioners also plan valuable activities to develop children's creative skills. They provide good opportunities by using chalk to make marks and numbers on blackboards, and painting at an easel to experiment with different colours by mixing them on paper.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enrich children's learning experiences. For example, they walk along the nearby lanes to observe chickens and horses, walk to the local shops and play in the park. This reinforces the curriculum effectively. Visitors such as the emergency services and the milkman teach children successfully about the roles of people in their community.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and are knowledgeable about the requirements of the foundation phase. They manage children's behaviour appropriately and encourage children's participation and enjoyment successfully in their activities. They intervene sensibly in children's experiences and play in order to stimulate them and motivate them to succeed. They understand the importance of providing a wide range of opportunities to learn through play. An effective example of this is shovelling sand to fill buckets to make sand castles, and setting the table neatly with dishes and cutlery in the three bears' kitchen.

Practitioners have good expectations of themselves and children, and they challenge them regularly in focus tasks. They question children skilfully and regularly by using excellent Welsh, which has a positive effect on children's literacy, numeracy and thinking skills. This is evident as they discuss Goldilocks' trials and tribulations in the three bears' house and her feelings as she ate the porridge and slept in their beds. However, practitioners' plenary sessions lose pace, at times, and are lengthy. As a result, the noise levels become unacceptably high, which distracts children from the session's objective and hinders their commitment to the task. This causes a minority of children to lose interest in discussions and the aim of the sessions.

Practitioners encourage children to take part in various activities effectively. They ensure regular opportunities for children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas. This challenges children to make sensible choices about their learning. Practitioners question children purposefully to develop their thinking and communication skills. This is done skilfully by making faces out of dough to reflect their feelings, and discussing how much water is needed to make watery or thick porridge.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are sound. Evidence corresponds correctly with individual children's outcomes by using the local authority's procedures and the foundation phase profile. Practitioners record assessments regularly and discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work. They use daily assessments to identify the next steps in individual children's learning well, and use this information to plan the next steps in learning effectively.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements. The daily dialogue between practitioners, parents and carers reinforces this soundly. At the end of their time at the setting, information about children's achievement is available to parents through useful booklets that track their progress well.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides good opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners provide sensible opportunities to encourage children to greet each other, reflect on the feelings of others, pray and say thank you.

Practitioners nurture values such as fairness and respect effectively among children. This reinforces the use of these values in the setting's daily life. An effective

example is the 'helper of the day' system, which allocates duties to individuals and provides valuable opportunities for each child to shoulder responsibility in turn. As a result, children are polite while eating snacks and serving milk and water around the dining table.

The setting has robust arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. Children understand that fruit and vegetables are part of a sensible diet. There are successful arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. They support children's learning sensibly, such as promoting activities to increase the heart rate in the outdoor area. As a result, these arrangements contribute well towards children's overall development and wellbeing.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, cardboard and plastic goods. They use a face on the food recycling box intelligently to remind children each day to recycle any food that has not been eaten. This and similar activities develop children's understanding of sustainability purposefully.

The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take good care of children when they arrive and when they are collected. Children are happy in the company of adults and often ask for help and support without concern. Practitioners use positive behaviour strategies that, on the whole, eliminate any disruption or unruly behaviour appropriately. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting records children's learning needs effectively on entry to the setting and during their time there. Practitioners review children's progress regularly. They identify their starting points effectively by following the foundation phase profile guidelines. As a result, the setting targets children with additional learning needs effectively, when necessary.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners promote a positive ethos through their daily activities and consistent motivation. Practitioners challenge and support children conscientiously. They emphasise daily the need to respect each other and that individuals' choices are an important part of their personal development.

Practitioners teach children about different the world's different festivals and cultures successfully. For example, the setting celebrates the Chinese New Year each year and provides opportunities for children to taste food from foreign countries.

Practitioners meet children's needs sensibly and all children are given an equal opportunity to learn in the different areas. As a result, the setting is a wholly inclusive community, which acknowledges children's individuality purposefully.

The setting uses resources effectively to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and children's needs. A wide range of interesting resources is used effectively in continuous activities to support learning and focus tasks. Resources are accessible to all and promote children's sense of responsibility effectively, such as around the mud kitchen and the construction area.

The indoor environment is clean and the room is in good condition and maintained conscientiously. Practitioners organise the learning areas sensibly to create a colourful, engaging and interesting indoor environment. They encourage children to move from one learning area to another, both indoors and outdoors, without much prompting, which contributes successfully to providing them with a variety of practical experiences.

Practitioners are currently unable to use the hall and part of the outdoor area. However, they make appropriate use of the limited outdoor area. They also use the small field near the hall sensibly to develop children's physical and investigative skills. However, the current use of the outdoor area does not ensure enough opportunities for children to develop all of their skills consistently enough outdoors.

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

The leader leads the setting well and, with the robust support of practitioners, they promote and maintain improvements effectively. As a result, they ensure that learning experiences, teaching and care have a successful effect on children's standards. The setting's procedures, which include methodical and corporate policies, focus thoroughly on improving provision. This meets the children's needs intelligently and promotes their achievements purposefully.

The leader works diligently with the other practitioners and they have high expectations of themselves and the children. As a result, they motivate and challenge children to improve in supportive ways through effective teaching. This can be seen as they feed Welsh excellently to the children by talking and singing regularly with individuals and specific groups to target improvements orally.

The leader and practitioners use relevant and up-to-date information about the setting to improve provision. This has recently included using the foundation phase profile effectively and refining planning procedures. As a result, they identify children's starting points accurately and weave assessments into planning to challenge children to make improvements in their work. They also focus rigorously on national priorities, such as developing literacy and numeracy strategies, to improve children's skills before they start school.

The supportive management committee ensures that provision for children is effective. They ensure that practitioners understand their roles fully through regular evaluations and discussions, and work diligently as a team. They focus purposefully on improving provision and hold fundraising events to ensure that the setting is sustainable financially. The management committee receives information about the setting's practices regularly from the leader and practitioners. They meet regularly to discuss the setting's income and funding, and monitor expenditure and the use of grants conscientiously and in detail. As a result, the management committee supports the setting well and focuses on maintaining and improving its practices further.

Improving quality: Good

The leader and practitioners have established consistent arrangements to monitor children's standards and provision. They work together conscientiously and their daily discussions contribute successfully towards improvements. Their procedures to improve the quality of the setting give full consideration to the views of practitioners, children, parents and carers, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. Information that derives from these procedures provides a complete and accurate picture of the setting's work. As a result, a positive culture of self-evaluation permeates the setting's work.

The self-evaluation report reflects the effect of the robust procedures and identifies the setting's strengths and areas for development purposefully. The leader and practitioners take purposeful steps to maintain regular practices and implement changes through effective development plans. As a result, they are open to new ideas and willing to experiment with different strategies in order to succeed.

The management committee prioritises expenditure in line with the actions that have been identified for improvement. They therefore improve provision by adopting different strategies and embracing valuable advice from others. For example, they have responded promptly and purposefully to the local authority support teacher's suggestions by revising planning, establishing sound starting points for children and monitoring their progress effectively through sensible observations.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works effectively with partners to improve children's standards, learning experiences and care. There is good co-operation with external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. This positive relationship reinforces the setting's work and supports it actively with useful training and management documentation.

Practitioners take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life. The setting informs parents and carers regularly about all aspects of the setting's work, which includes good use of social media. They also encourage them to offer their own views on issues to improve the setting through questionnaires and regular discussions.

The setting uses its robust links with the school to support children's learning. This includes using the school's small field for outdoor activities, and working together to transfer information about the children before they continue their education at the school. This has been established firmly.

Practitioners work and liaise with a wide range of other partners, which makes an important contribution towards improving provision. These include agencies that support the setting with training such as first aid, food hygiene courses and child protection training.

Resource management: Good

The leader and management committee aim consistently to improve all aspects of the setting's work, by managing staff and resources well. They ensure that the setting has enough qualified practitioners by ensuring purposeful training for them. As a result, they are a stable and conscientious team of practitioners.

The leader encourages practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge sensibly. As a result, the setting is a good example of an effective learning community.

The setting's performance management procedures are appropriate and lead to interesting learning experiences and positive teaching practices. The setting manages resources sensibly to support learning inside the building. Although the outdoor area is limited and there are no regular opportunities to use the hall, practitioners do their best to provide suitable outdoor experiences and physical activities for the children.

The management committee has a clear understanding of the budget and the importance of raising money to maintain and improve resources. It prioritises expenditure carefully and identifies responsibilities and sensible timescales. It makes regular improvements by discussing and funding improvement plans purposefully. As a result, the setting ensures that the use of funding has a direct effect on provision and children's standards.

Although aspects of the children's wellbeing need to be improved, the setting provides good value for money because of the children's good standards, purposeful provision and effective leadership.

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
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 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 three to seven 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 that 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
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 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