



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

**A report on**

**Cylch Meithrin Abergwaun  
Fishguard Leisure Centre  
Pembrokeshire  
SA65 9DT**

**Date of inspection: November 2017**

**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:

<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

Cylch Meithrin Abergwaun is a Welsh-medium setting that meets in a room at Fishguard Leisure Centre in Pembrokeshire local authority. The setting is open four mornings a week between 9.10am and 11.40am.

The setting is registered to admit up to 24 children at any given time, and the setting admits children between two and three years old. Around half the children receive funded early years education.

Nearly all children come from white British backgrounds and none speak Welsh as their first language. There are currently very few children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs five members of staff during the week. The leader began in post in April 2014.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in February 2017 and by Estyn in March 2011.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Most children make sound progress from starting points that are similar to, or above, the expected average
- Most children develop effective literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- Nearly all children behave responsibly and are polite
- Sound teaching and daily challenges reinforce children's learning
- Practitioners provide valuable opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Practitioners' diligent and consistent care is fully active
- Practitioners use the local area creatively to provide stimulating outdoor experiences for children

### Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader's high expectations provide clear guidance for all of the practitioners' and children's work
- The management committee is supportive and monitors provision intelligently
- A positive culture of self-evaluation leads to useful improvements
- Practitioners benefit from purposeful training and professional development
- Successful partnerships support provision and children's learning effectively
- The leader and management committee use the budget sensibly and prioritise expenditure wisely

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that practitioners use assessments effectively in order to plan the next steps in individual children's learning
- R2 Ensure that plenary presentations correspond appropriately with children's age and ability
- R3 Create a robust link between the self-evaluation processes and the development plan's targets

### **What happens next?**

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

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

Most children make sound progress at the setting from starting points that are similar to, or above, the expected average. They develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully. Many children's oral Welsh language skills improve quickly from low starting points.

Many children use language patterns and phrases effectively with encouragement from adults during informal play and particularly during focus tasks; for example, they recognise different animals and their various characteristics, and discuss parts of the body confidently. A majority try to create simple sentences while building on their awareness of specific language patterns when asking politely for cheese, fruit or bread around the snack tables.

When sitting on a large cushion in the reading area, many children handle books as sensible early readers. They respond intelligently to practitioners' questions when discussing characters and events in stories. When responding to the content of books in pairs and with an adult, they understand the purpose of pictures and writing to convey the story. Many children understand that different emotions and feelings exist and relate to individual characters, for example recognising that the wolf is a dangerous character in the story of the Three Little Pigs.

Many children make marks effectively when experimenting with different media. They persevere with early writing experiences and use crayons to scribble and draw pictures purposefully on long pieces of paper. A few children attempt sensibly to note customers' orders on paper in the role-play cafe. Many children experiment with their fingers in the colourful rice and with pencils on paper to practice the letters in their names successfully. A minority of children recognise their own names and those of others correctly. They are also beginning to form letters and numbers confidently in recognisable forms. A very few children record the attendance of others correctly on the register with a pen while recognising their names.

Most children use mathematical language effectively, for example as they weigh different three-dimensional shapes with scales and compare the value of different coins after finding them with magnets. Most children count numbers to 10 independently. A minority recognise, name and count to 10 and beyond correctly when sorting shapes and objects and making shapes out of dough. Most children understand differences in size when exploring with magnifying glasses in the soil and gathering leaves and twigs on a treasure hunt in the forest. They explain 'big', 'small' and 'medium-sized' objects successfully, and whether they are 'heavy' or 'light', or whether their baskets are 'empty' or 'full'.

Most children develop their use of the Welsh language effectively. They follow instructions that are given in Welsh successfully, and many use the Welsh language regularly with encouragement from adults. A few strive to use the language orally completely independently with each other and adults. Nearly all children sing familiar nursery rhymes and songs enthusiastically in Welsh.

Most children use technology purposefully when responding to challenges with electronic tablets and toys, a compact disc player and clipboards with a sound recorder. As a result, their use of Welsh educational software and apps develops their ICT skills and thinking skills successfully.

Many children choose equipment and materials effectively to solve practical problems. For example, they use glue and straw to convey a picture of the autumn, build a track with bridges to drive trains, and dig appropriately to plant daffodil bulbs in the growing areas. They develop their physical skills suitably when running and dancing in the hall at the centre occasionally, when going for walk around the town and the surrounding area, and when fishing for crabs at the seaside.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all children relate well to adults and visitors when they arrive at and leave the setting. They show interest and perseverance in their learning. As a result, most children concentrate with motivation during independent activities and focus tasks. They enjoy activities in all areas of learning and many children share and work diligently with other children. Many children show positive attitudes towards new experiences, for example when printing on paper with fruit and paint, and melting chocolate into heart-shaped moulds.

Many children are confident learners and work independently during play activities. This is evident when they decide to continue with a specific task or begin a new activity of their own choosing. Most choose thoughtfully which areas of learning include their favourite activities. They explain sensibly which practical tasks are of most interest to them and in which part of the building they would like to work. As a result, most children are beginning to express their opinions and personal preferences effectively.

Nearly all children behave responsibly and are polite. They show respect when responding to adults and each other. Nearly all children listen sensibly to adults, for example when brushing their teeth together and when they sit in turn to eat their snacks. After using the toilet, messy play and planting bulbs in the soil, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly without being prompted by practitioners. This shows their sound understanding of the importance of hygiene and healthy lifestyles.

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

The leader and practitioners plan conscientiously to provide interesting activities for children. They focus purposefully on developing independent learners by providing rich and varied activities, such as making symmetrical butterflies with paint. They encourage children to learn practically and to expand on their personal experiences; for example, they promote useful discussions when playing the role of the chef and the customer in the kitchen in the role-play cafe. As a result, they provide an interesting curriculum and learning experiences that reflect the ethos of the foundation phase successfully.

All practitioners discuss how to prepare and deliver exciting and challenging activities on a weekly basis. They organise activities sensibly and include opportunities to discuss, respond to books, make marks and practise with numbers and shapes in most learning areas. This sensible daily planning builds purposefully on children's enthusiasm, as they apply themselves fully to focus and continuous tasks. As a result, the setting provides rigorously to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills.

Practitioners target children's interests sensibly. The planning process is established and is the responsibility of the leader. However, the link between planning and the assessment process is unclear. It does not derive wholly effectively from practitioners' assessments to target the next steps in individual children's learning.

Provision to develop ICT skills is effective. The setting provides purposeful opportunities to use a range of equipment, such as a compact disc player, electronic toys and tablets. Practitioners encourage children regularly to use Welsh educational software and apps to develop their sense of the language and their early ICT skills. As a result, children use the equipment confidently.

Provision to develop the Welsh language is beneficial to the children. Practitioners are consistent language models. They encourage children to use the language as much as possible through exciting activities, which include songs and linguistic challenges in the learning areas. They question regularly in Welsh, which motivates children to respond purposefully. The effect of this is that many children respond with familiar words and phrases soon after they start at the setting. They count, name colours and recognise shapes intelligently soon after they start at the setting. As a result, most children's understanding of the language is 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.

Although opportunities to provide physical activities for children are difficult because of the nature of the building, practitioners plan creatively. They use the hall occasionally when opportunities arise, take the children out to the planting area, and visit the town and public facilities such as the forest and the seaside. They provide regular opportunities for them to dance and play energetically in the room, which promotes children's sense of fitness effectively. These activities develop children's physical skills suitably.

The setting makes beneficial use of visitors to promote children's learning experiences. For example, the police, a road safety officer, a dental hygienist and dancers teach children purposefully about the roles of people in their community. Practitioners use the town's shops, public transport, the seaside, the town carnival, the park and a wooded area to promote children's understanding of their local community successfully.

### **Teaching: Good**

All practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development. They are knowledgeable about the requirements of the foundation phase and work together effectively. They manage children's behaviour sensibly, which encourages children's participation and enjoyment in all learning areas and daily activities successfully.



Practitioners have high expectations and challenge children regularly during focus tasks and continuous tasks. As a result, practitioners ensure that children are highly-motivated. On the whole, practitioners' presentations are lively, which ignites and holds children's interest effectively. However, at times, plenary sessions do not correspond appropriately to children's age and ability.

Practitioners understand their roles fully when intervening in children's experiences and play. They use sensible methods and have a positive effect on children's desire to improve their work. As a result, practitioners motivate and lead children to successes regularly. Sound examples of this can be seen as children persevere to follow a pattern when threading shapes onto a piece of string, and when they explain the characteristics of different animals to each other in the small world area.

Practitioners encourage children regularly to take part in various activities. They understand the importance of providing broad opportunities to learn through experimenting and play, and ensure that children rotate regularly in order to experience different skills in all areas of learning. They also question children shrewdly to develop their communication and thinking skills. This is done successfully when reciting the order of numbers up to 10 and back down to zero, deciding on how to plant bulbs in the planting areas, and handling money in the kitchen in the role-play cafe.

Procedures for assessing and recording children's achievements are effective, on the whole. Evidence corresponds correctly with individual children's outcomes by using the foundation phase profile as they develop at the setting. Practitioners discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work during activities. However, not all practitioners record daily assessments regularly and purposefully, which leads to shortcomings when planning the next steps in children's learning.

The setting informs parents and carers effectively about their children's achievements. Daily dialogue between practitioners and parents and carers supports this. At the end of their time at the setting, useful reports and samples of work are available to parents with regard to their children's progress.

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

The setting provides valuable opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use snack sessions and story time to nurture these values successfully. They promote children's consideration and understanding of their peers' feelings intelligently. As a result, children treat each other fairly and respect others, including adults.

The leader and all practitioners create a reflective environment while providing positive opportunities for children to think, pray, discuss feelings and say thank you. The effect of this is that children quieten down to listen to others, take turns intelligently and share equipment. Children follow instructions sensibly when washing their hands, pouring a drink, choosing and sharing snacks and lining up to go outside. These systems provide valuable opportunities for each child to foster personal responsibility.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, card, food, plastic goods and stamps. This develops children's understanding of sustainability successfully. There are also efficient arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The setting operates effective systems to promote eating and drinking healthily. As a result, children understand that fruit, vegetables and exercise contribute to a sensible lifestyle.

The setting is a safe environment. Practitioners are vigilant as children arrive and when they are collected. The setting arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Use of positive behaviour strategies eliminates any disruption or irresponsible behaviour.

The setting records children's learning needs conscientiously on entry to the setting and during their time there. They refer children to specialist agencies immediately if specific intervention is needed, and provide relevant support when the need arises. As a result, they implement purposeful support for children who are in need by using external agencies to support the children.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is a wholly inclusive community and practitioners have a clear awareness of children's needs. All children are given equal opportunities to learn in the different areas, and their individuality is recognised effectively. Practitioners are in agreement when challenging and supporting children each day in positive and supportive ways.

Practitioners remind children regularly that we live in a society that recognises, respects and celebrates diversity. They promote a positive ethos through their daily activities and sensible attitudes towards other people. They celebrate the Chinese New Year and Diwali each year, and use dolls to discuss the characteristics of different cultures. As a result, practitioners teach children about the world's different festivals and traditions successfully.

The leader and practitioners use resources purposefully to meet the requirements of the foundation phase and children's needs. The wide range of interesting and entertaining resources is used purposefully to challenge children in focus tasks and continuous activities to enrich learning. Resources are at a practical level for all children, which promotes their sense of responsibility effectively. The setting has enough ICT resources to develop children's skills successfully.

The building is of suitable quality, maintained appropriately and is safe. All areas that are available are used effectively and the accommodation is divided with very sensible divides. There is no outdoor area available; however, practitioners use facilities in the local area very creatively and successfully in order to enrich children's experiences.

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

The setting's objectives, plans and policies focus directly on providing effective experiences for children. The leader, practitioners and the management committee meet children's needs effectively and celebrate their achievements and progress successfully.

The leader is experienced and manages a team of dedicated and enthusiastic practitioners. She uses relevant information about the setting to make improvements to provision, which has a positive effect on children's outcomes. Her vision ensures that teaching and learning are the main focus in order to promote and maintain consistent improvements at the setting. As a result, she has high expectations in terms of practitioners and children, which encourage everyone to improve in a sensible and purposeful manner.

The leadership, which includes the contribution of the management committee, ensures that provision is interesting and stimulating. The leader ensures that practitioners understand their roles in full and that they work diligently as a team. Supervision practices and annual appraisals are robust and established. As a result, the most is made of practitioners' expertise. The leader and her team focus conscientiously on national priorities, such as developing literacy and numeracy strategies across all learning areas and implementing the requirements of the foundation phase profile.

The management committee receives information about the setting's practices regularly from the leader and plays a practical part in the setting's life. It meets regularly to organise fundraising activities and to monitor funding purposefully. The management committee challenges the setting sensibly to maintain consistent practices and helps to develop areas that need further improvement.

### **Improving quality: Good**

A positive culture of self-evaluation, which leads to useful improvements, is part of the setting's termly work. The leader and management committee, under the guidance of the local authority, have established robust arrangements for monitoring children's outcomes and provision. The leader and management committee prioritise expenditure sensibly, in line with the actions that have been identified for improvement. They agree on targets with practitioners and implement changes purposefully together.

The local authority's new process, in addition to the management committee's evaluations, contributes effectively to self-evaluation. It also considers the views of practitioners, parents and carers, and Mudiad Meithrin, successfully. As a result, the setting has made meaningful improvements over time, such as developing opportunities to use the local area as a learning resource, and improving the use of the foundation phase profile. However, at times, the link between areas for improvement in the self-evaluation and the development plan's targets is inconsistent. Therefore, targets in the development plan do not always derive directly from the self-evaluation process. The self-evaluation report does not include enough details about how and why some areas need to be developed further.

All practitioners are keen to embrace new ideas that have been suggested by the local authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin link officer. They act on their advice regularly. This leads to beneficial improvements, such as establishing support from specialist agencies for individual children at the setting.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has a range of effective strategic partnerships. Practitioners work purposefully with partners to improve provision and children's outcomes. They take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life.

Practitioners inform parents regularly about all aspects of the setting's work through social media and regular discussions. There are worthwhile opportunities for them to express their views on issues to improve the setting through questionnaires, meetings and discussions. As a result, these community links promote children's learning successfully by supporting regular visits, visitors to enrich the curriculum, and financial support. In addition, this support is beneficial when bidding for equipment and relevant grants to promote provision further.

There are appropriate links with local schools. This supports children's transition arrangements to the next steps in their learning efficiently. Arrangements for transferring personal information and assessments are useful to the children as they settle in their new schools.

The setting works successfully with external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. This reinforces the positive partnerships that exist. These organisations support by providing useful documentation and effective training. Practitioners also work and liaise with a wide range of other partners. These include agencies that provide first aid training, food hygiene courses, risk assessments, foundation phase developments and safeguarding children. These useful links make an important contribution towards improving provision.

### **Resource management: Good**

The leadership strives consistently to improve all aspects of the setting's work. The diligent leader and supportive management committee use purposeful practices to enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge successfully. They ensure that the setting has enough qualified practitioners by providing comprehensive training. As a result, practitioners are used intelligently to target children's needs, and resources are allocated efficiently.

Performance management systems are robust and ensure interesting teaching and purposeful learning. The setting manages resources sensibly to support children's learning. This includes the use of the local area as an effective learning resource, the hall in the centre for physical activities and the planting area to explore nature purposefully.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and the challenges that are associated with it. They prioritise expenditure and use grants carefully, and identify responsibilities and sensible timescales. Parents and carers also contribute regularly to the funding of the setting through community fundraising events. As a result, the setting ensures that the use of funding has a direct effect on provision and children's outcomes.

The setting improves children's achievements through effective provision and successful leadership. Therefore, the setting provides good value for money.

## 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 partnerships 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 three to seven 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 that 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>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</b>	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

<b>National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)</b>	This organisation 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