



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llanbrynmair
Community Centre
Llanbrynmair
Powys
SY19 7AB**

Date of inspection: December 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:

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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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Context

Cylch Meithrin Llanbrynmair is a Welsh-medium setting, which meets in a community room at Ysgol Llanbrynmair in Powys local authority. The setting is open four mornings a week.

The setting is registered to admit up to 12 children at any given time. Practitioners provide education for children who are three and four years old. Each child at the setting is funded to receive early years education.

Nearly all children are from white British backgrounds and a few children come from Welsh-speaking homes. There are currently no children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs three members of staff. The leader began in post in September 2017.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in February 2016 and by Estyn in October 2010.

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 show sound progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning
- Nearly all children behave responsibly
- Practitioners work together purposefully to provide interesting activities to improve children's learning
- The teaching succeeds in motivating children to improve their standards and wellbeing
- The practitioners' watchful and robust care creates a supportive environment and ethos
- The indoor learning areas engage children's interest successfully

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- The leader provides a clear direction for the setting's daily and long-term work
- The management committee supports the setting purposefully
- Self-evaluation procedures lead to valid targets for action for the children's wellbeing
- Practitioners' training is appropriate and is beginning to have a beneficial influence on developing their personal skills
- Purposeful use is made of external services, which has a successful effect on provision
- There are positive partnerships with parents, carers, the school and external agencies, which support the next steps in children's learning purposefully

Recommendations

- R1 Use daily observations purposefully to track individual children's progress over time
- R2 Make better use of the outdoor area
- R3 Embed the new leadership systems
- R4 Ensure that the management committee's monitoring and evaluation practices are rigorous and regular

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it is going to 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 close to the expected average. They make sound progress in their literacy and numeracy skills, and many children make marks and a few write their names and numbers purposefully.

Most children speak clearly and make sure that adults and other children understand them when discussing and sharing ideas during activities. They conduct sensible discussions with adults and each other while weighing artificial snow with scales and completing measuring charts in the role-play hospital. They listen to instructions from others and act on them effectively, when colouring the red dragon with coloured pencils and discussing the different senses meaningfully in a group. A few children use mature language in spontaneous and structured play. This includes discussing parts of the body and their purpose, and leading the process of weighing ingredients to make Christmas biscuits.

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. Many children sit quietly and follow stories that are read to them intelligently. As a result, they share stories with each other and respond with interest to the story's content.

Many children make marks effectively. They enjoy early writing experiences and use a variety of media. They experiment with paint, chalk, crayons, pencils and coloured pens to make pictures of their faces and their families. A minority 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 when recording patients' personal details in the hospital.

Many children use mathematical language purposefully and in correct contexts. Most count, recognise and name numbers up to 10 confidently. A few children count beyond 10 skilfully when placing different objects and animals in order in the water tub.

Most children choose relevant equipment and materials to solve mathematical problems effectively. They use a scale successfully to measure milk and place each other in order in a row by using ordinals effectively before washing their hands. They also work well together when putting stickers on paper to create symmetrical patterns and when creating a graph of the eye colours of children in the setting.

Many children understand the difference between moving right and left when throwing and following balls on the school playground. They also group different kinds of objects by size, shape and colour correctly, particularly when sorting blocks to build colourful towers. Many children compare two-dimensional and three-

dimensional shapes correctly. Examples of this include creating skeletons when sticking different types of reeds on black paper and when sorting wooden blocks to make a penguin house in the small world area.

Most children are beginning to use technology effectively by using electronic tablets and through tasks that include electronic toys and a computer. They also use educational software and apps on the tablets to develop their ICT skills and their fine motor skills purposefully.

Many children develop useful thinking skills through interesting activities, and this has a positive effect on their learning and the standards that they achieve. For example, they follow a recipe and work intelligently with others when investigating the volume of different ingredients, and decide whether jugs and containers are 'full', 'empty' or 'half full'.

Nearly all children enjoy listening to music and respond enthusiastically to familiar Welsh nursery rhymes and songs. When given an opportunity, most children use their physical skills appropriately, for example as they run around the playground energetically. However, children's physical skills are not developed consistently enough or to the appropriate level.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children relate well to adults and visitors when they arrive at the setting and as they leave. They behave well and treat adults and each other with respect. Nearly all children listen carefully to practitioners. Effective examples of this include when they make shapes and letters in colourful glitter and when they roll and cut dough to make objects that are associated with Christmas.

Nearly all children show motivation and interest in their learning, and most concentrate conscientiously during activities. They take an interest in plenary activities, such as playing instruments in an orchestra. As a result, they enjoy tasks that are provided for them indoors and undertake them enthusiastically.

Most children share resources and work sensibly with other children. They show positive attitudes towards new experiences, such as using lightboxes to read x-rays and discovering which objects float and sink.

Most children understand that they can make sensible choices during free play. They express an opinion and make personal choices effectively, for example when they decide to move from one play area to the next independently. As a result, most children are confident and self-sufficient learners.

After using the toilet, and messy play and outdoor activities, nearly all children wash their hands thoroughly and without much prompting from an adult. This develops their awareness of purposeful hygiene and the virtues of keeping healthy successfully.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Learning experiences meet children's needs and interests successfully and provide useful opportunities for them to develop as independent learners. The leader and her colleagues provide a balanced curriculum for children. As a result, daily activities reflect the ethos of the foundation phase effectively, particularly indoors.

In a short period of time, practitioners have ensured conscientious co-operation between themselves in order to provide interesting and engaging activities, which motivate children to learn in a practical way. They focus on developing children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills purposefully and intelligently. They also plan to develop children's thinking and creative skills purposefully, for example when they copy their faces from mirrors on whiteboards. However, practitioners do not plan purposefully enough to use the outdoor area.

Practitioners plan interesting challenges for the children to solve problems, for example by counting pinecones and playing dominos by pairing different animals. These purposeful activities are evident in all areas of learning. As a result, they challenge most children to perform at their best consistently. Activities build effectively on children's existing knowledge and understanding. The setting challenges the most able children purposefully by preparing and planning challenging activities for them during the week.

Practitioners recognise that many children's Welsh language skills are at a low level on entry to the setting. They address this conscientiously by modelling vocabulary, numbers, colours and phrases regularly. As a result, nearly all children's understanding of the language develops quickly. 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 every year.

Opportunities are provided for children to use ICT equipment, such as electronic toys and tablets, a compact disc player, cameras and a computer. Children are given regular opportunities to develop their ICT skills successfully by using educational software and apps purposefully on tablets.

The setting makes beneficial use of visits and visitors to enrich children's learning experiences, such as police officers, farmers, and a trip to the village cafe and shop. As a result, children have a sound understanding of their local area and a useful understanding of the roles of people in their community.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners greet the children warmly and enthusiastically as they arrive for each session. This enthusiasm continues throughout the sessions. Practitioners manage children's behaviour positively and safely, and this encourages children's participation and enthusiasm in all activities.

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development. They implement the requirements of the foundation phase intelligently and work together effectively. The

leader and practitioners ensure an effective balance between activities that are led by children and those that are led by adults. They provide a wide range of opportunities to learn through play and practical experiences, particularly indoors.

Practitioners have high expectations for each child and they challenge children regularly in all focus tasks, including extending challenges for the most able children. Their introductions to focus tasks are concise and purposeful, which holds children's interest effectively. They intervene sensibly in children's play and encourage individuals to perform at their best during continuous activities. Practitioners question children skilfully to develop their thinking skills and create challenging opportunities to communicate and elaborate on aspects of the task. This is evident while discussing the differences between the different senses and how we use them in our everyday lives.

Practitioners encourage children to assess their own learning effectively orally. They also discuss sensibly with children what they need to do to improve their work. Practitioners have recently started to complete daily assessments more regularly and consistently. Recently, they have begun to record daily evaluations and discussions on useful record sheets. This leads directly to planning tasks and targeting the next steps in children's learning efficiently. However, the use of daily observations does not reflect individual children's progress and achievements wholly clearly.

The setting informs parents and carers regularly about their children's achievements. At the end of their time at the setting, practitioners present examples of children's work and reports on their progress to parents, which reflect their children's development clearly.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to reflect, discuss feelings and say thank you every day. This creates a polite atmosphere as the children sit to listen to adults and tidy up after completing activities. Practitioners provide beneficial and practical opportunities for them to serve and help each other in order to develop their independence. As a result, most children take turns politely while eating snacks around the dining table and when to work together to tidy the room.

The setting provides purposeful opportunities to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Practitioners use plenary sessions successfully to focus on children's feelings and the most appropriate ways to treat other people. As a result, practitioners nurture values such as fairness and respect effectively. These daily practices are beneficial to the setting's overall ethos.

The setting has efficient arrangements for supporting children's health and wellbeing. These arrangements contribute well to their development and support their learning purposefully; for example, the setting promotes eating and drinking healthily successfully. Practitioners emphasise effectively that fruit, vegetables and keeping fit are an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to recycle paper, card, plastic goods and food. This develops their understanding of sustainability effectively.

The setting uses positive behaviour strategies that eliminate any kind of unreasonable behaviour. As a result, children are happy and safe in the company of adults and often ask for support. The setting is a safe environment and practitioners take effective care of the children as they arrive and leave. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The setting records children's learning needs rigorously on entry and during their time at the setting. Practitioners review children's progress regularly and plan effectively for children with additional learning needs when necessary. Practitioners discuss these children with specialist agencies to meet their needs appropriately, when the need arises.

Learning environment: Adequate

The setting uses its resources appropriately to meet children's needs and the requirements of the foundation phase. Practitioners use a wide range of practical resources purposefully in continuous activities, focus tasks and opportunities to enhance learning in the indoor environment. They allow children to use equipment independently, which contributes successfully towards promoting their sense of responsibility for other people's property.

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 each year and taste food from different cultures, such as pizza from Italy. As a result, practitioners teach children successfully about the world's different festivals and cultures.

The indoor environment is clear and well maintained. Although the room is fairly small, practitioners arrange the learning areas sensibly to create an engaging learning environment each day. They encourage children to move from one area to another without much prompting, which contributes successfully towards providing them with a variety of interesting experiences. Practitioners also use the local area and the village's facilities purposefully to improve children's learning experiences.

Although the setting does not have a specific outdoor area, the school ensures that the setting has daily use of the foundation phase's outdoor area, in addition to the large playground and the field. However, the setting does not use them effectively. As a result, there is a significant difference between the use of the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Therefore, the setting does not set out stimulating learning areas in the outdoor area to enrich children's experiences further.

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

Following her recent appointment, the leader has ensured that leadership practices are beginning to embed appropriately at the setting. She effects sensible changes in positive ways. As a result, she uses relevant and regular information about the setting to promote improvements purposefully.

The leader and practitioners focus effectively on improving provision and children's outcomes. As a result, they have begun to establish robust leadership procedures in the setting's daily life. These focus positively on promoting and maintaining practices to improve the planning of learning experiences and the effect of teaching. However, these processes have not yet had enough time to improve the use of the outdoor areas to promote learning further.

The leader has followed the local authority's guidelines and advice on how to plan a broad and balanced curriculum. As a result, the setting's daily activities and long-term processes have a positive direction, particularly indoors.

The leader ensures that provision for children is interesting and beneficial to their development. She defines practitioners' roles and responsibilities clearly in order to promote successes at the setting purposefully. The leader and practitioners take advantage of the local authority's relevant and informative training. This has an appropriate effect on the setting's day-to-day work, such as improving planning and strengthening assessment procedures.

The leader's practice of conducting appropriate supervision and evaluations of the other practitioners is at an early stage. The process has not had time to become embedded and have a full effect on improving outdoor provision and practitioners' training further.

The management committee receives useful information about the setting's day-to-day practices from the leader and in regular meetings. The management committee implements suitable practices to ensure the quality of teaching and learning. However, responsibilities have not been distributed between them meaningfully to affect the setting wholly successfully. As a result, the management committee evaluates the leader's work occasionally and, therefore, the process is inconsistent and has not been established firmly.

Improving quality: Good

Positive quality improvement procedures permeate throughout the setting's work. With the local authority's support, the leader has established consistent arrangements for monitoring children's standards and provision. Purposeful co-operation, in addition to formal staff meetings and daily discussions, contribute to this successfully.

Self-evaluation procedures consider the views of practitioners, parents and carers, the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin purposefully. This is beneficial to the setting in terms of building a better picture of provision. As a result, the leader follows the local authority's quantitative procedures while conducting self-evaluation. Her use of these procedures ensures an effective bridge between self-evaluation and the development plan.

The leader identifies areas for improvement clearly in the self-evaluation report, and she uses these directly to set suitable priorities in the setting's development plan. As a result, the leader takes effective steps to implement improvements through purposeful improvement plans.

The leader improves provision by adopting different strategies and receives valuable advice from others, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. This includes beginning to use the foundation phase profile appropriately and establishing sound leadership systems. The leader is open to new ideas and is willing to experiment with different ways of working. This has recently had a positive effect on planning challenging activities to improve children's learning and wellbeing.

Partnership working: Good

The setting works well with partners to improve children's standards and wellbeing, in addition to provision. These partnerships have a positive effect on the setting's daily practices, such as re-organising the learning areas in the room and restructuring the planning of learning experiences.

Practitioners take active steps to include parents and carers in the setting's life. They inform parents and carers regularly about all aspects of the setting's work. They also encourage them to express their opinions on issues to improve the setting through questionnaires, social media and regular discussions. As a result, the setting's procedures have been expanded to include effective co-operation with the school to target individual children's needs.

The setting has positive links with the school's staff, and this supports children's transition arrangements efficiently. Arrangements for transferring assessments and personal information are effective and beneficial to the children as they settle at the school.

The setting works beneficially with external agencies, such as the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin. These positive relationships reinforce the setting's work and support it actively, for example with documentation to support the new management procedures.

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

Resource management: Good

The leader has begun to improve all aspects of the setting's work consistently by managing staff and resources successfully. With purposeful training and support, she succeeds in ensuring that provision has a purposeful effect on children's outcomes.

Performance management procedures are appropriate at present, and are beginning to enable practitioners to develop and share their professional knowledge valuably. As a result, there is a culture of useful co-operation between practitioners and other partners, including the school.

The setting manages the indoor resources effectively to support learning. The setting's day-to-day practices and routine are consistent and ensure that children benefit from engaging and positive learning experiences. Practitioners ensure that children are given ready access to plenty of interesting resources to support their learning successfully.

The leader and management committee have a clear understanding of the budget and they prioritise expenditure by identifying responsibilities and sensible timescales. They make regular improvements by discussing and funding development plans purposefully, which include updating ICT resources and gaining significant grants from local companies. The setting ensures that the use of funding has a positive effect on children's standards and wellbeing, in addition to the provision of learning experiences.

Overall, the setting provides good value for money because of the positive effect on children's outcomes.

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from three to seven years of age</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings that provide education for three and four-year-olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh</p>
Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	<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>

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