



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Llechryd
Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Llechryd
Llechryd
Cardigan
SA43 2QL**

Date of inspection: 7 November, 2012

by

Dorothy Morris

for

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

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

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Context

Cylch Meithrin Llechryd is accommodated in a classroom in Llechryd Primary School, near Cardigan in the county of Ceredigion. The setting shares the use of the hall, the outside play areas and the toilets with the school.

Most of the children who attend the setting come from the village itself. It is judged that the area, overall, is neither affluent nor economically and socially disadvantaged.

The setting caters for children between two and four years of age for five sessions a week during term time. It is open between 9:00 and 11:30 in the mornings. During the inspection, there were seven three year old children on the register in receipt of funding from Ceredigion Children's Partnership. The number of sessions attended by individual children varies according to the wishes of parents. English is the main language spoken in all the children's homes. There are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds in the current group. The setting admits children with additional learning needs and appropriate support arrangements are in place.

An experienced leader and a practitioner cater for children's learning. The setting leader was appointed to her post in 2010 and holds relevant qualifications in the education and care of young children. Two additional practitioners support two children with special educational needs.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in November 2006 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales in November 2011.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- the majority of children make consistent progress from their starting points;
- all the children are actively involved in their learning;
- most children have good attitudes to learning;
- children are offered interesting learning experiences;
- the teaching is good on the whole; and
- the children are well supported in an inclusive learning environment.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of:

- the lead practitioner's conscientious leadership;
- effective teamwork;
- the practitioners' commitment to developing and improving provision;
- a purposeful action plan which is being implemented appropriately; and
- the productive partnership with the primary school, parents and the community which supports children's learning and wellbeing.

Recommendations

In order to develop, the setting needs to:

- R1 strengthen children's learning skills particularly their Welsh speaking and communication skills;
- R2 develop the planning and organisation to ensure that tasks extend children's learning consistently, including that of the more able children;
- R3 plan and extend further the learning experiences organised in the outdoor areas; and
- R4 develop the role of the management committee.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

The majority of children make consistent progress from their starting points. Most children can convey their needs in English with the majority speaking clearly and using an appropriate range of vocabulary.

Most children listen appropriately during group activities. They understand greetings, instructions and questions in Welsh but offer brief responses orally. The majority enjoy looking at books and handle them properly. Most children recognise their names in print. They know a good number of songs and rhymes and they repeat them accurately. The majority of children use marking tools purposefully in a

range of media. A few children are beginning to write their names independently and, with support, can record a simple comment on their drawings and paintings.

The majority of children make appropriate use of their number skills in daily activities. Nearly all can count to ten correctly and the majority recognise numbers up to five. The more able children understand mathematical terms, such as big and small, full and empty, one more, in practical situations. Most children can create and follow a pattern correctly and sort objects according to colour, size and shape. The majority of children recognise basic two-dimensional shapes and are aware that money is required to buy goods in the setting's fruit shop. The majority of children use basic information and communications technology skills appropriately to move objects around the screen, record simple comments, take photographs with a digital camera and input simple instructions to guide a programmable toy.

The children's personal and social skills are developing well. All the children are familiar with session routines and accept responsibilities confidently, such as being 'the daily helper' and tidying the learning areas after activities.

The majority of children make appropriate use of their problem-solving skills in activities such as building with blocks, completing jig saws and participating in role-play activities. They use small equipment, such as paint brushes, scissors and rolling pins, effectively. They make good use of their creative skills when producing a variety of paintings including emulating the work of a famous artist. Most children enjoy music-making sessions and know the difference between high and low, fast and slow sounds.

Wellbeing: Good

The majority of children demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They concentrate appropriately and persevere with their tasks for a suitable amount of time. According to their ability and stage of development, many children are eager to undertake new experiences. Most children behave well.

All the children settle well at the setting and form good relationships with other children. A strong feature of the setting is the care and concern that children show towards each other. They are happy in the company of the adults and are ready to ask for help and support.

Many children are aware of the importance of healthy eating and of physical exercise. They also understand the importance of washing their hands before eating their snacks.

Levels of attendance are generally good. Children's social skills and awareness develop effectively through daily activities, visits and through participating in events with the school.

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

The practitioners provide a range of interesting activities for the children. The activities are based on a series of themes which are appropriate to the children's ages and stage of development. The practitioners use frameworks to plan the provision which are linked appropriately to the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The children are given suitable opportunities to contribute to the planning. The activities, however, are not always structured sufficiently to extend children's skills, including those of the more able.

The daily provision offers children suitable opportunities to develop their communication, number and broader skills across the curriculum. There is regular encouragement for children to use their Welsh communication skills in their learning and play. During group activities, there are opportunities for children to listen to stories, discuss different topics, sing songs and rhymes, and use marking skills. The attention given to reinforcing basic vocabulary and sentence patterns is less consistent.

The practitioners develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales effectively through activities such as celebrating St. David's Day. There are suitable opportunities for children to learn about other cultures through celebrating the Chinese New Year and the festival of Diwali.

The setting provides appropriate opportunities for children to learn about the importance of caring for the environment and all living things. They include growing and caring for plants, visiting an animal centre and participating in recycling and composting activities.

Teaching: Good

The practitioners have a developing knowledge of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They use a range of teaching approaches which succeeds in gaining most children's interest and involvement in their learning. The activities are thoroughly prepared and there is effective use of resources. The practitioners make good use of questioning to reinforce children's learning. The outside play areas are not used fully to provide a range of activities to promote children's skills across the areas of learning.

The close relationship between the practitioners and the children encourages all children to participate and enjoy. Behaviour is managed well and in a positive manner.

The practitioners know the children well and can discuss their general development in detail. They regularly observe children's progress and responses during activities and record their observations. They make suitable use of this information to identify short term targets for the children. During activities, the practitioners ensure that children receive relevant support. The practitioners have begun to collect examples

of children's work in personal folders which are a useful record of their development. Parents are kept informed about their children's achievements and wellbeing informally and through appropriate written reports. Transfer arrangements include valuable visits by the children to their new class in the primary school and discussions amongst the staff.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective arrangements to support children's health and wellbeing. The setting is a caring community which contributes significantly to children's wellbeing. The induction arrangements, including the daily contact with parents, ensure that children settle quickly into the setting.

There are effective procedures to support children with additional learning needs, which offer them full access to all areas of learning. The clear communication links with specialist services ensure that professional advice and guidance are available for children, parents and staff when required.

The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. The practitioners have received training and are aware of the requirements. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

Learning experiences promote children's personal development effectively, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values, such as fairness, kindness and an understanding of what is right and what is wrong, are promoted through the curriculum and daily activities. Experiences, such as celebrating thanksgiving, christening and Christmas, contribute purposefully towards children's spiritual development. The visits and the opportunities to join in celebrations with children in the primary school contribute further to their social development.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where all children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and value children's different backgrounds and respond appropriately.

The setting has sufficient practitioners with relevant experience. The classroom is of sufficient size and the practitioners make full use of the space available. The displays and samples of children's work around the room contribute to creating a colourful and attractive environment. The setting does not have its own toilet facilities but satisfactory arrangements are in place to share the school's facilities. There are sufficient resources which are used effectively to support the learning and the teaching.

How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The setting is led effectively by a conscientious leader. The practitioners understand their responsibilities and work well as a team. They share common values about children's learning and wellbeing. Daily routines are established and ensure that sessions run smoothly. Suitable policies are implemented.

The management committee offers the setting consistent support. Members take an interest in the setting and work hard to raise additional funding. Their role and involvement in evaluation and forward planning procedures is beginning to develop. The registered person offers the setting support and assistance of good quality. Through visits and regular discussions with the lead practitioner she has a thorough understanding of the setting's needs. There is an appropriate system in place to appraise the work of the practitioners.

The setting gives suitable attention to national and local priorities including implementing the Foundation Phase curriculum, promoting children's Welsh language skills and establishing effective links with the primary school.

Improving quality: Good

The practitioners have a secure understanding of the setting's main strengths and of some areas for improvement. They hold regular discussions and are open to new ideas to improve provision further.

The self-evaluation report completed by the lead practitioner and the local authority advisory teacher offers a balanced evaluation of the provision. The improvement plan produced as a result includes suitable areas for development. The plan is being implemented appropriately and the lead practitioner makes relevant observations on the progress made. In addition, an annual review of the progress made is undertaken with the support of the registered person and the advisory teacher. This ensures that the priorities listed reflect the setting's current needs.

The provision is regularly monitored by the local authority advisory teacher. Relevant areas for attention are agreed and suitable strategies implemented which are improving provision. The views of parents are sought and aspects of provision are discussed further with the headteacher of the primary school and the Mudiad Meithrin officer.

The practitioners attend suitable courses on aspects of the education and care of young children and they make appropriate use of the training received. There are some opportunities for practitioners to discuss and share ideas with other practitioners and settings during training days.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has clear aims and objectives which are shared with its partners. There is a good partnership with parents and they receive relevant information through the notice board, pamphlets and newsletters. Practitioners are regularly available to meet with parents at the beginning and end of sessions.

The constructive partnership with the registered person, management committee, the local authority advisory teacher and the Mudiad Meithrin officer supports the setting's work. The close working relationship with the local primary school enriches the provision and promotes a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education.

The setting has close links with the community. There is suitable use of visits and of the contribution of people from the local community to share their experiences with the children. The links with local agencies and organisations contribute well to children's development and wellbeing.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed effectively. The setting is staffed appropriately and there is good use of the practitioners' time and experience. The lead practitioner makes suitable use of the additional time provided for planning and preparation. Resources are organised effectively to support learning activities.

The lead practitioner has a good understanding of the budget and prioritises spending according to the setting's needs. There is regular use of fundraising events and of grants to supplement resources. The setting offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Responses to discussions with the children

The children state that they are happy in the setting and enjoy playing with their friends and taking part in all the activities.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Dorothy Morris

Reporting Inspector

Copies of the report:

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.
Foundation Phase	The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.
National Childminding Association (NCMA)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.

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November 2012