



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 Y Borth
Ysgol Gynradd Craig yr Wylfa
Borth
Aberystwyth
SY24 5NJ**

Date of inspection: 12-13 June 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 Y Borth was established over thirty years ago and the children who attend come from the village and the local area. The area includes both more advantaged and socially deprived areas. The setting meets in a demountable classroom located on the primary school site.

The setting caters for children between two and four years of age for five sessions a week during the school term. It is open between 9:00 and 12:30. During the inspection, there were two three year olds on the register. Nearly all the children come from homes where English is the main language spoken. At present, there are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds. The setting admits children with additional learning needs and appropriate support arrangements are in place.

There are two experienced members of staff. The setting leader holds relevant qualifications in the education and care of young children and the other practitioner is following an appropriate training course.

The setting was last inspected by Estyn in December 2005 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in December 2011.

Summary

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| The Setting's current performance | Adequate |
| The Setting's prospects for improvement | Adequate |

Current performance

The setting's current performance is adequate.

The strengths include:

- all the children are happy in the setting;
- all the children are actively involved in their learning;
- the very good relationship between the children and the practitioners; and
- the good links with the local primary school.

However:

- curriculum planning does not give sufficient attention to ensuring progression in children's skills;
- aspects of teaching lack sufficient focus to extend children's learning;
- tasks do not consistently offer children sufficient challenge; and
- learning areas, including the outdoor area, remain to be developed fully.

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are adequate.

The strengths include:

- the conscientious leadership of the lead practitioner;
- close teamwork;
- daily routines run smoothly.

However:

- aspects of management, including the role of the management committee, are not sufficiently developed;
- the implementation of the improvement plan is at an early stage of development;
- processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning are more informal in nature; and
- the range and quantity of resources are limited.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the setting needs to:

- R1 develop curriculum planning to focus further on the skills being developed;
- R2 strengthen the teaching to extend children's learning, particularly that of the older children;
- R3 develop management and evaluation processes, including the role of the management committee;
- R4 develop the learning environment further and ensure a sufficient range of resources.

What happens next?

The setting will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Not applicable

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children

present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

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| Key Question 2: How good is provision? |
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| Adequate |
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Learning experiences: Adequate

The setting offers children suitable learning experiences across the areas of learning. Overall planning is based on the local authority framework, which reflects the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The activities are based on a series of topics which are suitable for the children's age range. Generally, the planning does not focus sufficiently on ensuring the progressive development of children's learning skills. Planning for the use of the outdoor area is not fully in place.

There is appropriate attention to promoting children's communication, number and information and communication technology skills through activities. Activities are prepared appropriately but they do not always offer children, particularly the older children, sufficient challenge to extend their learning.

There is good use of visits and visitors to support children's learning. As part of the theme, 'People who help us', the contribution of a local dentist, fireman, and policeman has been used well to extend children's awareness of their roles. The use of trips, such as the trip by train to a local town, has been successful in developing children's knowledge of the local area.

There is continuous encouragement for children to use their Welsh communication skills in their learning and play. There are daily opportunities for children to listen to stories, discuss different topics, sing songs and rhymes, and use marking skills. The practitioners develop children's awareness of the traditions and celebrations of Wales through suitable activities which include celebrating St. David's Day and St. Dwynwen's Day.

The setting provides appropriate opportunities for children to learn about sustainability and the importance of caring for all living things. They include growing and caring for plants, discussing animals brought to the setting, and involvement in recycling activities. The children also have some opportunities to develop their awareness of the wider world, including other people, their cultures and celebrations. They celebrate the Chinese New Year through participating in art activities. They also celebrate St. Patrick's Day and St George's Day through different activities.

Teaching: Adequate

The practitioners have a developing knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum. They make suitable use of different teaching approaches and of resources to support the learning. Where teaching is effective, there is good use of story-telling techniques and of questioning to encourage children to contribute. However, the teaching does not always focus sufficiently on

the skills to be developed. The opportunities to apply these skills further during activities, such as making a fruit salad, are not utilised fully.

The practitioners know the children well. They record day- to-day observations and the information gathered is collated on individual learning records. The use of this information in supporting individual children's learning is developing. Reports to parents include clear information on the children's progress across all areas of learning. Transfer documents are completed appropriately and forwarded to the primary school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting is a caring community and relationships between adults and children are very good. Appropriate policies and procedures are implemented to support children's health and wellbeing. The induction arrangements, alongside the daily contact with parents, ensure that children settle well into the setting. The children are happy in the setting and comfortable in the adults' company.

Children's additional learning needs are identified early and appropriate support is provided. The staff work closely with outside agencies and specialist services, when needed, to address any specific needs.

The setting has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding. Practitioners have received appropriate training and understand their roles and responsibilities.

Learning experiences promote children's personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values, such as caring, kindness, and an understanding of what is right and wrong, are fostered effectively through the curriculum and day-to-day activities. Practitioners are effective role models. They treat all children with respect.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where children receive equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and value children's different backgrounds and respond appropriately. They succeed in creating a warm and welcoming environment for all children.

The setting has an appropriate number of practitioners. The accommodation is of adequate quality but improvements have been made to the facilities including a new kitchen area and an outdoor playarea. Samples of children's paintings and artwork are displayed appropriately around the room. Other displays, such as number and language materials, are not always displayed at an appropriate level to enable children to access them freely. The room is divided into learning areas but the range of learning resources within these areas is limited. Practitioners make appropriate use of the resources available, including resources they have prepared themselves, to support the teaching. The outside play area is being developed appropriately to provide areas for a wide range of activities.

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

Practitioners share common values and are fully committed to children's development and wellbeing. They work closely as a team. The leader succeeds in creating a very positive ethos for staff, children and parents. Daily routines operate smoothly and relevant policies are implemented. The use of planning and management processes in the context of the whole provision continues to develop.

The new management committee is developing its understanding of its responsibilities. Its role in the management and evaluation of the setting is not fully established. The chairperson takes a keen interest in the setting and members work hard to raise additional funding. There is an appropriate system in place to appraise the work of the practitioners and to identify their further professional development needs but its implementation lacks sufficient focus.

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

Improving quality: Adequate

The practitioners are open to new ideas and are ready to try out new methods of working. They discuss regularly but processes to evaluate aspects of the quality of teaching and learning are more informal in nature. The completion of the self-evaluation document has been a useful process and it identifies many of the setting's strengths. The improvement plan includes relevant targets but its implementation is at an early stage of development.

The setting seeks the views of parents through annual questionnaires and due attention is given to any comments made. Aspects of provision are discussed further with the local authority link teacher and the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin officer. Areas for development are agreed and relevant strategies introduced. The current management committee's role within forward planning and evaluation processes is not yet fully developed. The setting has addressed many of the recommendations of the previous report. Aspects, such as the use of assessment information, remain to be developed further.

The practitioners attend suitable courses on aspects of the education and care of young children including the Foundation Phase curriculum. They have had some opportunities to discuss and share ideas with other settings and practitioners during training days.

Partnership working: Good

A number of partnerships impact well on children's progress and wellbeing. The setting's links with the adjacent school are good. Close liaison and a sharing of facilities help to ensure a smooth transition for the children. Children benefit from the

opportunities to participate in events, such as the harvest thanksgiving service, alongside school pupils. The partnership with parents is also good and this was confirmed in the conversations with them during the inspection. Practitioners are regularly available to meet parents at the beginning and end of each session and they are offered relevant information about setting activities through the notice board, posters and newsletters.

The productive relationship with the local authority link teacher and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin's development officer contributes to the improvements in the setting's work. The links with the community support children's learning effectively.

Resource management: Adequate

Resources are managed appropriately. The setting is suitably staffed and practitioners are offered opportunities for further training. The building is old and the standard of decor adequate. The new outdoor learning area is a valuable resource and further improvements to the access were discussed during the inspection. There is effective use of local resources, such as the lifeboat station, the fire station and the local train, to extend children's experiences.

The setting leader and registered person have a clear understanding of the budget and spending decisions are prioritised according to the setting's needs. There is appropriate use of grants and fund raising initiatives to increase resources. The setting offers adequate 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 are happy in the setting and they all join in the activities enthusiastically. They are ready to talk simply about their favourite activities and state that they enjoy playing with their friends.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector –

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|----------------|---------------------|
| 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

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| 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 partnership's 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 2013. |
| 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 child minders 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. |