



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 Gaerwen
Ysgol Esceifiog
Gaerwen
Anglesey
LL60 6DD**

Date of inspection: February 2015

by

**Wil Williams
Reporting Inspector**

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 Gaerwen is a registered nursery that provides pre-school education for children of Gaerwen village and the surrounding rural area. It meets in a classroom at Esgeifiog Primary School.

The setting admits children of all abilities and backgrounds. During the inspection, there were a few children with additional learning needs attending the setting. Welsh is the main language spoken at home by approximately a third of the children.

The setting provides two and a half hour sessions during four mornings a week for children between the ages of two and four years. Eleven children are registered at the setting and are funded by the local authority.

Children are taught by a leader and practitioners who were appointed in September 2014. They are appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate Wales in February 2015 and by Estyn in March 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's performance is good because:

- nearly all children make good progress in their learning;
- most children apply their literacy and numeracy skills securely in a range of contexts;
- most children make good progress in their use of Welsh;
- nearly all children are positively engaged in their learning;
- learning experiences successfully cater for the needs of all children;
- teaching and assessment are consistently good; and
- the high quality of care, support and guidance provided for children is high; and
- the setting is an inclusive community

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leader has high expectations for the setting's development;
- the practitioner provides strong support for the leader and children;
- staff know the setting well and take positive steps to implement change;
- self evaluation has already lead to improvements in standards and provision;
- a range of partnerships contribute strongly to children's achievements and wellbeing; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

1. Ensure that children play an active role in self-assessment processes.
2. Provide a more stimulating learning environment in the outdoor area.

What happens next?

The setting will form an action plan showing how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

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

Bearing in mind their age and starting point on-entry to the setting, nearly all children make good progress in learning. Many recall previous learning well and face new learning experiences enthusiastically making appropriate progress towards becoming independent learners. With few exceptions, most children are inquisitive and enthusiastic learners that are willing to take risks and make mistakes. They work to the best of their ability and make appropriate progress across all Foundation Phase six areas of learning.

Most children make good progress in their ability to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of learning. All converse willingly with peers and familiar adults within the setting and concentrate well when listening to their favourite story. Most have an avid interest in storybooks and enjoy their content with, or without an adult. Many children handle a book as a reader whilst the more able are able to list words that begin with a specific letter. When distributing place mats during snack time, most children recognise their own names and, on occasions, the names of other children also. When experimenting with different media in the 'busy hands' area, many children make appropriate progress in their mark-making for different purposes.

Most children make significant progress in their understanding and use of Welsh from the time they started in the setting.

Almost all children use their numeracy skills with increasing confidence and accuracy during their day-to-day activities and play. They join in very enthusiastically with others in the group as they sing number rhymes or count together the number of children present in the class. The more confident children count up to six objects and beyond, with increasing accuracy. During role-play, most demonstrate an appropriate awareness of the purpose of money.

Many children make good progress in their information communications technology skills (ICT). They input command into a floor turtle with increasing accuracy and use electronic tablets confidently for taking photographs and practising letter formation.

Wellbeing: Good

All children have very positive attitudes towards keeping healthy and safe. They understand that eating healthily, such as when having snacks, and having regular physical exercise on the school playground is beneficial to their health. Individuals say that they feel safe at the setting and know whom to turn to if they are physically or verbally harassed by other children.

Almost all children participate positively and enjoy learning. Bearing in mind their age and personal needs, almost all children behave responsibly and are considerate

of other children's feelings. Without exception, children implicitly trust the care and concern which the adults have for them.

During sessions, almost all children respond positively to their learning experiences. Most are interested in the activities that are either provided for them or those they have chosen themselves. The most mature children persevere with a task until it is completed.

During indoor and outdoor tasks, most of the children work together harmoniously. They enjoy undertaking the duties of 'helpwr heddiw (*today's helper*) which they all fulfil responsibly.

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

Interesting and stimulating learning experiences meet the needs and interests of all children well and encourage them to learn effectively and to make good progress across all areas of learning. Learning experiences are based on detailed curriculum plans, which strongly reflect Foundation Phase principles and build systematically on children's current knowledge, understanding and skills. Practitioners use the indoor and outdoor areas imaginatively to stimulate children's interest and to encourage them to experiment with new experiences. Children have numerous opportunities to lead their own learning and to develop as independent learners.

Provision for literacy, numeracy, thinking skills and problem solving is cohesive and firmly embedded in every child's learning experiences.

Children play an active role in the setting's recycling and energy conservation procedures. The setting promotes children's awareness of the culture, festivals and traditions of Wales successfully and provides them with valuable opportunities to learn about their role as global citizens.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of child development and have a thorough understanding of Foundation Phase requirements. They expect much from children of all abilities and provide a variety of valuable opportunities for them to be active learners. Through detailed planning, practitioners succeed in creating an appropriate balance between activities chosen by the child in the learning areas, and focus tasks that are led by adults. The practice of varying the way learning is organised, for example through group work or individual work, sustains children's interest and ensures their engagement in the task in hand.

There is a clear focus to practitioners' support and intervention. They know the children well and adapt their teaching styles to suit the particular needs of the individual. Adults themselves are appropriate language models and use questioning skilfully to challenge children ideas and further their learning.

Practitioners assess children's progress regularly and comprehensively and record observations and assessments carefully to measure every individual's progress throughout their time at the setting. The setting uses assessment outcomes very effectively for identifying children's individual needs and planning future activities.

However, children do not have an active role in the assessment process and this limits its effectiveness.

Through open evenings, informal conversations with practitioners and by receiving a pictorial album of their children at work in the areas of learning, parents obtain full and interesting information about their children's progress during their time in the setting

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting's effective arrangements for promoting children's health and welfare make a significant contribution to their general development and support their learning well. The setting makes appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. The daily experience children have of participating in physical activity in the school hall makes a strong contribution to increasing their fitness.

During their daily interaction with children, practitioners strongly emphasise the need for everyone to be kind to each other, and to be honest and fair. This greatly helps children in learning to differentiate between right and wrong. The regular opportunities children have to undertake responsibilities and to make their own choices about their learning contribute significantly towards their personal and social development.

There are effective arrangements for recycling and avoiding waste.

The variety of strategies employed by practitioners for promoting good behaviour have a very positive impact on both children's attitudes and their ability to be more considerate towards other children about them.

Effective induction arrangements help children to settle down quickly and without difficulty at the setting. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Practitioners know children well and provide them with clear guidance during sessions. They have a good understanding of how to gain access to professional help for children and parents. Children's learning needs are noted in detail when they join the setting and practitioners ensure that these needs are met. This is a strength.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community where every child has equal access to all areas of learning and activities provided. There is strong emphasis on developing tolerant attitudes and on ensuring that children and members of staff are free from any harassment. The setting has enough practitioners who possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The interesting learning environment created and the opportunities all children have to develop positive values and attitudes are very prominent features of the setting.

The setting has enough practitioners who possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. There is an ample supply of good quality resources in all areas of learning, including ICT. These

are carefully matched to every individual's development and learning needs. The accommodation is of good quality and used extensively.

Although the outside learning area is used daily by the setting, it does not provide a sufficiently stimulating environment for promoting children's learning.

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

The leader succeeds in creating an environment in which children, parents and staff feel appreciated. She has a clear vision for developing the setting and has high expectations of herself and her fellow practitioner. As a result, there is a strong sense of purpose at the setting, which promotes and maintains improvement effectively. The manner in which the leader and practitioner share common values about learning, behaviour and relationships is a strong feature that has led to substantial improvements in standards and provision.

The day-to-day management of the setting is effective with sessions running smoothly and all staff having a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There are clear aims and policies that focus on children's needs, which are fully implemented.

The willingness of the leader and practitioner to undertake local priorities and new ways of working is a particular strength that has led to substantial improvements in curriculum planning and the quality of teaching and assessment.

The management committee is well informed about the setting's development and fulfils its duties conscientiously. Committee officers have effective procedures for managing and evaluating staff performance.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation is securely embedded in the setting's culture and has been a key instrument in raising standards and improving provision. Through continuous self-evaluation, practitioners are well aware of the setting's strengths and areas to be developed. The self-evaluation report analyses the setting's current situation appropriately and uses the information effectively to set priorities for improvements in the development plan. The plan sets a clear structure for implementing the priorities and for evaluating their impact on standards and provision.

The leader values the opinions of parents and provides regular opportunities for them to express their views about the setting. Any comments made by individual parents are responded to positively by the setting. Likewise, it responds positively to any advice or recommendations, which emanate from visit made by the local authority support teacher.

The setting is able to demonstrate that self-evaluation has led to visible improvements in standards, leadership and provision.

Partnership working: Good

A wide range of partnerships activities makes a strong contribution to children's achievements and wellbeing. The information pack that is distributed to parents, in

addition to the 'theme letter,' provides them with useful information about their child's education and the policies, procedures and the expectations of the setting.

The setting benefits substantially from the close partnership it has with the primary school. Foundation Phase teacher at the school take an interest in the setting's work and are very willing to share their expertise and learning resources with practitioners. The school hall is made available to the setting for one session for two days-a-week. This arrangement enriches the children's learning experiences substantially.

Effective transfer arrangements between the setting and the school ensure that children settle down quickly in the Foundation Phase class and that there is progression and continuity in their learning experiences.

The close co-operation between the setting and the local authority support teacher has contributed substantially towards improving provision and raising standards.

Resource management: Good

The setting is a strong learning community, which has established a positive culture of collaboration. Staff are supported well by continuous professional development that ensures that their knowledge and skills are updated regularly.

The setting has an appropriate number of staff to teach the curriculum effectively. The leader uses staff time and experience effectively to ensure that the care and support available for children is of the highest possible quality.

The management committee's treasurer keeps a detailed account of the setting's financial situation ensuring that expenditure is managed carefully according to the setting's developmental needs. Spending decisions are constantly evaluated to ensure they have a direct effect on children's progress and wellbeing.

Bearing in mind the good outcomes and children's continuous progress, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholders' satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on parental questionnaires as only a small number of responses were received

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Wil Williams

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

<p>Areas of Learning</p>	<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
<p>CSSIW</p>	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
<p>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</p>	<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 partnership's conditions of registration.</p>
<p>Foundation Phase</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</p>	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
<p>Local authority advisory teacher</p>	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
<p>Mudiad Meithrin</p>	<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>

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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.