



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 Gwalchmai
Ysgol Y Ffridd
Gwalchmai
Anglesey
LL65 4SG**

Date of inspection: March 2015

by

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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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Publication date: 31/03/2015

Context

Cylch Meithrin Gwalchmai is a registered nursery that provides pre-school education for children of Gwalchmai village and the surrounding rural area. It meets in the community room at Ysgol Y Ffridd, Gwalchmai.

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 a little over a half of the children.

The setting provides two and a half hour sessions during four mornings a week for two and three year old children. Five children were registered at the setting during the inspection and were funded by the local authority.

Children are taught by a leader, two full time practitioners and a further two part time practitioners. They are appropriately qualified to teach the early years.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate Wales in February 2014 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:

- Foundation Phase principles are reflected strongly in the quality of the curriculum;
- provision for developing children's literacy and numeracy skills is good;
- practitioners use a range of resources imaginatively to engage the interest of all children;
- procedures for assessing and recording children's progress are effective;
- the need for everyone to be kind, honest and fair is strongly emphasised;
- the quality of care, support and guidance provided for children is consistently high; and
- the setting is an inclusive community in which all children have equal access to all areas of learning.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- good leadership creates a positive learning environment;
- strong teamwork contributes significantly towards effective learning and teaching;
- practitioners are well informed about the setting's strengths and areas for improvement;
- self-evaluation outcomes are used effectively to move the setting on;
- a range of partnerships contribute well towards the quality of provision and learning;
- a good supply of resources is used effectively to promote learning and teaching; and
- the setting provides good value for money.

Recommendations

1. Establish a system for monitoring the quality of teaching.
2. Monitor the effect of implementing the development plan on standards and provision.

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?

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.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Foundation Phase principles are reflected strongly in the quality of the curriculum provided for children. The wide range of learning experiences provided both indoors and in the outside area encourage children to form close relationships with adults and other children, to take risks and to experiment with new experiences. The daily opportunities they have to make choices enable most children to make good progress towards becoming independent learners.

Through purposeful planning, practitioners ensure that children acquire good literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) and thinking skills across all areas of learning. During whole group sessions, children are encouraged to listen attentively to the contributions of others, to ask questions and to talk about issues that are of importance to them. Role-play experiences such as portraying a character from their favourite book, provide good opportunities for children to experiment with language and to become more confident when communicating with other children. During circle time, children are encouraged to join in rhymes and songs and to share their experiences with others in the group. Children have daily opportunities to follow stories, which practitioners read to them or to 'read' a book independently. Children have purposeful opportunities in the learning areas to experiment with mark making for a range of purposes, for example, to write their names on an electronic table or draw up lists in the shop.

Practitioners use number rhymes and songs, which children have memorised very skilfully to develop their skills and to make the work fun. Activities such as constructing jigsaws, using building blocks and experimenting in the water trough, contribute significantly towards developing children's numeracy skills.

By celebrating St David's Day and other Welsh festivals, promotes children's awareness of the traditions and culture of Wales successfully.

Teaching: Good

Practitioners' thorough knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase leads to effective learning and teaching. They provide interesting learning experiences across all areas of learning and employ a good range of teaching strategies, which ensure children's engagement in their tasks. Careful collaborative planning leads to an appropriate balance between activities chosen by the children in the learning areas and focus tasks, which are led by practitioners. Imaginative use of a variety of resources such as rubber gloves to mimic milking a cow attracts children's interest and improves learning.

Practitioners regularly join-in children's play, especially during role-play activities, and intervene purposefully to challenge children's ideas and to move learning on. They are good language models themselves and encourage children to experiment with new words and improve their oral expression.

Practitioners know every child well and have effective systems for assessing and recording children's progress across the six areas of learning. This enables them to take prompt action should a child require additional support and to plan the next steps in his/her learning.

The leader regularly informs parents of their children's progress. Through the 'Treasure Book' parents receive a photographic record of their child's progress in all six areas of learning. These are effective arrangements, which ensure that parents have a clear picture of their child's development and wellbeing.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting makes appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Daily experiences for children to play in the outside area provides them with good opportunities to practise their personal skills and to increase their levels of fitness.

During their day-to-day interaction with children, practitioners strongly emphasise the need for everyone to be kind to one another, to be honest and fair and to behave in a responsible manner. This helps children to difference between right and wrong. Frequent opportunities for children to undertake responsibilities, such as '*Helpwr Y Dydd*' (Today's Helper) during snack times, and to make choices about their own learning, make a good contribution to their personal and social development.

The practice of participating in celebrations such as the Chinese New Year makes a positive contribution towards raising children's awareness of other traditions and cultures in Wales.

There are appropriate arrangements for encouraging children to act sustainably by recycling and reusing waste.

The 'stay and play' sessions provided for prospective parents help their children to settle quickly in the setting.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Practitioners know the children well and provide clear guidance for them during sessions. They know how to access professional assistance, such as from educational psychologist or speech therapist, should the need arise. The support provided during sessions for children with additional learning needs is of a high quality and ensures that every individual has full access to the setting's activities.

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 staff are free from any harassment. The setting has enough practitioners who have sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Practitioners succeed in creating a stimulating environment, which promotes positive values and attitudes.

There is a good supply of resources in all areas of learning which carefully match every individual's development and learning needs. The classroom is of good quality and used extensively by children and adults. The outdoor area is used very imaginatively by practitioners to enrich children's learning experience. For example, for growing vegetables and developing co-operative play skills.

Good use is made of the school grounds to broaden children's learning experiences. For example, for observing animals on a nearby farm.

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

The leader's dedication and enthusiasm creates a positive learning environment in which children and staff feel they are appreciated. Practitioners share common values about learning, behaviour and relationships and collaborate very effectively as a team. This ensures that the setting implements Foundation Phase and other national priorities, successfully.

Day-to-day management is well organised giving a strong sense of direction to the setting's development. During sessions, staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, which they fulfil conscientiously and very effectively. Although learning and teaching is managed well, there are no appropriate procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching. All staff implement the setting's policies thoroughly.

Procedures for appraising staff are appropriate and lead to the identification of the training needs of all individuals. Positive relationships with children and parents and with the primary school make a strong contribution towards creating a sense of community.

The management committee has appropriate knowledge of the setting's performance and fulfils its duties effectively. Committee officers consult and share information with parents regularly and contribute appropriately to the setting's administration.

Improving quality: Good

Practitioners are well informed about the setting's strengths and areas that need development. With the leader's encouragement, they self-evaluate continuously and explore ways of improving. Self-evaluation considers the views of parents and children carefully and benefits substantially from the professional advice of the local authority support teacher. The practice of allocating time regularly for children to

express their views on their learning experiences ensures that the child's voice has become an essential part of the setting's self-evaluation processes.

Practitioners are able to demonstrate how self-evaluation has enabled them to bring about substantial improvements in the quality of learning and assessment.

The self-evaluation report and the improvement plan are of appropriate quality and give the setting's development a clear sense of direction. The leader ensures that the priorities identified in the plan are implemented systematically and thoroughly during the year. However, there are no clear arrangements for evaluating how the improvement plan has affected standards and provision.

Partnership working: Good

A wide range of partnerships activities makes a strong contribution to children's achievements and wellbeing. The very productive partnership it has with the school eases transition arrangements substantially. The setting benefits greatly from the use of the school's facilities, for example, the school hall and from opportunities to share resources and good practice. There are appropriate links with a number of establishments in the village. By informing parents about the setting's activities and encouraging their participation, practitioners take active steps to include parents in all the setting's activities and to become involved in their child's education.

Visits, reports and the professional advice of the local authority support teacher have a positive impact on the setting's development.

Productive links with professional agencies that support young children with additional social and education needs enable the setting to provide the best possible support for this group of children.

Practitioners collaborate effectively, they share information about children and know who to contact and when if additional support is required for individual children.

Resource management: Good

Regular training sessions which the local authority and the Mudiad Meithrin provide, give practitioners valuable opportunities to update their knowledge and skills. Recent training has enabled them to adapt their assessment procedures in order to comply with the local authority's recent guidelines.

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 wellbeing 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.

The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholders' satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Less than 10 responses were received. No data is shown.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Mr Wil Williams	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

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

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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 partnership's 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 3 to 7 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 which 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>

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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.