



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 Tonyfelin
Tonyfelin Chapel
Bedwas Road
Caerffili
CF83 3AR**

Date of inspection: February 2012

by

Owenna Davies

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 Tonyfelin is a Welsh medium setting serving the catchment area of the two Welsh-medium schools in the town of Caerffili namely, Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili and Ysgol Gymraeg y Castell.

The nursery is located on the outskirts of Caerphilly town on a busy road that leads from Caerphilly to Bedwas. The nursery meets for four mornings a week in large rooms housed at the rear of Tonyfelin Baptist Chapel and rented from the landlords. The building is a substantial brick built premises which provides indoor toilet facilities, including a disable access toilet. There is a separate entrance to the Cylch and a child proofed surface in the self-contained external play area. Both the spacious indoor facilities and the safe enclosed outdoor area are bright and colourful with well-planned activity areas and resources.

The setting serves an area which is considered to be neither advantaged or disadvantaged. The children who attend come from a range of backgrounds. There are currently 20 children on role with 6 funded to receive Foundation Phase Education by Caerphilly County Borough Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. A quarter of the intake come from homes whose main language is Welsh with a further 4 where one parent is a Welsh speaker. The remaining 11 pupils come from English speaking homes.

There are no children with special needs at present, or anyone from an ethnic background whose second language is English.

The present leader has been helping in the nursery since 1980 and has been the leader since 1992. The six members of staff are qualified to NVQ level 3.

The nursery has a well-established Management Committee.

The Cylch has achieved a Certificate of Achievement of Quality Standards from Caerphilly Early Years and Childcare Partnership and a Cylch Rhagorol Award through Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin's scheme in 2010.

The last Inspection by the Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) took place on Wednesday 6th July 2011 there were no recommendations made by the Inspector.

Summary

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

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- Standards in literacy, numeracy and information communication technology are good;
- nearly all children demonstrate high levels of interest and motivation;
- learning experiences are of a high quality;
- planning and assessment are interlinked and ensure that every child's need is met.
- Working relationships are outstanding;
- the management team work closely with the staff and parents to ensure that the high standards of both attainment and provision are maintained and
- the setting gives good value for money.

Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because of:

- the quality of leadership is outstanding;
- the whole team works very well together and is well established
- procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are developing well;
- practitioners are willing to undertake new initiatives and to accept advice; and
- substantial improvements have already been implemented by the setting

Recommendations

In order to further improve, the setting needs to:

- A1 extend the pupils' skills across the areas of the curriculum.
- A2. provide more challenging tasks for children whose first language is Welsh
- A3 ensure that the strong, effective partnership between the Management Committee and staff continues to be challenging and supportive.

What happens next?

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

The setting is invited to write a case study report on its excellent practice in strategic direction and the impact of leadership.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Nearly all children achieve good standards making realistic progress from their starting point. They make decisions and work individually and co-operatively for sustained periods of time. The majority are able to recall activities that they have previously experienced. The majority cope well with new challenges and can apply new skills to a wide range of play activities including pirate roll play / home corner roll play, number cave and language area..

The majority are able to choose materials tear, glue, design a picture and begin to explain what it is. They are able to use fine motor equipment confidently.

All children demonstrated how to use their bodies effectively during physical activities and in the outside play area. They are able to guide and control large play equipment and show good control when playing with a ball.

Children make very good progress in communication, numeracy and ICT skills. They are encouraged to experiment and explore, take risks, think creatively, solve problems and make decisions thus developing skills that allow them to become confident learners.

Children make good progress in relation to their starting point in Welsh. Nearly all are able to sing Welsh songs confidently, respond to instruction and instruct others in familiar contexts. The majority are able to respond to simple questions in their second language and all show that they understand basic Welsh when they are spoken to by adults. The more able need to have more opportunities to respond to higher levels of Welsh.

Results of parents' questionnaires indicate a very high level of satisfaction with the progress that their children are making.

Wellbeing: Good

All the children are happy and well cared for and are free from prejudice and harassment.

They settle well at the Cylch when they arrive in the morning. Nearly all are able to explain what they have in their lunch boxes and begin to reason why.

They respond very well to adults and the standard of behaviour is very good. They all choose activities confidently working quietly and diligently on their own and alongside others. Their concentration and persistence in all activities is of a high standard and this has a very positive effect on their standards of attainment.

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

The Cylch provides a broad and well balanced curriculum that meets the needs of the children and their community. The team works very well together to ensure that all planning is relevant and enhances every individual's developmental needs. Learning objectives are identified and daily evaluations, assessments and observations are kept. These help inform the next steps in learning. Differentiation is included to meet the needs of all learners. Both parents and children are beginning to have a positive effect on planning by suggesting ideas for projects and interests and by offering their expertise to enhance the learning.

The environment is rich in language opportunities. Every member of staff takes every opportunity to develop the children's linguistic development. They encourage the children to respond to instruction, to explain, discuss and use their limited vocabulary as well as learn new words. Number work and ICT are incorporated into all aspects as well as opportunities to make choices.

The development of the Welsh language and Welshness is integral to the Cylch. They provide an environment that enables the children to develop the Welsh language and culture by using the Immersion language system. Children's knowledge and understanding of the culture and history of Wales is promoted through a range of activities, including taking part in National events. The Cylch has begun to provide more opportunities for the fluent Welsh speakers to work alongside

each other in order to expand their linguistic skills. This is at an early stage of development and its effect has not yet been evaluated.

Children are encouraged to help others through the Helpwr Heddiw system. During Amser Cylch they are encouraged to develop an understanding of fairness and tolerance. This has a positive effect on their behaviour.

Teaching: Good

All staff are committed and strongly motivated in their quest for high standards for all their children. They understand the needs of the children and have a very good relationship with them. They use planning well to enhance and improve learning. They effectively use observation and share information with the rest of the Team in order to improve provision and standards.

Staff are well-qualified and attend regular training courses to keep up to date with the Foundation Phase Curriculum. This has a very positive impact on the quality of teaching. A wide range of good quality resources helps to provide a rich environment to help develop challenging and stimulating activities for the children. Effective strategies have been implemented to ensure that boys are motivated to learn as well as girls.

The standard of assessment is good. Initial assessments, daily activity plans, evaluations, next steps, daily observations and the children's ideas all help to inform future planning. Observations are recorded by all staff. All adults have high expectations of all the children and extension activities are included in the daily activity plans to help ensure that the more able children are challenged sufficiently. Progress is well recorded in the Transition Booklets. Parents have access to these and are invited to include a written comment on their child's progress at the end of the year. These Transition Booklets are passed on to the school and schools hand them back to the parents, once they have made use of the information.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides very high quality care, support and guidance for the children. They have been awarded the gold standard for "Caerphilly's Healthy Eating Scheme". They provide good role models to encourage good behaviour, manners and relationships. Different tools are used effectively to promote a positive outlook to learning. Children are encouraged to work with others. They promote good values and encourage children to be reflective about the way they and others behave.

The Cylch received a very positive report by Care and Social Standards Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and no areas for development were identified.

Links with a variety of specialist services are effective ensuring good quality care, support and guidance when needed.

Safeguarding arrangements are in place. Procedures are continually updated and checked to ensure the safety of the children who attend the Cylch. Entry and leaving procedures are effective and are carefully monitored. All staff are continuously

updated with training in child protection. The Cylch Leader is responsible for dealing with child protection and safeguarding issues and provides advice and support for other staff. The setting fulfils safeguarding regulations and responsibilities.

There are no children at present with additional learning needs. Arrangements are in place to help identify children. A Special Educational Needs policy is in place.

Learning environment: Good

The Cylch provides a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families. This is also confirmed in the CSSIW Report 2011. Multicultural books, Persona Dolls and resources are available in the Cylch and are effectively used to help all children feel at ease with other cultures. Multicultural themed events are held to celebrate diversity.

The environment is well planned and every area is utilised to the benefit of children's learning. The spacious entrance hall is colourful and welcoming. Very effective use is made of the large open indoor space as well as the main learning area. The displays enhance the learning and are relevant to the present topics and themes.

The outdoor area is safe and stimulating. There is a suitable soft surface which is in good condition. The high wall shelters the area from the elements and deters unwelcome visitors.

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

The quality of leadership and the very strong team ethos is outstanding. Expectations are high for all the children and this can be seen in the very good progress they make in a short period of time. The setting provides very high quality care, support and guidance for the children. The setting is constantly used as an example of good practice and has received several group visits in the past few years.

The leader and practitioners collaborate very closely giving a sense of purpose and continuous improvement to the setting's work. They make sure that the Foundation Phase and other national and local priorities are implemented successfully and have a positive effect on standards. Teaching and learning is very well managed and there are clear arrangements for ensuring that the setting's policies are implemented. All members of staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities and manage their time carefully during sessions. The leader is very receptive to advice and reflects critically upon her work.

Nearly all the staff have been working at the Cylch for a considerable period of time. They are not complacent but work diligently to improve their own knowledge and skills for the benefit of the children's learning.

The present committee is enthusiastic, challenging and supportive. Their close interest in the staff & children's performance & individual experiences, their work in

the promotion and marketing of Welsh Medium Education is clearly evident and leads to the high standards of each pupil. The current committee members have been in office for a substantial period. The individuals have demonstrated their loyalty & commitment to their roles and have themselves been parents of children who have attended the Cylch and also employed as members of staff before joining the management committee.

The partnership with the Local Authority is strong and effective. Many targets for this year have already been met and others are in the process of being developed.

All parent questionnaires returned confirm the excellent work undertaken by the management team to ensure that their children develop well above expectations.

Improving quality: Good

The Self-Evaluation processes are well developed and many improvements have taken place over the past 3 years as a result of this. Annual Reviews and the Annual Development Plan indicate where they have moved forward. All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and information is disseminated at staff meetings. Staff, parents and children are encouraged to be fully involved in the development of the Cylch and their ideas are taken seriously and acted upon when possible so that they feel they can make a difference.

The quality of planning is good and improvement is regularly reviewed using the Self Evaluation File. These processes and systems have had a very positive impact on developing practices and raising standards.

Partnership working: Good

A very wide range of partnership activities make a significant contribution to children's achievement and wellbeing. There is a very productive partnership with the local authority's educational services and with many other organisations and agencies. There are very close links with the two Welsh medium primary school and provide a very smooth transition process. Parents are regularly informed about all aspects of the setting's work with the leader taking advantage of every opportunity to include them in their children's learning.

Resource management: Good

The setting is well-staffed for teaching all aspects of the Foundation Phase curriculum. Staff are deployed effectively to make the best possible use of their time, expertise and experience. All resources are carefully managed and reviewed regularly to make sure they are fit for purpose.

The leader and the management committee have a thorough understanding of their budget and prioritise their spending in line with the setting's developmental needs. Financial decisions are carefully evaluated to make sure that they have a positive effect on standards and children's progress and wellbeing. The setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

The questionnaires were completed by the majority of parents who expressed very positive comments about the provision. They feel that their children make very good progress and that they enjoy attending the setting. They believe that their children are prepared well for moving on to primary school. They say that members of staff are very approachable and that their children have settled in well. They believe that the setting is very well- managed.

Responses to discussions with the children

The children are happy in the setting and join in the activities enthusiastically. They are happy to speak about their activities and their friends.

Appendix 2

The reporting inspector

Owenna Davies	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)