



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Pontllanfraith

**Bryn Pavillion, Bryn Estate
Bryn Road
Pontllanfraith
Blackwood
NP12 2DA**

Date of inspection: November 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Cylch Meithrin Pontllanfraith

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Pontllanfraith
Category of care provided	Children's day care – Sessional day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Stacey Cooper
Person in charge	Georgina Clifford
Number of places	13
Age range of children	2-3
Number of 3- and 4-year olds	2
Number of children funded for early education	0
Opening days / times	9.30-12.00 Monday to Friday, Wednesday afternoon
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	20/02/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	23/02/2016
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	22/11/2022

Non-compliance

The provider was notified that the setting is not in compliance with the Regulations. No notices were issued but these have been identified as areas for improvement and the RI/PiC should address them.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that practitioners promote the children's Welsh language skills systematically and consistently in line with the statement of purpose.
- R2 Review and tailor the risk assessments.
- R3 Ensure that staff training is updated in a timely manner.
- R4 Define the roles and responsibilities of the management committee and leadership team in line with the setting's policies and guidance.
- R5 Address the issues of non-compliance identified during the inspection.

What happens next

The setting will produce an action plan showing how it will implement the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being:

Children have a strong voice and they express their opinion regularly. For example, they express their feelings by moving their pictures about on the feelings wall. Practitioners acknowledge the children's feelings and respond appropriately. Consequently, the children know that their feelings are considered.

Most children feel completely at home at the setting and enjoy attending. They cope well with being separated from their parents and carers at the gate. By the time they reach the main room, the majority of children are happy and confident. Nearly all children settle very quickly and feel safe in their environment. They have developed a very close relationship with the practitioners and they are happy to chat informally with visitors. For example, they are eager to show their new jumpers and the picture on them. Nearly all children are familiar with the daily routine and comply with the setting's routine in a mature way. This gives the children assurance when coping with new experiences.

Many children develop good social skills. In the morning, they welcome their friends enthusiastically, greet each other and immediately go to play together happily. Most children are polite and well-behaved, showing respect for practitioners and their peers. For example, at the table during mealtimes, they wait their turn patiently, chatting happily with each other.

Most children enjoy their play and learning activities. For example, they have a lot of fun playing hide and seek with the practitioners. They thoroughly enjoy playing tricks with their friends. Many children respond with great excitement when playing in the outdoor area. They use the equipment and develop their physical skills by balancing and walking along the wooden bridges. After reaching the end, they show great pride in their achievement.

Many children develop good independence skills. For example, they go to the snack table to choose their food before returning to sit at the table to eat. They make choices in line with their interests. During the day they decide how to spend their time. Some go to the outdoor area whilst others choose from the various indoor activities. They persevere appropriately with the activities and immerse themselves in their play.

Learning (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

There is no report on children's learning. This is because there was an insufficient number of three and four year olds present at the time of the inspection, not receiving funded education elsewhere, about whom we could report without identifying individual children.

Care and development:

Practitioners prioritise keeping children safe and healthy. They understand their roles and responsibilities and adhere to the setting's daily procedures appropriately. The practitioners strive to ensure good hygiene procedures. For example, they wash their hands, wear aprons and disinfect surfaces carefully before preparing food.

Practitioners prepare suitable snacks offering a good variety of healthy food for the children and this reinforces the children's awareness of healthy eating habits. They have not had to administer medicine but they have a suitable policy in place and appropriate forms for record-keeping if needed. Practitioners follow appropriate procedures for recording accidents and injuries. They keep in touch with parents and carers regarding existing injuries which is beneficial. All the practitioners are confident in how to respond should they have any concerns about a child's safety. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet the requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners develop a warm relationship with the children, and treat them with care and respect. They praise the children frequently, which has a positive impact on developing their self-confidence and their understanding of the importance of respecting each other. All practitioners use positive language with the children which promotes good behaviour and supports the children effectively. Practitioners facilitate the children's social development alongside their personal skills. For example, during snack time, the children are given the opportunity to cut their own food. The staff model this effectively and provide support by encouraging the children to learn by observing other children's skills.

Practitioners know the children well and respect their wishes and preferences. For example, they respond to children's requests to take a photograph with a camera and go to the flash-lamps. Practitioners develop effective opportunities to respond to the children's interests and question them purposefully when playing. They are sensitive to children who choose not to undertake specific tasks and allow them to follow their own interests. For example, children are not forced to take part in the joint singing session.

Practitioners promote the children's understanding of the importance of treating people of all cultural backgrounds with respect and tolerance. They develop their understanding of celebrations such as Easter and the importance of charity work. Practitioners ensure that the children have a good understanding of sustainability and recycling by giving them real life experiences. They provide recycling facilities and the children use these enthusiastically.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting):

Practitioners work together effectively to provide an appropriate curriculum which offers valuable experiences and responds to children's needs successfully. They have started planning in accordance with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales, providing an interesting range of valuable experiences both within the building and in the outdoor areas. For example, they provide opportunities for the children to use real vegetables and money in the outdoor shop.

Practitioners plan good opportunities to develop the children's literacy and numeracy skills. They encourage the children effectively to create marks using a variety of media and encourage them to look for, sort and count bugs in the sand tray. Practitioners extend the children's understanding by questioning them skilfully whilst playing, and by singing lively songs. However, they do not use the Welsh language regularly enough to immerse and reinforce language patterns with the children. In general, the provision to develop the children's early ICT skills develops appropriately in line with their age.

Practitioners develop opportunities to nurture children's independence effectively. For example, they expect them to serve their own food and drink during snack time and tidy up afterwards. They actively encourage children to take their turn in order to understand the importance of sharing and good manners. Practitioners understand the children's needs well and they work in an enthusiastic and conscientious manner when encouraging their learning and promoting their well-being. Practitioners choose when to intervene sensibly in the play and when to let the children discover things for themselves. For example, they challenge the children to cut, press and stretch dough to create 'bugs' and observe as the children develop their ideas to create food with the dough.

Practitioners ensure that the children develop their physical skills successfully. For example, they encourage them to ride bicycles along the pavement and grass and move objects from one place to another in a wheelbarrow. They provide effective creative activities, such as cutting and gluing different materials, experimenting with paint, and preparing imaginative meals in the mud kitchen.

Practitioners develop the children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. They promote Welsh culture well by celebrating Saint David's Day and the history of Saint Dwynwen. They also celebrate diversity by studying particular festivals, such as the Chinese New Year.

The assessment procedures are effective and practitioners use the information purposefully to plan for the next steps in the children's learning. The reports for parents outline the children's achievements effectively.

Practitioners share information with parents and carers regularly, summarising the children's progress and interests.

Environment:

Leaders ensure a safe and clean environment for the children. Access to the building is via a secure door and the outside gate is kept locked during operating hours. Visitors are asked to sign in promptly and detailed records are kept. The building's maintenance records are up to date and practitioners ensure that fire drills are conducted regularly. Practitioners ensure that they check and clean resources regularly. On the whole, leaders conduct detailed risk assessments. They produce thorough risk assessments for the children's activities. For example, a comprehensive risk assessment is in place for the woodwork activity which uses nails and a hammer. Leaders have completed generic risk assessments for the building and for fire. These inform the daily check lists which are completed by practitioners.

However, leaders do not always take proactive steps to identify new risks promptly enough in order to minimise potential risks to children.

The quality of the environment is appropriate and provides opportunities for children to play and learn both within the building and outdoors. Leaders provide suitable toilet facilities within the building which ensure opportunities to respect children's privacy when washing. On the whole, practitioners plan a specific timetable for the children to access the outdoor area in order to ensure appropriate supervision. During these periods, the children choose whether they wish to spend time indoors or outdoors. This enables the children to make simple decisions about what they wish to do. Practitioners celebrate the children's creativity by displaying their work. For example, photographs of the children are displayed prominently and the children thoroughly enjoy looking at them and identifying their friends. This contributes to the sense of belonging amongst the children.

Practitioners keep resources at a low level to enable the children to choose independently and follow their individual interests. As a result, the children are starting to get used to fetching equipment and returning them to the appropriate places. The outdoor area enables children to develop their physical, creative and investigative skills. For example, the children grow potatoes and move them to the shop to sell. The furniture, equipment, toys and resources are appropriate and of a high standard, and they are well-maintained. In addition, the children's personal and social development is promoted effectively through access to multicultural toys and books.

Leadership and management:

The person in charge has a clear vision and sets a purposeful direction for the setting's work. She is focussed on and committed to developing the practitioners' role. All the practitioners work together effectively to create a stimulating and supportive atmosphere for the children.

Leaders have effective procedures in place to identify the setting's strengths and any areas for improvement. They have produced purposeful priorities which lead to stable and realistic targets. The leader and practitioners implement these targets successfully. A recent example of this is action to improve parents and carers' access to children's experiences by inviting them to visit the setting and participate in activities, such as planting vegetables and pumpkin carving.

On the whole, leaders make a conscientious effort to comply with the regulations. There are safe recruitment processes and appropriate arrangements in place to supervise and appraise the work of practitioners. They ensure that the practitioners' DBS checks are kept up to date. However, the responsible individual's check was not up to date during the inspection. The setting has comprehensive policies and guidance, and leaders and practitioners implement these effectively. However, the roles and responsibilities of the management committee and leadership team are not always clearly defined. The statement of purpose is detailed providing essential information for parents and states that the language of the setting is Welsh. However, the setting does not operate in line with this.

Additionally, the responsible individual does not always notify CIW of specific incidents in line with the regulations.

Practitioners have appropriate experience and qualifications and they understand their responsibilities well. The person in charge ensures that practitioners work effectively as a team and work together to plan and assess the children's progress. Practitioners are keen to improve their practice for the benefit of the children, and they listen sensibly to the suggestions made by officers from the support agencies.

The setting uses the budget and grants effectively and prioritises expenditure against targets wisely. For example, they enable practitioners to attend purposeful training to improve their teaching and planning practice, and they have ordered resources to enrich the outdoor area. However, leaders do not always ensure that mandatory training is updated in a timely manner.

The setting has beneficial partnerships. They work well with parents, and nearly all parents are happy with the provision and the care. They appreciate the regular feedback on their child's progress and well-being. The setting has appropriate transition processes in place at the end of the year. These include opportunities for children to meet with the school's nursery teachers before moving up.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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