



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

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Porthmadog

**Ysgol Eifion Wyn
Porthmadog
Porthmadog
Gwynedd
LL49 9PA**

Date of inspection: March 2023

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 Porthmadog

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Porthmadog
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Erin Wyn
Person in charge	Anna Roberts
Number of places	19
Age range of children	2 – 3 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	21
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 8:50 – 15:00
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service which provides the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of children who use, or may use, the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	07/07/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	07/05/2014
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	08/03/2023

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	Good
Learning (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	N/A
Care and development	Good
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Expand the opportunities for children to develop mark-making skills across the whole provision
- R2 Plan better experiences to promote the children's understanding of diversity and different cultures
- R3 Ensure that all the equipment in the outdoor area meet safety requirements

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Almost all children feel happy in the setting and have settled down well there. Most of them settle quickly on arrival and leave their parents or carers comfortably. They smile on arrival and the very few who are uncertain relax quickly after being comforted by practitioners. Almost all children demonstrate a fondness towards the practitioners, approaching them for attention happily and comfortably. Most children develop sound relationships with other children. For example, they use the interactive white board to make pictures together. Children show pride in their work, for example when showing a snowman made from dough to practitioners.

Children have a strong voice and they make decisions about what they wish to do. Almost all of them move between different activities confidently and follow their personal preferences effectively. For example, two children used the construction tools to pretend to repair the table in the role play area. In addition, they choose to sit next to their friends during snack time and circle time. They enjoy moving from one activity to another, and persevere and concentrate for appropriate periods. For example, they love playing in the kitchen pretending to prepare breakfast for the practitioner. Almost all children are familiar with the daily routine and are occupied by the activities offered to them. For example, on arrival, the children self-register with some support by placing their picture on the tree.

Almost all children behave very well, share resources well and are beginning to understand how to take turns successfully. For example, they cooperate happily in the sand pit to fill the teapot with sand. Most children form very positive relationships with practitioners and their friends and approach practitioners for comfort or to involve them in their play.

Almost all children enjoy experimenting with a wide variety of stimulating play opportunities. They are offered a good choice of free play opportunities in the main room and in the outdoor area. Most children develop appropriate independence and self-help skills. They lead their play, selecting activities and fulfilling tasks when role playing, opening and closing colour stamps and building with blocks. Many can meet their personal needs by going to the toilet, putting on their coats and pouring drinks at snack time.

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: Good

Practitioners provide good care and support for children and they have a very close and natural relationship with them. They know the children very well and respect their interests, preferences and personal needs. For example, they respond sensitively to

children who choose not to participate in an activity. The practitioners allow children to pick and choose their own resources, indoors and outdoors. They implement appropriate policies to promote healthy lifestyles. Practitioners promote children's health and well-being effectively. They ensure that the children bring a healthy snack with them from home and they offer milk and water to drink. Practitioners have received training on safeguarding children, and are confident of how to act should they have any concerns about a child. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet the requirements and pose no cause for concern.

Practitioners complete effective risk assessments and follow very thorough procedures to ensure careful supervision in relation to the children's health and safety. They have a sound understanding of their responsibilities and provide suitable opportunities for children to develop according to their age and ability. In addition, they follow appropriate procedures and maintain detailed records of accidents, incidents and any medication administered. The records include the signatures of practitioners, parents or carers. They undertake regular fire drills so that the children can familiarise themselves with these arrangements.

Practitioners have a thorough understanding of the behaviour management policy, and act as good role models. They interact positively with the children, showing warmth and kindness.

The practitioners promote the children's play, learning and development effectively. They ensure the children feel comfortable and happy, discussing play opportunities with the children and asking open-ended questions very skilfully. For example, they discuss different shaped objects. Practitioners follow effective processes for identifying and supporting children's individual needs, including children with additional learning needs.

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

The practitioners' teaching develops a wide range of good skills for the children, which has a positive impact on their knowledge and understanding. The practitioners' faithful teaching methods motivate the children to work together effectively. They are knowledgeable in encouraging the children to experiment when playing. Consequently, most children develop as confident learners. For example, the practitioners challenge the children to sort 3D shapes in order to build tall, short, big and small towers independently.

The practitioners make considerate plans and support the children's learning through a range of practical challenges. They provide a balanced curriculum which follows the children's suggestions and interests purposefully. They provide engaging activities that enable the children to take risks and develop good cognitive skills. For example, practitioners challenge the children to draw self-portraits using an electronic device on an interactive board.

The practitioners provide constant opportunities to improve the children's early digital skills, such as using educational apps on electronic tablets regularly. The practitioners challenge children effectively to develop their numeracy skills. For example, the children have good opportunities to count chestnuts and wooden characters and roll them down troughs, either quickly or slowly. In addition, they have opportunities to fill boxes with sand to compare different volumes. The practitioners

plan relevant activities to develop the children's literacy skills. They question the children well as they make marks with paint and chalk during specific tasks. However, there are few opportunities for the children to develop their fine motor skills in handling different tools independently across the areas of provision.

The practitioners ensure that the children develop their physical skills successfully by encouraging them to climb and jump on adventure equipment, dance to different rhythms and ride bikes and scooters on the yard. They provide interesting creative activities such as making musical instruments using plastic bottles and filling them with pasta and rice. In addition, practitioners encourage the children to collect sticks in order to create castles and cook acorns in a wok in the mud kitchen, playing the role of a chef.

The practitioners develop the children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. They promote Welsh culture well by celebrating Saint David's Day and Santes Dwynwen's Day and singing traditional rhymes regularly. However, they do not make effective plans to celebrate diversity or the children's multicultural understanding successfully.

The practitioners intervene effectively in the children's play, giving the children good opportunities to consider the success of their efforts. They have sensible discussions with the children about how to improve their work. They integrate these reflective discussions into their assessments skilfully in order to plan the next steps in individual children's learning.

The practitioners provide valuable information for parents and carers about the children's achievements. This is done via social media, oral discussions and a progress booklet, which is available during and at the end of their time at the setting.

Environment: Good

The environment is safe and secure, enriching and provides valuable opportunities for children both inside and outside the building. Written risk assessments outline the action taken to minimise or prevent risks to children. Leaders keep records of all the children, staff and visitors, ensure that the main doors are kept locked, and implement a secure system for controlling access to the premises. The practitioners ensure that the play areas are interesting, attractive and colourful. By displaying photographs of the children undertaking activities and some examples of the children's work on the walls of the room, practitioners create a sense of pride and belonging for the children, and a welcoming atmosphere for everyone who visits the setting.

The practitioners ensure that the outdoor area is used daily as an integral part of the provision. For example, they ensure that the doors leading from the main room to the outdoor area are kept open throughout the session allowing the children to play where they wish. The outdoor environment provides good and exciting opportunities for children to play and learn. They ensure that the wooded area is used during activities in the outdoor area. The practitioners provide a good range of resources which stimulate curiosity and interest, for example a mud kitchen with various utensils, a planting area with plastic troughs and small pieces of equipment made of natural materials.

The leader ensures that almost all children can access a wide range of furnishings, toys and equipment that are age-appropriate and of good quality. For example, there are baskets and open shelves for the children to explore and a great deal of natural and home furnishings available. However, the leader provides very few resources to encourage children's curiosity about wider society.

The practitioners follow effective procedures to keep the environment and the equipment clean and in an appropriate condition. However, they must ensure that all the equipment in the outdoor area are in a suitable condition. The practitioners ensure that children are supervised closely in a safe environment. Leaders ensure that children's privacy is respected successfully while children are using the toilet and when nappy changing.

Leadership and management: Good

The leaders ensure that the setting's leadership strategies are sound and focus effectively on improving the provision and children's outcomes. They have a clear vision which ensures that the practitioners work together diligently to create a productive environment which promotes the children's learning successfully. The leaders' philosophy is based firmly on providing an engaging environment, as well as engaging resources and activities for the children. The leader and the practitioners offer tender and pastoral care for the children, creating a sense of belonging among the children and the adults. This positive atmosphere motivates the children to do their best and persevere in their play and learning.

The leaders ensure that the practitioners work together effectively as a team. The practitioners are reliable and they listen sensibly to suggestions made by the leaders and officers from support agencies. There are regular arrangements in place to evaluate the performance of practitioners, and they supervise and evaluate their work conscientiously. In addition, they ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed correctly.

The leaders set sensible expectations and they support the practitioners to maintain high standards. They identify the setting's strengths and matters for improvement effectively. There are rigorous self-evaluation procedures in place, which include appropriate targets for improvement. For example, recently, leaders have been focusing on developing the learning in the wooded area. As a result, they introduce and target improvements regularly to develop the setting's practice purposefully.

The leaders ensure full consideration is given to the views of everyone associated with the setting. They conduct direct discussions with all stakeholders, such as support organisations, to improve the provision and children's experiences. For example, they listen carefully to the support officers in relation to developing planning practices in order to better follow the children's interests. In addition, they act on concerns and suggestions from parents and carers in a meaningful way if they have any concern about their child's development.

The leaders have formed a range of strong partnerships locally, which offer the children engaging experiences. For example, they go for a walk through the town to visit the library regularly and collect vegetables in the community garden before washing and eating the produce. In addition, the very active relationship with the school prepares the children for the next step in their education purposefully.

The leaders allocate resources successfully. They use the budget and grants effectively and prioritise expenditure wisely against the setting's targets. They enable the practitioners to attend useful training to improve their teaching and planning practice. Additionally, they fund various resources efficiently, such as equipment for the forest school and digital equipment.

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)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point rating scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required