



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

**A report on**

**Cylch Meithrin Penygroes**

**Penygroes Memorial Hall  
Waterloo Road  
Ammanford  
SA14 7PG**

**Date of inspection: October 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 Penygroes

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Penygroes
Category of care provided	Sessional day care
Registered person(s)	Anne O'Brien-Stafford and Margot Roberts
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Jenny Davies
Number of places	17
Age range of children	2-3 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	16
Number of children funded for early education	14
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 2.30pm
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	15 May 2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection	2 February 2016
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	23/10/2023

## Summary

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

## Non-compliance

We informed the provider of Areas for Improvement where there was non-compliance with the regulations. No warning was issued but this was identified as an area for improvement which the Registered Person / Responsible Individual must address. Information about all instances of non-compliance will be included in a Summary of Improvement Action which will be published on the CIW website only.

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that practitioners engage children in their learning in a timely manner
- R2 Provide more opportunities for children to solve problems independently

## What happens next

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

## Main findings

### Well-being: Good

Most children make choices and decisions regularly. They enjoy the freedom to move confidently around the indoor and outdoor learning areas. Most children help themselves to resources within the play areas effectively. For example, using colanders to thread spaghetti and straws through small holes. Most children enjoy observing before choosing their activities, such as using craft materials to decorate a pumpkin. They know that their wishes and feelings are considered fully. During snack time, children can choose their fruit and they know that they can choose when to go to the toilet.

Most children settle quickly and feel happy and at home at the setting. They cope well when separated from their parents and carers and feel safe in the care of practitioners. Most children show energy and pleasure on seeing practitioners and joining their friends. For example, when a group of children came together in the role-play area to work together busily in front of the mirror to wear jewellery and talk about clothes. As a result, they cope well when moving from one activity to another, such as finishing a physical activity and starting a tooth-brushing activity.

Most children develop good social skills and share easily with others when playing. They respect the feelings and interests of others and learn to take turns. For

example, waiting to use the outdoor water fountain. They are willing to support each other, for example by working together to create a hedgehog house using logs, cones and cardboard. Most children develop close and warm relationships with practitioners and interact well with visitors. For example, a group of children were eager to prepare food for the visitors and enjoyed playing in the small kitchen, naming vegetables and offering plates of real potatoes. Another child went over to the investigation area to collect real herbs to be added to the food and enjoyed serving the plates very much.

Most children are energetic and enthusiastic in their play. For example, they sing, count and use fine motor skills when experimenting with natural resources such as leaves and bark. Most children develop their physical, literacy, numeracy and creative skills effectively. In addition, they enjoy concentrating and experimenting for periods filling the pans in the mud kitchen or at a table covered with moss, soil and dinosaurs.

Most children develop good independence skills, for example, when using the toilet, washing and drying their hands and eating their snack. They show pride and enjoyment when undertaking tasks such as completing activities, tidying up, brushing their teeth and wiping their nose. Children also enjoy self-registering by placing their names on the cup tree. As a result, they persevere purposefully when learning and take pride in their achievements.

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

Most children play with each other enthusiastically and make good progress in their learning. They apply a wide range of skills effectively, which improve their outcomes and skills successfully.

Many children strive to use Welsh independently, with guidance and encouragement from practitioners. In addition, they enjoy joining in with familiar rhymes and lullabies and singing them together during their circle sessions and while brushing their teeth. They listen carefully to instructions and follow them conscientiously, for example, when filling pumpkins with seeds and chestnuts. They speak naturally with each other while engaged in extended periods of creative play. They respond to discussions effectively and share ideas to complete tasks successfully. For example, they work together and chat animatedly while doing each other's hair in the home area.

Most children discuss books intelligently. They engage enthusiastically with stories and respond humorously to their peers while enjoying the events and pictures in the stories. They show interest when describing different characters and consider the results of actions thoughtfully, for example, they respond intelligently to the adventures of the doll and her friends.

During their play, most children make purposeful marks using different media such as chalk, paint and crayons. They are starting to develop their early writing skills effectively. For example, they make marks when describing a spider and record

numbers to match the different numbers of small stones. As a result, they enjoy their early writing experiences and explain the purpose of their records intelligently.

Most children use mathematical language correctly in appropriate contexts. They have sound numeracy skills and they enjoy experimenting with a wide range of mathematical equipment. They count confidently when sorting leaves and pine cones, and they have an increasing understanding of the properties of shapes.

Most children develop physical skills successfully by riding bikes in the hall and shaking the parachute enthusiastically. They enjoy working together to adapt their ideas, for example, by beginning to develop their rugby skills. These positive attitudes have a good effect on their learning.

Most children develop digital skills effectively. They take advantage of the purposeful opportunities available to them. For example, they control the direction of electronic robots and follow language and numeracy programmes on electronic tablets. As a result, they familiarise themselves well and apply their digital skills purposefully.

### **Care and development: Good**

Practitioners prioritise children's health and safety successfully. They understand their roles and responsibilities well and implement sound policies and procedures effectively. Practitioners have first aid certificates and keep accurate records of accidents, incidents and allergies. Practitioners have up to date food hygiene certificates and the procedures are effective. For example, they disinfect surfaces carefully before snacks and wear gloves when preparing healthy foods. They ensure that children have constant access to drinks such as water and milk. Practitioners have a sound understanding of safeguarding processes and ensure that the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet the requirements and are not a cause for concern. Practitioners have a thorough understanding of children's individual needs and integrate, support and provide for children with additional learning needs. They maintain an accurate and well-organised child registration system and ensure that records of consent are in place.

Practitioners have an affectionate and warm relationship with children and treat them with care and respect. They are kind and model positive and natural interactions when explaining to the children how to respect each other and supporting them in doing so. Practitioners encourage children to realise that there are more children than there are resources and that they need to wait and take their turn. They reinforce the importance of sharing in a clear and fair way during free play. Practitioners observe, listen and explain in a caring way. For example, they remind children of what will happen next, encourage them to work together to tidy up and support them with tasks such as wiping their nose. Practitioners praise children regularly, which has a positive impact on developing their understanding and self-confidence.

Practitioners develop very good relationships with children and they have a clear understanding of their individual needs and wishes. Practitioners have purposeful procedures and networks in place to support children with additional learning needs.

They create an atmosphere and environment which nurture care and they show respect at all times. They know the children very well, including their interests, how confident they are and any specific dietary requirements. Practitioners develop children's independence in a kind and sensitive manner. They build on children's individual skills to develop their self-esteem. For example, they ensure that children have purposeful opportunities to help during snack time, collect resources when preparing activities and complete toileting tasks successfully. Practitioners support children's language development regularly using clear and correct Welsh. They reinforce vocabulary which supports their learning and understanding, for example using autumnal vocabulary and mathematical language when children are engaged in learning experiences in the pumpkin area.

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

Practitioners provide a good range of engaging learning and play experiences and activities. They encourage children to take risks and experiment, which has a positive impact on their knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, they support children to investigate with spades in the soil and challenge them to create colourful patterns with chalk.

Practitioners have positive attitudes which motivate children's learning effectively. Their teaching methods are sound on the whole. Although presentations are lengthy at times, they encourage children to work together enthusiastically and develop a wide range of skills effectively across the learning areas.

Practitioners intervene consistently during activities and encourage children to experiment when playing. They have regular discussions with children about how to succeed in their tasks. For example, practitioners discuss the quickest way of moving cars from the garage roof to the bottom. However, opportunities for children to solve problems completely independently, without adult supervision, are limited.

Practitioners deliver a wide-ranging and balanced curriculum, which includes sensible cooperation amongst themselves and a willingness to follow children's interests and suggestions. They plan together effectively to expand children's learning through a variety of practical experiences, such as gluing leaves and acorns. They observe children and discuss their progress purposefully to identify the next steps in their learning. Practitioners provide useful information about children's achievements to their parents and carers on social media, through verbal discussions and feedback and through entries in progress records.

Practitioners plan interesting opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and digital skills. They extend children's understanding during sessions by questioning them effectively and encouraging them to explain their actions carefully. They do this whilst discussing ingredients in the mud kitchen, shovelling small stones to fill a circle, and using apps on electronic tablets confidently.

Practitioners ensure that children develop their physical skills effectively. For example, they encourage children to keep their balance while walking along a bench

and handle balls skilfully when playing rugby. They provide interesting creative activities, such as creating different rhythms with percussion instruments and role playing when putting dolls to sleep in a cage.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills well. They promote Welsh culture efficiently by celebrating Saint David's Day and the history of Saint Dwynwen. Practitioners celebrate diversity sensibly and study particular festivals, such as the Chinese New Year. In addition, they raise children's awareness of their local area purposefully and examine the features and facilities of the village and sing traditional lullabies.

### **Environment: Good**

Leaders provide a high quality environment which is safe and clean for the children. They ensure that visitors cannot gain access without practitioners' consent and everyone signs in promptly. Leaders ensure that a range of useful and purposeful notices and posters are displayed around the setting's entrance and main door. These support the setting's clear procedures, such as a safeguarding children flow chart. Leaders keep up-to-date maintenance records for the building and ensure that fire drills are conducted regularly. Children and practitioners' records are kept confidential. Leaders ensure that the equipment to protect the environment is serviced regularly, including fire equipment and first aid boxes. They conduct up-to-date, purposeful and effective risk assessments for the indoor setting along with the enclosed outdoor play area, and these are reviewed skilfully. Leaders and practitioners have identified a risk between the building and the gate of the enclosed outdoor play area, putting temporary equipment and supervision practices in place. However, the outdoor area beyond the external fire door continues to pose a risk to children. Consequently, this is an area for improvement and leaders are expected to take action.

Leaders ensure that the environment is peaceful and welcoming. The indoor environment is stimulating and has plenty of room for the number of children who attend daily. Leaders provide suitable toilet facilities along with designated facilities for washing hands and changing nappies, which respect children's privacy and provide opportunities to promote their independence. They use a suitable kitchen to prepare snacks and they occasionally use a large hall for physical activities. The setting has an outdoor area which provides challenges and purposeful opportunities for children to experiment and develop their curiosity. This is an enclosed space and offers purposeful play areas including an imaginative area, creative corners, stone tables, small trees and a mud kitchen. They ensure a good balance between promoting children's safety and supporting them to take risks. For example, they challenge children to fill a range of containers to understand the flow of the water structure.

Leaders provide a high-quality range of purposeful resources which have been placed at a low level both indoors and outdoors. As a result, children have access to a wide range of furniture, toys and equipment for their age and development. Leaders provide good opportunities to choose independently and develop further skills. For example, they use free-standing resources and technical equipment such



as digital cameras and robots to enrich their learning. Leaders ensure that resources are well-maintained and clean. They ensure that children have access to high-quality areas and they assess the risk and suitability of resources continuously. For example, construction areas, numeracy, small world, investigating, music, mark-making and role play. Leaders encourage children's personal and social development well. Their use of low-level mirrors in the play areas promote children's identity. They also provide opportunities to learn and promote cultural awareness and equal opportunity including providing a good range of resources such as a world map, books, dolls and multi-language posters.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Leaders have effective leadership strategies for the setting and leaders focus well on improving the provision and children's outcomes. They have a clear vision which promotes successful cooperation among practitioners. They encourage children to do their best during their activities and provide intelligent encouragement. This leads to firm teaching and tender pastoral care.

Leaders' knowledge of the provision's strengths and areas for improvement is reliable and they evaluate their work effectively. They follow thorough self-evaluation procedures, which enable them to identify appropriate priorities for improvement. They evaluate progress purposefully, for example, when developing a successful outdoor area. As a result of these thorough procedures, leaders have a firm understanding of how to develop and maintain an operational provision.

Leaders support practitioners sensibly to maintain standards by setting firm expectations for their work and conduct. They implement safe recruitment systems effectively and ensure that the qualified practitioners work tirelessly as a team. Leaders support practitioners to attend useful training to improve their practice. As a result, practitioners act conscientiously on suggestions made by leaders and officers from support agencies. Leaders have efficient arrangements to evaluate the performance of practitioners, and they supervise and evaluate their work regularly. They manage staffing ratios suitably at all times and ensure that the admission and leaving procedures are safe and effective.

Leaders ensure that they give appropriate consideration to feedback given by children, parents and staff, who are involved in the life and work of the setting. They have useful discussions and consider stakeholders' suggestions fully when developing the provision and improving children's experiences. For example, they listen carefully to the support officers in relation to developing planning and assessment practices in order to better follow children's interests and ideas. In addition, they use social media effectively to provide up-to-date information about children's experiences and progress to their parents and carers.

Leaders have developed a good relationship with the local school to prepare children for the next step in their education purposefully. In addition, they have sound local partnerships to improve children's awareness of their local area. These include a visit from a farmer with a tractor and walks to the village shops and cafes.

The use made of the budget and grant funding prioritises expenditure against the setting's targets effectively. Leaders allocate resources wisely and fund useful equipment in line with the setting's targets. Leaders' careful planning improves children's learning and play experiences meaningfully by providing valuable resources such as a mud kitchen and technical 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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