



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

A report on

**Cylch Meithrin Cefneithin Gorslas
The Portacabin
Crosshands Welfare Park
Crosshands
SA14 6SU**

Date of inspection: November 2017

by

**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 Cefneithin Gorslas is a Welsh-medium setting that meets in a dedicated cabin in Crosshands Leisure Park, in Carmarthenshire local authority. The setting is open five mornings a week and is registered to admit 20 children between two and four years old. Eight children are funded to receive early years education.

Most children are from white British backgrounds and a few come from Welsh-speaking homes. There are currently no children with additional learning needs.

The setting employs three full-time practitioners, including the leader, and a part-time practitioner. The leader was appointed to the post in October 2011.

The setting was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in April 2017 and by Estyn in March 2011.

Summary

The setting's current performance	Excellent
The setting's prospects for improvement	Excellent

Current performance

The setting's current performance is excellent because:

- Most children make excellent progress from their starting points and acquire their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills confidently across all areas of learning
- Most children develop exceptional oral Welsh skills
- Many children have excellent numeracy skills
- Many children have exceptional thinking skills and make decisions about their work regularly
- Nearly all children have excellent independent skills and they show high levels of engagement and excellent motivation when taking part in activities
- Nearly all children's behaviour is excellent
- Practitioners plan excellent opportunities to develop children as confident independent learners
- The setting provides an exciting range of learning experiences and stimulating activities that ignite children's curiosity and natural desire to learn
- Practitioners are highly-motivated and enthusiastic, and ensure that all children develop as active learners by challenging them successfully to make progress and achieve exceptional standards in their work
- The setting has very robust arrangements for assessing and tracking all children's progress, which are used regularly and comprehensively by all practitioners in order to identify the next steps in children's education

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are excellent because:

- The committed leader has a robust vision that is based on providing learning experiences of an excellent quality in order to develop independent and knowledgeable learners
- The leader has high expectations of children and practitioners
- The leadership fosters a strong sense of purpose, which ensures that practitioners fulfil their teaching work consistently effectively
- The leader places a very strong emphasis on developing children to be eloquent Welsh speakers who use their skills confidently and independently across the curriculum
- The management committee supports the setting's work in full and ensures the success of the setting, so that all children are given robust opportunities to develop

- Arrangements for evaluating the setting's work are very sound and are based on a wide and thorough range of first-hand evidence, which encourages stakeholders to reflect regularly on children's achievements and progress
- Leaders know the setting and the children very well and use self-evaluation outcomes effectively to plan for improvement
- The development plan includes clear priorities and quantitative targets that provide robust guidance for practitioners in order to ensure that they contribute efficiently to the process of improving the setting's performance

Recommendations

R1 Ensure more regular opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills outdoors

R2 Develop the role of the management committee further in monitoring actions in the development plan

What happens next?

Cylch Meithrin Cefneithin Gorslas will prepare a written case study describing the excellent practice that was seen during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Excellent

Standards: Excellent

Most children make excellent progress from their starting points. They develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills of a high standard and acquire them confidently across all areas of learning.

Many children start at the setting without any Welsh language skills. These children make very quick progress, which is far above the expectation for their age and baseline, in developing the language. By the end of their time at the setting, most children develop exceptional oral language skills and use a very wide range of appropriate vocabulary confidently in different situations. They discuss their favourite dinosaurs intelligently with other children and adults, and use mature adjectives when referring to the size of a brontosaurus or the shape of a triceratops. Many children develop as creative performers who are very confident when singing Welsh songs and nursery rhymes. They are very comfortable when role-playing independently through the medium of Welsh. Around half of children give clear instructions to the setting's younger children, for example when reminding them to put equipment away or when helping them to use the water fountain without getting wet.

A majority enjoy listening to an adult reading a story and they discuss previous activities enthusiastically for extended periods of time; for example, they speak creatively and at length about pirates and their valuable treasure. A few children develop a good awareness of the structure of a story by predicting what will happen to characters in the story and by differentiating between funny scenes and sad situations. Many know how to hold a book correctly and enjoy choosing books voluntarily in order to re-tell a familiar story to their peers. Many recognise simple words and numerals when reading a story about 10 dinosaurs that went for a walk.

Most children use various mark-making equipment independently and with sound control. A few are beginning to realise that writing and text are a way of communicating and transferring information to others, for example when writing a shopping list for another child at the setting. Nearly all children make zigzag and wavy lines successfully in order to plan a route to lead a dinosaur to a volcano. This strengthens their grasp and control of writing equipment and develops very robust early marking skills.

Many children have excellent numeracy skills. Nearly all count objects to 10 correctly and recognise numbers independently. A majority have a very good awareness of shape and recognise properties such as a star and a square when making pictures relating to the theme. A minority name and recognise semi-circles and quarter-circles correctly and use them to make collages of a pirate ship and a colourful parrot. A few develop exceptionally good map-making and map-reading skills and know that a map needs to be held with north facing upwards. They give clear oral instructions on how to go from one side of the island to the other, and draw a path in order to find the treasure. Many handle a wide range of mathematical equipment skilfully in order to count and classify objects correctly by using appropriate

mathematical language. For example, they use terms such as big and small, short and tall, in addition to thick and thin, confidently when comparing the size of dinosaurs in the small world corner or when building a tower of bricks.

Most children use technological equipment purposefully and independently. They choose to play with a metal detector, books and talking pegs, and are very willing to explain to others how to use them correctly. Most are able to control an electronic toy skilfully, for example when guiding the shark carefully around the pirates' treasure island. They use information that is part of their everyday life confidently, such as a till, scales and calculators, when playing and during focus tasks.

Most children have strong physical skills. They move with good agility and balance, and run at an appropriate speed and avoid obstacles successfully. Many listen to instructions correctly. They stop, continue on their journey and change direction freely when playing a game on the nearby tennis courts. Most children work very well together, for example when building a cave for the dinosaurs or when helping each other climb over equipment. A majority of children's ability to handle small equipment, such as writing implements, scissors, toys and equipment when building, is very good.

Many children have exceptional thinking skills and make decision about their work regularly. For example, most choose what to put in the treasure chest, which two-dimensional shapes to use in order to decorate the dinosaurs, and which paint is best to create a background for their displays.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Nearly all children have excellent independent skills. This is an exceptional feature of the children's standards of wellbeing and has a strong influence on their ability to use their skills very confidently across the curriculum. Nearly all show high levels of engagement and excellent motivation when taking part in activities. They enjoy coming to the setting, are very aware of the daily routine and show perseverance and resilience in overcoming any difficulties or problems. Most are familiar with the setting's routine and are keen to go straight to their activities. Once they have self-registered without fuss in the morning, they fetch marking and painting equipment without any adult assistance, find their name on a chair and convene in an orderly fashion for activities on the carpet. A majority concentrate and persevere for very extended periods when completing a task; for example, they find treasure in the sand or match shapes and numbers skilfully in the mathematics area. Most play an active part in deciding on the themes and what they would like to do in the role-play corner; for example, as a result of the children's decision, the Wendy house is now part of the continuous provision and does not change from one term to the next.

Very few more able children develop an appropriate awareness of how well they are doing and are beginning to understand what they need to do to improve their work. They are beginning to make choices about what and how they learn, for example when choosing which songs to sing and which instruments to use from the music corner.

Nearly all children's behaviour is excellent. They are polite when interacting with each other, are very mindful of their peers' needs and are keen to include everyone

in activities. Most children's social skills are developing well as they serve themselves during snack time. Nearly all children thank practitioners when getting a drink, toast and fruit. Nearly all children share resources sensibly when playing together and know that they need to wait their turn. They are keen to help others to tidy up and understand that this leads to praise from practitioners.

Nearly all children have a good understanding of how they can stay healthy. Nearly all understand the importance of washing their hands after going to the toilet or if they get messy while painting and before eating. Nearly all children do this independently during the session. They participate very enthusiastically in activities on the tennis courts to help them to keep fit. They understand that some foods and drinks are healthy for the body, while others can be harmful.

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

The setting provides an exciting range of learning experiences that meet nearly all children's needs very effectively, in line with the requirements of the foundation phase. Practitioners plan the curriculum thoroughly in order to support the development of children's skills progressively throughout their time at the setting. These stimulating activities ignite the children's natural curiosity and desire to learn across the six areas of learning. This leads to excellent opportunities for children to build systematically on previous knowledge and understanding through beneficial opportunities to work independently and in a group. Very good examples of this are the regular opportunities for them to choose different media and design equipment in order to create paintings and creative collages. Although the children do not have continuous access to outdoor activities, practitioners plan carefully in order to provide very good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills on the land around the setting, in addition to the enclosed tennis courts.

Practitioners ensure that children develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills systematically through activities that challenge them effectively. Planning to develop children's numeracy skills is excellent and ensures that there are regular opportunities for them to use these skills across the curriculum. A very good example of this is the frequent use that practitioners make of shape and number during art activities. This leads to masterful numeracy skills among many children, in addition to very good standards of mathematics.

Schemes of work for literacy are very ambitious and focus thoroughly on presenting the Welsh language successfully across the areas of learning. This has a very positive effect on most children's confidence and standards of oracy.

Practitioners plan excellent opportunities to develop children as confident independent learners. Plans identify clearly which activities will be led by practitioners as they present and reinforce skills. This ensures an appropriate balance between direct learning and activities that are led by children. One of the setting's strengths is the way in which practitioners plan continuous activities that enable children to practice their skills and make decisions about their own learning. For example, art, cooking and role-play activities motivate children successfully to make choices in order to develop their creative skills without fear of failure or making mistakes.

The Welsh dimension is given a prominent place in the setting's curriculum and activities. Practitioners organise an annual Eisteddfod for children and their families, and celebrate St Dwynwen's Day and St David's Day. Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities to enable children to learn about the traditions of other countries in order to respect a range of multicultural backgrounds. The setting plans interesting activities in relation to Diwali and Ramadan, for example. This helps children to develop positive attitudes towards the wider world in order for them to develop as knowledgeable, tolerant and moral citizens. In addition, the setting provides good opportunities for all children to learn about sustainability by recycling paper, plastic and food in order for them to develop as responsible members of society.

Practitioners make beneficial use of visits and visitors in order to enrich children's experiences successfully. They plan valuable opportunities to go to the local park, in addition to the library and the coffee shop in the village. Visitors such as the dentist, the postman and local business owners strengthen children's understanding of people's contribution to their society successfully.

Teaching: Excellent

Practitioners have a very thorough understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase and provide education of a high standard. All are highly-motivated and enthusiastic, and have a very good understanding of how children learn. They are firmly committed to their role of ensuring that all children develop as active learners who are challenged successfully to make progress and achieve exceptional standards in their work.

One of the practitioners' notable strengths is the intelligent way in which they encourage children to work without too much input from adults. For example, they allow them to develop their numeracy skills independently when playing on the pirate island or when learning about the properties of two-dimensional shapes during art activities. This derives from the high expectations that practitioners have for the children. They also have a good knowledge of when to facilitate and support learning carefully, when necessary, in order to provide new experiences and reinforce skills. A very good example of this is the way in which they develop children's understanding of number bonds. As a result, nearly all children develop as confident independent learners.

Practitioners prepare clear learning objectives for all children. An excellent feature of teaching is the practitioners' knowledge of all children's ability and what they have achieved. The leader has established very robust arrangements to assess and track each child's progress, which are used regularly by all practitioners in order to identify the next steps in children's education. This sets a very effective foundation that enables practitioners to support all children through questioning and extensive suggestions that build well on their previous learning. Practitioners use effective elements of assessment for learning during daily activities. They praise children's efforts and provide constructive oral feedback regularly when explaining clearly what children need to do to improve their work. Practitioners standardise children's individual work during staff meetings and consistency in levelling children's work is sound across the setting.

Practitioners place a valuable emphasis on the accuracy of children's oral language. They strive successfully to use Welsh songs and nursery rhymes throughout the sessions and encourage children to join in with the fun. They model the Welsh language very well and this develops children's oral skills effectively.

Practitioners ensure a very colourful and stimulating learning environment within the different learning areas. They respect children's work by ensuring that it is at the heart of the impressive displays. Management of children's behaviour is excellent. Practitioners use positive strategies purposefully when responding to instances of unacceptable behaviour. Practitioners ensure that children are very familiar with the setting's routine and rules. As a result, this leads to a calm environment that stimulates a busy working environment in which all children are happy and play an active part in activities.

Resources are used imaginatively, both indoors and outdoors, to support and challenge children to improve. Practitioners ensure that resources are within children's reach and are readily available so that they are able to choose and select materials, as necessary. Practitioners consider children's aspirations and ideas regularly when planning activities that encourage them to make decisions successfully.

Parents receive a detailed report on their children's progress and achievements in all areas of learning when they leave. Practitioners are available to speak with parents or carers to discuss their children's progress and to give them beneficial guidance on how they can contribute to their education.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting is a happy and caring community in which practitioners ensure that children feel safe. All children are treated fairly. Practitioners are welcoming and respect children as individuals, are sensitive to their needs and provide equal opportunities for them to develop socially and emotionally. They encourage children to care for their friends and help each other effectively, particularly when they go on visits to the village. These experiences, in addition to visitors to the setting, develop a sense of curiosity and enrich children's learning.

The setting has effective daily activities that develop and maintain children's ideas of keeping healthy. Practitioners encourage them skilfully to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for caring for themselves; for example, they encourage children to wait patiently to put on their coats before going outside. They ensure that there is a healthy choice of food and provide continuous access to the water fountain and the toilet.

The setting promotes values such as honesty, fairness and respect successfully. This develops children's sound understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Daily routines during snack time provide a valuable opportunity for children to develop their social skills, patience and co-operation appropriately. Practitioners encourage children effectively to set the table and take responsibility when serving food and tidying up. This has a very good effect on nearly all children's independent skills.

Practitioners plan in detail in order to ensure regular opportunities for exercise activities on the nearby tennis courts. Provision for children's moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is planned purposefully. Activities that celebrate Welsh festivals and traditions, in addition to those from China and Africa, help children to learn and understand the world in which they live. A very good example of this is the annual Eisteddfod that is organised, which provides very good opportunities for children and their parents to compete and perform various items. There are appropriate arrangements in place for children to learn about the importance of recycling by composting unwanted food.

The setting has suitable processes to support children with additional learning needs. Practitioners seek specialist support, as necessary, in order to meet individuals' needs appropriately. All children who receive additional support have a useful individual education plan. Parents are included in all steps of provision, in addition to meetings, in order to review and monitor progress. The setting has sound arrangements in order to identify more able children. They challenge them appropriately through schemes of work that have been differentiated well.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive community that encourages children to develop tolerant attitudes. The setting's warm and friendly ethos promotes a sense of wellbeing and respects individuals' differences and diversity successfully.

Practitioners work very well together and celebrate children's achievements and talents. They know the children and their individuality well. They have high expectations of what children can do, and this has an extremely robust effect on developing each child's self-respect and confidence.

The building is of an appropriate standard, is clean and tidy and well-maintained. Practitioners make imaginative use of the indoor space to provide valuable opportunities to develop children's skills. High quality displays celebrate children's learning and achievement appropriately. Resources in all areas are of good quality, are within easy reach and are specific to the children's age. This promotes children's independence very effectively.

Although children do not have continuous access to an outdoor learning area, practitioners make purposeful use of the areas near the setting to develop children's physical and thinking skills. However, these areas are not used frequently enough to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills further.

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

The setting is managed very effectively by a committed leader. She ensures that the daily routine runs efficiently and that all practitioners have a very sound understanding of their roles. She has a robust vision that is based on providing

learning experiences of an excellent quality in order to develop independent and knowledgeable learners. She shares this vision successfully with parents and the wider community. As a result, she has established a setting that places an exceptionally good emphasis on developing children to be eloquent Welsh speakers who use their skills very confidently across the curriculum.

The leader ensures that children receive very good care and support and that they all benefit from an orderly, stimulating and happy environment. This means that each child has an excellent start to their education.

The leader has high expectations of practitioners. This leads to a strong sense of purpose. They organise staff meetings carefully in order to share assessment outcomes and up-to-date information about curricular developments. This ensures that practitioners fulfil their teaching work consistently effectively. The leadership gives detailed attention to developing children's standards of wellbeing in addition to their numeracy, literacy and ICT skills across all areas of learning and enhanced activities. The attention that is given to these aspects has a very positive effect on provision and children's standards.

The deputy supports the leader's work effectively. She has developed a very close relationship between the setting and parents by ensuring a regular flow of information on social media.

The leader uses robust procedures to evaluate and manage practitioners' performance. These arrangements identify and support their training needs effectively. Practitioners take advantage of beneficial opportunities to develop professionally and share their experiences with their colleagues. This leads to a knowledgeable and dedicated workforce. A very good example of this is the way in which they have shared information with each other following training to improve arrangements for assessing children's work. This has had a very good effect on their ability to plan purposefully to raise standards.

The management committee supports the setting's work in full and is knowledgeable about its strengths and a few areas for development. They have a shared commitment to ensuring the setting's success so that all children are given sound opportunities to develop. Members of the management committee are regular visitors to the setting and use direct observations to judge practitioners' work, challenge them and support them skilfully. As a result, they are fully aware of the commitment of the leader and the practitioners and value their efforts greatly.

Improving quality: Excellent

The setting has very effective self-evaluation procedures whereby all practitioners work well together and show a strong commitment to ensuring the best possible provision for children.

Arrangements for evaluating the setting's work are very robust and are based on a wide and thorough range of first-hand evidence, which encourages stakeholders to reflect regularly on children's achievements and progress. The leader includes the views of practitioners, parents, children and members of the management committee regularly as part of the procedure. Practitioners evaluate their own practice

thoroughly each week; for example, they consider how effective activities are in developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. This is a strength at the setting and helps practitioners to plan robust follow-up activities. As a result, the setting improves the opportunities that are provided for children regularly. This leads to clear improvements in children's standards of attainment and wellbeing.

The self-evaluation report is a comprehensive and concise document, which has a firm focus on evaluating the effect of leadership and provision on children's standards. It is an honest report and is evidence that the leader knows the setting and the children very well. As a result, it provides a very clear picture of the setting's strengths, in addition to areas for development.

The setting uses the self-evaluation outcomes effectively to plan for improvement. There is a robust link between areas for improvement in the self-evaluation and the targets in the development plan. The plan has clear priorities and quantitative targets. It is an accessible document that gives full consideration to timescales, monitoring arrangements, staff responsibilities and costs. This gives practitioners sound guidance in order to ensure that they contribute effectively to the process of improving the setting's performance. Actions are already having a positive effect on improving provision for ICT.

Members of the committee visit the setting regularly in order to observe activities. They provide useful reports to the remaining members, and the leader uses information from the reports successfully as part of the self-evaluation process. The management committee's arrangements for monitoring development actions in the improvement plan are good, but they are not always formal enough to challenge the leader further and contribute fully to the setting's strategic direction.

Support from the local authority and Mudiad Meithrin is effective and has supported the setting well over a period of time, which has led to high standards, effective teaching and very robust leadership.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has a suitable range of partnerships that improve the quality of provision and have a good effect on children's standards and wellbeing. The relationship between parents and the setting is very productive. Parents are very supportive and organise social activities in order to raise money to buy resources for the setting. The leader ensures that there is an informal opportunity at the end of each session to exchange information about their children's development. This is very useful in order for them to be more aware of how they can contribute to their children's development. Parents appreciate this and are glad to have open access to practitioners to discuss any concerns and to play an active part in their children's education.

The setting has beneficial partnerships with the advisory teacher and a Mudiad Meithrin officer who provide practical advice and beneficial suggestions to practitioners, which have improved continuous provision. Staff attend training and meetings regularly and this helps them to understand and implement recent developments, such as baseline assessments. These partnerships have also had a positive effect on the setting's self-evaluation procedures and practitioners' ability to develop children's numeracy skills.

Appropriate partnerships have been established with the primary schools that admit the children, in order for them to familiarise themselves with the school and the reception class teacher. By the time they leave, children are well-prepared for the next step in their education.

The setting works closely with other settings in the area and other practitioners have visited in order to observe good practice. These visits have focused effectively on developing practitioners' ability to create a stimulating learning environment, in addition to planning systematically in order to develop children's skills across the areas of learning. Community partnerships include visits to the library, the park and the coffee shop, and provide valuable experiences for children. This makes a positive contribution to their wellbeing and knowledge of people who help them.

The setting has appropriate arrangements with local specialist education agencies. This is valuable when any child's additional learning needs need to be met.

Resource management: Excellent

The leader manages all resources and funding very efficiently by ensuring that the setting has a very good level of staff with suitable qualifications to teach the curriculum effectively. Practitioners' roles are defined clearly and they work very well together as a team. The leader makes valuable use of practitioners' individual skills in order to meet nearly all children's needs and organises beneficial training for them in order to deliver an exciting curriculum.

The setting's performance management arrangements are developing well. Although they are slightly too informal, they identify practitioners' needs accurately and there is a close link between training needs and the setting's priorities. This ensures that all practitioners have up-to-date knowledge of recent developments in the foundation phase while they continue to build on their personal skills.

The leader allocates funding appropriately, in line with the setting's priorities. She supports the management committee appropriately in evaluating the effect of expenditure on children's standards and wellbeing carefully.

Considering the excellent quality of teaching, care and guidance, the setting provides excellent value for money.

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	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	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 partnerships conditions of registration.
Foundation Phase	The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from three to seven years of age
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012
Local authority advisory teacher	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings that provide education for three and four-year-olds.
Mudiad Meithrin	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
Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation 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