



*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 Bro Elfed  
Cynwyl Elfed Community Hall  
Surgeon Street  
Cynwyl Elfed  
Carmarthen  
SA33 6TR**

**Date of inspection: October 2014**

**by**

**Dorothy Morris  
Reporting Inspector**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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## Context

Cylch Meithrin Bro Elfed meets in the Community Hall in Cynwyl Elfed, near Carmarthen.

The setting caters for children aged two and three years of age for four sessions a week during term time. The setting is registered to take up to 24 children per session. At present there are 13 children on roll and five receive funded early years education. The five children are from English speaking homes. There are no children with additional learning needs.

There are four members of staff. All staff are suitably qualified and experienced in working with young children. The leader has been in post since October 2008.

The setting was previously inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) in September 2014 and by Estyn in March 2009.

## Summary

<b>The Setting's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The Setting's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The setting's current performance is judged to be good because:

- practitioners provide a wide range of interesting activities which ensures the practical involvement of children in their learning;
- the good teaching offers children purposeful opportunities to work effectively in groups and independently;
- practitioners have a good knowledge of each child's development;
- the close relationship between the practitioners and the children promotes a happy and purposeful learning environment;
- children receive good quality care and support which contributes effectively to their wellbeing and development; and
- the learning environment is colourful, attractive and warm.

### Prospects for improvement

The setting has good prospects for improvement because:

- the leader provides sound leadership and a clear sense of purpose to the setting's work;
- effective teamwork ensures purposeful provision for children;
- the management committee undertakes its responsibilities efficiently;
- practitioners have a good understanding of the setting's main strengths and areas for improvement;
- there is evidence of improvements being introduced successfully; and
- the good collaboration with a range of partnerships contributes constructively to children's development and wellbeing.

## Recommendations

R1. Develop the opportunities for children to use their Welsh oral skills more independently

R2. Strengthen the link between self-evaluation and forward planning by setting clear targets to develop children's skills

R3. Extend the supply of information and communication technology (ICT) resources, and plan to develop children's skills more consistently

### **What happens next?**

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skill development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children present at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

### Key Question 2: How good is provision?

**Good**

#### Learning experiences: Good

Practitioners provide a wide range of interesting experiences across the areas of learning. Activities are based on a series of themes that are appropriate to children's ages and stage of development. There is good use of story books, seasonal events and children's ideas as a stimulus for activities. Short term planning is detailed and provides clear guidance on teaching and learning.

The curriculum is enriched appropriately by the contribution of visitors and some visits. As part of the theme on animals, for example, children received a valuable learning experience when observing animals and birds in the company of a wildlife park officer. A visit to the National Botanic Garden of Wales has helped children learn more about plants and the world of nature.

Provision provides purposeful activities to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills through the learning experiences provided. Welsh is the natural medium of the setting's work. During group activities, there are good opportunities for children to listen to stories, join in songs and rhymes, learn to recognise their names and the main letters of the alphabet, and use their marking skills. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to use their Welsh speaking skills independently.

There are good opportunities for children to count, recognise and understand the value of numbers, learn about shapes and handle money in their play. The opportunities for children to collect information about fruits, for example, and to present their findings in the form of simple graphs provide a purposeful challenge to extend their skills. There are appropriate opportunities for children to use basic ICT skills but planning is not detailed enough to promote and extend their skills consistently.

There are productive opportunities for children to practise their thinking, problem solving and investigative skills through activities such as collecting and counting autumn fruits, and sorting them according to colour and size.

Children are introduced to Welsh traditions and celebrations effectively through activities such as celebrating St. David's Day and St. Dwynwen's Day.

## **Teaching: Good**

Practitioners have a secure understanding of the Foundation Phase and child development. They make effective use of different teaching strategies which ensure the practical involvement of children in their learning. There is a clear structure to the daily sessions with an appropriate balance between activities chosen by the children and those led by practitioners.

Activities are thoroughly prepared and there is effective use of suitable resources to support the teaching and learning. During story time, for example, there is imaginative use of a range of resources including books, toys and pictures to maintain children's interest and to encourage them to participate. Practitioners provide good language models and take advantage of all opportunities to develop children's vocabulary. This promotes children's understanding of more extended vocabulary effectively. Practitioners have a secure understanding of when to intervene in children's play. They support them well to work independently and to use their skills, for example their creative and investigative skills, confidently.

Practitioners know the children well and use appropriate processes to assess and record their progress. Children are observed closely when participating in their daily activities and practitioners record and discuss significant developments fully. The leader makes good use of the information gathered to identify personal targets for the children and to plan the next stages in their learning, as individuals and as groups. The detailed records of children's progress across the areas of learning are updated regularly and used effectively to monitor each child's progress.

Parents are kept suitably informed of their children's development through informal discussions and a detailed annual report. An appropriate transition form is completed when the child moves on to the primary school.

## **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The setting operates as a happy and caring community. A range of suitable policies are implemented and daily routines established. They safeguard and promote children's wellbeing appropriately.

Relevant learning experiences promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. Practitioners are good role models and treat one another with respect. There is effective use of daily activities to promote values such as kindness, concern for others and courtesy. Experiences, such as harvest thanksgiving, Christmas celebrations and the offering of a prayer before snacks, contribute effectively to children's spiritual development. There is good attention to developing children's awareness of the need to help others less fortunate by raising money for good causes.

Children's awareness of the wider world is developed appropriately through learning about other peoples' cultures and celebrations. For example, there is good use of a range of craft activities to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

There are appropriate arrangements to support children with additional learning needs, when required. There are clear lines of communication with key agencies such as children's care services and speech therapists.

Practitioners contribute effectively to raising children's awareness of healthy eating and establishing a healthy way of living. Healthy daily snacks, including fresh fruit, milk and water, are available for children. As part of the 'Life Skills' programme, there is effective use of the contribution of a visitor to talk to children and demonstrate a range of healthy foods.

Experiences, such as growing and caring for plants, recycling and composting activities promote children's awareness of the need to care for the environment and all living things successfully.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Regular risk assessments are recorded fully.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The setting is an inclusive community where all children have equal access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided. Practitioners consider and appreciate children's varying backgrounds and they act appropriately in accordance with this information.

The setting has an appropriate number of suitably qualified practitioners to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase. With the exception of ICT, there are enough resources to support the teaching and learning.

The building offers facilities of good quality. There is effective use of space through the creation of a range of activity areas around the hall. The colorful displays create an interesting environment which celebrates children's work. The small outdoor area and access to the local school's playing field and outdoor facilities provide purposeful opportunities for children to investigate and play. The building is clean and safe.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The setting leader's sound leadership provides a purposeful and well organised environment for children. Practitioners share common values based on promoting each child's development and wellbeing. They understand their roles which promotes good teamwork. Policies and procedures are implemented appropriately.

The management committee provides effective support. Members have a good understanding of the setting's work and communicate consistently with parents through regular meetings. The chairperson visits the setting to observe provision and to discuss with the leader. This contributes constructively to the process of identifying needs and planning improvements.



The setting has a suitable system to appraise the work of practitioners and to identify further professional development needs. This is reflected appropriately in the training and support programme provided.

The practitioners give suitable attention to national and local priorities including implementing the Foundation Phase, developing children's literacy and numeracy skills and promoting healthy eating.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Practitioners have a good understanding of the setting's main strengths and areas for development. The leader monitors provision consistently by observing and discussing practice with other practitioners. The setting seeks the views of children, parents, the management committee and relevant agencies. The information gained from this process contributes positively to the evaluation process and future planning.

Planning for improvement is established appropriately. An example is the system whereby the effectiveness of each activity area is reviewed in turn. This approach has resulted in improvements in relation to locating and organising the role-play area. The new arrangement attracts more children to play collaboratively and to apply their learning skills.

The setting self-evaluation report provides a balanced view of provision. The setting improvement plan that emanates from this process identifies suitable areas for improvement. It includes appropriate success criteria and notes individual responsibilities and the actions to be taken. Nevertheless, there are insufficient links with the outcomes of self-evaluation by setting clear targets for the areas to be improved such as the need to develop children's Welsh speaking skills further.

The support and guidance of the link teacher assists practitioners well in taking on board new ideas and methods of working. This is demonstrated by the focus on promoting children's number skills and the purposeful use of new resources to support teaching and learning.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The setting has a number of strategic partnerships that make an effective contribution to the quality of provision and to children's development.

There is a good partnership with parents and this was confirmed during the inspection. Parents are offered relevant information through pamphlets, newsletters and the notice board. Practitioners are regularly available for discussion at the beginning and end of sessions.

There is a strong partnership with the management committee and members and practitioners share the same aims for the further development of the setting. The constructive partnership with the Local Authority and Mudiad Meithrin officers supports the setting purposefully by providing training and advice.

The setting benefits from its links with the community particularly the links with local businesses. This ensures good support for the setting's fund raising efforts to supplement its learning resources.

The constructive links with the primary school include good opportunities for practitioners and children to use the learning facilities on the school site. This promotes a smooth transition for children to the next stage in their education.

**Resource management: Good**

Resources are managed effectively. The setting is staffed appropriately and there is productive use of the practitioners' time and skills. There is an appropriate range of learning resources which are used fully.

The practitioners attend relevant training on the Foundation Phase curriculum and on aspects of child development. The positive impact of the training is reflected in the quality of the learning experiences such as activities to develop children's early literacy and number skills. The practitioners make suitable use of training days to share experiences and good practice with other settings.

The leader and treasurer have a good understanding of the budget and prioritise spending appropriately according to the setting's needs.

In view of the effective provision and strong leadership provided, the setting offers good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

The number of responses received was fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

## Appendix 2

### The reporting inspector

Dorothy Morris	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](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

## Glossary of terms

<b>Areas of Learning</b>	<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"> <li>• personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity</li> <li>• language, literacy and communications skills</li> <li>• mathematical development</li> <li>• Welsh language development</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the world</li> <li>• physical development</li> <li>• creative development</li> </ul>
<b>CSSIW</b>	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.
<b>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)</b>	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 partnership's conditions of registration.
<b>Foundation Phase</b>	The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.
<b>Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)</b>	Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.
<b>Local authority advisory teacher</b>	These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.
<b>Mudiad Meithrin</b>	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.

<b>Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)</b>	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
<b>National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)</b>	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
<b>Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)</b>	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.