Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

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

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Bethel
Ysgol Gynradd Bethel
Bethel
Caernarfon
Bethel
Gwynedd
LL55 1AX

Date of inspection: May 2022

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Cylch Meithrin Bethel

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Bethel
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Amanda Hughes
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Gwenno Thomas and Margaret Williams
Number of places	19
Age range of children	Two and a half to four years old
Number of 3- and 4-year-old children	22
Number of children who receive funding for early education	5
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday from 08:45 to 14:45 during term time
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service provides the “active offer” for the Welsh language. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the needs of those who use the service, or who may use the service, in terms of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	September 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	January 2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	17/05/2022

Additional information

All children come from Welsh-speaking homes.

Non-compliance

No issues of non-compliance were identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

A1 Ensure that reading books inside the building are fully accessible to the children

A2 Improve opportunities for children to move independently between indoors and outdoors

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being:

Most children are happy, enthusiastic and ready to play immediately on arrival at the setting. They express their feelings clearly and make effective choices about where they would like to play and with whom they would like to share experiences. For example, they decide either to prepare food in the role-play area or complete a jigsaw.

Most children are enthusiastic, hard-working and show motivation, perseverance and resilience in their play and learning. They respond eagerly to practitioners' challenges and support. For example, they respond to practitioners' questioning about insects and snails intelligently and extend the discussion further by talking about the creatures' habitat. Most have good imaginative skills as they discuss the fairies that live in small houses in the gardening area. Most express their ideas and preferences effectively and know that practitioners will respect their ideas, such as choosing to eat a snack before going out to play in the outdoor area.

Most children concentrate well and act confidently when taking part in stimulating activities. As a result, they share and work purposefully with their peers. They are creative and imagine real-life situations excellently, such as using building blocks to create water pipes to extinguish a fire. Most take pride in the excellent opportunities that are available to them, such as creating and insect area then searching for insects with magnifying glasses and digging equipment. They also experiment intelligently with sinking and floating objects in the water tub and study flowers and vegetables growing after they have planted the seeds.

Most children have good independent skills. For example, they wash their hands effectively, take off their coats and place their bags in an orderly manner. They also prepare their fruit and drinks neatly after emptying their bags independently before snack time. They behave excellently, politely and treat practitioners, other children and visitors with respect. For example, they enjoy welcoming visitors and smile widely while saying 'good morning'. Nearly all children play well together and enjoy each other's company when pretending to eat fruit and drink a cup of tea in the role-play area.

Most children enjoy learning new skills as they experiment with a wide variety of interesting learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy playing in a group and a few take advantage of the attractive and quiet areas to reflect and chat with a friend. Most show pride when discussing purposefully the colourful displays that celebrate their creativity and this creates a sense of self-worth and belonging among the children.

Learning (only applies to three- or 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 were not enough three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection, who do not

receive funded education elsewhere, to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development:

Practitioners set high expectations and priorities to keep children safe and healthy. They have a sound understanding of their responsibilities and implement all of the setting's policies and procedures purposefully. They have a strong understanding of the responsibilities and provide good opportunities for children to develop in line with their age and ability. For example, they emphasise the importance of treating people with respect and courtesy. As a result, practitioners lead conversations with children intelligently, in line with each child's individual needs.

All practitioners have up-to-date first aid and food hygiene certificates, which ensures a sound understanding of the processes to be followed. Hygiene procedures and practices are effective and practitioners encourage children to wash their hands at the appropriate times purposefully and completely independently.

Practitioners keep thorough records of any concerns, accidents, incidents and personal information. All practitioners' training in relation to child protection is up-to-date and useful when discussing any problems or concerns that arise. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners manage interactions with children highly effectively and there is a wonderful relationship between practitioners and children. The practitioners' use of beneficial practices to support children to make friends, manage their feelings and cope with difficult situations is successful. Practitioners implement the behaviour management policy well and talk to children sensibly and in ways that they understand. For example, practitioners remind groups of children to work together carefully and avoid pushing each other. As a result, practitioners model effective behaviour and show constant respect towards the children.

Practitioners have good knowledge of each child's needs and preferences by acting on information from parents when they register their children at the setting. They are aware of each child's development steps and act effectively on the next steps in individual children's learning journey. Practitioners also attend courses to support any children with additional learning needs to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge to deal with individuals' needs.

Practitioners promote children's understanding of the importance of treating people from all cultural backgrounds with respect and tolerance. They develop their understanding of celebrations and charity causes well, such as studying the Chinese New Year and taking advantage of opportunities to raise money. Practitioners use the Welsh language regularly with children, which supports and develops their Welsh purposefully.

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

Practitioners' teaching supports children effectively to develop a wide range of purposeful skills, which has a positive effect on their learning. The enthusiastic encouragement of practitioners motivates children to work together diligently and their intelligent teaching prompts children to experiment confidently while playing. For example, practitioners challenge children to balance buckets of water on scales and build towers with three-dimensional shapes. As a result, most children develop as increasingly independent learners.

Practitioners intervene effectively in children's play. They provide good opportunities for children to take pride in their successes and have sensible discussions with children about how to improve their efforts. They weave these reflective conversations skilfully into their assessments in order to plan the next steps in individual children's learning purposefully. Practitioners also provide parents and carers with beneficial information about their children's achievements on social media, through oral discussions and in progress booklets.

Practitioners plan thoroughly and motivate children to learn through a range of practical challenges. They provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which pursue children's suggestions and interests successfully. They provide interesting activities that enable children to take risks and develop their cognitive skills well. For example, they challenge children to roll and cut roots, stems and petals from playdough to reflect how a flower grows.

Practitioners plan engaging opportunities to develop children's literacy skills. They question children valuably as they make marks with crayons and chalk and challenge children to describe their pictures in detail while they paint. However, reading books are not accessible to the children inside the building, which hinders their early reading experiences.

Practitioners provide effective numeracy experiences for children. They provide good opportunities for children to explain the properties of shapes and match them to holes in a box and set purposeful targets to children to sort and number farm animals. They also provide regular opportunities to improve children's early digital skills by using educational apps on electronic tablets and equipment to control cars on a track.

Practitioners ensure that children develop successful physical skills. They encourage them to travel and balance on a narrow path and stepping stones and climb and slide on adventure equipment. They provide stimulating creative experiences, such as creating a spider web by cutting holes in paper with scissors and decorating it. They also mix fruit and vegetables in the role-play area to make a cake, before baking the ingredients in the oven and microwave.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. They promote Welsh culture well by celebrating St David's Day and the story of St Dwynwen. They also celebrate diversity beneficially by studying special holidays, such as the Chinese New Year and interesting and moral stories from different continents around the world.

Environment:

The quality of the learning environment is good and provides purposeful and valuable opportunities for children to learn and play both inside and outside the setting. Practitioners ensure that the play environment, equipment, toys and resources are stimulating and suitable for the age of the children.

The way that the building is organised allows children to move around freely and make effective choices about their play. Apart from access to books, practitioners ensure that resources are kept at a practical level so that all children are able to reach them easily and independently. Practitioners focus on creating a natural environment to create a relaxing feel within the setting. They use intelligent lighting in the different areas by turning some lights off and hang material from the ceiling to create a homely and cosy environment for the children.

Children's well-being is promoted purposefully through the wide selection of toys and equipment that are available in the playroom and the outdoor area. The outdoor area is interesting and includes a number of natural areas for children to explore and learn independently. However, there are no opportunities for children to choose to play either indoors or outdoors of their own accord.

The environment is inclusive and all children have equal access to all resources and various activities. Children are given an opportunity to go to the toilet and use the handwashing basins independently, which promotes their independence effectively. Toilets and handwashing facilities are also clean and comply efficiently with hygiene requirements.

Practitioners ensure that children are safe and are given valuable opportunities to stay healthy by following a range of clear and comprehensive policies. They prioritise assessing all risks in relation to the indoor and outdoor areas on a daily basis. They have regular fire drills so that children can familiarise themselves with these arrangements. The setting is clear and tidy and very well-maintained.

Practitioners are very aware of safety issues. Visitors cannot go to any part of the setting unless a practitioner gives them access. They are vigilant when supervising children during all activities to ensure their safety. For example, they use effective procedures to ensure that children leave the setting either with a parent or recognised carer.

Leadership and management:

The leaders' clear vision ensures that practitioners work together enthusiastically to provide stimulating activities that promote children's learning purposefully. The setting's leadership strategies are sound and leaders focus diligently on improving provision and children's outcomes.

Leaders plan and anticipate intelligently to provide an interesting environment and stimulating resources. They provide loyal pastoral care, which creates a sense of belonging among children and adults. As a result, the positive environment encourages children to strive consistently during learning and play.

Leaders and practitioners work effectively as a team. Practitioners are keen to improve their practices for the benefit of the children and listen sensibly to the suggestions of the leaders and support agency officers. There are arrangements in place to evaluate their performance and leaders supervise and evaluate practitioners' work thoroughly. They also ensure that safe recruitment practices are implemented correctly.

Leaders set realistic expectations for themselves and practitioners to maintain high standards. They have good knowledge of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement by implementing valuable self-evaluation procedures. Appropriate targets for improvement, which derive from their regular evaluations, are reliable. For example, they have focused recently on developing the outdoor area and improving ICT resources. As a result, leaders focus on introducing improvements regularly to enrich the setting's practices.

Leaders ensure that full consideration is given to the views of everyone who is involved with the setting. They hold valuable discussions with all stakeholders, such as support organisations, to improve provision and children's experiences. For example, they listen carefully to support officers about developing planning practices to pursue children's interests effectively. They also act meaningfully on the suggestions of parents and carers, such as providing pictures of children's activities on secure social media each week.

Leaders have forged a range of robust local partnerships, which provide engaging experiences for children. For example, the fire service and a road safety officer were invited to the setting to discuss their roles in the community and their work with the children. The very productive relationship with the school also prepares children for the next step in their education effectively.

Leaders allocate resources well. They use the budget and grants effectively and prioritise expenditure purposefully against the setting's targets. For example, they fund various resources wisely, such as a planting area and balance bikes. Leaders ensure that relevant training is available to practitioners, which improves their teaching practices and planning of the curriculum.

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)

This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).

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