Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

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

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Gwdi Hw

Penrhiw Estate
Brynithel
Abertillery
Blaenau Gwent
NP13 2GZ

Date of inspection: November 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Gwdi Hw

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Gwdi Hw
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Leanne Marsh
Person in charge	Zoe Powell
Number of places	19
Age range of children	2-4 years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	1 child
Number of children funded for early education	1 child
Opening days / times	9:00 to 14:45 Monday to Friday
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service provides the Welsh language 'Active Offer' and makes every effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and Welsh culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	13 September 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	14/11/2023

Few children have prior experience of the Welsh language.

The new Person in Charge has been in post since September 2023.

Summary

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Extend opportunities for children to play and learn 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 are very happy in their learning and play environment. They are enthusiastic, enjoy the suitable activities on offer, and interact very well with their peers and the practitioners.

Most children settle immediately and feel safe in their environment. Almost all children demonstrate a fondness towards their practitioners, approaching them happily and comfortably when leaving their parents and carers. Most children develop sound relationships with other children. For example, they share pots and spoons in the outdoor mud kitchen. The children demonstrate a sense of pride in their work by showing their paintings to the practitioners. They listen well to directions given by the practitioners, responding happily when receiving praise, for example, for hanging their coat on the peg independently.

Most children move confidently from one activity to another, selecting activities of interest to them. They enjoy playing with water resources and are excited to add rice to create patterns. Others enjoy making mud cakes explaining that they were making the cake for Mum and Dad. Most children express their wishes and preferences confidently. They choose drinks and healthy snacks and where to sit to eat their food. The majority of children demonstrate effective listening and communication skills by speaking or using non-verbal communication. They point at resources and areas of their choice or tell the practitioners what they would prefer. The children listen well to the practitioners when they encourage them to put on their coats or wash their hands before eating.

The majority of children concentrate for increasing periods. They take their time to build a train track independently and feel confident to move the resources to different play areas. The children play on bikes enthusiastically, racing each other, and go to

the 'shop' to buy fruit and vegetables in the outdoor areas. Most children interact well with each other, sharing and taking turns when playing with the mud kitchen resources. They respond well to practitioners' techniques when the importance of sharing the bowls and spoons was explained to them. When celebrating success, the children take pride in their creative work painting flowers as a gift for their family and showing them to their peers and the practitioners.

The majority of children develop appropriate independence skills. They lead their play, selecting activities and undertaking construction tasks, role play, craft and creative work purposefully. The majority of children are able to meet their personal needs by going to the toilet and putting on their coats themselves. Most children undertake daily tasks independently, including helper of the day, as well as jumping, dancing, and handling and setting up equipment. They develop good mathematical skills and identify some colours, animal names and count successfully. They hold books in a mature way and develop their physical skills effectively through experimentation and play.

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

There is no report on the children’s learning. This is because there was an insufficient number of three and four year olds present at the time of the inspection, not receiving funded education elsewhere, about whom we could report without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

There is a very close relationship between the practitioners and the children. They know the children very well and respect their interests, preferences and personal needs. The practitioners allow children to pick and choose their own resources in the indoor and outdoor play areas. They meet the children's individual needs by planning tasks in accordance with their interests. The practitioners assist the children to extend their understanding of spoken language and develop their imagination successfully. They communicate effectively and celebrate the children's successes regularly praising them effectively, for example, when they put on their coat independently or after completing a piece of art work. They provide good opportunities for the children to develop their independence by encouraging them to pour their drink and choose their food as well as collect and return their cups and plates during meal times. The leaders and practitioners make very effective use of natural resources and materials to enable the children to experiment and discover. For example, there are excellent opportunities to experiment with containers and water, as well as using soil, leaves, twigs and grass to create cakes and imaginative cooking.

The practitioners help the children to understand their emotions well, for example, during circle time they self-register their personal emotions. They show warmth and kindness towards the children when they arrive every morning. The practitioners offer a good range of activities and experiences which develop the children's ability to play together appropriately both indoors and outdoors. The practitioners manage children's behaviour consistently and fairly and are positive role models. They ensure

that the children are aware of the need to share and be kind to others. They show the children how to wash their hands effectively.

The practitioners have a good understanding of additional learning needs. They complete personal profiles and individual education plans to respond to children's needs successfully.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. The practitioners have a very good understanding of child protection procedures and are fully aware of their responsibilities. They complete effective risk assessments and follow very thorough procedures to ensure careful supervision to secure the children's health and safety. They promote healthy eating and drinking by providing healthy and nutritious snacks. Practitioners keep detailed records of accidents and incidents including practitioners' and parents' signatures.

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

The practitioners have a friendly relationship with the children and they support and encourage them appropriately. The practitioners work together effectively and plan engaging experiences that allow the children to develop into confident and caring explorers in their environment. For example, they give them opportunities to observe nature, to grow plants and vegetables, and to consider and respect others.

The practitioners continue to reflect on and adapt their practice in relation to the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. They develop effective assessment procedures and use the information to purposefully plan the next steps in the children's education. When playing alongside the children, the practitioners teach effectively and often ask questions that encourage the children to think and discover things for themselves. For example, when the children play in the water tub, practitioners ask them effective open-ended questions in order to develop their mathematical language and their reasoning skills. However, the practitioners tend to over-guide the learning which often limits opportunities for the children to apply their skills independently.

The provision to support the children's early literacy skills is appropriate. The practitioners focus purposefully on improving the children's speaking skills by repeating vocabulary and phrases, and they encourage them to make marks using a variety of media. The practitioners' regular practice of encouraging children to use numeracy skills to count and sort objects, name shapes and compare objects of different sizes is effective. The provision for developing children's digital skills is limited.

The practitioners plan a wide range of experiences for children to develop their creative and physical skills successfully. For example, they encourage them to experiment with dough, prepare meals in the mud kitchen, use a range of equipment for construction, and ride bikes skilfully around obstacles in the outdoor area.

The practitioners develop the children's spiritual, moral and social skills successfully. They encourage the children to take their turn and to say please and thank you in order to understand the importance of sharing and good manners. They promote

culture well by studying the history of St David and celebrate diversity appropriately by examining traditions and special festivals during the year, such as Diwali, Easter, Christmas, the birthday of Dewin and Doti and Mr Urdd day.

Good use is made of the community with practitioners taking the children out for walks to the chapel and the park and visiting the field and the farm to observe nature. These opportunities are beginning to create a clear awareness amongst the children of their local area.

Environment: Excellent

The leaders prioritise children's safety at all times. They ensure that sound procedures are in place to ensure that any potential hazards are monitored and managed very effectively. Detailed risk assessments outline potential hazards and the action being taken to reduce or prevent any risk to children. Managers and practitioners complete daily checks to ensure that there are no obvious hazards.

The setting is completely safe, welcoming and warm and is very effectively maintained. The indoor and outdoor play areas are open and unrestricted encouraging the children's curiosity as they can move around freely and easily. The indoor and outdoor areas have been set out very carefully and purposefully. The leaders ensure that there are a wide range of activities to enrich experiences successfully. A range of natural resources and equipment are available including flowers, leaves and dried foods such as rice and flour, which enrich and expand the children's experiences and allow them to develop their imagination. The outdoor play area provides a wide range of purposeful and exciting activities and opportunities for the children. For example, areas for gardening, construction, reading, painting and mark-making, cycling and a mud kitchen. The areas that develop children's curiosity include loose parts, and scientific and creative exploring and discovering experiences.

The leaders ensure that there is a wide selection of interesting and exciting resources and equipment available. These are of high quality and are stored at a low level so that children can choose them independently. The leaders ensure that high quality resources are available to develop awareness of different cultures.

Leadership and management: Good

The leaders have created a clear vision which sets a clear direction for the setting's procedures. The vision is based on ensuring that a high quality service is delivered in relation to the children's well-being, care and learning. The leaders create a positive atmosphere of team-work across the setting and the practitioners support each other well. This creates a homely, happy and welcoming ethos.

The setting’s statement of purpose is appropriate and gives an accurate picture of what the setting offers. The leaders ensure that a suitable range of relevant policies and procedures are in place. The setting complies with the regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

There are comprehensive procedures for staff recruitment and for ensuring staff suitability. Robust self-appraisal procedures have a good impact on the setting's

practices. The leaders ensure that the opinion of everyone who is associated with the setting is taken into account and as a result, the procedures have an appropriate impact on creating purposeful improvements. For example, leaders have highlighted the importance of developing their own Welsh language skills, and of listening carefully to the voice of the child in order to shape the provision according to the children's interests.

The leaders manage the practitioners conscientiously through their supervision and appraisal procedures. These arrangements ensure the accountability of all practitioners regarding the standard of provision and children's outcomes as well as offering them beneficial opportunities to develop professionally.

The leaders have developed useful links with a range of partners that support and improve the quality of the provision and children's outcomes appropriately. For example, the setting has positive links with the local school that prove very effective during transition.

The leaders allocate resources and prioritise budget expenditure and grants against targets in a sensible manner. This ensures that all the practitioners are well-qualified and benefit from purposeful training which improves their assessment and planning practices to meet the children's needs. As a result, the setting's decisions promote exciting and valuable experiences for the children.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (http://careinspectorate.wales) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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

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

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Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

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