Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Estyn | Dros ddysgwyr, dros Gymru
For learners, for Wales

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Cwm Derwen

YGG Cwm Derwen
Beech Grove
Oakdale
Blackwood
NP12 0JL

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Cylch Meithrin Cwm Derwen

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Cwm Derwen
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Cylch Meithrin Cwm Derwen
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Katie Szekely
Person in charge	Katie Szekely
Number of places	16
Age range of children	2 – 4 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	10
Number of children who receive funding for early education	7
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 12.00 – 2.30
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This service provides the Welsh Language Active Offer and makes every effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	19 October 2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	July 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	13/05/2025

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	**Good**
Learning **(only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
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	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Strengthen the way in which practitioners use the Welsh language to extend children's oral skills

R2 Continue to develop the role of the management committee to refine evaluation and supervision procedures

R3 Develop partnerships within the local community

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Many children are happy and enjoy the company of their friends and practitioners as they socialise together. They make choices confidently and enjoy the freedom to move around the learning areas. For example, they choose if they would like to play indoors or in the outdoor area. Nearly all children join groups of friends in line with their wishes. They delight in choosing resources as they have time and free access to the play areas. For example, they enjoy experimenting with dough, building with blocks and trying craft and art experiences. Many children are comfortable asking for help when going to the toilet, completing an obstacle course or finding specific resources such as spray bottles to water plants.

Nearly all children settle quickly and go to greet their friends, on arrival, before walking together to the setting. They are eager when organising their bags before sitting excitedly for the short registration and singing session. Children cope well and feel safe and at home. They are familiar with their environment and the routines of the session and seek the closeness of practitioners or friends when joining activities. They have the confidence to call the practitioners' names, when necessary, and show that they have a sense of belonging. Many children develop their understanding of their identity, such as enjoying looking at the children's individual 'Dyma Fi' ('This is Me') books on the bookshelf and pointing enthusiastically at a display of their artwork.

Many children interact well and develop their social skills. They enjoy the company of friends and learn to share. For example, children enjoy opportunities to garden and wait their turn to plant peas. They work together busily to fill saucepans in the mud kitchen and talk happily about what to add to the mixture. While doing so, they solve and select equipment such as spoons and small jugs to move the water from one saucepan to the next. They smile and laughing while completing tasks such as the obstacle course and enjoy their warm relationships with the practitioners.

Many children are enthusiastic and persevere purposefully while learning. For example, when experimenting in the outdoor area, they take interest in the role-play area, by selling and buying from the market stall. They learn the names of vegetables such as asparagus and fill baskets with fruit or use the till. Many children concentrate for periods to water the flowers and vegetables while others develop their physical skills on scooters, bicycles and the slopes in the outdoor area. When they succeed, many children are eager to try again.

Most children develop good independent skills, for example when going to the toilet and washing and drying their hands without support. They take pride in their achievements, such as using the water fountain themselves, pouring drinks independently and show pride when fulfilling their responsibilities as 'helper of the day'.

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

Nearly all children make appropriate progress from their individual starting points and develop a range of skills effectively while playing and learning. They are curious learners. Nearly all children make suitable progress in developing their communication skills during their time at the setting. They increase their vocabulary regularly and use it in a relevant context, for example when asking for a drink at snack time and when answering the register. They listen carefully to practitioners and other children and respond appropriately when talking to visitors. Most children look at books with an adult and respond appropriately to the story. Most use a variety of mark-marking equipment effectively. They make patterns in the sand and dough and make marks on paper to convey words, for example by putting their names next to their picture.

Most children make sound progress in their mathematical development and use correct mathematical language when counting spoonfuls of flour up to 5 and naming 2D shapes when playing with the dough. They apply their mathematical knowledge appropriately when playing in the different areas and discuss objects that are bigger or smaller than each other.

Most children's digital skills develop appropriately. They use talking buttons to record themselves talking and singing and use them to listen to simple instructions. Nearly all children demonstrate strong problem-solving skills. For example, they consider which container is the best to hold the water without overflowing. Nearly all children persevere with the tasks until they complete it.

Nearly all children demonstrate strong physical skills. They use a wide range of resources appropriately when walking along the obstacle course and kicking and catching balls. Nearly all children's fine motor skills are strong. For example, they string beads to create a long snake and use food tongs to pick out a sandwich at snack time.

Nearly all children show sound creative skills. They make effective choices about what to use to create their work, for example when choosing a paint colour to paint a leaf to make a butterfly.

Nearly all children's personal, social and emotional skills are strong. They are completely independent when playing with their friends and respect the contributions of others.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners understand their responsibilities to keep children safe and prioritise their health and safety successfully. They implement robust policies and procedures effectively. Practitioners understand their responsibilities in safeguarding children and have completed appropriate child safeguarding training and are confident when following clear policies and procedures. They assess children's needs on a daily basis. For example, they consider the importance of sun cream during sunny weather and ensure the use of sun hats and plenty of drinking water. They have attended appropriate first aid training and keep accurate records of accidents and incidents.

Practitioners follow robust hygiene procedures during snack times and encourage children to wash their hands regularly. They provide a varied and healthy menu and understand their responsibilities to protect children with allergies. They also have clear procedures for administering medication. They ensure dignity and privacy when following the nappy changing policy and record these practices on a daily basis. They understand their responsibilities in supporting children with additional learning needs and have effective networks and purposeful procedures to follow, when necessary. Practitioners have a thorough and organised registration system and have consent records in place. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners have a tender relationship with the children and treat them with care and respect. They are kind and good role models when interacting warmly. They take their time to listen and explain gently which creates a respectful environment and a sense of belonging. Practitioners praise children regularly and support them to persevere with activities. For example, when planting, they encourage children to take their time and to try tasks again. Practitioners talk next to the children regularly and understand when to intervene or offer support and praise. Many practitioners use the Welsh language and develop their confidence when working with others.

Practitioners know the children very well and have a clear understanding of their individual needs and wishes. They are passionate about the learning experiences they provide and their enthusiasm has a positive effect on children's learning experiences. Practitioners observe the children continuously and use effective methods such as taking pictures and recording children's achievements to feed into the planning process and the next steps. They take pride in their system of recording the children's daily achievements, where all practitioners contribute and discuss ideas and the children's individual skills.

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

By listening successfully to the children's voice, practitioners succeed in planning learning experiences that engage the interest of nearly all children. They have a sound understanding of child development and the way in which children learn through play and experimentation. They ensure that children have seamless access between the outdoor and indoor area. As a result, they encourage children's independence and develop their curiosity effectively. They provide beneficial opportunities for children to take suitable risks, for example by steering bicycles down the slope on the playground under the careful supervision of practitioners to test the speed of travel down the slope.

Practitioners have a suitable grasp of the Welsh language and communicate appropriately with children on more formal occasions. In the best practice, they model spoken language by introducing vocabulary and phrases purposefully, for example during snack time or circle time. However, they do not provide sufficient opportunities to develop children's oral skills.

Practitioners foster a very strong relationship with the children and have created a very homely environment. As a result, children settle quickly and are keen to explore and experiment as soon as they arrive at the setting. Practitioners have created an attractive reading area which includes the children's personal *"Dyma Fi"* books. This engages children's

pre-reading skills effectively. Practitioners provide a range of opportunities for children to begin to make marks and develop their early pre-writing skills. They are beginning to understand that marks represent words, for example by beginning to put their names on their artwork. Practitioners provide an effective range of resources and opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills. Most count correctly when placing beads on a string to create a long snake.

Provision for physical skills is strong. Practitioners provide a range of purposeful resources that allow children to develop secure physical balancing skills. As a result, they enjoy using the bicycles, scooters, balls and obstacles. Provision for children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is sound. Practitioners ensure opportunities to learn about interesting events in other cultures. They promote children's awareness of their Welshness and their *cynefin*, or local area, skilfully, for example when celebrating Remembrance Day by creating and placing a poppy wreath in front of the local cenotaph.

Practitioners observe regularly and use the information that is gathered successfully to plan activities that promote children's development. They are prepared to adapt their planning in response to children's needs and interests.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure a safe and clean environment. They have robust measures to ensure that there is safe access to the school site and that access to the building and visitor records are managed carefully. The setting's maintenance procedures are effective and leaders ensure that fire drills are conducted regularly. They conduct purposeful risk assessment which are reviewed regularly. Leaders keep an attendance register for children and practitioners and ensure that the ratios of practitioners to children are correct at all times.

Leaders provide a good quality inclusive environment that is welcoming and warm. They provide suitable toilets and private and purposeful nappy changing facilities. They use the setting and the site's facilities and access to the outdoor area effectively, which allows a continuous and safe flow for the children. In the main room, leaders provide an open environment where small furniture and storage units full of resources promote children's independence. The outdoor area provides stimulating experiences for children. For example, there are sheltered areas and a hard sloped surface that offer challenges and opportunities for children to take risks while fostering physical skills. Leaders ensure beneficial opportunities to develop children's curiosity. For example, outdoors, children have access to a book nook, authentic equipment such as sweeping brushes and watering cans to enjoy gardening and sand play. Indoors, they provide exciting learning experiences such as role-play area, an art area, mathematics and construction. They ensure a good balance between promoting children's safety and supporting them to take risks. For example, children choose their own equipment to add to an obstacle course.

Leaders provide resources of a high standard for the children's age and stage of development. They provide countless opportunities to experiment with a wide range of resources such as real crockery in the role-play area. Outdoors, they provide opportunities for children to undertake responsibilities, such as taking care of plants of flowers. There are opportunities in every area to explore, make marks and take risks. Children enjoy

multicultural resources such as dolls and a range of experimenting resources, such as talking and singing tiles. Leaders and practitioners encourage children's personal and social development effectively by providing experiences and resources for them to learn about diversity and about the world. For example, they have a range of books, a family table and a digital screen that shows images of Wales. Children are given opportunities to celebrate specific days, such as dance day, and enjoy using seasonal tables such as the summer table, where they use a mirror to put on their sun hats.

Leadership and management: Good

The leader has a robust vision for ensuring that all children are happy and safe at the setting. She is passionate about providing them with the best possible foundation while they are in her care. She inspires the team and has succeeded in creating a strong sense of belonging. She is completely committed to the work of the provision and the well-being of children and practitioners is very important to her.

Leaders follow safe and robust recruitment processes and have effective arrangements for evaluating practitioners' performance. Leaders support practitioners successfully and ensure that they are given regular professional learning opportunities, training and supervision. However, there is no system in place to ensure that the leader has individual supervision meetings to discuss performance and development needs. Leaders review their policies in line with requirements and implement them well. No breaches of regulations or national minimum standards were identified during the inspection.

Leaders have established thorough and effective self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures. They work closely and successfully with the local authority advisory teacher and support organisations. They respond purposefully to any recommendations for improvement. As a result, the setting has a good understanding of its areas for development and its strengths. Practitioners work with external agencies and seek advice regarding child development to ensure that children receive the support they need.

The leader makes good use of the early years development grant by ensuring that they employ additional practitioners and ensure suitable resources to support children's skills. They use funding effectively, for example by developing the outdoor area.

Leaders and practitioners have a strong relationship with parents. They communicate through regular conversations at the beginning and end of the session. They also make good use of a digital social page to inform parents about weekly activities. They include parents effectively in the children's learning journey, for example by getting parents to create a *"Dyma Fi"* ("This is Me") book which outlines the children's interests and what it is beneficial for practitioners to be aware of.

Leaders develop children's awareness of their *cynefin*, or local area, appropriately through activities such as going on walks to the nearby forest. However, there are very few opportunities to work with the local community.

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 judgement 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

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

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Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

Mae’r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

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