A report on

Cylch Meithrin Pwllheli

Cymerau Primary School
Ffordd Mela
Pwllheli
Gwynedd
LL53 5AR

Date of inspection: January 2026

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Pwllheli

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Pwllheli
Category of care provided	Full Day Care
Registered person(s)	Cylch Meithrin Pwllheli
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Gwenllian Evans
Person in charge	Kimberly Jones
Number of places	19
Age range of children	2-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	35
Number of children funded for early education	7
Opening days / times	9:00am – 3:00pm Monday and Friday. 9:00am – 5:00pm Tuesday to Thursday. Open during the school term.
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	26 February 2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection	26 February 2020
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	27/01/2026
Additional information	

Summary

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

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Continue to focus on developing children's confidence to start using Welsh with increasing independence.

What happens next

The setting will produce an action plan showing how it will implement the recommendations.

CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to how practitioners record and use observations purposefully to meet the needs of all children for dissemination on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

Nearly all children are happy and content at the setting. They settle and cope well when leaving their parents or carers at the start of sessions as they have formed strong relationships with practitioners. The minority of children who need extra support are comforted and encouraged by practitioners, who help them to feel secure and to happily join their friends in play.

Nearly all children communicate confidently and make their own decisions successfully. They choose how to spend their time very effectively, follow their interests and take part in learning and play experiences in their own time. Practitioners prioritise children's opinions and choices, and always consider and meet their individual needs. For example, they are able to express when they do not want to take part in activities such as brushing their teeth until they are ready to do so.

Most children respond well to praise, with many showing pride in their work and eagerness to share their successes. For example, they are eager to show their creative work and to share it with practitioners, asking them to add their work to the 'Wow Wall'. They show pride when they receive praise from practitioners for their efforts. Nearly all children are familiar with the daily routine and comply with the routine in a mature way. For example, they put toys back in the appropriate place without bother when practitioners tell them that it's time to tidy up and they go to sit on the mat immediately.

Most children are beginning to develop sound social skills and are learning to share toys and resources. For example, they are happy to take turns using the bikes and wait for their turn to use the sand timer. Many children are happy to work together and to share resources effectively. For example, they work together to create an adventure course and share resources in the mud kitchen to make a cake.

Nearly all children enjoy their play and learning. They concentrate and persevere diligently when undertaking tasks. Nearly all children enjoy problem solving and experimenting with different materials and resources. For example, they enjoy feeling the texture of jelly with their hands and persevere when pouring warm water to melt the ice to release the small animals. Nearly all children are curious about the world around them and enjoy experimenting with natural materials. For example, they thoroughly enjoy experimenting with clay to make cakes and pancakes, adding dried petals and flour.

Nearly all children choose activities in line with their interests and develop their independence skills successfully. For example, they help to pour their own drink during snack time, learn how to handle crockery carefully in the role-play area and put equipment and toys back in the appropriate places without adult intervention. Nearly all children develop good independence when completing self-care tasks, such as wearing their coats, washing their hands and placing their bags and coats in the appropriate places.

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

A number of children are making good progress from their starting points, particularly in relation to their physical skills. Nearly all children engage happily with their play and use the resources available meaningfully. They make deliberate choices about where to play and the majority show confidence when choosing not to take part in an activity. Most children wait their turn patiently and show responsibility by taking care of resources.

Many children are developing their literacy and communication skills effectively. They show a keen interest in books and handle them appropriately as young readers. Nearly all children listen carefully and follow instructions appropriately when sharing toys. Many children use marking tools appropriately and a minority can describe their work in an intelligible way. Most children are developing a strong understanding of the Welsh language, with some starting to use Welsh during activities and play. Some children are starting to form the letters in their names successfully. In the case of the few children who are not yet verbal, they are developing effective communication strategies to ensure that their needs are met appropriately.

Many children are developing their numeracy and problem-solving skills effectively. They show confidence when using digital equipment and control electrical toys increasingly skilfully. Many children have an outstanding understanding of numbers and count naturally and intentionally during their play. They work together effectively to solve practical problems. For example, they agree on the best way to rescue a vehicle that has become stuck. Many children recognise mathematical symbols and replicate patterns successfully.

Most children are developing their physical skills very effectively. They walk along beams, crawl through tunnels and jump in muddy puddles confidently. They are developing their fine motor skills particularly effectively. For example, when playing in the mud kitchen, they control spoons skilfully to transfer ingredients from the bowl to the baking tin. Outside, they show natural curiosity when exploring the woodland and use bikes and scooters confidently with excellent co-ordination. Many children are developing sound creative skills, using their imagination effectively during role-play. For example, they choose dressing-up clothes to imitate a flying butterfly. They enjoy singing and dancing and show good control of their movements.

The emotional skills of many children are developing well. They show increasingly effective control of their emotions, and seek support from trusted adults when needed.

Care and development: Excellent

All practitioners give high priority to safeguarding and follow sound procedures to ensure that children are kept healthy and safe. Practitioners have a thorough understanding of the correct procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child. They use the practices learnt from their training on safeguarding children effectively. All practitioners have completed appropriate first aid training and record any accidents in detail, ensuring that parents are made aware of the incident. Fire drills are conducted regularly and recorded effectively. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet the requirements and pose no cause for concern.

All practitioners follow thorough procedures to prevent the spread of infection. They follow effective practices during nappy changing and encourage children to wash their hands where appropriate. They promote healthy eating and physical activities successfully. They also ensure that there are valuable opportunities for children to spend time outdoors in the fresh air regularly.

All practitioners form very positive relationships with the children. They are patient, speak to the children in an affectionate manner and treat them with care and respect. All practitioners use very effective and consistent strategies to promote positive behaviour in accordance with the setting's policy. They also use consistent praise effectively. All practitioners respect the children's feelings and support them to understand and start controlling their emotions. For example, when children cry because they do not want to wait their turn to play with the bikes, they acknowledge the children's feelings and comfort them. They help them to compromise by explaining the concept of sharing and helping them to understand that they will get their turn after waiting, using a sand timer as a visual aid. Consequently, children develop their self-confidence in a very beneficial manner and learn positive social skills.

Practitioners follow purposeful arrangements for identifying and supporting children's needs, including children with additional learning needs. They collect a wide range of information about preferences, individual needs and any information that may be important to support the child. This information is used to create a personal profile for each child, which includes useful strategies to help practitioners learn how to support the children effectively. For example, they comfort children who find it more difficult to leave their parents when they arrive. There are positive procedures in place for referring children to external agencies for support, if needed.

Practitioners communicate regularly with parents via social media and by completing daily diaries. They create bespoke books to share with parents at the end of each year, which contain photographs of the children taking part in activities and examples of their achievements. Practitioners hold regular open days and parents evenings to allow parents to see the various activities and resources provided. As a result, parents receive current information about their child's development.

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

Practitioners demonstrate a sound understanding of child development and the curriculum. They have a natural way of enabling children to lead their learning and they skilfully balance long periods of uninterrupted play with more structured periods. As a result, children are given valuable opportunities to immerse themselves fully in their play, as well as worthwhile opportunities to build and develop their skills.

The setting provides rich learning experiences that meet children's needs very effectively. They develop children's literacy skills successfully by providing regular opportunities to talk, read and write in meaningful contexts. Practitioners model language very effectively. They play alongside children and use rich language to demonstrate vocabulary and extend understanding. They work effectively to develop an affinity for books by sharing texts with children and encouraging discussion. They promote writing purposefully by providing a range of marking tools in the indoor and outdoor play areas. The setting celebrates children's progress skilfully by displaying their early written work, which helps develop children's confidence when talking about their experiences.

Practitioners organise exciting and challenging experiences to develop children's physical skills. For example, they attend the leisure centre weekly for gymnastics sessions and are given daily opportunities to climb, balance and ride various bikes. These valuable experiences support children's cognitive development, strength and resilience very effectively. Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their creative skills by singing and dancing to familiar songs.

Practitioners provide a range of digital resources across all play areas giving children a valuable opportunity to experiment and solve problems. For example, a range of cameras, phones and remote control vehicles are available for children to explore and use independently. Practitioners set out resources purposefully to create a very effective environment that develops children's numeracy skills successfully. They set out measuring tapes, weighing scales and numbers to ensure that children use mathematical concepts naturally during spontaneous play.

Practitioners provide excellent opportunities for children to learn about and take an interest in their local area to reinforce their sense of belonging to the community. For example, they visit the local woodland to collect natural items for crafting and go to the café to buy drinks. They support children's social and moral development in particular by visiting the old people's home regularly to sing and chat with residents. This helps children to develop empathy and respect while communicating in an authentic context. Practitioners plan valuable experiences that develop children's cultural understanding effectively. For example, they celebrate the Chinese New Year by creating symbols, tasting, dancing and using traditional stories. They ensure that children are given valuable opportunities to develop spiritually by saying prayers of thanks before eating and at home time.

The setting has progressive procedures in place to observe and assess children. Practitioners record relevant observations identifying progress and individual needs. They use information from their observations skilfully to identify the next steps in children's learning and

achievable individual targets. As a result, there is clear progression in children's learning. Practitioners develop comprehensive one page profiles that are updated regularly, with support from parents and carers. Through the effective relationships established, especially with the parents of children with additional learning needs, practitioners ensure a strong partnership that supports progress and strengthens children's learning experiences skilfully.

Environment: Good

Leaders prioritise child safety and ensure that sound procedures are in place to check, monitor and manage any potential hazards effectively. Detailed risk assessments outline potential hazards and action taken to reduce or prevent any risks to children. Additionally, practitioners complete appropriate daily checks and address any hazards identified quickly and effectively. They plan activities thoroughly where children take risks themselves. For example, they provide sessions where children are given opportunities to use manual construction tools, visit the beach and learn in the forest.

Leaders ensure that the learning and play areas are pleasant and comfortable. They display examples of children's work and photographs on the walls which create a sense of belonging. The play areas are arranged effectively, with a wide variety of natural materials and resources and real life objects. This provides plenty of opportunities for children to experiment, explore and learn about the world around them. For example, there are opportunities for children to build using pieces of wood and to experiment with herbs, flowers and soil in the mud kitchen. Real machines and objects in the role-play area help children to handle equipment carefully and develop their independence skills, for example by making a cup of tea using real crockery.

Leaders have developed the outdoor play areas to offer a good variety of purposeful activities and opportunities for children to develop their skills through play. For example, they have an adventure course with climbing equipment, a woodland area and a range of mark-making tools on designated tables. Leaders ensure that there is a good range of interesting resources and equipment available in the indoor areas. These are of good quality and are stored at a low level so that children can choose them independently without any adult intervention. Practitioners clean equipment and resources regularly and monitor this by keeping detailed records.

Leadership and management: Excellent

The leadership of the setting is very effective and has an outstanding influence on the quality of provision and children's standards of well-being. The setting's warm and homely ethos clearly reflects the high expectations of leaders. Leaders ensure there is a strong emphasis on supportive practices that focus on children's well-being. They arrange relevant training that strengthen the team's practice successfully. As a result, leaders manage to create an outstanding environment where children are given a voice, where their feelings are validated and where they feel safe in the learning environment. Leaders ensure that assessment systems and documents are detailed, up-to-date and purposeful. They arrange specific times for staff to contribute to observation and planning. No non-compliance was identified with regard to the regulations or the national minimum standards during the inspection.

Leaders have a clear vision for improvement. They draw on support from key partnerships to raise standards, including working with the school to develop projects such as the forest school. Leaders have established very effective procedures to identify the setting's strengths and any areas for development. As a result, they have invested strategically in purposeful resources such as digital equipment. This planning is systematic and focuses clearly on delivering the statement of purpose.

Leaders prioritise practitioners' professional development ensuring valuable training opportunities are provided regularly. They arrange valuable one to one meetings that provide an opportunity to discuss concerns and ensure high-quality and carefully-tailored support is provided. Leaders ensure that all practitioners have clearly-defined roles and responsibilities, and through the focus group system, practitioners are able to get to know the children well and prepare detailed plans for them. The inspired guidance of leaders has an extremely positive effect on practitioners' confidence and their interaction with children.

Staff files are up-to-date and well-organised, and very effective supervision is undertaken regularly to ensure safe and professional practice.

Leaders monitor the budget carefully and make purposeful use of grants to provide exceptional education for all children. For example, they are investing in a canopy to improve the outdoor provision and arranging sensory training in response to children's requirements.

The setting has a strong relationship with parents, with open evenings, contact books and a digital app for sharing information about children's progress. Leaders ensure there are extremely effective transition arrangements with the primary school and help children to transition confidently to the next step in their education. Leaders ensure that the community is at the heart of the setting by arranging visits, welcoming visitors, and encouraging active partnerships that support children's learning and well-being very effectively.

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

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

© Crown Copyright 2026: This report may be re-used free of charge: (a) in any format or medium; and (b) may be translated by or on behalf of an education and/or training provider in respect of which this report relates into any language, provided that it is re-used and/or translated accurately in each case and not used in a misleading context. In each case, the material (including any translation) must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 31/03/2026

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

This report is also available in Welsh

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2026.
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.