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 Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant

Ysgol Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant
Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant
Oswestry
Shropshire
SY10 0LG

Date of inspection: October 2024

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Lowri Jones
Person in charge	Alwen Harding
Number of places	16
Age range of children	2 to 4 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	8
Number of children who receive funding for early education	4
Opening days / times	Monday, Tuesday and Friday: 08.45am – 15.15pm, Wednesday: Closed, Thursday: 08.45am – 11.15am
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This 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	07/11/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection	03/11/2016
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	10/10/2024

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	**Excellent**
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)**	**Excellent**
Environment	**Excellent**
Leadership and management	**Excellent**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Identify opportunities to celebrate diversity and promote children's awareness of diversity within society.

What happens next

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

CIW and Estyn will invite the setting to prepare a case study on its work in relation to 'the effect of leadership on provision for children', to be disseminated on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

Nearly all children are happy and enjoy the company of their friends and practitioners as they socialise readily with each other. They make decisions regularly which have a very strong effect on their well-being and self-esteem. For example, as children lose interest in activities, they choose to move to another area of their own accord. They enjoy the freedom of the open flow to move enthusiastically around the learning areas, such as the indoor craft table and the large blocks in the outdoor area. Nearly all children approach practitioners confidently and play together very successfully. They help themselves to resources confidently and know that they have the freedom to do so. For example, they enjoy choosing to experiment with bicycles or tricycles, use a hammer at the worktable or experiment with water. Nearly all children are comfortable and confident asking for help if they find a task or activity challenging, for example when opening a spray bottle, mastering the water fountain or using wooden pegs to grasp items of their choice.

Nearly all children settle quickly and play happily, energetically and excitedly. They cope very well and feel safe and at home. The children are familiar with the daily routine and know what comes next, which creates a strong sense of belonging. They take pleasure in developing their understanding of their identity, their community and their friends. For example, during registration, children are excited to answer questions and smile when they receive praise. During the dance session, children who are less confident immerse themselves fully in the activity and smile and laugh with their friends while waving pieces of material.

Nearly all children interact readily and develop their social skills while chatting happily and sharing in their play. They respect the feelings and interests of others and learn to work together and take turns. For example, when experimenting outdoors with bubble sticks, children solve problems effectively by sharing liquid skilfully among themselves and celebrating when they see their bubbles appear in the air. They develop close and warm relationships with practitioners and interact confidently with visitors. Children show pride and enjoy showing what they are able to achieve, such as when comparing shapes they have created from natural materials.

Most children play very enthusiastically and persevere purposefully and happily when learning. For example, they enjoy using authentic tools, concentrating carefully and immersing themselves in the task of hammering nails into pumpkins. They are aware of the importance of using safety equipment over their eyes when undertaking the task. Nearly all children experiment in their environment confidently. For example, they enjoy producing liquid with citrus fruits by using sieves and filters to create lemon and orange tea.

Most children develop excellent independent skills by attempting tasks enthusiastically by themselves. For example, most children choose a song to sing independently by taking a wooden spoon. They also enjoy the independence of using the low sink to wash and dry their hands without support and show pleasure in setting the table for snack time. Most children use small jugs successfully to pour milk or water into their cups. They take pride in their achievements when completing tasks, such as helping to clean up real dishes. They also show genuine pride when adopting the role of ‘Helpwr Heddiw’ and show complete satisfaction as they complete their tasks.

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: Good

Practitioners understand their responsibilities fully in terms of keeping children safe and prioritise their health and safety successfully. They implement robust policies and procedures effectively. Practitioners have completed appropriate child safeguarding and first aid training and keep clear and accurate records of accidents and incidents. They provide varied and healthy snacks and follow sound hygiene procedures during snack and lunch times. Practitioners are very knowledgeable about their responsibilities to protect children with allergies and have clear procedures for administering medication. They ensure complete dignity and privacy while following the nappy changing policy and keep accurate records. Practitioners have a thorough and well-organised registration system and have clear consent records in place. The setting’s arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners have an excellent relationship with the children and treat them with care and respect. They are very kind and model excellent interactions in a sincere manner, including teaching children to consider their values and to share and take turns. Practitioners observe, listen and explain in a caring and gentle manner that fosters close-knit relationships and a strong sense of belonging. For example, practitioners praise children in a meaningful way and encourage them to try activities. Practitioners chat or sing in a very warm manner which fosters a calm and safe environment. They model the Welsh language clearly and consistently, which has a very obvious effect on the children's understanding. Practitioners are always on hand. For example, they sit at the table with the children during snack times and reinforce good manners and politeness very successfully.

Practitioners know the children very well and have a clear understanding of their individual needs and wishes. They offer support when children ask, for example as they develop their skills to create numbers on digital tablets as part of the daily registration process. Practitioners are very knowledgeable about procedures for children with additional learning needs. They have established strong partnerships to provide specific support in line with children's developmental needs. They encourage and support children to think, be confident and solve problems independently. Practitioners use the environment very creatively and offer valuable opportunities to provide a variety of experiences that motivate children to learn through play. They provide excellent experiences for them to use high quality resources. For example, there is a rich range of authentic equipment, such as dishes and construction tools to introduce responsibilities and build life skills. Practitioners ensure beneficial opportunities to enjoy stories in an intimate manner and develop children's understanding to learn about their feelings and their own identity.

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

Practitioners provide a broad and rich curriculum for the children in their care. They engage with parents regularly to include children's interests when planning and adapting provision. As a result, they add purposeful resources that ensure that children engage fully during their play and learning periods. Practitioners have thorough knowledge of the children's interests and an understanding of elements that are challenging for them. This reflects the strong partnership between practitioners and parents and promotes the children's well-being and learning very successfully.

Practitioners succeed in creating an effective balance of activities that develop specific skills, along with opportunities for children to play for extended periods. They intervene skilfully in play and adapt their questions for individual children. For example, they use more extensive vocabulary with children who speak Welsh as a first language and feed language successfully to those who are newer to the language. As a result, most children's understanding develops very well. Practitioners use familiar songs often, which enables children to become familiar with the vocabulary associated with different daily patterns.

They provide beneficial opportunities for children to develop their early reading skills by enjoying books and stories in a fun and supportive environment. They teach children to recognise their names, by noticing the first letter, and tell stories that interest the children. There is a good range of puppets and toys available which allow

children to role-play and enjoy developing the confidence to express themselves. They place children's names on the table during snack time so that they come to recognise the written form of their names. Children also enjoy making marks on the large blackboard in the outdoor area.

Practitioners provide rich opportunities for children to develop fine motor skills, for example when hammering nails skilfully into balsa wood or the skin of a large pumpkin. Children have regular access to outdoor areas, such as the forest area, where they can develop physical skills and manage risks maturely. Practitioners encourage the development of numeracy skills skilfully, for example as a child creates a rectangle shape from pinecones they have collected. There are beneficial opportunities for children to develop their digital skills, including using digital scales in the role-play area.

Practitioners provide excellent opportunities for children to develop creativity. They develop an awareness of rhythm in music by using a range of percussion instruments. As a result, children become completely immersed and express themselves very skilfully as they wave different light materials around them to the rhythm of the music.

Practitioners plan beneficial learning experiences that promote children's social, moral and spiritual awareness and their understanding of the traditions of other cultures. For example, they celebrate events such as Diwali and provide a range of resources such as kitchen utensils and a variety of clothing to enrich children's experiences. However, opportunities for children to learn about diversity within society has not been developed in full.

Practitioners have a thorough awareness of the children's development and the next steps needed to develop their skills further. This work is very thorough and effective and promotes learning successfully. Practitioners share information with parents regularly through digital methods and regular meetings.

Environment: Excellent

Leaders have a very thorough understanding of the importance of providing a safe and clean environment and have robust arrival and departure procedures. Visitors sign in to the school site and the setting and there are clear records of each visit. Leaders ensure that the building's maintenance records are up-to-date and maintain effective procedures to ensure that safety exercises, such as fire drills, are robust, regular and purposeful. Leaders also conduct clear and meaningful risk assessments for the setting, trips and activities. They ensure that these are reviewed regularly and used effectively and purposefully, in line with the setting's planning timetable. The children's safety is absolutely central to this process. Leaders and practitioners provide convenient areas on site where detailed and interesting information is available to parents, which includes policies, safeguarding procedures and a preview of the week's activities.

Leaders ensure a very high-quality environment that is welcoming and homely. They ensure safety, privacy and sufficient space for the number of children who attend on a daily basis. They use the site's facilities effectively, such as the main room and the enclosed outdoor areas. Leaders provide an environment that offers continuous

access to children to play and learn in a stimulating and homely environment. They also provide an exciting outdoor environment, which offers a range of diverse and safe areas including water, mark-making and construction equipment, along with trails to develop physical skills. Leaders use the site's wooded areas regularly and effectively, which allows children to develop confidence and co-operation skills, for example when going on an exciting treasure hunt. They take advantage of the additional outdoor area which provides engaging challenges and beneficial outdoor learning and play experiences. Leaders and practitioners take every opportunity to use the site's additional areas effectively, including the use of the school hall for dancing and the rainbow room for enjoying stories. These arrangements are valuable for children's well-being and development and highlights the excellent co-operation between leaders and the school.

Leaders build a wide range of excellent resources for children, appropriate for their age and stage of development, such as stimulating equipment they have made from recycled materials that promote robust messages about sustainability. They place them at low levels to promote children's independence and pursue their interests. For example, they provide bottles and cardboard so that children can create imaginative creative resources. Leaders provide numerous and varied opportunities for children to develop their imagination and experiment with handling real resources, such as fruit and vegetables in the role-play area. They also provide purposeful resources such as household appliances and a large suitcase containing clothing, so that children can develop curiosity and use their imagination to plan an imaginary trip.

Leadership and management: Excellent

Leaders work together successfully and share the same clear vision for maintaining provision of the highest quality for the children in their care. Leaders and staff are passionate about their work in developing children's skills and taking care of their well-being. Leaders share responsibilities meaningfully and provide the staff with high quality support. They have a very good awareness of Curriculum for Wales and their work has an excellent influence on children's well-being and progress.

Leaders have established thorough and robust self-evaluation procedures which have led to a culture of continuous improvement. They scrutinise provision, taking into account the current best practice, to identify aspects that would benefit from further development. Leaders seek the views of stakeholders, taking into account the comments of key partners when agreeing on improvement priorities. They ensure valuable opportunities for practitioners to attend training, as necessary, or organise visits to other settings to share ideas and view good practice. For example, there have been opportunities for practitioners to visit nearby settings to expand their use of the outdoor area. Leaders work together purposefully to ensure that improvement work is manageable and focus on developing the experience of the child. They set sensible milestones and evaluate the impact of their work regularly.

Leaders manage staff and resources very effectively. Practitioners benefit significantly from regular evaluation meetings which are led by members of the management committee. This ensures that the committee's work is sustainable and disseminates strong practice. As a result, leaders provide a suitable range of training in line with the needs of practitioners, which contributes well to the sense of being valued.

A range of strong partnerships have an excellent effect on the quality of provision. Leaders work very successfully with the school. For example, children are given beneficial opportunities to spend time in the forest area, in addition to eating their lunch in the school hall on a daily basis, which facilitates the arrangements as they move to the next stage in their learning. Practitioners work closely with the local authority's early years advisory team, and with umbrella organisations, to improve the quality of provision and children's outcomes.

Leaders promote a sense of belonging successfully among the children though community events such as 'something nice for tea' and visits to the local church at Easter. This promotes the children's sense of being part of the local Welsh-speaking community very well. Members of the local gardening club visit the setting to develop children's awareness of nature and where our food comes from.

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

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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.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	
	Regulation 28: Suitability of Workers	Achieved

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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