A Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru Care Inspectorate Wales report on

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

Cylch Meithrin Pontrobert

Village Hall
Pontrobert
Meifod
Powys
SY22 6JN

Date of inspection: July 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Pontrobert

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Pontrobert
Category of care provided	Sessional day care
Registered person(s)	Bethan Edwards
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Lowri Lewis
Number of places	18
Age range of children	2-4 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	19
Number of children who receive funding for early education	11
Opening days / times	Monday 09:00-15:00 Tuesday 09:00-12:30 Wednesday 09:00-11:30 Thursday 09:00-15:00
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, or might use, the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is the setting’s first inspection.
Date of previous Estyn inspection	November 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	04/07/2023
Nearly all children come from English-speaking homes.	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	**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 Ensure that practitioners' interactions support and extend children's skills

R2 Develop the use of assessments and observations further to plan purposeful experiences that meet the needs of all children

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children are happy within their learning and play environment. They feel safe at the setting and are happy on arrival when leaving their parents/carers. Nearly all are happy to approach practitioners for support and a hug when they are tired or sad. They undertake their various tasks enthusiastically and enjoy them greatly. Nearly all children take pride when they are praised by practitioners, for example for pouring their milk independently or singing well.

Nearly all children show a strong sense of belonging to the setting and have a strong voice in relation to choosing activities and where they would like to spend their time. They feel that practitioners value them, listen to them and respect their preferences when choosing their favourite play areas. As a result, they move confidently from one activity to another. Most express their feelings well, either orally or through eye contact with the practitioners who know them well. The youngest children point at resources, while many of the older ones express clearly verbally what they need, such as more milk or help to put on their sun hat and coat.

Most children interact well with each other and communicate effectively with their peers. They are kind, behave in a polite and friendly manner, take turns and share toys in line with that is appropriate considering their age and stage of development. A few children show empathy towards others, such as holding out their hand to help another child while walking to the outdoor area. Most children interact well with practitioners, respect them and listen attentively to their instructions and questions.

Most children play enthusiastically and concentrate well for extended periods while building a path for a digital toy to roam around. They join in with activities enthusiastically and a few laugh out loud, for example while controlling the direction of an electronic care underneath the tables and chairs and crashing into walls.

Most children develop good independence skills. On arrival at the setting, a majority look for their names so that they can place their coats and bags in the right place. Nearly all children help themselves to a cup and drink during snack time. Nearly all pour their own milk and water, fetch their own fruit and return the dishes to the washing up bowl after they have finished.

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

Nearly all children play together enthusiastically and make good progress in their learning, by choosing where to play independently. Nearly all listen attentively and respond appropriately to instructions. They join in with songs, such as *'Sut mae'r tywydd heddiw?'* successfully. Around half of the children use the Welsh language spontaneously. Nearly all discuss books skilfully and engage with stories that are read by practitioners enthusiastically. They read their names successfully during self-registration. A majority of children make marks purposefully with different media, such as chalk, paint and crayons and are beginning to develop their early writing skills effectively. For example, they keep notes meaningfully in booklets to make a shopping list in the role-play area. A minority of the older children write their names successfully.

Many children develop their numeracy skills suitably. They join in enthusiastically with number nursery rhymes, for example *'Pum crocodeil yn nofio yn yr afon'*. A majority of children use simple mathematical language in relevant contexts, for example when comparing the size of dinosaurs and when building with wooden blocks. Nearly all recite numbers to 10 verbally. Many children identify colours confidently in Welsh and name two-dimensional shapes while playing. However, the children's number skills and concepts are rudimentary considering their age and progression step.

Nearly all children develop strong physical skills by climbing on adventure equipment and sliding on the slide in the nearby community park. Around half of the children develop throwing skills confidently, for example by throwing a ball into net and different shapes.

Most children develop their creative skills well and use their imagination while playing. For example, in the kitchen area, they use loose parts to emulate dog food. They perform a dance on the outdoor stage skilfully and enjoy creating their own rhythm by hitting sound bars in the community park.

Nearly all children are familiar with using information and communication technology (ICT) resources during their play and do so fairly confidently. For example, they use an electronic tablet to draw pictures and choose different colours. Many children solve problems by controlling where Mr Urdd can travel around the setting in his

electronic car. A few children concentrate for an increasing amount time to solve problems, for example by investigating magnetic shapes to create a star-shaped box.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners prioritise the children's health and safety successfully. They understand their roles and responsibilities well and implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively. Practitioners have up-to-date first aid certificates and a thorough understanding of children's individual needs. They follow procedures carefully and keep accurate records of accidents, incidents and medication. Practitioners have up-to-date food hygiene certificates and procedures are effective. For example, they disinfect tables carefully before snacks and wash their hands regularly. They are aware of the children's health needs and have clear procedures to support those needs.

Practitioners have a sound understanding of child safeguarding processes and are confident in implementing them should they have any concerns. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Leaders ensure that the staffing ratios are always suitable and ensure that the procedures for the children's arrival and departure from the setting are safe and effective.

Practitioners have a fond and warm relationship with the children and treat them with care and respect. They interact naturally and explain and support the children to respect each other. Practitioners act as very good role models and interact positively by listening, working together and explaining in a clear and caring way. They promote physical activities appropriately and provide regular opportunities for children to be energetic and develop their skills. Practitioners provide consistent messages about the importance of playing safely to ensure that the children do not hurt themselves while playing and experimenting; for example, they remind the children not to construct a water pipe in front of the swing.

Practitioners build a very good relationship with the children and have a clear understanding of their individual needs and wishes. Practitioners provide an ethos and environment that nurtures care and demonstrates respect. They encourage the children's independence kindly and sensitively and provide encouragement to build on their individual skills to nurture their self-respect. During snack time, children are encouraged to visit the 'snack kitchen' in their own time, without intervention from practitioners. Practitioners have an appropriate understanding of additional learning needs. They are aware of the new framework and follow the processes confidently, as they are outlined in the setting's policy.

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

Practitioners plan a range of interesting learning experiences that encourage the holistic development of each child. They provide long periods of uninterrupted play for children to explore their ideas. Practitioners have a good understanding of child development and provide effective opportunities to nurture their independence. One

of the strengths of planning is the way in which practitioners consider the suggestions and interests of the children, in addition to those of parents, when providing experiences. Practitioners' teaching methods support children to develop a range of useful skills that expand their knowledge and understanding. As a result, most children maintain an interest while playing for extended periods.

Practitioners are effective language models and feed vocabulary successfully. They plan engaging opportunities to develop literacy skills, for example by reading stories warmly and enthusiastically and stimulating the children to develop a love of books. Practitioners interact with the children warmly and intervene suitably while they are engaged in their play. However, discussions do not always focus effectively enough on extending children's skills.

Practitioners develop the children's creative and physical skills consistently well. They also make effective use of the local area to enrich children's learning experiences and support their awareness of their community. This supports the development of children's skills across the curriculum effectively.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills very well. For example, they encourage the children to take responsibility for tidying up their plates and cups at the end of snack time and teach them to wait their turn with digital devices. They focus very well on honesty, fairness and respect and ensure that children understand that they need to treat each other and their environment with care.

Practitioners develop the children's curiosity of the world around them by celebrating cultural occasions, such as the Chinese New Year. They promote the children's awareness of Welsh culture effectively through a range of activities and celebrations, such as St Dwynwen's Day, St David's Day and celebrating the Urdd procession.

The setting has appropriate observation and assessment procedures, which enable practitioners to use this information to plan a suitable range of learning and play opportunities. However, they do not always use their assessments to plan challenging experiences for each child, particularly the concept of number. Practitioners implement effective initial assessments for each child. Recently, they have recorded these assessments in the form of a personal letter to the child. Parents are very happy with this method of sharing information about their children. Practitioners also observe children regularly and share those comments with parents face-to-face at the end of the week.

Environment: Good

Leaders provide a safe, clean and stimulating environment for children in the local community hall. The leader and practitioners complete daily safety checklists for each area, including the outdoor area. They ensure that the indoor and outdoor environments are maintained to a good standard. Practitioners complete thorough risk assessments. They have satisfactory safety and insurance certificates.

Although practitioners set out and put away all equipment and resources on a daily basis, they succeed in creating a stimulating play and learning environment. They

make effective use of the room and the outdoor area to provide well organised learning areas that children can use independently. For example, the woodwork play area promotes learning experiences by providing real-life resources. There is plenty of space for practitioners to lead group activities, including dance and interactive story time. The outdoor environment provides a full range of engaging experiences for the children and leaders and practitioners make the most of the space available. Practitioners plan to use the outdoor area as often as possible, which promotes children's skills and well-being successfully.

The effective range of resources in all areas are within the children's reach, which promotes their independence. For example, practitioners encourage children to take advantage of resources in the role-play area, and to help themselves to painting resources, digital resources and outdoor play equipment. Practitioners provide resources that support children's learning well and support their creativity. For example, good use is made of natural resources and large and small loose parts, such as pipes, tyres, buckets, shells and tins. There are resources to support understanding of celebrations to extend the children's curiosity and understanding of the world and knowledge of different cultures and diversity, as appropriate.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders create a positive ethos at the setting and all children and practitioners are happy there. They ensure that they consider the views of all stakeholders. They hold useful discussions with them and consider their suggestions in full. A very good example of this was the way in which everyone contributed to the process of creating the setting's vision.

Leaders lead the setting robustly and focus effectively on improving provision and children's skills. As a result, they ensure that practitioners work effectively together to create an interesting environment, which promotes children's learning purposefully. Practitioners listen sensibly to the advice of support officers and ensure that they work together effectively as a team.

All practitioners work together successfully to treat the children with kindness and care. Practitioners feel that they are valued and supported in their roles. Leaders support the professional learning and personal needs of all practitioners to increase their knowledge, understanding and skills.

The registered person plays a core part in the setting's activities and works closely with the person in charge. This ensures that she has a sound understanding of what happens from day to day and enables her to support practitioners continuously. There are regular arrangements in place to evaluate the performance of practitioners and they supervise and evaluate their work effectively. There is a clear statement of purpose, which is reflected effectively in the setting.

There is a strong and continuous evaluation system in place to identify strengths and areas for improvement. For example, they have identified the need to use the Early Years Development Grant to develop the outdoor area effectively.

Leaders engage well with parents and carers when their children start at the setting to gain an individual perspective of their strengths and preferences. There are effective systems in place to share the latest information with parents and carers about their children's progress. They also use social media effectively to provide parents and carers with up-to-date information about their children's experiences.

The setting has strong links with the local primary schools. This co-operation ensures that children are supported effectively as they move forward to the next step in their education.

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. 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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