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Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

A report on

Cylch Meithrin y Graig

Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd
Ruthin
Denbighshire
LL15 2SD

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 y Graig

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin y Graig
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Ceri Lewis
Responsible individual (if applicable)	
Person in charge	Samantha Lewis
Number of places	34
Age range of children	2.5-4 years old
Number of 3- and 4-year-old children	26
Number of children who receive funding for early education	2
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 08:00 – 15:00
Flying start service	Yes
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	19/04/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	First inspection since registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	20/01/2026
Additional information	

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)**	
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 use of continuous observation and assessment to guide the adaptation of provision to meet the developmental 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

Most children are happy and enjoy the company of their friends and practitioners as they socialise. They make choices confidently and take advantage of the opportunity to move fairly freely between the areas. For example, they decide if they would like to play indoors or in the outdoor area. Nearly all children join groups of friends in line with their wishes and help themselves to resources carefully. For example, they enjoy experimenting with dough, building with blocks or riding bicycles. Many children are comfortable asking for help, for example when putting on a helmet or preparing for the forest school session.

Most children are enthusiastic on arrival and settle quickly. They are familiar with the morning routine and complete tasks independently, such as putting away their coats and bags before self-registering with increasing confidence. They cope well when saying goodbye to their parents or carers and feel safe and at home at the setting. Many children have the confidence to call the practitioners' names, as necessary, which reinforces a sense of belonging. They gain satisfaction from developing their understanding of their identity. This is reinforced as they look at pictures of themselves with their families in the *'Llyfr Teulu'* (Family Book), pointing enthusiastically at their own family. A majority of children are comfortable with visitors and include them in their play.

Many children interact well. They respect the wishes of other children and learn to share with increasing intelligence. For example, children enjoy having art and craft opportunities and wait for their turn to use the glue. They work together busily to create a magic potion in the mud kitchen and talk happily about what to add to the mixture. While doing this, they pick and choose equipment such as a teapot and saucepans suitably to mix different-coloured water. They value their warm relationships with the practitioners and smile when receiving praise after answering questions.

Most children are energetic and enjoy participating. They are active in their play and benefit from opportunities to explore, experiment and discover without being under time pressure. For example, they persevere purposefully when using tools such as hammer and golf pegs to free penguins from blocks of ice. A few children concentrate for longer periods as they build an animal shelter by using magnetic shapes.

Most children develop robust independent skills, for example when going to the toilet and washing and drying their hands without support. They use a knife skilfully to spread butter on toast, pour milk into a cup and wash their own dishes as part of the snack time routine.

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 for keeping children safe and prioritise their health and safety successfully. They provide good care and support. Practitioners have a good understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding children, have completed appropriate training and demonstrate a sound awareness of policies and procedures. Practitioners have attended appropriate first aid training and keep accurate records of accidents and incidents. As a result, the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners follow robust procedures during snack times and encourage children to wash their hands regularly. They provide a varied, healthy menu and understand their responsibilities to safeguard children with allergies. They also have clear procedures for administering medication. Practitioners ensure complete dignity and privacy when following the nappy-changing policy and record these practices on a daily basis. They understand their responsibilities to support children with additional learning needs and have effective networks and dedicated procedures to follow, when necessary. Practitioners have a thorough and well-organised registration system, along with appropriate consent records.

Practitioners work together successfully to reinforce kind values. They treat the children with care and respect and are good role models when interacting warmly. Practitioners praise the children regularly and support them to persevere with activities. For example, when cutting paper with scissors, they encourage children to concentrate and to hold the scissors correctly. As a result, children follow practitioners' instructions regularly. In general, practitioners take their time to listen and explain in a gentle manner and understand when to intervene to support children. For example, when children ask for assistance, practitioners are on hand to step in and offer support, when needed. They promote the Welsh language continuously by talking, singing regularly and introducing language patterns effectively.

Practitioners know the children well and have a clear understanding of their individual needs and wishes. They are passionate about their work and work diligently to provide a variety of experiences to motivate the children to learn by doing. For example, they teach the children to understand their feelings during circle time. Practitioners record observations of children's progress in the *'Taith Dysgu'* books and showcase their successes on 'Cwlwm Balch'.

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

Practitioners forge strong relationships with the children and create a warm and caring environment. As a result, children enjoy attending the setting, settle quickly and are eager to explore and experiment as soon as they arrive.

Practitioners are considerate of the children's voice and succeed in planning effective learning experiences to engage the interest of most children. They have a good understanding of child development and the way in which children learn through play and discovery. Practitioners manage children's behaviour sensitively and firmly. They encourage them to share, tidy up and respond to disruption in a caring manner. Practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to make choices, solve problems and take appropriate

risks. For example, they add resources such as knives to cut fruit during snack time and ensure suitable opportunities for children to climb and balance on a log while playing outdoors.

Practitioners' effective teaching methods motivate children to engage well with their learning. This has a positive effect on developing children's skills, knowledge and understanding. Practitioners provide activities that encourage children to work together purposefully, develop empathy and their social skills successfully. For example, they encourage children to work together as they gather leaves and twigs to make soup for the deer in the forest area.

A majority of practitioners use assessments and observations regularly to identify what children have learned, to set targets and to show progress over time purposefully. However, practitioners do not always adapt provision to respond to the needs of each child and inform the next steps in their development effectively enough.

Practitioners model the Welsh language consistently well. Through purposeful immersion methods, they take advantage of regular opportunities to enrich children's vocabulary while playing alongside them, using the natural dialect of the area. They encourage children to sing Welsh nursery rhymes while playing instruments and use the language purposefully in their activities, by reciting numbers and using simple greetings. This regular input contributes effectively to ensuring that children begin to develop their understanding of the Welsh language and their speaking skills with increasing confidence.

Practitioners encourage children to participate in activities that develop their literacy skills successfully. For example, children are encouraged to talk about the penguins stuck in the ice and plan how to release them as part of the penguin day celebrations. Practitioners provide a good range of opportunities for children to start making marks and develop their early writing skills. Practitioners develop children's numeracy skills effectively and challenge children appropriately to measure objects around the setting by using a tape measure.

Provision for physical skills is robust. Practitioners provide a range of purposeful resources which allow children to develop physical balancing skills. As a result, they are confident when using the balance bikes and sliding down the slide. Practitioners plan purposeful opportunities to develop children's ICT skills and independence. They provide a range of effective opportunities for children to develop their creative skills, for example when using a variety of different-coloured crayons and paints to create self-portraits. This builds the children's confidence to express themselves in different contexts.

Practitioners plan beneficial experiences to develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills and promote their awareness of Welsh culture and their *'cynefin'*, or local area, successfully. They plan purposeful experiences that help children to understand their local community and organise visits to the library and church to create harvest decorations. This fosters a sense of belonging and begins to enrich children's understanding of their environment. They also provide appropriate opportunities for children to learn about religious celebrations and festivals, such as Diwali.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure a safe and clean environment and they have robust arrangements to manage access to the site. They have clear procedures that ensure that visitors sign in promptly and all records relating to the service are kept securely. Leaders ensure that fire drills are conducted regularly and that safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers, are serviced regularly. Leaders conduct purposeful risk assessments and review them regularly. They keep a register of children and practitioners and ensure that the ratio of practitioners to children is appropriate. Leaders display relevant information about practitioners, policies and safeguarding policies and procedures in key areas around the setting.

Leaders provide a good quality, self-contained environment which is welcoming and warm. They provide a suitable toilet and private nappy-changing facilities. They make effective use of the setting and the site's facilities. Access to the outdoor area enables continuous and safe play for children. In the main room, leaders provide an open environment where suitable furniture and well-resourced storage units promote children's independence. They ensure beneficial opportunities to develop children's curiosity. For example, they provide exciting learning experiences, such as role-play areas, a construction area and a cosy corner in which to relax or read a book. The outdoor area provides stimulating experiences for children. For example, the sheltered areas and various surfaces offer challenges and beneficial opportunities for children to take risks and nurture their physical skills. On the whole, leaders offer children the freedom to move around their environment independently according to their interests and ensure a good balance between promoting children's safety and supporting them to take risks.

Leaders provide resources of a good standard that are suitable for the children's age and stage of development. They ensure extensive opportunities for children to develop their skills, for example by finding, touching and exploring conkers in the forest area. Similarly, there are beneficial opportunities for children to use authentic resources, such as crockery in the role-play area, developing their imagination, confidence and social skills. Leaders encourage children's personal and social development effectively by providing books and resources for children to express their feelings. They also provide purposeful resources, such as dolls and puppets, to support children to learn about diversity and different cultures. Opportunities to go for a walk in the local area to collect fruit promote children's awareness of their community successfully.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders share a clear and robust vision that drives continuous improvement within the setting. They work well together to implement effective strategies that focus on expanding provision, strengthening the Welsh language and improving children's outcomes. Through their positive attitudes and consistent practices, leaders create a warm and caring learning environment that provides purposeful experiences and promotes children's development effectively.

Leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about the setting's work. They have high expectations of themselves and practitioners. The leader has a successful working relationship with members of the management committee, and regular discussions and

meetings between them make a valuable contribution towards offering good quality provision and care. There is a clear statement of purpose which provides an accurate picture of the setting, enabling parents and carers to make informed decisions about the setting's suitability for their child.

Leaders provide experienced and effective leadership and respond flexibly to challenges. They implement safe recruitment systems. The committee and leaders organise appropriate staff supervision and annual appraisals that identify useful targets for improvement. The setting has a variety of up-to-date policies and procedures that support practitioners effectively in their work.

Leaders have robust self-evaluation processes that focus effectively on a wide range of evidence and input from all members of staff. Leaders identify strengths and areas for improvement appropriately and work with the staff to make improvements to provision. They work successfully with the local authority advisory teacher and other agencies in setting priorities for improvement. This ensures that they adapt and improve provision regularly to provide meaningful experiences to meet children's needs. Leaders share the actions sensibly with practitioners by considering the most effective methods to achieve their priorities.

The leader allocates appropriate funding by using local and national grants effectively, which leads to an improvement in the quality of provision. An example of this is the investment in the outdoor area to improve the suitability of the ground's surface. This, in turn, has a positive effect on children's physical skills.

Leaders have close relationships with parents and carers. They communicate effectively though social media, regular conversations and on dedicated digital platforms to share pictures, experiences and inform them about relevant events and development. This ensures that parents and carers receive beneficial up-to-date information about their children's progress and well-being.

Practitioners work effectively with the local school and this prepares children suitably for the next stage in their education. For example, children are able to socialise and eat their lunch with children on the school site on a daily basis. As a result, effective arrangements are in place to ensure that children transfer to the next stage in their education successfully.

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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