A report on

Cylch Meithrin Machynlleth

Yr Asgell
Secondary Campus
Ysgol Bro Hyddgen
Ffordd Aberystwyth
SY20 8DR

Date of inspection: September 2025

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Machynlleth

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Machynlleth
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Tomi Rowlands
Person in charge	Caryl Edwards
Number of places	24
Age range of children	2 to 4 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	15
Number of children who receive funding for early education	
Opening days / times	8.45 – 15.45 Monday to Thursday 9.00 – 15.00 Friday
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	18/10/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection	18/10/2022
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	16/09/2025
Additional information	Very few children come from Welsh-speaking homes.

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. Ensure regular opportunities for children to develop their digital skills constructively over time

R2. Sharpen purposeful methods of recording observation and use them more effectively to plan the next steps for individual children

R3. Strengthen methods of sharing information about children's experiences and progress with parents and carers

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 strong community links that support children's social and emotional skills and wider experiences extremely effectively, to be disseminated on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children have an excellent sense of belonging to the setting and are familiar with the agreed daily arrangements and routines. They are happy, feel safe and know that they are respected by all practitioners. Most children settle exceptionally well at the beginning of each session. They cope well when leaving their parents and carers and go immediately to play enthusiastically and excitedly with their friends. They receive kind support from practitioners, when necessary, by moving quickly to play happily.

Almost without exception, children behave very well and are comfortable in their environment and nearly all communicate their feelings and personal needs effectively. For example, they enjoy the freedom to move confidently and spontaneously around the continuous learning areas and wash their hands independently after arriving at the setting.

Children have a prominent voice in the setting. Most communicate purposefully about how they would like to use the learning environment to enjoy their learning and play. They choose their resources with increasing independence, for example when collecting purposeful construction equipment to make a frog shelter.

Nearly all children take advantage of tailored opportunities and purposeful resources when deciding where and when they would like to play. For example, children take advantage of purposeful opportunities to sit in the outdoor area for an extended period to enjoy experimenting with the resources and activities that are available to them. This contributes strongly to fostering children's independent skills and well-being.

Most children interact effectively with each other, with practitioners and visitors. They develop a close and warm relationship with adults and have the confidence to ask for support, when necessary. Most respect the feelings and interests of other children and learn to take turns well. For example, they share resources sensibly in the 'Small World' area and support each other diligently when completing a jigsaw puzzle.

Nearly all children nurture their emotional well-being successfully. For example, they enjoy showing care and tenderness when caring for donkeys that visit the setting. This contributes exceptionally well to supporting children's emotional well-being and develops their appreciation of animals and the natural world successfully.

Nearly all children develop robust independent learning skills. They put away their coats, self-register fairly independently on arrival and put food waste in the appropriate bins when they are finished. They also place chairs and collect real glasses and plates spontaneously during snack time.

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

Nearly all children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress from their starting points. They develop a purposeful range of skills effectively while playing and learning, particularly their independent skills, which are developing soundly.

Most children listen attentively to each other and follow practitioners' instructions effectively. For example, with the purposeful guidance of the practitioners, they fetch appropriate cooking equipment from the kitchen without fuss. Most children's communication skills develop well and they foster their Welsh language skills purposefully in real-life contexts. For example, they respond appropriately to practitioners' questions when role-playing ordering refreshments in the café. This contributes purposefully to the children's consistent progress in their spoken Welsh skills over time.

Many children nurture their early reading skills appropriately by immersing themselves in a good range of books in the areas. They enjoy their content, follow print with a finger carefully when reading the story and turn pages respectfully. Most experiment purposefully with early writing experiences and enjoy them. For example, they make marks of their names on paper and use chalk to create a careful outline of their bodies in the outdoor area.

Most children nurture their mathematical skills appropriately and develop suitable mathematical language in relevant contexts. For example, they enjoy singing and repeating catchy number rhymes like *'Un bys, dau fys, tri bys yn dawnsio'* and *'Pum Crocodeil'* in plenary sessions. Many children consider carefully how to solve problems and persevere purposefully to finish activities. For example, they work together diligently and show resilience when placing and balancing blocks to build a house for a character.

On the whole, children's digital skills develop suitably. When they are given an opportunity to do so, they use an appropriate range of digital tools purposefully, for example when using a timer skilfully to time how long it takes a friend to balance and walk along a path. However, most children do not develop their digital skills robustly enough over time.

Most children's creative skills develop well. They are given valuable opportunities to express themselves regularly through art, music and movement. They enjoy dancing energetically to music while imitating the movements of a train and using musical instruments regularly to keep rhythm. Most children develop their physical skills successfully when climbing and balancing confidently on the adventure equipment in the outdoor area, demonstrating good agility and strength.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners provide children with effective care and support. All of their policies are up-to-date and they implement them purposefully. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of the setting's safeguarding arrangements and have attended purposeful child protection training, which enables them to deal in a timely manner with any problems or concerns that arise. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leaders ensure that all practitioners have an up-to-date first aid certificate to ensure that they have the confidence to deal with any accidents. Appropriate records are kept of any accidents, including any first aid administered, to ensure children's safety and well-being. Practitioners also keep useful records of children's allergies and dietary needs and this information is displayed purposefully and clearly in the setting's kitchen.

Practitioners pay constant attention to children's hygiene and remind them regularly to wash their hands at appropriate times. They encourage children to eat and drink healthily and take part in physical activities on a daily basis. For example, they encourage children to make suitable body shapes to accompany the 'Hela Arth' ('Bear Hunt') story and allow them to choose whether they want to drink water or milk during snack time.

Practitioners are used effectively in the setting. They supervise children well and the setting often exceeds the required ratio of adults to children. Practitioners communicate with the children in a friendly, positive and warm manner and create a calm and pleasant atmosphere. An obvious strength is the way in which practitioners implement the positive behaviour policy to ensure that children keep within boundaries and expectations sensibly. They support children very well and talk to them sensitively, praising them extensively in all activities. This has a positive effect on nurturing children's skills and self-confidence.

Practitioners are conscientious and effective when planning a variety of meaningful activities, which has a beneficial effect on children's development. They ensure diverse experiences that motivate children to learn by doing. For example, they provide purposeful opportunities for children to roll clay to shape numbers, which reinforces their mathematical understanding purposefully.

Practitioners know all children very well and show inherent pride in their successes. They have a clear understanding of each child's individual needs and interests. They observe children sensitively and know when to ask questions, offer explanations and ideas to encourage children to think and solve problems. Overall, practitioners keep suitable records of what the children do on a daily basis. They support children with additional learning needs effectively through strong links with external agencies and act promptly on guidance that is provided.

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

One of the setting's strongest qualities is the wonderful and supportive relationship between the practitioners and children. They have a sound understanding of the ways in which children learn through play and exploration. They use this knowledge purposefully to plan stimulating and meaningful learning experiences that enable children to nurture their skills naturally and in their own way. For example, following recent training on schematic learning, practitioners use these methods skilfully to ensure that experiences are suitable and relevant to children's individual needs.

The child's voice is an obvious element that informs learning and provides a clear direction for learning. For example, after a child notices conkers and leaves falling from the trees while climbing on the adventure equipment, practitioners use this idea as a starting point for learning. As a result, a series of practical and meaningful activities were developed, such as

making kites and windmills. This extends children's curiosity and imagination in their play and learning successfully.

Practitioners work tirelessly to promote the Welsh language during sessions. Through purposeful immersion methods, they take advantage of every opportunity to enrich children's vocabulary regularly while playing side by side. For example, they encourage children to use the language purposefully as they play, recite numbers and use simple greetings.

A good range of attractive and colourful books is provided in each area and practitioners read stories to the children warmly in 'Y Cwtsh'. This encourages children to engage fully and foster a love of books and stories. Practitioners also provide extensive resources for children to make marks in the indoor and outdoor learning areas and ensure that they are given purposeful opportunities to use them.

Practitioners take advantage of appropriate opportunities to develop children's early mathematical skills in areas of the provision. For example, they encourage children to experiment with scales when weighing ingredients carefully to bake cupcakes. The learning areas provide children with easy access to an appropriate range of different digital resources, such as mobile phones, calculators and tills. However, on the whole, practitioners do not provide enough purposeful and regular opportunities for children to develop their digital skills constructively over time.

Practitioners allow children to solve problems and take appropriate risks. For example, they add resources such as knives to cut vegetables, and hammers and saws when experimenting and making in the 'Construction Area'. Practitioners plan interesting experiences for children to engage with nature and develop their curiosity and sense of wonder about the natural world. For example, children enjoy collecting insects in the forest area, using binoculars with increasing independence to look at their features.

Practitioners promote children's awareness of their Welshness and *cynefin*, or local area, effectively. For example, they arrange to celebrate significant days such as St Dwynwen's Day and St David's Day by wearing traditional Welsh dress. They promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Children visit the local church regularly to learn about the Nativity, where they dress up as characters from the Bible.

Practitioners have a growing understanding of child development. In general, they keep appropriate notes about each child's progress. However, practitioners do not always record learning incisively enough to feed into planning, inform the next steps in learning and ensure progress in children's skills over time.

Environment: Good

The leader and the management committee ensure a clean and safe environment for the children. The leaders and practitioners ensure that the outer gates are closed and locked promptly after the children arrive and that visitors show identification and sign in. They ensure that there is an appropriate range of purposeful advertisements and posters around the setting which support their clear arrangements in relation to child safeguarding. Practitioners follow consistent arrangements in relation to the safety of the environment

and regular cleaning arrangements to control infections, which reflect good hygiene practices. The leader and practitioners conduct regular fire drills so that the children familiarise themselves with the procedures appropriately.

Practitioners use the room purposefully to provide well-organised learning areas that encourage children to use them independently and to experiment. For example, the indoor and outdoor learning areas connect seamlessly, giving children the freedom to explore their chosen learning environment throughout the session.

Leaders provide furniture, equipment and resources of a consistently good quality for the children, which meet their needs purposefully. For example, the 'Home Area' promotes good learning experiences by providing authentic cooking equipment and a low-level beauty desk with relevant equipment. Leaders and practitioners ensure that the resources and equipment are clean, well-maintained and are appropriate for the children. Practitioners encourage children to take care of the resources and help to tidy up when they have finished playing.

The developing use of natural and open-ended resources stimulates children's interests and there is a suitable variety of resources that promote cultural awareness and diversity well. Practitioners ensure that the indoor areas are clean and decorate them with pictures of the children's families, along with suitable displays of the children's work. There is also a variety of recycled materials and resources available, which promote children's understanding of real-life purposefully.

The setting has an effective outdoor area that provides beneficial opportunities for children to take risks under the supervision of practitioners. There is an appropriate balance between ensuring the children's safety and providing purposeful opportunities for them to challenge themselves and take risks. For example, practitioners provide opportunities for children to develop new skills while experimenting with 'authentic' tools, such as a hammer and nails to make vehicles creatively. Practitioners also encourage children to show a mature awareness of the importance of self-care by putting on safety goggles before beginning to experiment with the tools. They extend children's knowledge and development effectively outdoors by providing a good range of resources that spark their curiosity and interest. For example, children plant and eat fruit and vegetables from the setting's garden, which deepens their appreciation of the importance of sustainability.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for the setting and work together successfully to promote well-being, care and supporting learning to nurture *'Plant llawen, hyderus ac annibynnol'* ('Happy, confident and independent children'). Their thorough practices and positive attitudes create a supportive environment that provides stimulating and meaningful experiences for the children.

Leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about the setting's work. They have high expectations of themselves and the practitioners and work together effectively to ensure continuous improvements. The leader has an excellent working relationship with the members of the management committee and regular discussions and meetings between them make a valuable contribution to offering good quality provision and care. There is a

comprehensive statement of purpose that provides an accurate picture of the setting, enabling parents and carers to make informed choices about the suitability of the setting for their child.

There are rigorous procedures in place for recruiting staff, which ensures that they are experienced and qualified. Leaders evaluate practitioners' performance regularly, which includes beneficial professional conversations and leads to timely and meaningful professional learning opportunities to improve their teaching and care practices. For example, attending training on embedding experiences where children working with wood has supported children to foster a variety of valuable skills successfully.

Leaders have effective procedures for evaluating the work of the setting and identifying the strengths and aspects that are in need of attention. They work efficiently with the local authority's advisory teacher and other agencies in setting priorities for improvement. This ensures that they adapt and improve provision constantly to provide meaningful and exciting experiences to meet children's needs.

Leaders use the budget and the early years development grant wisely and prioritise expenditure against the setting's targets prudently. Through these grants, they have expanded the childcare provision for some families which, in turn, has a positive effect on children's communication skills and engagement with their learning and play.

On the whole, useful information is shared with parents and carers on social media, through an occasional newsletter and on dedicated digital platforms. However, overall, parents and carers do not feel that they receive information about their children's development and progress regularly enough. As a result, they are not always confident about how to support their children's skills at home.

One of setting's main qualities is the way in which leaders have established a range of valuable and meaningful partnerships to support children to develop a sense of belonging to their *'cynefin'*, or local area. For example, they hold regular community events such as a lantern walk with parents and show kindness by donating to local services and shops during the Christmas period. Valuable opportunities are provided for children to develop a good range of skills when visiting a local supermarket to buy ingredients for cooking sessions at the setting. They also benefit from regular visits to a home for older residents in the community, where they entertain and play board games with the residents. These experiences support the development of children's oral and social skills successfully, in addition to fostering empathy and respect towards older members of the community. Leaders have developed robust transition arrangements which ensure that children and their families make a smooth transition to primary 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

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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