A report on

Cylch Meithrin Aberdâr

Urdd Centre
Wind Street
Aberdare
CF44 7ES

Date of inspection: June 2026

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Aberdâr

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Aberdâr
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Claire Jones
Person in charge	Charlotte James
Number of places	40
Age range of children	2 – 11 years old
Number of 3- and 4-year-old children	16
Number of children who receive funding for early education	14
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 09.00 – 17.00
Flying start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Bilingual
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	18/01/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection	April 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	02/06/2026

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being and Care	**Excellent**
Teaching, Learning and Development	**Excellent**
Leadership and Management	**Excellent**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Refine the planning process to ensure that provision supports children to make constructive and coherent progress in their skills

R2 Continue to support practitioners to have regular access to professional learning to build their confidence further as they communicate increasingly spontaneously with the children in Welsh

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being and Care: Excellent

In an extremely caring, supporting and safe learning environment, nearly all children are happy and enjoy learning. Practitioners foster a welcoming atmosphere that supports children's needs, choices and interests successfully. They listen to children's ideas and value their participation in their learning. Through this, nearly all children gain the confidence to communicate and interact confidently.

Nearly all children respond confidently to opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play and learning. Children's views and interests are valued consistently by practitioners. This contributes firmly to practitioners' understanding of the well-being and learning needs of individual children. A notable feature of the provision is the way in which practitioners review children's needs regularly and adapt provision purposefully to respond and support their learning. The method of identifying individual practitioners as 'key workers' for specific children is effective and provides complete information about each child's development.

Practitioners support children to speak or express themselves through productive support and encouragement. Through this, children interact enthusiastically and familiarise themselves with the daily arrangements quickly and with increasing independence, such as snack time arrangements. Practitioners know each child exceptionally well, understand their interests and respond effectively to their needs. This, in turn, nurtures trust and builds children's confidence successfully.

Practitioners interact enthusiastically with children and nurture their well-being and extend their learning purposefully. Nearly all children have the confidence to ask questions and share information or their wishes with an adult in a safe and caring environment. Children co-operate enthusiastically and respectfully and are inspired consistently by practitioners because of the supportive working relationship that exists between them. As a result, most children learn how to play together and share resources and toys with their friends. Children's engagement in their learning is a strength that contributes successfully to their excellent behaviour and kind attitudes towards each other and adults.

As part of children's play and learning experiences, practitioners are aware of their individual circumstances and needs. They respond flexibly and sensitively to stimulate and motivate children to develop their knowledge and understanding consistently over time. They support children skilfully when they need reassurance or additional support. Information about the development of children's feelings, emotions and learning is communicated effectively with the team of practitioners and with parents and carers. This strengthens the productive working relationships between the setting and the home.

Practitioners have sound knowledge and understanding of the development of each child. They observe children individually and in small groups and share valuable information about their progress with colleagues. They hold beneficial discussions as a team to adapt and refine provision, with the aim of meeting children's needs and stimulating their interests. For

example, they evaluate the daily activities to identify ideas, progress and the next steps in learning. This promotes children's interests very successfully and provides regular opportunities for them to make decisions about their play and learning in a stimulating variety of contexts.

Teaching, Learning and Development: Excellent

Practitioners provide beneficial opportunities for children to develop their sense of belonging to the Cylch, to their homes and to the local area. For example, attractive displays are provided so that children can see photographs of their families, along with important sites in the local community. Children also have valuable experiences when visiting the local library which, in turn, fosters their interest in a variety of texts and supports their pre-reading skills successfully.

Nearly all children enjoy the stimulating experiences and immerse themselves fully in their play and learning. Through interesting provision and proactive activities, the learning needs of nearly all children are met effectively. This means that children interact purposefully when developing and making progress in their skills.

Practitioners promote and maintain children's interest and regular engagement in a good variety of activities. This helps children to face challenges confident, concentrate for increasingly extended periods and persevere regularly in their learning.

With the consistent support of practitioners, nearly all children develop their ability to learn with increasing independence. Through this, they immerse themselves and concentrate on their activities successfully and develop a good range of skills over time. Practitioners praise children's effort and achievement sensitively. One of the prominent qualities of provision is the way in which practitioners promote inclusion successfully among the children. Through detailed knowledge of backgrounds and of children's well-being and learning needs, practitioners use a good range of experiences and resources to promote diversity and equality.

Following beneficial adaptations to the building, practitioners work together diligently as a team to create a welcoming, stimulating and inclusive learning environment. All parts of the environment are planned and presented attractively to promote children's play and learning. Practitioners have high expectations and provide activities that engage and hold children's interest and spark their curiosity successfully. For example, they encourage children to learn about how plants grow when planting and growing herbs in the garden.

Practitioners have a good understanding of how children develop and provide a stimulating range of activities to promote their play, nurture their skills and support their progress. In the best practices, they question children skilfully, observe them shrewdly and intervene in their learning in a timely manner. Practitioners hold valuable discussions about children's progress and interests to adapt provision further. However, they do not always focus clearly enough on planning the next steps in developing children's skills.

Practitioners are gaining confidence and strive diligently to introduce the Welsh language to children in a good variety of activities. They speak Welsh increasingly with the children and model vocabulary and simple language patterns, which encourages children's understanding

successfully. However, practitioners are not always confident enough to use language immersion methods consistently with the children and to speak increasingly spontaneously with them in Welsh.

Welsh traditions and celebrations are promoted purposefully as a natural part of provision. Through this, children improve their understanding of the importance of speaking the language and deepen their appreciation of Wales. For example, children develop their speaking and digital skills skilfully when using a microphone and speaker to sing traditional nursery rhymes and contemporary Welsh songs enthusiastically. Practitioners celebrate children's diverse backgrounds as a means of expanding their knowledge of different countries and cultures effectively. Through this, children develop their understanding of the diverse values and cultures of Wales, and the wider world, effectively.

Leadership and Management: Excellent

Leaders have a robust vision which aims to ensure that all children are happy and enjoy learning in a stimulating and inclusive environment. A strong feature of leadership is the way in which practitioners work together as a diligent team in planning and providing a range of rich experiences for pupils. They nurture the well-being of each child and support them to be ambitious, confident and independent learners.

Leaders have high expectations of themselves and the children. They understand their statutory responsibilities thoroughly. They hold regular meetings so that practitioners can discuss their experiences and any professional development needs. This promotes a strong culture of co-operation and maintains the well-being of the team successfully.

All practitioners understand and fulfil their roles well in line with the relevant policies and procedures, for example in ensuring a safe and clear environment for children. Leaders ensures that recruitment processes are robust and timely, with ongoing suitability checks in place constantly. The safeguarding culture and procedures are appropriate and protect the well-being and interest of all partners successfully. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern during the inspection.

The innate enthusiasm of leaders to develop provision continuously is a notable strength. Through beneficial self-evaluation processes, all partners, including parents and carers, have useful input into the monitoring and evaluation process over time. This supports the active participation of leaders to identify the service's strengths and areas for improvement. As an integral part of the evaluation process, leaders ensure resources, equipment and toys of a good standard and quality for children to use during play and learning.

Practitioners are given beneficial professional development opportunities, including a good range of training. This equips staff successfully and has a positive effect on education and learning, for example in improving the learning environment to meet children's needs. Practitioners enjoy opportunities to take advantage of professional learning to support them in learning the Welsh language. However, professional learning opportunities are not provided regularly enough to support them to build their confidence further, along with their ability to communicate increasingly spontaneously with children in Welsh.

Leaders have effective arrangements for supervising and monitoring provision. They use funding effectively, including relevant grants, and plan purposefully to spend it prudently to improve provision continuously. Leaders support practitioners to create an attractive and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment to support children to move freely and independently from one learning area to another. The needs of children from low-income households are met purposefully.

Managers and practitioners have an effective working relationship with parents and carers. They communicate with them regularly through various methods to support children's play and learning. The service has effective arrangements to support children to move to the next stages in their learning, for example as they transfer to the local primary schools. By working with a wide range of partnerships, practitioners support the health, well-being and learning of children, including those who need support, extremely 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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