A report on

Cylch Meithrin y Garnedd a Clwb Ffrindiau y Garnedd

Ysgol y Garnedd
Penrhos Road
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2LX

Date of inspection: February 2026

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin y Garnedd a Clwb Ffrindiau y Garnedd

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin y Garnedd a Clwb Ffrindiau y Garnedd
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Meithrinfa Ffalabalam Cyf.
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Menna Jones
Person in charge	Helen Hayes
Number of places	24 in the morning, 18 in the afternoon
Age range of children	2 – 4 years old
Number of 3- and 4-year-old children	18
Number of children who receive funding for early education	13
Opening days / times	7.45am – 5.45pm Monday – 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	First inspection since registration on 1/7/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	4/7/2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	10/2/2026

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	**Excellent**
Leadership and management	**Good**

Non-compliance

No non-compliance was identified during this inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that there are sufficient practitioners with appropriate full paediatric first aid training to meet requirements

R2 Sharpen purposeful methods of recording observations and use them more effectively to plan the next steps in learning

R3 Review policies to ensure that they reflect current procedures

R4 Develop communication methods with parents and carers to share up-to-date information about children's progress

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Children learn to make decisions about their play and pursue their own interests. They move between the indoor and outdoor areas and choose the resources they want to use to play with. Many children show enthusiasm towards their activities and sing happily while walking to the forest school or when starting a new activity.

Most children settle well and are familiar with the daily routine, waving or greeting practitioners on arrival. If any of them are sad when separating from their parents, they settle quickly as practitioners respond effectively by offering comfort and supporting them with these feelings. Children forge close relationships with practitioners and are comfortable in their company. Most children follow what is expected of them during tidying up time or discussion time on the mat. If anyone chooses not to join in, this choice is respected and children are allowed to join in their own time.

Most children interact positively with each other and the staff. They converse naturally, are comfortable asking for help and begin to share ideas through play. For example, they role play selling ice lollies and accept practitioners' offers to ask friends for imaginary money for them. Many begin to make friends or invite others to play and show kindness, for example by saving a seat on the mat for a friend or offering to share a snack.

A majority of children show enjoyment by laughing and smiling excitedly while playing. Many respond positively to a challenge and try new activities or persevere in one area before moving on. They enjoy a good balance of free play and activities led by practitioners. A majority of children concentrate for a period that is suitable for their age and stage of development.

A majority of children develop good independence skills and take part in everyday tasks with increasing confidence. For example, they decide to go to the toilet or wash their hands on their own and place their coats and bags on the pegs. They are happy to ask for support, when necessary, for example when putting on a raincoat to go to the forest school. Children have the freedom to choose when to have a snack by helping themselves to plates, glasses and a choice of toast or fruit. They respond with increasing maturity to further opportunities to develop confidence, independence and life skills, such as removing the skin from a fruit or cutting their own snack carefully.

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, make good progress from their starting points. They develop a purposeful range of skills effectively during play and learning, particularly their independent skills, which develop robustly.

Most children listen carefully to practitioners and other children and respond appropriately when talking to visitors. Most make consistently good progress in developing their communication skills during their time at the setting. Most speak in full sentences through

the medium of Welsh in different relevant contexts. For example, they discuss how they will create a boat in the woodwork area and respond to questions about which fruit they will choose at snack time.

Most children look at books with practitioners and respond appropriately to the story. They point at the pictures and talk with interest about the contents. Nearly all children use a variety of mark-making equipment effectively.

Most children develop robust numeracy skills and use correct mathematical language when counting how many pieces of apple they place on the wire when making food for the birds. They apply mathematical knowledge beneficially while playing in the areas by discussing the weight of the potatoes on the scales.

Most children's digital skills develop appropriately and they understand that digital equipment has an effect on their everyday lives. Nearly all children demonstrate strong problem-solving skills. For example, they consider how to steer the wheelbarrow around the roots in the forest school. Nearly all children persevere with the task until they have completed it successfully.

Most children develop robust physical skills. They are physically active and demonstrate increasing control in their play. The fine motor skills of nearly all children develop well. For example, they use a litter picker to pick up leaves and place them in the wheelbarrow. A minority of children demonstrate satisfactory creative skills. They show enjoyment when singing a variety of songs and make effective choices about what to use to decorate their work, for example when choosing small parts to create sad and happy faces.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners have a sound understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They implement most policies consistently. For example, they follow a medication policy effectively, record accidents, incidents and existing injuries appropriately and meet the needs of children with allergies. Most have completed first aid training. However, not enough have completed full paediatric first aid training, in line with requirements. Practitioners are confident and have been trained in child safeguarding procedures and have acted appropriately when issues have arisen. Registers show that they reach practitioner to child ratios and leaders communicate clearly and regularly to ensure that they are deployed effectively to supervise children. Hygiene procedures are robust, including cleaning practices and those for changing children. Practitioners also ensure that children have plenty of time outdoors, that a healthy snack is available and that children are encouraged to follow personal hygiene practices. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Practitioners treat children with kindness and respect and set a positive example through their attitudes and behaviour. They use praise and encouragement regularly to boost children's confidence. When necessary, they provide quiet time or an opportunity to talk about emotions by using resources or books to support children's understanding. Practitioners provide opportunities to support children's understanding that their choices have consequences and that they need to consider this. For example, they ask children to tidy resources away after finishing an activity, so that the toys are available for other

children to play with. Conversations are warm and positive and there are strong relationships between the children and practitioners.

Practitioners use their understanding of children's interests to create experiences that are supportive and meaningful. They show genuine enthusiasm towards the children, by talking naturally about their families and interests. Examples of the children's social progress are evident, particularly as they begin to play and share with their friends. There are systems in place to identify small daily targets and practitioners are aware of these as they engage with the children. Practitioners understand how to support children with additional learning needs and how to work effectively with parents and external agencies, such as speech and language therapists, when necessary.

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

Practitioners provide effective learning experiences that encourage children to develop as confident explorers of their environment, for example by using binoculars to look for birds in the forest. These experiences strengthen children's understanding of the world around them and the importance of treating all living things with care and respect.

Practitioners provide a very relaxed and creative environment which provides a range of excellent experiences for children in the indoor and outdoor areas. They engage children's interest and draw their attention successfully to the wonder of the world around them. They have high expectations of the children and know them exceptionally well. They promote children's independent skills very well. As a result, children have the confidence to fetch equipment and make their own choices during play.

Practitioners model polished and consistent language and sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes. This regular input contributes effectively to ensuring that children develop their Welsh language skills increasingly. Practitioners question skilfully and feed language of a high standard when discussing with children. They provide a range of beneficial opportunities for children to begin to make marks and develop their early writing skills. Provision to develop children's numeracy skills is strong. For example, children are given beneficial opportunities to learn about shapes by creating a picture by using shapes on the light table and making shapes while painting on the board. Practitioners provide a wide variety of resources that develop children's digital skills successfully.

Practitioners allow children to solve problems and take appropriate risks. For example, they add resources such as hammers and a saw when experimenting and creating in the woodwork 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 a bird treasure hunt in the forest school, using a chart to record the birds they have found.

Practitioners have an increasing understanding of child development. In general, practitioners record appropriate observations about children's progress in their learning and play. However, practitioners do not always record learning regularly enough to feed into planning and inform the next steps to ensure progress in children's skills.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills effectively. They promote Welsh culture well when learning about St Dwynwen, celebrating St David's Day and singing Welsh songs. There are also beneficial opportunities to promote children's understanding of diversity and other cultures when learning about celebrations such as the Chinese New Year and the Diwali festival.

Environment: Excellent

Leaders ensure a safe, extremely clean and high-quality environment. The entrance and external gate are locked and procedures are in place to manage them effectively, ensuring access for authorised users or visitors with permission only. A wide range of detailed risk assessments support safety within the environment. Practitioners follow the risk assessments and complete daily checks to manage risk and any dangers to children's safety. These include monitoring the temperature of the room and preparation of the areas. Practitioners also include children meaningfully in daily safety procedures. Children are proud to help leaders place coloured ribbons on the ground in the forest school area to outline safe boundaries. Leaders keep records of fire drills, which are completed regularly and appropriately. They also ensure that safety equipment and certificates are up-to-date, reflecting a systematic approach to managing safety.

Leaders create an extremely welcoming environment, which inspires children to enjoy learning through play. There are rich areas that nurture independence and provision that provides high quality play experiences. Leaders organise furniture and mats skilfully to define specific areas, motivating children to explore them enthusiastically. For example, a comfortable reading area with books and cushions and a home role play area provide attractive opportunities to promote children's curiosity. Provision is flexible and is adapted to align with children's needs and interests. Numerous examples of children's work and pictures of their families adorn the walls, fostering a strong sense of belonging and pride. Children engage naturally with these displays, for example looking at pictures of their families while becoming engrossed in an imaginary telephone call.

The outdoor area is used regularly and is a very effective extension of the indoor environment. Children move freely from one area to another and take advantage of being outdoors. Leaders provide suitable clothing and wellingtons to ensure opportunities to play outside in all weathers. The forest school area provides valuable experiences by using natural resources, expanding and enriching children's experiences further. Leaders provide a variety of play resources and equipment that challenge and stimulates children's interests. For example, children work together to solve problems creatively by using equipment and pipes to build a water slide. Regular access to the school playground provides plenty of space for children to run, cycle or use the climbing equipment to develop a wide variety of physical skills.

Leaders ensure that there is a variety of resources and equipment to inspire children and enrich their play significantly. Independence is nurtured by ensuring that resources are within easy each of the children, along with appropriately sized furniture. The use of authentic resources promotes children's curiosity to explore and imagine extremely effectively. For example, there is a hair dryer and hair straighteners on the make-up stand and potatoes and carrots in the weighing area to support authentic and purposeful learning

experiences. Practitioners provide resources that promote children's understanding of a variety of cultures and identities, including books, dolls and items with different patterns and textures, and they are integrated meaningfully.

Leadership and management: Good

The leader is very passionate and shares her vision to maintain provision of a high standard with all stakeholders. She includes all members of the team in the life and work of the setting to provide the best opportunities for children. The leader is aware of the interests and strengths of all practitioners and treats each one with respect. She has succeeded in creating a strong, active team who work together exceptionally well. The well-being of all practitioners is important to her and she gives them time to develop their knowledge and skills. This raises practitioners' confidence and develops their understanding of child development very effectively.

Leaders ensure that provision complies with the required regulations and standards. They follow robust recruitment procedures and have established excellent systems for inducting new practitioners. Leaders manage and supervise all practitioners regularly and ensure that practitioners have training of a very good quality to meet their needs. As a result, practitioners are very knowledgeable about their roles and duties and this has a positive effect on the well-being of everyone at the setting. However, there are very few policies that do not reflect the current procedures. No breach of regulations or national minimum standards was identified during the inspection.

Leaders have effective and sustained procedures to evaluate the setting's work. They use first-hand evidence which identifies the setting's current strengths accurately, along with a very few areas for improvement. Leaders consider the views of practitioners, parents and carers as part of the self-evaluation process. They use the outcomes of these procedures to set appropriate priorities for improvement which support their work extremely successfully.

Leaders make effective use of the grants available. For example, funding was invested in erecting a shelter in the forest school to enable children to use the outdoor area throughout the year. As a result, this has had a positive effect on the development of their skills and their well-being. They use funding very effectively to purchase resources and toys of a high standard that maintain children's interest and stimulate their learning successfully.

Leaders have an appropriate relationship with parents and carers. For example, they invite parents to join in with play sessions. However, parents do not always receive up-to-date information about their child's progress. Leaders work effectively with local schools to support the transition process and work closely with the local authority's development officer.

The setting benefits from close links with the local community and this helps leaders to provide rich and engaging learning experiences for children. For example, they invite a wide variety of visitors to the setting, such as students from Nigeria and a beekeeper. These experiences enrich children's learning experiences extremely effectively.

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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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.

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