A report on

Cylch Meithrin Bro Alun

Ysgol Bro Alun
Delamere Road
Gwersyllt
Wrexham
LL11 4NG

Date of inspection: March 2025 by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Cylch Meithrin Bro Alun

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Bro Alun
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Charlotte Thrussell Osian Jones
Person in charge	Charlotte Thrussell Indica Townson
Number of places	57
Age range of children	2-4 years old
Number of 3 and 4-year-old children	42
Number of children who receive funding for early education	12
Opening days / times	Monday – Friday 8:05am-17:10pm
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	This is the first inspection since re-registration.
Date of previous Estyn inspection	March 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	11/03/2025
Very few children come from Welsh-speaking homes.	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Well-being	**Excellent**
Learning **(only applies to three- and four-year-old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)**	**Good**
Care and development	**Excellent**
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 more opportunities for children to respond in and use the Welsh language.

R2. Ensure more opportunities for children to learn about diversity.

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 creating a rich and stimulating learning environment that derives from observations and children's interests, to be disseminated on their websites.

Main findings

Well-being: Excellent

Nearly all children are happy, confident and enthusiastic on arrival at the setting. They have a very strong voice across all aspects of their experiences. Nearly all children cope exceptionally well after being separated from their parents and carers. They settle quickly at the beginning of each session and feel completely happy when playing confidently alongside their friends. Nearly all enjoy playing and are full of excitement when they do so. For example, a group of children are excited when playing hide and seek with practitioners in the outdoor area. Many children enjoy the presence of visitors, asking them their names curiously and inviting them to play.

Nearly all children join confidently in daily sessions to discuss and develop their vocabulary, such as discussing the weather and their feelings. As a result, they understand that practitioners listen to their wishes and concerns respectfully.

Children feel happy and safe. They have a very strong sense of belonging and have a particularly strong voice. Children make an exceptional contribution to the planning process by sharing ideas about what they would like to learn during sessions. Children decide where they would like to play and when they would like to do so and use the indoor and outdoor learning environments extremely effectively and creatively. Nearly all children interact positively with each other and with practitioners and visitors. They develop their social skills by talking and discussing while playing together. For example, children co-operate and interact enthusiastically when creating pictures and making marks on the outdoor mark-marking board.

Nearly all children are active and learn effectively through play. They are very curious and experiment in the mud kitchen with a keen interest when mixing soil and water to make a ‘cake’. They enjoy regular opportunities to develop their physical skills, such as balancing while walking along wooden logs to reach the other side.

Nearly all children develop independent learning skills extremely effectively. They spread butter on toast and pour themselves drinks. They also take responsibility for their personal hygiene exceptionally well when using the toilet and washing and drying their hands independently. They develop new skills confidently. For example, under supervision, they are given opportunities to use authentic tools, such as a hammer and nails, and to climb tall equipment such as a ladder to feel the side of the building.

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

Most children make good progress from their starting points. They show perseverance and resilience and immerse themselves in their play. Nearly all children listen attentively to others and respond confidently in their first language. Most children join in when singing 'Bore da' and many show an understanding of instructions through the medium of Welsh. However, very few have the confidence to express themselves in Welsh. A minority of children show an interest in books and handle them with respect. They discuss books independently, turn the pages in order and talk about the characters and pictures with their friends. They enjoy joining in with a story session at the end of the day, for example by joining a session in the outdoor area to go on a bear hunt. Most children's early writing skills develop successfully. They are confident when making different marks on a digital board and when painting on a white canvas in the outdoor area.

Most children develop sound numeracy skills and use correct mathematical language when filling pots with soil. They apply their knowledge of heavy and light and practise counting when hammering nails in the woodwork area. A majority enjoy joining in with a range of mathematical songs and nursery rhymes successfully. Nearly all children explore the outdoor area confidently and develop their gross motor skills masterfully, for example when climbing the ladder and walking along wooden beams and logs confidently. They develop their fine motor skills well and make confident choices about the resources they use. For example, they use knives to cut fruit and vegetables independently to make baby food. Most children's creative skills develop effectively. They make wise decisions about which equipment to use when working creatively. In the paint, they use different resources and brushes of varying thicknesses to make cards and paint over a picture of themselves. Most are able to express themselves effectively when role-playing in a real-life context.

Most children have good manners. They are polite and able to take care of their property independently. They develop effective social and emotional skills and work well together when playing. Most children develop their digital skills successfully and understand that digital devices have an effect on their everyday lives. A minority of children solve problems naturally in their play, for example when filling a receptacle in the mud kitchen and choosing suitable equipment to remove some water from the receptacle to prevent it from overflowing.

Care and development: Excellent

Practitioners provide excellent care and support. They foster an effective, warm and natural relationship with the children and interact brilliantly with them. Practitioners know the children exceptionally well and respect their personal preferences and needs. For example, they respond sensitively to children who are tired and choose not to take part in an activity. They respond to them appropriately, ask if they are alright and provide comfort, if necessary. Practitioners talk kindly to the children and praise them effectively for doing their best and succeeding with their tasks. All practitioners use effective and consistent strategies to promote positive behaviour in line with the setting's policy.

Practitioners have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities in promoting healthy lifestyles and keeping the children safe. They implement policies extremely effectively. Practitioners pay particular attention to all aspects of hygiene. They encourage children to eat and drink healthily and take part in physical activities on a daily basis. They ensure that any of the children's allergies and dietary requirements are recorded to ensure that all of them can enjoy their meals safely. They have excellent knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children. Practitioners have received child safeguarding training and know what to do if they have concerns about a child's safety.
The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. All practitioners have up-to-date first aid certificates. They ensure that accident records, with all the relevant details, are completed in detail and share these with parents and carers.

The setting has effective arrangements for identifying and supporting children's individual needs, including those with additional learning needs. Practitioners support the children very well and meet their individual needs extremely successfully. They promote children's play, learning and development particularly effectively. Practitioners are extremely skilful at planning responsively and pursue the children's lines of enquiry, interests and ideas effectively in all activities. They have a very effective relationship with parents and carers. They discuss their children's needs and achievements with them regularly to understand their needs clearly. This has a positive effect on children's care and development.

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

Practitioners have a sound understanding of each child's needs. They use Curriculum for Wales effectively to plan valuable experiences and respond to children's needs extremely successfully. Practitioners have a very good understanding of how children learn through play and exploration. They intervene sensibly and encourage children to explore independently through valuable discussions. They often interact with the children in the areas to expand their skills or entice them masterfully to play in specific areas. As a result, nearly all children develop their social skills effectively.

Practitioners plan interesting opportunities for children to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills purposefully. They encourage children to develop numeracy skills through a variety of interesting opportunities, such as counting the number of steps when climbing or when hammering nails into the wood. They challenge them to use mathematical vocabulary appropriately when playing, for example when pouring water from one receptable into another in the mud kitchen.

Practitioners provide extensive opportunities for children to enjoy sharing books and making early marks in a variety of indoor and outdoor areas. As a result, most children's early writing and reading skills develop well. They provide regular opportunities for children to join in with nursery rhymes during a session at the end of the day where children can choose their favourite song. Most practitioners model spoken language clearly by using familiar vocabulary and patterns when talking to the children. However, they do not insist that the children respond in Welsh. As a result, the children's development and use of the Welsh language is limited.

Practitioners provide a wide range of digital resources across the areas, which enables children to use them confidently and purposefully. They prepare role-play areas full of treasures where there are opportunities for children to enjoy and develop their creative skills. For example, they ensure opportunities for children to dress imaginatively, to play with hairdressing equipment and to experiment with different instruments. They respect the children's creative process as much as their finished work.

Overall, practitioners provide suitable opportunities for children to learn about a few cultures by ensuring purposeful resources that represent people from different backgrounds in the learning environment. However, there are few opportunities for children to learn about diversity. Practitioners plan beneficial experiences to develop children's spiritual and moral skills. They intervene appropriately to encourage children to understand simple rules, such as sharing toys and taking turns.

A notable element of provision is the opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills. They plan high quality experiences and support them successfully to take risks confidently when stepping from logs of different heights, along wooden obstacles and climbing high tunnels independently. They provide opportunities for them to take risks by using tools in the woodwork area. Practitioners also provide extensive opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills effectively.

Practitioners make excellent use of their observations to create a learning environment that is stimulating and purposeful, ensuring that children's experiences continue to be relevant, exciting and support their development. They respond excellently to children's interests and developmental needs and record valuable observations that inform their intelligent planning for future experiences and activities. Their responsive approach enables them to make quick adjustments to provision, ensuring that learning opportunities continue to captivate the children's fascination and promote their progress. For example, when identifying the children's particular interest in washing objects, the water area was adapted to include dirty dishes, a sponge and soap, providing meaningful opportunities to encourage them to explore and learn through play. This approach reflects excellent practice that meets children's needs directly, motivates them to learn and provides purposeful opportunities to extend their progress effectively.

Environment: Excellent

Leaders and practitioners work diligently to create an attractive and interesting environment to develop children's skills purposefully. As a result, the environment is of an extremely rich quality and provides excellent and valuable opportunities for children to develop their imagination and creative skills. The doors from the main room to the outdoor area are open throughout the session so that children can choose where to play. An excellent feature of the service is the extremely extensive provision in the indoor and outdoor areas. These excellent opportunities inspire curiosity and promote children's skills successfully.

Leaders ensure that the environment is safe, clean and welcoming. By displaying examples of the children's artwork and photographs of them and their families on the walls of the room, practitioners create a sense of pride and belonging among the children and create a welcoming ethos for all who visit.

Practitioners ensure that there is a wide range of interesting and exciting resources and equipment available to the children. They keep resources at a low level to enable children to choose independently and pursue their individual interests effectively. Practitioners ensure that the environment offers experiences and resources that stimulate children's interests and imagination continuously; for example, a collection of real-life items, woodworking tools, fresh vegetables, chinaware, paint and small pieces. Practitioners provide effective play and learning areas, which include quiet areas and role-play areas, opportunities for children to investigate and inquire and activities that have a very strong effect on their imagination.

Practitioners ensure that children are safe and prioritise assessing the risk both indoors and outdoors and of specific activities. This has a positive effect on children's development by enabling them to take risks and undertake new experiences. Practitioners ensure that children are supervised carefully in a safe environment.

Leaders keep a record of all children, staff and visitors, ensure that the main doors are locked and implement a robust system for managing access to the site. They conduct frequent fire drills and vary their timing. As a result, nearly all children are given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the arrangements to be followed in an emergency. Practitioners ensure that the setting is clean and well-organised and very well maintained.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders place children's well-being at the heart of everything they do. They have a clear vision based on ensuring that every child achieves the best possible outcomes through care, learning and play and that they feel valued and safe. They ensure that the statement of purpose is up-to-date and reflects the service successfully. Leaders' high expectations ensure that everyone works together strongly as a team. They are very enthusiastic and are committed to providing a stimulating and extremely purposeful environment. Leaders provide suitable professional learning opportunities for practitioners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding successfully.

Leaders succeed in creating a warm, caring and homely environment where practitioners and children are respected and their voice contributes to the setting's procedures successfully. Leaders contact parents and carers regularly about their children's development and achievements. They use secure social media meaningfully to provide them with relevant information.

Leaders undertake their management duties successfully, which includes purposeful use of the early years pupil development grant. Leaders ensure safe recruitment arrangements and update practitioner checks appropriately. They provide regular and valuable opportunities for supervisory discussions, along with an annual evaluation.

Leaders focus well on introducing regular improvements to develop the setting's practices further. They conduct valuable self-evaluation procedures which lead to useful targets for improvement. As a result, they identify the setting's strengths and issues that are in need of attention successfully.

Leaders ensure that full consideration is given to the views of everyone involved with the setting. They hold beneficial discussions with all stakeholders to improve provision and children's experiences and act on the suggestions of support agency officers. They work effectively with the local school and this prepares children purposefully for the next stage in their education. Leaders provide valuable opportunities for children to visit the local community. They develop the children's awareness of their *cynefin*, or local area, well and use the surrounding area purposefully. For example, practitioners and children visit the country park, a care home and go on trips by train and bus regularly.

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.

Mae’r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

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