Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Estyn | Dros ddysgwyr, dros Gymru
For learners, for Wales

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Ffestiniog

Cylch Meithrin Ffestiniog
Clwb Chwaraeon
Llan Ffestiniog
Gwynedd
LL41 4ND

Date of inspection: January 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 Ffestiniog

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Ffestiniog
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Cylch Meithrin Ffestiniog
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Manon Morris
Person in charge	Ceri Hughes
Number of places	16
Age range of children	2-4 years
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	11
Number of children funded for early education	9
Opening days / times	Monday – Friday 08:30 – 15:30
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	The service provides the Welsh language 'Active Offer' and makes every effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and Welsh culture.
Date of previous CIW inspection	This is the first post-registration inspection.
Date of previous Estyn inspection	22/05/2016
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	21/01/2025
Not applicable.	

Summary

Theme	Rating
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 practitioners use observations effectively to plan the next steps in the children's development.

R2. Develop the outdoor area to provide richer opportunities for children to develop their skills.

What happens next

The setting will produce an action plan showing how it will implement the recommendations.

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Children have a strong voice and they make choices and decisions regularly. They enjoy the freedom to move confidently around the learning areas. Most children help themselves to resources within the play areas effectively. For example, they move from the dough table to the role-play area and then go on to build a tower out of blocks. Almost all children arrive happily and enjoy the morning routine before chatting and laughing with their friends. They know that their wishes and feelings are considered fully. Most children choose where to sit at the table during mealtimes confidently and feel comfortable asking to go to the toilet on their own.

Almost all children settle quickly and are happy at the setting. They arrive with a smile and cope very well when separated from their parents and carers. Children feel safe in the care of the practitioners. For example, they enjoy the warmth whilst spending time listening to stories, and are eager to share their news from home. Children settle very quickly and are familiar with the setting's daily routine. They socialise, laugh and sing whilst playing. Most children develop close and warm relationships with practitioners and interact well with visitors. Children ensure that visitors are welcomed warmly, they chat with them about interesting topics and offer them a mug of coffee from the role-play area.

Most children interact well and develop their social skills by discussing and sharing while playing. For example, they use the sand timer confidently whilst taking turns to use the bikes. They eagerly remind the practitioners when it is time for them to have a go. Most children are ready to support each other, for example, by working together to build a tower out of blocks and helping each other to put on their shoes. Almost all children are very friendly and courteous with each other.

Most children concentrate for extended periods. They take their time to make birthday cakes usingdough and feel confident to move the resources to different areas. For example, they sing happy birthday when presenting the cake to the rest of the group, who are sitting comfortably in the role-play area. Most children develop their physical, literacy, numeracy and creative skills effectively. For example, they enjoy concentrating for long periods of time whilst racing each other on the bikes, listening to Welsh songs and creating shapes by using paint and the arts and crafts equipment.

Most children develop good independence skills, for example, when storing their coats and bags and using the toilet and washing and drying their hands. They take pride in their achievements when completing tasks such as brushing their teeth and self-registering.

They persevere purposefully when learning and show pride when they develop their independence further.

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

During their time at the setting, most children build their confidence when interacting with their friends and they develop their skills well. Many of the children speak Welsh naturally with each other as Welsh is their first language. Children who are new to the Welsh language come to understand the language quickly as they are continuously immersed in it. Most children express their opinion sensibly whilst playing in the setting's areas.

Most children listen intently to each other and to the practitioners, for example, whilst sitting comfortably and discussing the characters from a story. They approach books spontaneously, whilst looking at the pictures and asking questions about the characters. Most children are aware of their names during the morning register. A minority of children imitate practitioners by holding the book and reading the story to their friends, asking a question and waiting for the children to answer. Many create marks on a big piece of paper or a blackboard independently using different tools. They respond eagerly to invitations to learn, for example, whilst creating their own imaginary menu in the play house.

Most children's mathematics skills are developing well whilst they gain confidence using different toys and resources. They recognise different numbers that have been placed on the small resources, and count up to five whilst singing familiar rhymes. They play with different sized objects whilst filling and emptying them and use scales to consider the weight of different objects. Many choose colours that appeal to them to create patterns with a square and triangle shaped sponge.

Their fine motor skills are developing well and they get tongs and scissors to pick up resources and cut paper independently. They play together contently whilst building high towers with plastic blocks, and placing them on wheels to push them across the floor. The digital skills of many of the children are developing appropriately. They use equipment that allows them to listen to a practitioners voice giving them instructions on how to complete a task. Many enjoy playing with a keyboard which develops their awareness of numbers and letters.

Most children's physical skills are developing effectively. They use the bikes skilfully by carefully slowing down when approaching a bend at the end of the yard. A minority of children are able to move along the climbing wall on the school yard, and support themselves effectively. Nearly all children play with each other in a kind manner and consider their friends' feelings.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners have a robust understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe and prioritise their health and safety successfully. As a result, they implement robust policies and procedures effectively. Each practitioner has a first aid certificate and they follow procedures carefully and keep accurate records of accidents and incidents. They follow medication procedures effectively to ensure the safety of children. Practitioners have a good understanding of hygiene procedures and implement them effectively. For example, they disinfect surfaces carefully before snacks and wear gloves and an apron when sharing food packages. They ensure complete privacy and dignity when following the nappy changing policy and keep accurate records. Practitioners have a thorough and well-organised registration system and ensure records of consent are in place. They ensure the setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet the requirements and pose no cause for concern.

Practitioners have an affectionate relationship with the children and treat them in a kind manner. They interact naturally and explain to the children how to respect each other and support them in doing so. Nearly all practitioners are good role models and interact positively, listening, working together and explaining things in a clear and caring way. For example, when children arrive, practitioners welcome them warmly and encourage them to build their confidence by self-registering independently. Practitioners show interest when listening, praise and enhance the children's understanding by interacting in a close and personal manner. For example, they explain what will happen next and as a result, they create a supportive ethos. The practitioners sit and eat their lunch at the table with the children. As a result, they praise children regularly, which has a positive impact on their self-confidence and social skills. Practitioners encourage children to consider their behaviour by learning how to wait and take their turn. They reinforce the importance of sharing in a clear way and are able to ensure children understand the positive effect on others. For example, when waiting their turn to use equipment by the sand or to choose a story.

Practitioners develop very good relationships with children and they have a clear understanding of their needs and individual wishes. They encourage children's independence in a kind and sensitive manner and provide encouragement to build on their individual skills in order to develop their self-esteem. For example, practitioners support the children to think about their needs, such as washing their hands or wearing a coat to go outside.

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

Practitioners plan a beneficial range of learning experiences for the children. They have close links with parents and carers and ask about their child's interest to ensure there are various resources available that appeal to them. They ensure there are toys and resources available for the children to use as they wish and this builds the children's confidence and independence successfully. They ensure that children are given extended periods of time to play freely where they develop perseverance by making decisions for themselves.

Practitioners plan worthwhile opportunities for the children to develop their different skills in every area. They offer homely opportunities for the children to come together to enjoy stories, by reading a story enthusiastically and asking questions to encourage the children's imagination. They chat about the puppy brushing its teeth, and the importance of brushing their teeth regularly. There are opportunities for them to develop their fine motor skills by using different resources to create patterns and pictures. Children are given worthwhile opportunities to make marks with chalk on the outside walls.

Practitioners encourage children to research effectively, for example, by looking at how much sand they will need to cover the children's hands. This leads to opportunities to count in a practical context. Practitioners offer effective opportunities for children to develop their creativity, for example by using cornflour and water to create snowflakes. They encourage the children to feel the material slipping between their fingers, adding colours to ensure that the experience is beneficial for the children. Practitioners ensure there is an appropriate variety of digital resources available, such as programmable robots the children can drive in different directions. They offer beneficial opportunities for children to learn about social diversity and cultural and spiritual ethics by learning about other cultures and discussing diversity within families. For example, practitioners use story books to develop the children's kind and inclusive manner.

Whilst the children play, practitioners interact with them effectively, intervening skilfully in their play to ask questions or to develop learning further. When needed, they teach particular skills, and allow the children to continue to play and develop independence. They introduce language continuously to develop the children's confidence orally. They offer regular feedback that develops the children's self-confidence effectively, and praise them for persevering.

Practitioners observe the children playing regularly, and record their progress in different areas. This information is shared regularly with the team to ensure they are able to support the children in different areas. However, they do not fully use this information to plan the next steps in their learning.

Environment: Good

Leaders ensure the environment is clean and safe. They close the gate and visitors cannot access the setting at any time without permission. Leaders keep all records relating to the service securely on site. They ensure fire drills are held regularly, and record and analyse them. Leaders conduct effective and purposeful risk assessments and these are reviewed regularly. They maintain a register of children and practitioners which records arrival and departure times. Leaders maintain an information board which shows various adverts, posters and purposeful procedures that supports the setting's regulations and policies. As a result, practitioners and parents are given up to date information in various ways.

Leaders ensure the environment is welcoming and warm with plenty of room for the children to play and move around freely. Leaders provide suitable toilets and facilities for them to wash and dry their hands as well as a nappy changing area that develops independence and ensures privacy. They arrange the environment effectively to ensure there is a good variety of play opportunities for the children. However, the outdoor area at the back of the building is not used regularly as it has not been developed sufficiently. As a result, the opportunities for children to make the most of the rich playing experiences in the outdoors is limited. However, leaders arrange opportunities for the children to visit the local primary school to use the equipment and to have opportunities to develop their physical skills by balancing, biking, pushing and climbing.

Leaders provide a variety of purposeful resources for children for their age and development and these are stored at a low level. As a result, children have easy access to high-quality equipment, enabling them to choose independently and follow their interests. Practitioners encourage children to experience multicultural resources. For example, dolls, books and clothes from different countries around the world. They ensure t they have a wide range of furniture and equipment of a good standard, which are age appropriate for the children. These help to encourage the children's imagination and interests. Leaders ensure there are a great deal of natural materials and loose parts available for the children to explore.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders work together effectively and share the vision of a welcoming provision where children and practitioners work together happily. The statement of purpose is correct and reflects the service provided. Leaders follow safe, robust and timely recruitment processes. They update policies and procedures to ensure that they meet the requirements. No non-compliance was identified with regard to the regulations or the national minimum standards during the inspection. Volunteers support the work of leaders effectively to maintain and develop the provision in the community. They offer worthwhile support for practitioners and ensure the setting's developing needs are

considered regularly. The provision’s grant funding is used effectively to maintain practitioner's developing needs and enrich children's learning experiences.

Leaders have thorough information on the current standard of the provision. They work together with partners, such as the local authority's advisory team and support organisations to note strengths and elements that would benefit form being developed further. Leaders spend time with practitioners to scrutinise how the provision is being run and discuss needs with regard to adding resources to enrich the children's experiences.

Leaders share priorities with regard to improving the setting into clear actions, which includes a completion date and appropriate criteria to note when they have reached the aim. For example, it was noted that there was a need to develop the children's awareness of cultural differences. This led to adding a good variation of resources, including books with characters of different ethnic backgrounds, and expanding the children's experiences and awareness successfully.

The performance management procedures are incorporated in a robust manner, and formal observations are maintained regularly. These arrangements support the practitioners well, and allow them to recognise their training needs effectively. For example, practitioners have received training on responsive planning which has helped them to gain confidence by presenting methods which respond to Curriculum for Wales' expectations. As a result, this has developed the practitioners' teaching skills effectively, and has strengthened the way in which they plan learning experiences for the children.

Leaders develop an effective culture of sharing good practice and considering developments within the sector. They consider the work of other settings to develop their work further. They have a close relationship with the local school, which has led to expanding the children's physical experiences beneficially. They work together with local schools when the children are ready to transfer to the next step in their learning.
Practitioners have a supportive relationship with parents and carers. They use various methods to share learning experiences with parents to encourage the children's development and to maintain their welfare. Leaders work closely with local authority officers and umbrella organisations to maintain and develop the provision. Practitioners have a close relationship with partners in the community, and enjoy community events such as an event to celebrate Halloween.

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 rating 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 Prysg (Welsh to English).

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Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

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