A report on

Meithrinfa Seren Fach

Brithdir
Dolgellau
Gwynedd
LL40 2RW

Date of inspection: March 2026

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Meithrinfa Seren Fach

Name of setting	Meithrinfa Seren Fach
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Carwyn Siddall
Person in charge	Eleri Jones
Number of places	42
Age range of children	3 months to 8 years old
Number of 3- and 4-year-old children	16
Number of children who receive funding for early education	8
Opening days / times	Monday to Thursday, 07:30 – 18:00 and Friday, 07:30 – 17:30
Flying start service	No
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-registering as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Date of previous Estyn inspection	22/03/2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	24/03/2026
Additional information	

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)**	
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 that practitioners promote children's independence by not over-directing their learning experiences

R2 Provide more opportunities for children to solve problems independently

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Nearly all children are happy and enjoy the company of their friends and practitioners as they socialise with each other. They make choices confidently and enjoy the freedom to move around the learning areas. For example, they make free choices about which play area they would like to play and learn in. Nearly all children join groups of friends of their choice and help themselves to resources skilfully. They enjoy experimenting with dough, washing sea creatures in the water tray or painting in the craft area. They are comfortable asking for support when putting on an apron or asking practitioners for different colours of paint.

Nearly all children settle quickly and make themselves at home happily. They cope well when leaving their parents and feel safe and homely. For example, they have the confidence to call the practitioners' names, as necessary, and demonstrate that they have a sense of belonging. Many children are familiar with the daily routines and understand that a timetable and structure allow them to learn and play. They are aware of the snack time arrangements and when to sit on the mat for circle time, which gives them a sense of reassurance. They gain satisfaction from developing their understanding of their identity, such as discussing their families and talking animatedly while playing with mobile phones.

Many children interact well and develop sound social skills. They enjoy the company of friends and learn how to take turns. For example, during snack time, children enjoy eating with their friends around the table. They observe each other when learning to serve their food and when pouring milk into their cups. They smile and laugh as they complete tasks and take pride in their friends' successes. Many children support each other effectively when offering another child a turn when playing in the water tray and when explaining to each other that they need to wear aprons, showing them where to find the garments. Nearly all children develop warm relationships with the practitioners and interact well with visitors.

Many children are enthusiastic and persevere purposefully when learning. They have the confidence to experiment and enjoy mastering equipment such as a rolling pin to roll the dough to make a strawberry cake. As a result, children are keen to try again and develop their skills. Most children also develop good independent skills, for example when going to the toilet, washing and drying their hands without support, serving food or preparing to play outside.

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

There is no report on children's learning. This is because there were not enough three or four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection, who do not receive funded education elsewhere, to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Good

All practitioners understand their responsibilities to keep children safe and prioritise their health and safety successfully. All practitioners have a clear understanding of the

safeguarding policy and complete appropriate child safeguarding training regularly. They attend relevant first aid training, keep accurate records of accidents and incidents, and understand the procedures for administering medication. Practitioners encourage children to enjoy eating healthy food and ensure that they follow robust procedures when distributing snacks and lunch. They understand their responsibilities to safeguard children with allergies and complete detailed and organised registration processes to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the individual needs of each child, including consent records.

Systems for supporting additional learning needs (ALN) are good and they work with external bodies and professionals, where necessary, to support children and their families. Practitioners follow robust hygiene practices, for example when encouraging children to wash their hands regularly and following robust processes when changing nappies. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

All practitioners know the children very well and treat them with care and respect. They have a kind relationship with the children and model positive interaction regularly in sincere ways. Practitioners are caring and recognise when children need support, such as when getting dressed, using particular resources or to suggest further ideas when interacting. They are enthusiastic and work together effectively to reinforce positive social skills by using warm and consistent praise. All practitioners are positive role models and encourage children to treat each other kindly.

Practitioners have a good understanding of the development, needs and wishes of individual children. They understand their responsibilities to support children's individual interests and skills. Practitioners provide creative opportunities to extend children's experiences and skills and pay attention to their ideas and requirements. They are on hand to offer support, when necessary. They use resources of a high standard and plan carefully to deliver interesting and stimulating activities for children's further development and their individual needs.

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

Practitioners provide a good range of interesting learning experiences and play activities. They encourage children to work together and communicate with each other regularly, which has a good effect on their knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, they support children sensibly to do each other's hair and practitioners' hair while role-playing and challenge them to create colourful patterns with paint and chalk.

Practitioners have positive attitudes, which stimulates children's play effectively. On the whole, their teaching methods are sound and they encourage children to work together enthusiastically and develop a wide range of skills intelligently across the areas of learning. However, at times, practitioners tend to over-direct children, which hinders their independence.

Practitioners intervene regularly during activities and try to encourage children to experiment while playing. They hold regular discussions with the children on how to succeed during their tasks, such as how to use flashlights and compare the brightness of the lights.

However, there are very few opportunities for children to solve problems completely independently, without adult supervision.

Practitioners provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes sensible co-operation among themselves and a willingness to pursue children's interests and suggestions. They plan together effectively to extend children's learning through a variety of practical experiences, such as creating patterns with beads in the dough and filling boxes with pipettes. They observe children and discuss their progress purposefully to identify the next steps in their learning.

Practitioners plan effective opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills. They extend children's understanding during the sessions by questioning them effectively and prompting them to explain their actions sensibly. They do this as they describe the length and size of pieces of wood in the construction area, weigh pebbles and soil with scales, and when controlling electronic cars confidently. Practitioners ensure that children develop their physical skills effectively. For example, they encourage children to balance carefully when climbing adventure equipment and use rubber bands neatly to create colourful patterns between pegs. They provide interesting creative activities, such as creating different rhythms with percussion equipment and role-playing when placing dolls to sleep in a cradle.

Practitioners develop children's spiritual, moral and social skills well. They promote Welsh culture efficiently by celebrating St David's Day and the history of St Dwynwen and contributing to the local eisteddfod. Practitioners celebrate diversity sensibly and talk about the special festivals of different religions regularly. They also raise children's awareness of their *cynefin*, or local area, purposefully by studying the features and facilities of the local area and singing traditional songs and nursery rhymes.

Environment: Good

Leaders prioritise children's safety by providing procedures which ensure that any risks are identified, monitored and managed effectively. They produce thorough risk assessments that outline potential hazards and the steps that have been taken to minimise or prevent the risk to children. They also check these documents regularly and complete additional assessments for any new activities. Practitioners complete daily checks of the play areas, toys and resources and keep a record of any further steps that need to be followed effectively.

Leaders respond promptly to issues relating to children's safety and any cases that arise. For example, they monitor and conduct fire drills regularly to ensure that children are familiar with the arrangements to be followed should they have reason to evacuate the building urgently. The building is well maintained and safety checks are completed regularly. Practitioners are vigilant when supervising children carefully to ensure their safety indoors and outdoors and on trips around the local area.

The playroom is comfortable and cozy and there is plenty of space for children to move around freely. Leaders ensure that children have a sense of belonging by displaying examples of their work on the walls, including photographs of families and examples of children's creative work. Practitioners ensure that the playrooms provide a wide range of

stimulating and exciting activities and resources that enrich children's experiences successfully. For example, there is a painting area, reading books and areas for marking and playing with dough. These areas motivate children to use their imagination purposefully. The outdoor area is enclosed and offers interesting play experiences in the mud kitchen, sand and water trays. They also use an extensive grassy area to develop children's physical skills purposefully.

Leaders ensure that the wide range of resources are clean and of good quality. They are stored at a low level to enable children to choose independently without adult intervention. Leaders provide an effective range of 'authentic' resources. For example, children play with crockery and cooking equipment in the mud kitchen and pretend to talk confidently on the telephone with their friends.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have a sound vision and work well together to promote children's care and support their learning. They focus clearly on developing provision, as well as children's skills and well-being. As a result, their regular routines and positive attitudes create an interesting environment that provides good experiences for children.

Leaders provide diligent care during sessions, which creates a sense of closeness between practitioners and children. This caring atmosphere encourages children to work well together and persevere while playing and learning in a close-knit, supportive and Welsh environment. Leaders also hold regular discussions with parents and carers about their children's development and achievements. They use initial visits, secure social media, termly reports and progress booklets meaningfully to provide them with relevant information.

Leaders work together conscientiously as a team and ensure that everyone attends useful training to improve their teaching and care systems. They keep a register of children and practitioners and ensure that the ratio of practitioners to children is correct at all times. Leaders ensure that the setting's statutory documents, policies and practices are renewed annually. The Statement of Purpose is accurate and reflects the service correctly. They ensure that processes for supervising, evaluating and appraising the work and development of all practitioners are effective.

Leaders focus well on introducing regular improvements to develop the setting's practices further. They conduct useful self-evaluation procedures, which lead to relevant targets for improvement. As a result, they identify the setting's strengths and areas that are in need of attention well. For example, leaders have focused recently on developing practitioners' expertise in assessing skilfully and targeting the next steps in individual children's learning accurately.

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. As a result, they succeed in providing diverse experiences for children to develop their social skills and improve their literacy and numeracy skills while looking at books, discussing stories and learning about shapes, numbers and volume.

Leaders have a good relationship with schools in the local area and this prepares children purposefully for the next stage in their education. Leaders and practitioners develop children's awareness of their *cynefin*, or local area, well and use the surrounding area purposefully. For example, practitioners and children visit nearby waterfalls and go on regular trips around the village to enrich children's learning. Leaders also invite officers from the emergency services to the setting the expand children's understanding of the roles of people in their community.

Leaders follow safe recruitment processes and allocate resources sensibly. They use the budget and grants carefully and prioritise expenditure against the setting's targets wisely. They also fund a variety of resources purposefully, such as materials to develop children's creative and physical skills.

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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