

# **The inspection of educational provision for children before compulsory school age**

## **Nursery report on: Cylch Meithrin Llansannan**

**Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Shirley Taylor**

**Date of inspection: 9/14 June 2010 (afternoon sessions)**

**Contract number: T/101/09N**

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## Report on the inspection of nursery settings in the non-maintained sector

**Name of nursery: Cylch Meithrin Llansannan**

**Address:**

**Ysgol Bro Aled  
Canolfan Addysg Bro Aled  
Llansannan  
Dinbych  
Conwy**

**Post code: LL16 5HN**

**Telephone: 01745 870660**

**Persons responsible for day-to-day management: Olwen Wyn Lloyd**

**Position: Lead practitioner**

### **About the inspection**

This inspection took place as part of a national programme of inspections of the educational provision for children before compulsory school age in Wales. It was commissioned by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings so that providers can improve the quality of education offered and help children achieve their full potential. Another purpose is to inform parents and the public about the quality of nursery education. A copy of the inspection report must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the nursery and should be available on request to other people.

Inspectors have used a five-point scale to record all judgements. Grade definitions are:

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	many important shortcomings

## **1.0 Context of setting**

### **Context of the nursery setting**

Cylch Meithrin Llansannan is a registered setting and an affiliated member of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. The nursery offers Welsh medium provision and was established over forty years ago by a group of officials representing the local branch of Merched y Wawr.

The majority of children registered at the setting live in Llansannan and the surrounding rural area including the nearby village of Llanfair Tal Haearn. Llansannan is a small village located approximately eight miles from the town of Abergele. The area is considered as being neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Children attending the setting are from a range of socio economic backgrounds.

The setting is housed in a community room within Canolfan Addysg Bro Aled, that forms part of Ysgol Bro Aled's building. Nearly all children transfer to the school in the September following their third birthday. The setting offers four afternoon sessions a week from 12.30 until 3 o'clock for the younger children and from 12.00 until 3 o'clock for the group of children referred to as 'Meithrin Mwy'. The latter group attend the local school on a part-time basis.

Cylch Meithrin Llansannan is registered to accept 21 children between two and a half years-old and school age. Currently, there are four two year-olds, four three year-olds and five four year-olds included on the setting's register. At present, thirty per cent of children are from families where Welsh is the first language of the home. There are no children from an ethnic minority background. Evidence shows that the lead practitioner understands the procedures involved in ensuring that any child with additional learning needs receives effective support and provision. During the inspection period it was noted that three children are in receipt of funded educational provision.

Effective use is made of the large indoor area in order to provide a wide range of activities. The accommodation comprises of a well equipped kitchen, toilet and washing facilities and large purpose built storage cupboards. A notice board situated near the setting's entrance provides parents and carers with a range of information relating to the nursery's life and work. Recently, practitioners have developed an area in front of the nursery as an outdoor learning area. The centre serves the local community and is used during the evening by a number of local groups. It is also used by the After School Club and the Cylch Ti a Fi group meet every Wednesday afternoon. Practitioners have to clear and set out furniture and equipment before and after each session.

The lead practitioner has undertaken the role of leadership for the past ten years. She holds a NNEB diploma and has over 32 years experience of working with young children. The deputy has over ten years experience and has achieved a Level 2 NVQ in early years care and education. Recently, an additional assistant, who has gained a nursing degree, has been appointed on a part-time basis.

In December 2009, the setting was inspected by Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales. This is the first time for the nursery to be inspected by Estyn.

## 2.0 Main findings of the report

### 2.1 The overall quality and standards of educational provision and whether or not the provision successfully promotes the goals for children's learning

The quality and standards of educational provision, taken overall, are appropriate and successfully promote the Foundation Phase Outcomes for children's learning.

In view of the limited number of children aged three to four years old, this report focuses on the setting's provision. Consequently, no grades are awarded for the standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning.

### 2.2 Standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Areas of learning	Grade for under-fives
Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity	Grade not awarded. Comments on provision only.
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade not awarded. Comments on provision only.
Mathematical development	Grade not awarded. Comments on provision only.
Welsh language development	Not applicable
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade not awarded. Comments on provision only.
Physical development	Grade not awarded. Comments on provision only.
Creative development	Grade not awarded. Comments on provision only.

### 2.3 Inspection judgement on the quality of education provided by the setting

Quality of education	Grade for under-fives
Quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
Quality of planning for children's learning	2
Quality of teaching	2
Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress, and reports for parents and carers	2
Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community	1
The extent to which the setting contributes to children's wellbeing	2
Quality of the leadership and management of the setting	2
The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report	2

### **3.0 The experiences the setting provides to develop children's skills in the six areas of learning**

#### **3.1 Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity**

##### **Good features**

All practitioners help create a happy and relaxed atmosphere where children feel confident and are willing to ask for help. The provision for welcoming children each afternoon is good and provides parents and carers opportunities to meet the practitioners. Both the indoor and outdoor spaces are well prepared and allow children to choose from a range of activities independently. The setting's daily routines together with the practitioners' high expectations regarding courtesy and behaviour help promote children's personal and social development. Children are offered opportunities to develop their self-confidence and to form relationship with each other and with the adults that care for them. Emphasis is placed on working together and playing happily. Children's concentration skills are promoted through a range of activities and they are encouraged to make decisions independently. Children are encouraged to learn how to take responsibility for their personal hygiene and to become increasingly independent when dressing and undressing their indoor and outdoor clothes. The provision encourages children to think of others and to show sensitivity towards their peers. Children are also made aware of the importance of looking after their environment through introducing issues such as recycling. Practitioners are effective language role models and use the Welsh language throughout the afternoon, across all areas of learning. This provides children who are natural Welsh speakers as well as those learning Welsh as a second language with opportunities to hear and use the language naturally within the setting's daily life. Children are introduced to celebrations, traditional stories, songs and rhymes relating to Wales. Evidence shows that a few opportunities have been offered to raise children's awareness other cultures, for example, participating in activities to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

##### **Shortcomings**

The provision for encouraging children to practise their Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) skills is underdeveloped.

#### **3.2 Language, literacy and communication skills**

##### **Good features**

The provision places emphasis on encouraging children to be good listeners and to communicate their needs confidently. The setting's practitioners are effective language role models and their questioning techniques encourage children to respond. Practitioners introduce new vocabulary and phrases whenever possible and encourage children to use them, such as during role-play situations in the setting's shop. Children are offered opportunities to recall a variety of stories, songs and rhymes and are encouraged to do so using clear pronunciation. Sharing stories with children is part of the setting's daily routine and helps promote their listening skills and to begin to develop an appreciation of the written word. Children's interest in books is also fostered through introducing and providing a wide range of story books as well as reference books for children to browse through. Practitioners

encourage children to hold books properly and to handle books with care. The experiences offered together with the clear labels displayed around the room help promote children's understanding that written symbols carry meaning and sounds. Children are offered regular opportunities to develop and practise their mark-making and basic writing skills. The provision ensures that children begin to understand some of the functions of writing. Practitioners offer a range of opportunities for children to practise their mark-making skills in a range of medium including paint, sand and flour.

#### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

### **3.3 Mathematical development**

#### **Good features**

The setting provides a variety of experiences that promote children's ability to sort, match and order objects according to size, colour and shape. Practitioners effectively encourage children to practise and use their number skills when introducing activities across the six areas of learning. The provision includes opportunities for children to learn and perform a wide range of counting rhymes. They are offered opportunities to participate in simple counting activities, including counting the number of children present, the pieces of fruit consumed by the hungry caterpillar and when ordering a specific number of fruit in the setting's shop. During sand and water play children are introduced to concepts, heavy/light, full/empty, and big/small. The provision ensures that they are introduced to various two dimensional shapes both in indoor and outdoor activities. Through role play activities in 'Siop Ffrwythau Sali Mali', children are provided with opportunities to begin to recognise simple coinage when buying and selling various goods. Interacting with practitioners during focused activities enriches children's understanding of a range of mathematical concepts as well as introducing them to mathematical vocabulary and terminology. For example, observing and discussing pictures of various structures and buildings from around the world.

#### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

### **3.4 Knowledge and understanding of the world**

#### **Good features**

The provision both in the outdoor and indoor environment ensures that children are offered opportunities to begin to learn about the properties of a variety of materials including building materials and natural materials. Practitioners encourage children to make decisions and to solve problems. Children's appreciation of the environment is regularly promoted through activities, such as visiting the gardens of local residents and through introducing them to the local recycling centre. During daily discussions relating to weather conditions, practitioners encourage children to recognise basic weather symbols. In addition, planned activities throughout the year ensure children have a developing understanding of some of the features associated with specific seasons. The investigation area provides opportunities for children to experiment and investigate using magnets and to enhance their observation skills

through using a range of magnifying glasses. Daily routines help promote children's understanding of the passage of time. Activities such as planting potatoes raise children's awareness of the conditions needed for plants to grow healthily. The provision for enhancing children's knowledge and understanding of the role of different workers in the community includes planned visits from the local community police officer. Practitioners ensure that children are made aware of some of the features relating to their locality, including the parish church and local shop. Through a variety of action rhymes, the provision offers children opportunities to learn about and name the main external parts of the body.

#### **Shortcomings**

At present, activities to promote children's awareness of past and present are limited.

### **3.5 Physical development**

#### **Good features**

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of small tools and equipment such as, modelling tools, scissors, weaving mats, pencils, paintbrushes and chalk to develop their fine motor skills. Practitioners provide various pieces of equipment to encourage children to develop their walking, hopping and balancing skills. The provision offers children opportunities to follow instructions, such as when introducing an obstacle course. This activity helps increase children's awareness of the vocabulary relating to positional language. Children are also made aware of the importance of working safely and confidently. Activities held in the school hall helps develop children's spatial awareness. The setting encourages children to participate in a range of action songs so that they recognise the main external parts of their bodies. The recently developed enclosed area at the front of the building provides space for children to further develop their physical skills, including steering and controlling wheeled toys and to enjoy the benefits of outdoor play.

#### **Shortcomings**

At present, the provision lacks large pieces of equipment so that children can practise their climbing, balancing, jumping and sliding skills on different levels.

### **3.6 Creative development**

#### **Good features**

The setting provides children with a wealth of opportunities to mix paints and choose from a range of materials, including natural materials to express themselves creatively. Activities, such as being introduced to the work of the Welsh artist Tim Pugh and opportunities to share their work with their peers help children begin to enjoy and appreciate the work of others. The provision introduces children to a wide range of techniques and offers excellent opportunities for children to investigate and experiment with different media. This is a noteworthy feature of the setting's provision. An outstanding aspect is the means in which children's work is displayed attractively around the setting. Children's creative images form an important part of the setting's colourful displays. Practitioners ensure that children learn and perform a repertoire of traditional and modern songs. Children are offered experiences, such

as using a range of simple percussion instruments to produce loud and soft sounds as well as opportunities to keep a simple beat. The setting provides children with a constantly changing role-play area. Practitioners also encourage children to participate in imaginative drama, such as providing props and apparatus for them to emulate the movements of a butterfly.

**Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

## 4.0 The quality of educational provision

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds

### 4.1 Quality of provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

##### Good features

The setting's aim is to 'provide an environment based on clear, fair and consistent guidelines that promote children's understanding of acceptable behaviour'. This is evident in practice. Daily procedures and activities help foster children's understanding of values, such as honesty, being grateful and respecting others. Children are encouraged to share their feelings, such as discussing what makes them happy or what makes a good friend. Practitioners succeed in making every child feel special and treat them with care, affection and equal concern. The provision encourages children of all ages to work together and to display courtesy at all times. Children are given opportunities to begin to develop an awareness of responsibility, such as when undertaking the role of 'Helpwr y Dydd'. Snack time is a pleasant occasion, offering children further opportunities to develop their social skills. The provision promotes children's spiritual development well. Children are introduced to various Christian holidays and are encouraged to offer a prayer of thanks before leaving the setting at the end of the afternoon session. The provision successfully encourages children to begin to appreciate the wonders of nature and the world around them. Children are made aware of the importance of caring for the environment including protecting wild flowers and mini beasts. Emphasis is placed on promoting children's Welsh identity and practitioners provide opportunities for children to experience a range of activities relating to their country's traditions and culture. For example, children are offered opportunities to learn the Welsh names for a variety of wild flowers and taste food associated with Wales, such as bara brith and Welsh cakes. Practitioners promote a respect for diversity through introducing children to stories, artefacts and pictures.

##### Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings but at present, the provision for promoting children's awareness of other cultures and beliefs is limited.

### 4.2 Quality of planning for children's learning

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

##### Good features

The quality of planning for children's learning is good and reflects the requirements of the Framework for Children's Learning for 3-7 year-olds in Wales. A wealth of activities is offered across the six areas of learning with a good balance between child-led and adult-led activities. The planning meets the needs of every child and ensures that they are making progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes in all six areas of learning. The setting's planning procedures follow those recommended by the local partnership. It is based on a series of themes that provides a broad and balanced learning programme, covering all areas of learning

over a period of time. Activities are noted for each area in the indoor and outdoor areas as well as the skills to be developed. Effective planning includes planning for continuous provision, enhanced provision and focused tasks led by an adult. Specific focused tasks based on promoting children's personal and social development are included in the setting's weekly planning format. The planning provides continuity and progression in children's learning. Practitioners are aware of the need to follow the correct procedures when ensuring that any child identified as having additional learning needs receives the appropriate support and guidance. Opportunities to observe and evaluations of the weekly tasks are noted on planning sheets. Every child is provided with equal access to all activities and opportunities. The setting ensures that the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is introduced within the setting's planning documents. Planning for continuous provision includes reference to various artefacts that reflect diversity within society. The setting's work is planned effectively around its indoor and outdoor learning areas and resources.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings but the comments made when evaluating focused tasks are not always specific enough to influence future learning.

## **4.3 Quality of teaching**

### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

The quality of teaching is good and has a positive effect on children's progress, achievement and well-being. Practitioners succeed in creating a happy, supportive and positive learning environment. They have developed a close working relationship with the children in their care. Practitioners' knowledge of the Framework for Children's Learning for 3-7 year-olds Wales is well developed. The setting's children are provided with a good standard of care, support and guidance. All practitioners are very well qualified and both full-time practitioners have a wealth of experience of working with young children. The lead practitioner and assistants are effective role models and ensure that children are taught in a homely, stimulating and colourful learning environment. Children receive constant praise and encouragement that motivates them to focus and persevere. The learning environment is well prepared and all resources are utilised well both in the indoor and outdoor environment to support the teaching and to strengthen children's understanding of new concepts and skills' development in the six areas of learning. Effective use is made of the local area and residents to enrich the quality of experiences offered to children. Practitioners communicate effectively with children during small group activities and use appropriate questioning techniques to encourage children's thinking skills and reinforce learning. The sessions are managed well and opportunities are offered, in each session, for children to enjoy free play and to make their own choices. Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to learn through active involvement and effectively use the quality resources available to support their teaching. The link teacher representing the local partnership offers constant support and practical input so as to ensure that the Foundation Phase curriculum is introduced effectively and efficiently. Further support is offered by the development officer representing Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin. The lead practitioner also recognises

and values the support provided by Ysgol Bro Aled's head teacher and early years teacher.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

## **4.4 Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress and reports for parents and carers**

### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

Practitioners have a sound knowledge and understanding of the children in their care and are aware of their individual needs. Nearly all parents stated during informal discussions with the inspector and in the comments noted in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are kept informed through informal discussions about their child's progress at the setting. For example, they appreciate the daily opportunities they have to chat with practitioners. Recently, the setting has introduced an initiative inviting parents and carers to visit the setting on a more formal basis so that they can discuss their child's progress in the six areas of learning. Children are observed when participating in their daily activities and staff regularly discuss and record any significant developments in the six areas of learning. The information collated from observation notes and assessments of focused tasks is referred to when completing the skills checklist in the individual 'Myself' booklets. These are transferred to Ysgol Bro Aled when a child starts at the school on a part time basis. Children's individual 'Llyfr Trysor' provides parents with a record of annotated photographs depicting individuals participating in a range of activities. Regular discussions and written evaluations of planned activities are referred to when planning future activities. Evidence shows that practitioners are aware of the strategies involved in diagnosing and planning for children with additional learning needs. Sound procedures and initiatives are in place to ensure that the transition from the setting to the receiving school is smooth and effective. For example, the school's Foundation Phase teacher is a regular visitor at the setting and the children are admitted to the school on a part time basis allowing children time settle into their new surroundings.

#### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings but the quality of the comments/questions relating to the observation of focused tasks is inconsistent and do not always provide clear information regarding the next steps in learning.

## **4.5 Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community**

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Outstanding features**

Cylch Meithrin Llansannan has over the past forty years established itself as an integral part of the local community. An outstanding feature is the setting's presence in numerous community events, such as Eisteddfod Llansannan and fayres organised by local clubs, including the local football club. People representing the local community are welcomed into the setting and the provision also offers children

opportunities to visit the locality including the local shop, park and church. The local branch of Merched y Wawr was instrumental in establishing the setting and has continued since those early days to be extremely supportive of the setting's day-to-day life. The close links established between the nursery and Ysgol Bro Aled is an outstanding feature of the setting's provision. The head teacher is the registered person for the setting and regularly visits the nursery. Continuous dialogue between the setting's practitioners and the school's Foundation Phase teacher ensure that children enjoy the benefits of experiencing a smooth transition from one stage of learning to the next. All these factors have an outstanding impact on children's all round development.

#### **Good features**

Practitioners have earned the respect of parents and carers and the quality of the relationships between them is good. Parents and carers provided positive feedback in the pre-inspection questionnaires. During informal discussions with the inspector it was apparent that they appreciate the caring and happy environment created by all practitioners. The quality of the links with parents and carers is enhanced through various initiatives, including providing them with an insight into the type of activities children are involved in during the afternoon sessions. This takes the form of a 'Precious Experiences' file containing a detailed and well annotated collection of photographs reflecting all aspects of the six areas of learning. Settling-in procedures are well established and an introductory booklet is presented to parents when their child first enters the nursery. Parents and carers receive newsletters every term containing information regarding the current theme. Further information is posted daily on the setting's notice board and this includes a synopsis of the activities introduced to children during each session.

#### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

### **4.6 The extent to which the setting contributes to children's wellbeing**

#### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

##### **Good features**

Cylch Meithrin Llansannan's policies and procedures ensure that each child receives a high level of care in a supportive and welcoming learning environment. Practitioners are attentive of each individual's needs and successfully promote children's well-being within an ethos of inclusion. Child Protection procedures are in place and all three practitioners are aware of the correct protocol. Two practitioners hold current first aid certificates. During snack time, children are served a good selection of fruit and a drink of milk. Children are encouraged to talk about different tastes and practitioners help begin to raise their awareness of the benefits of eating healthy food. The provision ensures that children are beginning to develop an increasing understanding about the importance of exercise and are offered daily opportunities to undertake energetic play. The setting's practitioners promote good personal hygiene habits amongst the children. The learning programme provides regular opportunities for children to learn about their personal safety, including issues relating to road safety, handling animals and safety in the sun. Risk assessments are undertaken for identified areas within the nursery. There are appropriate security

arrangements in place, which ensure that entry cannot be gained if unannounced. Children are well supervised at all times.

**Shortcomings**

The practice of preparing risk assessments for off-site activities is underdeveloped.

**4.7 Quality of the leadership and management of the setting**

**Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

The setting has clear aims and values. The lead practitioner is an extremely experienced and well qualified practitioner. She is effectively supported by a full time assistant as well as a recently appointed part time assistant. They work well as a team and are committed to further developing their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The setting is becoming increasingly confident in implementing procedures for self-evaluating its provision in order to identify areas to be developed. Practitioners recognise that annual appraisals help establish agreed targets and identify training requirements. All these factors help provide an environment that caters well for children's all round development. The management committee meet regularly and are supportive of the setting's work. They are proactive in securing regular fundraising activities, including running stalls in numerous community based events. The wealth of fund raising activities held throughout the year not only succeed in raising funds but also helps raise the setting's profile within the community. Practitioners utilise their training opportunities as well as the sound advice they receive from the local partnership's Foundation Phase link teacher to further develop their practice within the nursery. The nursery's indoor and outdoor resources and accommodation are well managed. The quality of the setting's resources is an outstanding feature of its provision.

**Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

**4.8 The progress made by the setting in implementing the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report**

This is the first time for the setting to receive an Estyn inspection.

## 5.0 Recommendations

### **The setting needs to:**

- ensure that the evaluations of focused tasks provide clear guidance as to the next steps in children's learning;
- continue to develop its provision for promoting children's awareness of other cultures and beliefs; and
- enhance the provision for further developing children's Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) skills.

**The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days, or 45 working days if the plan needs to be translated to or from Welsh, showing how the issues identified above will be addressed. The action plan must be given to all parents/carers with a child at the setting. A copy of the action plan must be sent to the Chair of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership or Children and Young Peoples' Partnership, as appropriate, and to the Local Authority. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection.**