

The inspection of educational provision for children before compulsory school age

Nursery report on Cylch Meithrin Bodorgan

Registered Nursery Education Inspector: Martin Cray

Date of inspection: 10 / 11 June 2009 (mornings)

Contract number: T/101/08N

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

Name of nursery: Cylch Meithrin Bodorgan

**Address: Ysgol Gymuned Bodorgan
Bodorgan
Ynys Môn**

Post code: LL62 3AB

Telephone: 01407 840386

Person responsible for day-to-day management: Megan Price Humphreys

Position: Leader

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:

- Grade 1** good with outstanding features
- Grade 2** good features and no important shortcomings
- Grade 3** good features outweigh shortcomings
- Grade 4** some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
- Grade 5** many important shortcomings

1.0 Context of the setting

Context of the nursery setting:

This Welsh medium cylch meithrin was established in 1986 and it is held at Ysgol Gymuned Bodorgan. The setting serves Bodorgan and the surrounding areas of Hermon, Bethel and Malltraeth, and the children come primarily from working class backgrounds. The area is not adjudged to be prosperous.

The setting is managed by a volunteer committee and it is an educational provider as a member of the Ynys Môn Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership. It is also a registered member of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin.

There is provision for children between two and a half and four years of age and the setting is open for four mornings a week. There are currently 13 children registered for the different sessions. Three of them are four years of age and the other 10 are three year olds. Nine of the places are funded under the arrangements of the Ynys Môn Partnership.

There is provision for children with additional learning needs, but at the time of the inspection there were no such children in attendance.

Welsh is the language spoken in the homes of approximately half the children. At the time of the inspection, there were no children from ethnic minority backgrounds in attendance.

One adequately sized room is used for activities, together with an outdoor area that is suitable for learning. The setting also has access to the nearby community hall.

The setting is permanently staffed by a leader who has teaching qualifications, together with one assistant. They are highly experienced and they have led the setting for many years – in the case of the leader, from its inception.

The setting was inspected by Estyn in February 2001 and by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales in January 2008.

The inspection was held on the mornings of the 10th and 11th of June 2009.

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.

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	3
Language, literacy and communication skills	2
Mathematical development	2
Welsh language development	Not applicable to this inspection
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Physical development	2
Creative development	2

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	3
Quality of planning for children's learning	3
Quality of teaching	2
Quality of assessment and recording of children's progress, and reports for parents and carers	3
Quality of the relationships with parents, carers and the community	2
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 standards achieved by children in the six areas of learning

Standards achieved by 3-4 year-olds and 4-5 year olds

3.1 Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

All the children arrive happily at the setting and in general they form good relationships with each other, and with the adults who teach them.

They choose their free play activities and exhibit growing confidence during play.

The majority behave consistently well and they are happy to wait their turn and to share during snacktimes, and in the various activities.

The children are keenly aware of the need to handle living things carefully, and this has been reinforced by a visit to a local farm and by looking after the class plants.

They understand the importance of personal hygiene, such as washing their hands before handling food and after using the toilet. A number of children exhibit high levels of independence in this regard.

Shortcomings

The children's awareness of the diversity of beliefs and cultural traditions has not developed sufficiently.

At times, there is a tendency for some children to exhibit a failure to persevere and focus on their activities.

3.2 Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

Despite the English language background of a good number of the children, the majority quickly come to be able to recall a good range of Welsh language nursery rhymes and to sing them with enjoyment. They make increasing use of vocabulary and short sentences with which they are familiar to convey their needs effectively.

Most children are good listeners to stories such as 'Ar Goll ar y Traeth' and about Sali Sws and her friends, and they respond with great enthusiasm to their contents.

The children's early reading skills are developing appropriately, and a number behave like readers. They know how to hold a book and follow a story by looking at

the pictures. They come to be able to select their own names correctly from the pile of labels awaiting them as they self-register after arriving at the setting.

Most children understand some of the functions of writing and they enjoy marking activities for various purposes. There are individuals who are able to write their names and copy simple sentences correctly.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

3.3 Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

Children gain great enjoyment from singing a range of counting games and learning mathematical concepts with the assistance of Sali Sws. Almost every child comes to be able to count eight of Sali's socks and legs with ease and they come in due course to be able to recognise and name numerals in other contexts. The majority respond correctly to questions such as 'How many are left?'

They can re-create basic patterns, match one to the other correctly and sort sets of sea shells and marine animals according to specific characteristics.

The children come to understand the function of money as they buy and sell ice cream and other goods in the setting's seaside shop, 'Siop y Cob'.

A good number come to recognise the most common two-dimensional shapes that are to be found around the learning room and by playing beanbag throwing games.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings, but opportunities are sometimes lost to develop children's understanding of the measures by playing with water.

3.4 Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

All the children begin to appreciate the importance of the environment. They plant a variety of seeds such as potatoes and climbing beans, and many come to know about the conditions they require to grow healthily.

Most children become aware of the characteristics and passage of the different seasons and of what Tedi needs to wear in different weather conditions.

They display natural curiosity as they investigate driftwood and other materials they have collected during their visit to Trecastell beach. Some individuals use reference books effectively to gather information and to gain a better understanding of their collection.

The children are knowledgeable about certain people in their community. They have helped a builder to erect a brick wall, and in so doing they have learned about different equipment and materials. Their visit to a local farm and to Llangefni library has taught them more about a farmer's work and that of the librarian.

Most children have a good developing understanding of the concept of time in the context of daily events, such as their snacktimes and the timing of different activities.

They know about some of the buildings and features of the Bodorgan area.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

3.5 Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

Most of the children are able to handle small items of equipment and objects with increasing control. They come to be able to handle paint brushes, pencils, scissors and spatulas effectively. They show good hand-eye co-ordination in different activities.

Most of the children develop a good awareness of their bodies, moving confidently and safely in the open air with growing co-ordination. When playing with large toys, their pedalling, controlling and steering skills are developing well. Their ball throwing and catching skills are developing appropriately.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings, but the children are rather hesitant as they link a series of physical activities.

3.6 Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

Every child knows a range of songs and rhymes and they sing them tunefully and with enjoyment. They are able to keep a good beat with their instruments as they sing 'Heno heno hen blant bach' and 'Fuocho chi 'rioed yn morio?'.

Most of the children respond creatively as they move to music.

They use different materials and media to convey their ideas very effectively. Most of the children develop their skills well as they make cards for Easter, or a personal *collage* of a fish.

They learn how to mix basic colours and can make suitable choices of how to use colour effectively in their work.

The majority of children respond very creatively as they perform a variety of roles relating to the seaside.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

4.0 The quality of educational provision

The quality of educational provision for 3-4 year-olds and 4-5 year olds

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

The daily life of the setting promotes important values to the children, such as kindness and politeness and concern for others.

The staff manage the setting with fairness and regular praise and they ensure that children develop an understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable. Good co-operation and respect for each other's feelings and wishes are emphasised.

The Nativity is celebrated and the children are familiar with offering a prayer of thanks for their snacks.

Appropriate consideration is given to learning about Welsh culture and traditions and learners are given a good introduction to the Welsh language. Children are taught

traditional nursery rhymes and songs and they are given an opportunity to celebrate St David's Day and to come to know about their local area.

Shortcomings

Insufficient attention is given within the provision to developing children's understanding of the diversity of beliefs and cultural traditions.

4.2 Quality of planning for children's learning

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

In general, the planning for children's learning effectively addresses most of the Foundation Phase areas of learning. Activities are planned around a series of interesting themes such as 'Byd Bob y Bildar' and 'Ar Lan y Môr', that are likely to motivate children to make progress. All children, be they girls or boys, receive equal access to the programme.

The planning provides balance in terms of activities that are initiated by children and those that are undertaken under adult guidance. Many of the experiences are organised around a number of designated play areas that are changed on a regular basis. This ensures regular access to a range of meaningful experiences.

Shortcomings

The planning does not give sufficient attention to the needs of individual children, given the age and ability range within the setting.

The planning does not promote children's understanding of cultural diversity.

The planning of focussed tasks is not always comprehensive enough to ensure effective continuity and progression of learning.

4.3 Quality of teaching

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

The teaching makes an effective contribution to children's progress, achievements and wellbeing. Members of staff are consistent in the way in which they handle children. They have a good relationship with them and their families, and they provide good care, support and guidance.

The learning environment is very positive. The leader is well qualified, and has an understanding of Foundation Phase outcomes.

A good number of teaching strategies are used and activities for individuals and groups are managed effectively. Adults intervene as required to challenge children's ideas and to develop their learning skills. Children receive good opportunities to pursue activities they have chosen for themselves, together with those led by adults through focussed activities.

Overall, effective use is made of resources and children are given suitable opportunities to learn outdoors. The availability of wet weather clothing means that there are good opportunities to take advantage of the outdoors as a learning resource.

The setting receives regular visits and support from the Ynys Môn Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership link teacher, and it acts on the advice given by her.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

Staff observe and assess children's progress on an ongoing basis through field notes of significant developments that are in due course transferred to a booklet entitled 'Llyfr Arsyllwadau' that is kept for each child. They contain space to record developments in terms of social, communication and physical skills, together with children's wellbeing. These also note the next steps that are required in their learning.

Children's work is sent home to be celebrated, and in coffee mornings parents and carers are given opportunities to ask about progress and to inspect their child's work. They are encouraged also to ask about progress at any time.

Written reports are provided at the end of the Summer term.

Shortcomings

The assessment and recording of children's progress does not give sufficient attention to the outcomes of all Foundation Phase areas of learning.

Within the assessment procedures, insufficient emphasis is placed on keeping samples of children's work to support the written records.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

The relationship between the staff and the children's parents and carers is good and it was seen that parents and carers are warmly welcomed. Excellent support for the setting was expressed in the questionnaires returned to the inspector.

A useful handbook is provided for new parents and the setting ensures a regular flow of information through regular newsletters and the information displayed on the noticeboard. Parents are given occasional opportunities to contribute to the provision by taking part in fund raising activities, helping on trips or with thematic activities.

The setting has established a particularly good relationship with the local school that is happy to assist and support in whatever way it can.

Good use is made of community resources and of the local environment to enhance the children's learning experiences.

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

The setting has adopted appropriate policies and procedures that contribute effectively to promoting children's wellbeing. Staff take great care of the children and they respond quickly to any situation or incident that has the potential to have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of any individual.

There are very sound arrangements for receiving the children and releasing them to the care of their parents or carers at the beginning and end of sessions. There are clear child protection and anti-bullying policies in place. Risk assessments and fire drills are held as required.

There are effective arrangements in place to promote children's health. They receive healthy foods during their snack times and high standards of hygiene are maintained at all times.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

4.7 Quality of the leadership and management of the setting

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

The experienced leader succeeds in effectively co-ordinating the efforts of all relevant personnel and in offering a sense of direction to the work of the setting. There is good co-operation between staff and the Management Committee.

The staff appreciate the importance of supporting training courses in order to ensure their continuous professional development and this has had a positive impact on the work of the setting.

Overall, the range and quality of resources for learning are good and they are managed effectively.

Formal self-evaluation processes, despite being relatively recent initiatives, have identified areas for improvement. Particularly good emphasis is placed on developing those aspects that relate to the standards achieved by the children.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings, but it would be appropriate to set a programme of improvements over time rather than planning development on a term by term basis as is currently the case.

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

Overall, the setting has made good progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection report.

5.0 Recommendations

The setting needs to:

- A1: Ensure that children's awareness of different beliefs and cultural traditions develops appropriately.
- A2: Improve the arrangements for planning for learning.
- A3: Ensure more comprehensive procedures for assessing and recording children's progress.

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.