



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Cylch Meithrin Maesincla

**Plas Pawb
Ysgol Maesincla Site
Maesincla
Caernarfon
LL55 1DF**

Date of inspection: May 2023

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

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

About Cylch Meithrin Maesincla

Name of setting	Cylch Meithrin Maesincla
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Manon Gwynedd
Responsible individual (if applicable)	Nicola Wyn Hughes-Jones, Nicola Williams
Person in charge	Nicola Wyn Hughes-Jones
Number of places	26
Age range of children	2-4 years old
Number of 3 and 4 year old children	23
Number of children funded for early education	23
Opening days / times	Monday to Friday 9.00-11.30am and 12.30-15.00pm School terms only
Flying Start service	Yes
Language of the setting	Welsh
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service which provides the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of children who use or may use the service.
Date of previous CIW inspection	December 2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection	27/01/2015
Date(s) of this/these inspection visit(s)	23/05/2023
Most children speak Welsh as a first language Very few children have English as an additional language	

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 Refine and strengthen the role of adult practitioners to maximise all opportunities to challenge and extend children's learning skills

What happens next

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

Main findings

Well-being: Good

Almost all children are happy and content at the setting. They cope well with leaving their parents and are eager to immediately join in and play with their friends when they arrive. Almost all children express themselves confidently and their wishes are respected by practitioners. For example, children join practitioners at the table to eat their snack in their own time and they have the confidence to say that they do not want to wear an apron to paint, knowing that practitioners will support them. Almost all children move confidently around the wide range of activities and play areas. This enables children to follow their interests and take part in learning and play experiences in their own time successfully.

Children have a very positive relationship with practitioners and know that they can ask for support or comfort when needed. For example, they ask practitioners to read books to them, sitting on the cushions next to practitioners and listening carefully. Almost all children are familiar with the daily routine, which gives them a sense of security. They respond well to praise, which makes them eager to share their successes. For example, they are eager to show their craft work and show pride when they receive praise for their efforts.

Most children have started to make friends. They interact well with their peers and enjoy playing and completing tasks with one another. For example, working together to water the flowers using a spray, with one child pumping the water and another one pointing the hose and pressing the button. Most children are happy to share resources with friends and learn important social skills well, such as taking turns. For

example, when blowing bubbles, they are happy to share the liquid and take turns dipping the wand in the liquid before blowing and catching the bubbles.

Almost all children enjoy their play and learning. They concentrate and persevere well when undertaking tasks, and enjoy experimenting with different materials and equipment. For example, they had great fun experimenting and adding different materials to the dough, including dried flowers and feathers. Almost all children are inquisitive about the world around them and enjoy playing and using their imagination, such as playing imaginatively in the role play area and the small world area.

Almost all children choose activities independently and follow their interests effectively. Most develop good independence skills, for example, wiping their nose and wearing wellingtons before going to play in the water. In addition, during snack time, almost all children are eager to wash their hands independently and to try to pour their drink.

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

Most children make good progress from their starting points and are successfully developing their skills across all learning areas. Almost all children listen and communicate well while playing and interacting with practitioners and friends. They demonstrate perseverance and resilience and immerse themselves in their play, for example, when trying to build a sand castle using a range of objects, including a jug, a bucket and a jar.

Most children show an interest in books and enjoy looking through them with an adult and independently and handle them with respect. Their pre-reading skills are developing effectively, for example, children follow the print with a finger while reading the Mrs Wishi Washi story. The majority of children have verbal skills and vocabulary which are developing appropriately. They respond confidently in Welsh and are keen to participate in language games and singing. The majority of children enjoy mark-making using a range of large and small mark-making tools successfully, for example, creating patterns and pictures in the sand outside using brushes, pencils and sticks.

Most children's numeracy skills are developing strongly, with the majority able to count to ten successfully. Almost all children identify familiar 2D shapes, for example, when fetching one piece of square toast and one triangle-shaped piece in the cafe. They experiment skilfully with shape while stacking wooden blocks and use accurate mathematical vocabulary when describing the position and location of the teddy during a game. The majority enjoy joining in a range of mathematical songs and rhymes successfully, for example, when counting backwards while singing the Five Crocodiles song.

Most children's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills are developing purposefully. They use a range of equipment independently to enrich their

play and learning. For example, children control a programmable toy successfully moving it forwards and backwards, and changing direction.

Almost all children explore the outdoor area confidently and develop their gross physical skills very effectively, for example when balancing on a wooden balancing table or mastering the climbing wall. They are physically active, in line with their development stage, and fetch and wear their coats independently. In the dough area, they roll, stretch, press and add natural materials, such as dried petals from dried flowers, in a creative way to change the texture of the dough. The majority develop coordination skills demonstrating increasing control, for example when controlling bikes and small cars.

The majority of children's creative skills are developing effectively. They make wise decisions and choices about what to use to produce creative work, such as choosing paint colour or mark-making tools in the creative area. Most children can express themselves effectively when undertaking role-play in a real-life context, for example, making hot chocolate in the home area. The majority participate positively when using equipment and when performing movements to familiar songs and rhymes.

Care and development: Good

Practitioners prioritise children's safety and put effective procedures in place to ensure that children are both healthy and safe. They have all attended relevant child protection training, and are familiar with the appropriate procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child. The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Most practitioners have completed relevant paediatric first aid training which prepares them to provide appropriate treatment if needed. They log any accidents appropriately, ensuring that parents sign these records. Fire drills are conducted regularly and recorded effectively.

Good use is made of designated procedures to prevent the spread of infection. For example, practitioners encourage children to wash their hands regularly and follow suitable procedures for handling food and changing nappies. Practitioners promote healthy eating and exercise successfully, including encouraging children to eat healthy snacks and drink plenty of water. They ensure that there are valuable opportunities for children to develop their physical skills and spend time outdoors in the fresh air.

Practitioners have formed positive relationships with the children, and speak to them affectionately and treat them with care and respect. They use effective and consistent strategies to promote positive behaviour in accordance with the setting's policy. For example, they distract children with another activity if they find it difficult sharing or taking turns, and provide a clear explanation when their behaviour is not acceptable. All practitioners model social skills effectively when playing alongside the children.

The setting has purposeful arrangements for identifying and supporting children's individual needs, including children with additional learning needs. Practitioners

collect sufficient information about preferences, needs and any other relevant information before children start at the setting. This enables practitioners to plan effectively. There are effective procedures in place for referring children in a timely manner to external agencies for support if needed, ensuring that every child's needs are met effectively. Practitioners track children's progress successfully by undertaking regular observations and assessments. They also create bespoke books to share with parents at the end of each year, which contain photographs of the children taking part in activities and examples of their successes and progress.

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

Practitioners have a lovely relationship with children and a sound understanding of each child's needs. They deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which offers valuable experiences and responds to children's needs successfully. They develop their teaching skills effectively in line with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. Practitioners plan thoroughly for play and learning experiences in order to firmly develop all of the children's skills. They work together well to nurture a positive feeling within a setting that encourages children to be independent and inquisitive.

Practitioners plan interesting opportunities to develop children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills purposefully. In line with best practice, they promote responsive planning in a skilful way that encourages children to think for themselves. However, these practices are not consistent across the setting. As a result, practitioners do not always challenge children sufficiently to broaden their understanding and develop their skills effectively enough. Practitioners model clear verbal language using suitable vocabulary and syntactic patterns when chatting naturally with children. For example, they ask questions and feed vocabulary appropriately during water-play. However, they do not always maximise worthwhile opportunities to challenge and extend children's vocabulary and oracy skills.

Practitioners ensure that children develop their physical skills successfully by planning worthwhile activities. A range of indoor and outdoor play and learning experiences have a positive effect on children's development. Practitioners play alongside children purposefully to support their learning successfully. For example, they create patterns, letters and numbers in the colourful sand to encourage children to do the same. Good use is made of social periods to move the learning forward. For example, practitioners ensure that children have worthwhile opportunities to fetch their own crockery in the cafe. Practitioners provide worthwhile opportunities for children to learn through engaging, practical and creative experiences, such as following visual instructions to create a cake in the mud kitchen or composing and performing music and songs.

There is solid provision for developing children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual skills. For example, they sing a prayer of thanksgiving for the cylch at the end of each session. Practitioners teach children the difference between right and wrong and the importance of respecting others, supporting children effectively to be kind to each other. They promote Welsh culture well, raising children's awareness of significant traditions and celebrations, such as St David's Day.

Practitioners' teaching methods succeed in encouraging children to firmly develop a wide range of skills. They undertake valuable and regular observation focussing on children's progress, and detailed systems are in place to record these observations. As a result, practitioners plan effectively to respond to children's needs and to move the learning forward. Practitioners share information about children with each other, skilfully modifying the provision as required.

Practitioners have a good awareness of the importance of child development, and they use this positively to respond to their individual needs. They work together effectively to ensure that sound plans and procedures are in place for children with additional learning needs.

Environment: Good

Leaders prioritise child safety by implementing procedures that ensure that any potential hazards are monitored and managed effectively. Detailed risk assessments outline potential hazards and action taken to reduce or prevent risk to children. Daily checks are undertaken of the play areas and equipment to ensure there are no hazards present and that the equipment is suitable for children. Where any hazards are identified, practitioners deal with these hazards quickly and effectively.

The play areas are pleasant and comfortable with plenty of room for children to move about freely. Leaders ensure that children develop a sense of belonging by displaying examples of children's work and photographs on the walls. The playroom is arranged into purposeful learning areas, with a variety of natural and recycled resources and materials to enrich children's experiences. For example, there are real crockery, a recycled kettle and phone and empty bottles and packets in the role play area. Leaders place an emphasis on using natural colours which create a calm and peaceful atmosphere and help children to be able to immerse themselves in their play. The outdoor play area has been developed to offer a variety of activities and exciting opportunities for children to play and develop awareness of the world around them. For example, leaders provide a mud kitchen and a small world area with dinosaurs including small stones and wooden planks. Leaders also ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their physical skills and take acceptable risks. For example, practitioners supervise children carefully to enable them to balance as they walk along the wooden planks and climb the ladder.

Leaders ensure that there is a wide range of interesting and exciting resources and equipment available. These are of good quality and are stored at a low level so that children can choose them independently without any adult intervention. Practitioners keep a detailed record of when the play areas, toys and resources are cleaned. This happens on a regular basis in order to ensure that resources are kept clean and in good condition. Leaders ensure that equipment and resources promote children's independence, for example, by ensuring that there are resources available to help children to learn to use the toilet independently. There is a range of resources available to promote children's awareness of diversity and different cultures, including a good variety of books, dolls and jigsaws. This helps children to learn to be tolerant citizens and to understand differences in the world around them.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders ensure that the setting's leadership strategies are sound and focus effectively on improving provision and children's outcomes. They set high expectations consistently well by supporting and challenging everyone to do their best. Leaders address concerns with parents/carers effectively, keeping detailed records.

Leaders prioritise the issues they wish to improve and act on them promptly and effectively. They create valuable links with a range of partners to improve children's health, learning and well-being. They have strong links with the advisory teacher and the dental hygiene officer, and encourage children to brush their teeth during each session. They create valuable links with the wider community to offer a range of worthwhile experiences for children, including the nearby leisure centre.

Leaders take the views of practitioners and parents/carers into account effectively, collecting feedback regularly via questionnaires. They provide opportunities for practitioners to contribute to the setting's self-appraisal purposefully. As a result, leaders improve the provision successfully. For example, they have developed the outdoor area effectively to provide a wider range of experiences for children, following forest school principles.

Leaders follow safe, sound and timely recruitment processes and all practitioners have a contract of employment and a relevant job description. The performance management process has been embedded purposefully, and comprehensive records are kept of findings and practitioners' targets. Practitioners have good opportunities to attend a range of training and apply their learning successfully. This year, they have received training on physical development in the early years and forest schools. The impact of both can be seen clearly in the setting. For example, they have developed a separate physical area to provide opportunities for children to exercise and apply their physical skills.

Leaders make effective use of funding and financial grants to improve the provision. For example, they have developed the outdoor area by extending the space available, installing climbing equipment and suitable flooring and paying for a perimeter fence. As a result, the outdoor provision provides wider opportunities for children to develop their skills.

The setting has a strong relationship with parents/carers. Leaders and practitioners communicate effectively with them so that they can work effectively to improve children's day to day well-being and learning. Leaders and practitioners use an app to track progress, to communicate skilfully to report on children's progress, development and care through pictures and to inform parents/carers of important messages, such as the need to provide sun hats and sun-cream for children. Good use is made of 'Learning Journey' books to show individuals' progress during their time at the setting. The setting's main policies and procedures are displayed prominently for parents/carers in the main entrance.

The setting has detailed transition procedures ensuring that children can transition successfully to school. They undertake settling-in sessions at the school and leaders and key workers attend meetings with the school, parents/carers and any other agencies involved with individuals with additional learning needs in order to share information about children's development and progress.

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

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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. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
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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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