



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Cylch Meithrin Nelson**

**21a Commercial Street  
Nelson  
CF46 6NF**



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## **Description of the service**

Cylch Meithrin Nelson is registered to provide care for up to 23 children from two to four years old. The service is located in rooms, which are fit for purpose, in a converted house in the middle of a main street in Nelson. The service is open from 9:00 until 12:30, Monday to Friday during school term time. The nursery is managed by a committee and the responsible person is Anna Webb-Price. Sharon Lewis-Connolly is the person in charge. The service is an early years provider and is also registered with the Flying Start programme.

The service provides the Welsh Language active offer, and identifies and meets the linguistic and cultural needs of the children in attendance.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children who attend Cylch Meithrin Nelson are happy, content and enjoy their time there, and the variety of activities that are arranged for them. The enthusiastic staff respond to the children's requirements and have a close relationship with them. The service is provided in rooms across two floors in the building and an outdoor play area that offers a wealth of experiences for the children. Leadership and management are robust and motivate the staff to give their best. It is a warm and welcoming Cylch that facilitates the experience of starting school.

### **2. Improvements**

Following the recommendations from the previous inspection, the person in charge has ensured that a fire exit plan is clearly shown in each room; children's arrival and departure times are recorded and changes were made to ensure that the adults' toilet is private. A specialist was invited to look at the risk of children falling by the outer door's threshold and the advice received stated that they did not need to do anything. The staff and children follow a strategy to be careful when stepping over the threshold. The person in charge has also ensured that infection control guidelines are implemented.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

We have recommended to the person in charge they they need to consider further opportunities to develop children's independence, record the outdoor area's checks, ensure that each member of staff has been appraised under the new arrangement and amend staff files.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children are happy, confident and relaxed and truly enjoy their time there. They feel comfortable in their surroundings and this promotes their development and self-confidence. The children have developed a close relationship with staff and individuals' needs are met.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children are given opportunities to express what they would like to do and are listened to.

Children benefited from having a wide variety of activities to choose from in each of the play areas in the service. We observed children having freedom to choose their own activities and to change them whenever they wanted and their voices were therefore listened to. The main activities room had a variety of toys, puzzles and jigsaws for the children and we saw the children being given opportunities to work on focus tasks such as making hats as part of an art activity during the session. There was a variety of activities for the children in the outdoor area and they had freedom to engage with their own choice of activity. Children were encouraged to communicate and express their preferences. Children were given the opportunity to choose where they sit during snack time and which songs they wanted to sing during song time. Despite the fact that most children came from non-Welsh speaking backgrounds they received enough support to enable them to communicate in Welsh and they were also given the opportunity to communicate in their first language if needed.

Children experience stimulating opportunities to express themselves, and receive care from attentive staff who listen to their responses.

### **1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?**

The children are happy and content with the staff and have managed to gain self-confidence as they know the service well.

There was a close relationship between the children and staff, and they received a warm welcome as they arrived and gentle attention was given to those who were getting upset, which helped them to cope with being away from their parents. The children benefitted from the staff's full attention as soon as they arrived, which made it easy for them to settle. Each child was busy and content whilst engaging with various activities. The children knew the staff well, and the friendliness and close bonds gave the children a sense of belonging. The children's work was displayed on the walls and this gave them a sense of belonging and a feeling that their achievements are celebrated. We saw that individual needs are met as one child asked for a cuddle and instantly received a positive reaction.

Children feel safe and happy in the care of the staff, and are treated with dignity and respect.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

The children are learning to control their behaviour, co-operate and take turns. They are also learning how to build relationships with others successfully.

Children benefit from the clear emphasis on consistent praise which exists in the Cylch. The children demonstrate acceptable behaviour during play and when sitting at the table during snack time as the staff provide positive reinforcement, encouragement and praise, using gentle voices. We saw the children playing and chatting happily with each other and demonstrating positive signs of developing a relationship with their peers, especially when playing outdoors. The family wall prompted conversations between the children and staff and it was also comforting for them to see familiar faces. The children learned to share by taking a fruit from the plate during snack time as this raised their awareness of ensuring that there is a piece of fruit for everyone. Snack time was also a social event as the children chatted with the staff around the tables whilst eating. We saw the children tidying up and helping each other, which developed their awareness of their responsibilities.

Children are led by example in terms of how to build a relationship with others and respect other people's feelings. This promotes the children's social development.

### **1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?**

Children enjoy the stimulating opportunities to play and learn. The children all engage with their own choice of activities and are engrossed in them.

We saw that all the children enjoy playing, are industrious and inquisitive when learning and responding to prompts from the staff. The children in this service enjoyed the opportunities to sing, circle time and to sing again before going home. Their enthusiasm as the toy came out of the bag was clear as they were willing to sing the corresponding song. The children's conversations with the staff during different activities and play opportunities encouraged linguistic development.

Children are given a good balance of structured and free play activities, that enable them to make simple decisions and learn and develop through play.

### **1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?**

Children are given stimulating opportunities to develop their skills and become independent.

Children were given regular opportunities to develop and become independent in a variety of situations. We saw children taking part in a craft activity making hats, and

one child was encouraged to cut out the shapes independently in order to promote development and self confidence. We saw the children developing physical skills in the outdoor area whilst playing with the variety of resources available to them which stimulated their curiosity such as the bug hotel, insect hut and the water bath for the bees. Children responded enthusiastically and showed that their linguistic and numeracy skills were being developed. During snack time, the children were encouraged to develop their own self-help skills as they helped themselves to the fruit and poured their own drinks despite the fact that there was help available if they needed it. Some of the children put on their own coats before going outside, however the opportunities to encourage each child to be independent whilst putting on their own coats and taking them off could be developed.

Children are given good opportunities to learn and develop their self-help skills.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

The staff at the service keep children safe and are caring towards them as they succeed in building a warm and happy relationship with them. Children's development is promoted and staff demonstrate an understanding of key policies and procedures and know when and where to get support.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

A number of procedures are employed effectively to ensure that the children are safe and healthy.

We saw that the staff follow procedures to ensure the children are kept safe. In conversation with the staff, we found that staff were familiar with the safeguarding children policy and knew what steps to take and who to contact should they have any concerns. The outer door and gate are kept locked at all times. The service's visitors are asked to sign a book and a daily record of children and staff's attendance is kept. We saw that there was a risk assessment in place and that actions were being implemented in the daily routines. Fire drills were performed each half term and we saw the records to support this. Children's safety was promoted further by staff as they keep detailed records of any accidents or incidents and each member of staff have the relevant first aid qualifications. Despite the fact that none of the children were currently on any medication we saw that they had forms to record this. Staff also promote children's health by ensuring that tables are sanitised before snack time and that children wash their hands. Children received healthy snacks which included a variety of fruit, brown toast and milk or water to drink. We observed a nappy changing procedure and saw that the staff followed the infection control guidelines at all times.

Staff manage to keep the children safe and healthy, and are familiar with the policies in operation.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

Staff promote positive behaviour at all times and lead by example in terms of acceptable behaviours.

The staff had developed a warm relationship with the children, which creates a friendly atmosphere within the service, working in accordance with the behaviour management policy. The staff gave the children their attention at all times, and encouraged acceptable behaviour by reminding the children to share and to discuss familiar topics with them by speaking gently and also gave them constant praise. We observed two children being praised for singing and this developed their self confidence. The staff reasoned in a lovely way by encouraging the children to take turns and share – 'pan

ddaw fory byddi di'n gallu cael e' (you'll be able to have it when tomorrow comes). We heard the staff encouraging the children to interact with each other and develop a relationship by modelling polite language at all times which was then imitated by the children. Staff often referred to the children using loving terms and this therefore created a warm relationship between them. The staff knew how to model positive behaviour and we saw them emulating this behaviour and creating a warm and friendly atmosphere.

The staff have succeeded in setting behaviour boundaries which enables them to control the interactions effectively.

### **2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?**

The staff know the children well and provide a stimulating environment where each child can develop at their own individual pace.

We saw the staff encouraging the children's linguistic development by giving them constant attention and encouraging them to talk. The staff chatted with the children during snack time and created a lovely sociable environment. The staff chatted with the children about their lives at home in order to foster a warm relationship and to get to know them well. The service had a key worker plan in place which facilitated children's development observations and ensured that individual needs are met. We saw records of the observations and children's development which enables staff to plan appropriate opportunities whilst recording the learning objectives that reflected the learning areas in the Foundation phase. These records were up-to-date and noted children's most recent achievements. The children were given opportunities to play independently and in groups in order to promote their development and their ability to interact with peers.

Staff successfully provide a range of activities to promote children's development and enhance their experiences by responding to individual needs.



### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The service is delivered in suitable rooms in a house that was converted for childcare. Good standards of cleanliness and safety are practised. The resources and furniture are of good quality, and reflect the ethos of the Foundation Phase. The outdoor area is very suitable and the children are given opportunities to be adventurous which stimulates their curiosity.

#### **Our findings**

##### **3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?**

There are procedures in place to ensure that the children are cared for in a safe and clean environment.

There were robust safety measures in place to ensure children's safety. The staff were aware of the dangers as the children reached for a variety of toys, and the children were encouraged to tidy up and put equipment away in the relevant areas at regular intervals, in the interests of safety. We saw that detailed risk assessments had been completed and were reviewed regularly. The environment's safety was checked daily and records were kept, but we didn't see any records of checking the outdoor area. The outdoor area was safe and enclosed by a robust wall.

Leaders consider and assess any risks that arise on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that the environment is safe for children.

##### **3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?**

Leaders provide an environment of a good standard for children. There is sufficient space and resources to meet individuals needs.

The service was provided in six shared rooms and the experience areas were shared between them, for example upstairs there was a mathematics room, another room for the home, building and role-play areas and another room for the older children which concentrated on specific activities in order to prepare them for school. The main play room was colourful and welcoming and displayed the children's work in order to give them a sense of belonging. The outdoor area is lovely and offers stimulating opportunities for the children to be inquisitive. There is an adventure centre, mud kitchen, insect house, planting area, water wall, 'fidget' wall, seats made of tree trunks for story time, nature area and a play area. The service recently won an award given by a national organisation for the best outdoor area. The facilities are convenient for children and are easy for them to use them independently.

The leaders have managed to provide a welcoming and fun environment which motivates the children in their development and enhances their experiences.

### **3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?**

Leaders provide a range of good quality resources and equipment which enables them to meet individual needs.

We saw that the furniture in the rooms were of a good quality and suitable for the children. The resources were of a good quality and in good condition. Many of the resources reflected social ethnic variations. The focus on sustainable materials was also evident in the wooden resources and the inspiring use of recycled materials and equipment. The water dishes for the bees that were made from milk carton lids and the strings with old washers encouraged the interest of the children and conveyed an important message regarding recycling. The resources stimulated the children to experiment and learn through play.

The leaders have successfully gathered a wide range of unique resources to encourage the children's enjoyment and development, ensuring that they are of good quality.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Appropriate leadership and management is provided in this service. A robust self-evaluation procedure is implemented which allows the service provided to parents and children to improve and develop.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

The person in charge and the responsible individual provide effective leadership in the service whilst ensuring that records and documents are of good quality and organised.

We saw that the policies and procedures file was complete and up to date and was reviewed regularly. The staff were familiar with the policies and procedures, and were seen incorporating them appropriately in their daily routines. We saw examples of the children's files and saw that they were comprehensive, up to date and the forms that required signatures were signed. The responsible person has committed to meet her responsibilities and ensures that most of the staff attend courses regularly to ensure a high standard of care. The service has an up-to-date statement of purpose and we observed that the expected information has been included.

Overall, the leadership is effective and supports the service to provide adequate care.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

The leaders ensure that some procedures are employed to monitor the quality of the service and to plan for improvements when required.

We saw evidence that the service is evaluated regularly and we saw the details provided in the responses to Care Inspectorate Wales' self assessment questionnaire. The staff worked together to plan activities and have discussions before the children arrived at the service. There was evidence that plans were in place to improve the quality of the service for the benefit of the children who attend. Parents are given the opportunity to voice their opinions regularly on different aspects of the service and their effect on their children's development in the form of questionnaires.

Leaders are aware of the importance of evaluation in order to develop for the future, and implement robust self-evaluation structures.

#### **4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?**

The person in charge and the responsible individual manage the resources well and lead a team of staff who are happy in their work, and clear about their duties.

We saw that the staff worked together effectively and supported each other at all times. Duties were shared, and all members of staff were entirely familiar with their

duties and fulfilled them effectively. We also saw evidence that the staff jointly planned the activities which gives the staff a sense of ownership of what is happening in the service. The service has adopted a new strategy to appraise staff, but should ensure that each member is appraised as soon as possible under the new regime. There were gaps in staff files and no reference for one of the workers, however a copy was sent to the inspector. We were told that staff files were being amended due to the changes in the staffing structure.

The management is robust and effective and allows staff to give of their best.

#### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

An effective relationship exists between the service and parents, with constant lines of communication and cooperation to ensure the children's well-being.

We had an opportunity to speak to some of the parents who spoke highly of the care and the staff. Parents commented on the staff's commitment to ensuring that the children feel comfortable and safe, and also that they are approachable should any issues arise, with opportunities to raise any issues every day. We heard particular praise for the children's shows and they were looking forward to the Christmas show very much. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss their children's development once a year, but we were told that they were planning on improving this by holding meetings more often. Staff spent time talking to parents at the end of each session in order to discuss any matters that arise. The service works well with national pre school supporting organisations and the local community.

The service has developed positive relationships with parents who use the service and other bodies to ensure the children's well-being.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

- Look for further opportunities to encourage children to develop self-help skills;
- record the outdoor area checks daily;
- ensure that the new staff evaluation system is completed;
- amend staff files and ensure that the required documents have been included.

## 6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced visit. The inspection was conducted on Thursday 18 October 2018, from 8:45-13:00. This included time for further discussion with the person in charge and a phone call a few days later.

Also:

- We looked at existing CIW information – a report from the previous inspection, the statement of purpose and responses to the self-assessment;
- we spoke with the children and parents. We also spoke with members of staff;
- we looked at a wide range of documents, staff files, policies and records, children's files and activity plans and staff appraisals, and
- we observed practices and procedures during the inspection, and undertook a SOFI2 inspection on a group of children in order to gather evidence on the children's engagement with the care provided by staff.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Anna Webb-Price
Person in Charge	Sharon Lewis-Connolly
Registered maximum number of places	23
Age range of children	2-4 years
Opening hours	9:00 – 12:30 Monday – Friday, School Term
Operating language of the service	Welsh
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	25 February 2016
Dates of this Inspection visit	18 October 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Is early year's education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the needs of people who use or may use the service, in terms of Welsh and its culture.
Additional Information:	