



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

A report on

**Rhiwderin Village Meithrin
Rhiwderin Community Centre
Pentre-Tai Rd
Rhiwderin
Newport
NP10 8RL**

Date of inspection: October 2017

by

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Context

Rhiwderin Village Meithrin is an English-medium setting situated in the village of Rhiwderin, near Newport. It meets in Rhiwderin Community Centre and employs four full-time and one part-time member of staff, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. A voluntary committee manages the playgroup. The two leaders, both qualified early years teachers, have been in post for over 20 years.

The setting is registered to take up to 26 children per session from two to four years old. There are 59 children currently on roll, of whom 23 three-year-olds and eight four-year-olds receive early years education funded by the local authority. Nearly all children have English as their home language and none have identified additional learning needs.

The playgroup was last inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in October 2015 and by Estyn in May 2011.

Summary

The setting's current performance	Good
The setting's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The setting's current performance is good because:

- All children are happy coming into the setting and settle quickly
- Most children's communication and numeracy skills are developing well from their starting points
- All children have good relationships with adults in the setting
- Practitioners work together purposefully and their positive approach enables children to enjoy attending
- The setting provides an interesting range of activities that help children to develop a full range of skills
- All practitioners have a good understanding of the requirements of the foundation phase and provide valuable learning experiences
- Both indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and offer a wide range of opportunities to develop children's skills successfully

Prospects for improvement

The setting's prospects for improvement are good because:

- Both leaders share their roles and responsibilities effectively according to their strengths
- Practitioners work together well as a team
- The setting has a good record of improving provision and the learning environment
- Nearly all practitioners benefit from regular training and use what they learn successfully to improve children's learning experiences
- Partnerships with parents and the local community are strong
- The management committee provides useful support, particularly in managing the setting's finances

Recommendations

- R1 Improve children's self-help skills and their ability to take on responsibilities in line with their stage of development
- R2 Improve planning and provision in order to develop children's information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively
- R3 Ensure that self-evaluation focuses effectively on improving outcomes for children

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most children make good progress from their starting points during their time in the setting.

Most children develop their speaking skills well. They chat confidently to each other and use a good range of vocabulary. Nearly all join in enthusiastically when singing songs and reciting nursery rhymes. When listening to a story, most children are attentive. Many children look at books for pleasure and turn pages appropriately. Many retell a 'story' by looking at the pictures in books and handle them correctly. A few predict story endings successfully. Most children make appropriate progress with their early writing skills. They enjoy making marks in different ways and with different implements, for example when writing 'clues' for Little Bo Peep to find her sheep, making marks on a blackboard with chalk and making a map for Little Bo Peep to follow.

Overall, most children make strong progress in developing their numeracy skills. Most children use a suitable range of mathematical vocabulary, for example when talking about whether their foot size is 'bigger' or 'smaller' than a footprint. Nearly all use the correct terms when talking about basic shapes. Nearly all children can count at least three objects correctly and a few count to eight objects confidently and accurately. A minority recite numbers correctly to more than 10 with confidence. A few recognise numbers to four on a mobile phone.

Many children develop their physical skills well, such as when they use large tongs to put conkers and cones into a bucket. They steer bikes and scooters carefully and successfully around obstacles. They are developing valuable skills to hold writing equipment sensibly for example when writing letters to the police to describe Little Bo Peep's lost sheep.

Nearly all children make independent decisions about the activities that they want to do and the resources that they will use effectively. They are developing strong problem solving skills, for example when trying to find Little Bo Peep's sheep.

Nearly all children know how to use a mobile phone correctly and understand how to use push button devices such as torches and simple talking devices. However, in general, they do not develop their ICT skills well enough.

Nearly all children respond to and join in singing familiar Welsh songs enthusiastically. A few children count by rote to at least ten and many respond to instructions in Welsh successfully.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children enjoy their time at the setting. They enter eagerly in the mornings and settle quickly to the daily routines. They are confident and enthusiastic and make clear choices about the activities they would like to participate in. Most concentrate well on their tasks both indoors and out. They persevere well when completing activities such as when making a spider out of dough and decorating it with the appropriate number of legs and eyes. Most children show pleasure in talking about what they have made and how they made it.

Nearly all children develop good relationships with each other and with staff. Most children play together co-operatively, share equipment and take turns happily. Most are comfortable, assured and respectful when interacting with adults and chat easily with both practitioners and visitors.

Nearly all children are beginning to understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods and talk about these well. Most are developing independent skills suitably for example, when pouring their own drinks from a jug. However, in general, children do not learn to take on responsibilities well enough in line with their stage of development, or develop their self-help skills effectively.

Nearly all children behave well and look after resources carefully. They are enthusiastic and motivated about new experiences and suggest ideas about what they would like to do next. Nearly all children are busy and active for appropriate periods. They persevere well when completing activities such as when making a spider out of dough and decorating it with the appropriate number of legs and eyes. Most children show pleasure in talking about what they have made and how they made it.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The setting provides plenty of exciting holistic learning opportunities that help children acquire new knowledge and skills across all areas of learning proficiently. These are linked to meaningful and interesting themes, such as 'fairies and wizards' and nursery rhymes, which engage children effectively. Planning is purposeful and takes appropriate account of the children's varying starting points.

There is good provision to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. Practitioners provide cosy, attractively laid out areas that promote children's communication skills effectively. They are very good role models and provide children with valuable opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Practitioners share books with children and model how to look after them carefully. They provide a beneficial range of different play opportunities that enable children to develop mathematical concepts well. Children have regular opportunities to count

objects and to recognise numbers and shapes, such as counting conkers accurately into buckets labelled with different numbers. The setting offers a wide range of beneficial resources such as colour and shape puzzles that develop children's skills usefully, including their sorting and matching skills.

Practitioners plan worthwhile opportunities for children to begin to develop their thinking and problem solving skills, for example how to make an igloo out of plastic milk bottles and how many children will fit on to a broomstick. However, the setting does not plan well enough to help children develop their ICT skills systematically.

Practitioners provide valuable opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Activities include building with small and large construction toys, making dough and picking up conkers with tongs. The sand pit provides valuable opportunities for large scale digging, mixing and building with realistic looking bricks and children can develop mark making skills outdoors such as by making patterns in shaving foam.

Practitioners are good Welsh language role models. They greet the children upon arrival and use a variety of Welsh words and phrases naturally in their conversations and instructions. They encourage children to join in with a wide variety of songs successfully. There are valuable opportunities for children to learn about their Welsh heritage, for example when making a Welsh dragon from boxes.

Teaching: Good

All practitioners work well as a team and support children's learning effectively. They understand child development well and offer a wide variety of exciting activities to engage children. Practitioners provide a suitable balance between adult-led and child-led activities and respond well to children's interests. For example, practitioners ask children for ideas about what they would like to learn in different topics and act on these appropriately.

Practitioners are good language models. They introduce children to a wide vocabulary during circle time activities, for example when they talk about worms and their role in helping plants grow. They spend time with individual children and groups, stepping in appropriately to develop their thinking or explain misconceptions.

Nearly all practitioners assess children regularly and evaluate their progress well through planned and spontaneous observations. They use the foundation phase profile effectively to identify important developmental milestones and to help them plan appropriately to meet children's individual needs. Practitioners gather a range of worthwhile assessments when a child starts at the setting that provides a detailed baseline of children's abilities and helps track children's progress effectively. Practitioners make valuable notes about how well children progress that provide powerful assessment information. They use these assessments well in their planning. Practitioners praise children for their efforts and achievements well.

However, their praise is not always specific enough to help children know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve.

Practitioners keep parents well informed about their child's progress through informal verbal feedback and a useful report at the end of the children's time at playgroup.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Children are well cared for and benefit from positive relationships between practitioners. The setting promotes positive behaviour successfully and helps children understand the difference between right and wrong well. Practitioners are very good role models showing thoughtfulness and consideration for others. In daily routines, practitioners acknowledge and reward kindness and respect shown by children skilfully, for example by hanging the child's name on the kindness tree. This promotes their wellbeing successfully.

Practitioners welcome all children into the setting and they enjoy a well-structured and familiar routine. They encourage children to take part in all activities confidently. This creates a positive ethos where children feel valued and secure.

The setting helps children learn about healthy eating by providing a wide range of healthy snacks for children to choose from. There are regular opportunities for children to run around and learn in the fresh air. Children begin to learn about sustainability when they recycle food waste. There are meaningful opportunities for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, such as when practitioners share stories about people from around the world. They develop children's natural curiosity about the world around them and their fascination with nature, when they teach them about hedgehogs hibernating and encourage them to watch worms wriggle. However, in general, there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their self-help skills and take on meaningful responsibilities, such as helping to tidy away resources and taking an active role at snack time.

Currently, there are no children at the setting with additional learning needs. The setting has successful arrangements in place to identify these children. Practitioners work successfully with outside agencies and parents, reviewing progress regularly and appropriately.

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

Practitioners create a safe and inclusive environment where children feel secure and valued. All children have access to a range of interesting resources that promote equality and diversity successfully, for example using dolls from different cultures in children's play.

Both indoor and outdoor areas are safe and well maintained. The outdoor space has undergone recent improvements. It is an attractive area and offers a range of good quality learning experiences including opportunities to make a waterfall using guttering, buckets and water. The indoor provision is spacious and well laid out. Practitioners use the hall effectively to create a stimulating learning environment that enables children to develop a variety of skills independently. They organise all the space available into interesting areas of learning, providing a busy environment where children enjoy learning, including physical play, construction, role-play, reading, sand and water. In general, the setting has a good range of resources, both indoors and outdoors, which are well matched to children's learning needs. These include interesting books and natural resources such as stones and conkers. However, the setting does not provide sufficient ICT resources for children to develop their skills systematically and effectively.

The setting makes good use of the immediate local environment to enrich children's learning experiences. For example, children learn about the world around them when they look for conkers on the field and watch workers using machines to resurface the adjoining car park.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The persons in charge lead practitioners well and have clear aims and objectives. They focus effectively on providing a good quality learning environment and supporting practitioners to give of their best. They are enthusiastic about their roles and work hard at building effective communication and positive working relationships with each other. Leadership roles are divided equally between the two leaders, each working to their strengths. All practitioners' roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and they work together as a team consistently well.

The setting leaders work co-operatively with the support teacher and the local authority to improve the provision. For example, the setting has acted on advice to improve the outdoor environment recently, providing more meaningful learning experiences for children.

The organisation of the setting ensures that all practitioners know and understand their roles effectively. The setting has established an appropriate performance management system, which helps practitioners evaluate the quality of their work and identifies training needs appropriately. All practitioners are committed to continuous professional development, which has had a positive effect on standards of provision. However, performance management does not focus well enough on outcomes for children to be fully effective. The setting leaders keep the management committee well informed about the setting's work. The committee meets regularly and provides useful support, particularly with managing the setting's finances and raising funds.

Policies and procedures are robust and leaders review them regularly. Leaders' awareness of national priorities, such as promoting and developing children's literacy, numeracy and Welsh, is successful in improving learning experiences in the setting.

Improving quality: Good

The setting has useful systems to evaluate its performance and prioritise improvements appropriately. All practitioners contribute to the self-evaluation process. They know the setting's strengths well and identify suitable areas for improvement. The setting's self-evaluation report is comprehensive and reviewed annually. However, practitioners do not focus well enough on children's outcomes when reviewing their work to make the self-evaluation process fully effective.

The setting's improvement plan is well-organised and identifies appropriate actions, costings, timescales and monitoring opportunities. Leaders evaluate progress against the targets appropriately and the setting has a good record of improving provision and the learning environment over time. This includes improvements to the outdoor area and to the provision for developing children's communication skills. The setting has made good progress in addressing the recommendations from the last inspection.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has established a good range of effective partnerships that benefit the children well. Positive links with the local primary school help develop children's confidence before they move on to the next stage in their learning. For example, children become familiar with the school environment when they visit the reception class for play days during the summer term. Leaders benefit from helpful advice about children's additional learning needs (ALN) which they implement successfully.

There are strong links with parents. Practitioners communicate with them well, for example through social media and regular newsletters. There are frequent formal and informal opportunities for parents to receive information about their child's progress. For example, practitioners are always on hand to talk with parents about the day's activities as they collect their children.

The setting uses community links extensively to support children's learning. For example, visits from the community police, firefighters and librarian enable the children to learn about these services effectively. Practitioners invite parents to the setting to cook with the children and teach them about giant African land snails. Visits to the local park and walks in the immediate environment help children to develop valuable physical skills and knowledge of their local area.

The advisory teacher from the local consortium provides strong support, which has benefited the setting well. For example, literacy training has enabled the setting to improve the provision for developing children's speaking and listening skills.

Resource management: Good

Leaders ensure that there are sufficient well-qualified and experienced practitioners working at the setting. Nearly all practitioners access a range of helpful training regularly to improve their knowledge and the children's learning experiences. For example, recent child development training has enabled practitioners to improve the range of interesting learning opportunities they offer to children and match these more closely to their needs. Practitioners attend local authority events to share good practice and this has led to improvements to the outdoor learning environment and practitioners' confidence to speak Welsh.

Leaders manage the setting's finances robustly and work constructively with the management committee to involve parents in fundraising events.

The setting has a worthwhile range of resources to support children's development across most areas of learning. Resources are readily available to children and this encourages their independence effectively. However, the setting does not have sufficient ICT resources for children to develop their skills effectively.

The setting understands its budget well. The treasurer and setting leader prioritise spending effectively. In view of the good standards that children achieve, the quality of provision and the quality of care, support and guidance, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

The reporting inspector

Joanna Burdett	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnerships conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from three to seven years of age</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings that provide education for three and four-year-olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh</p>
Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	<p>This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.</p>

National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education