



Childcare Inspection Report on

Cylch Meithrin Harlech

**Ysgol Tanycastell
Ffordd Y Nant
Harlech
LL46 2UE**

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



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Description of the service

The maximum number of children who can be cared for at Cylch Meithrin Harlech is 18 with places offered for children aged between two and four years of age, including children who are eligible for the Local Authority's Early Years Entitlement. The hours of opening are 11.30 – 15.30 Monday to Thursday during school term time with the service located in Ysgol Tanycastell, Harlech, Gwynedd. The registered persons are Annwen Williams and Rhian Corps; Rhian Corps is also the person in charge of the daily running of the service. The service is well on it's way to providing the Welsh Government's Active Offer with both staff speaking Welsh and English.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are developing exceptionally well. They are all active and curious learners and thoroughly enjoy choosing what they want to do from the extensive choice of stimulating activities. Staff meet children's individual needs effectively and provide an interesting range of activities indoors and outside. Leaders ensure children have a wide range of learning opportunities within the environment which is secure, safe and clean. Leadership and management of the service is strong resulting in a good level of care for the children by a committed staff team. Leaders have a clear vision for the service and work in partnership with parents and professionals. An exceptional relationship between the school and the service is well established.

2. Improvements

A significant improvement since registration in October 2017 is the purchase of a large Ty Bach (Little House) for the children to play in outdoors.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We found the service did not meet one legal requirement in that the statement of purpose needed to be updated with the service's new hours of opening. We did not consider this affected the care of children and this has been brought to the registered persons' attention to be addressed.

Three recommendations to consider in improving practices were made in relation to staff recording all children's development, recording conversations with parents when a child sustains a head injury and completing Public Health Wales' Infection Prevention and Control Audit Tool.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children communicate exceptionally well and are always listened to. They are extremely happy and show excellent skills in managing positive interactions and how to behave socially. All children are enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoy their play and learning experiences. Children benefit from a significant and stimulating range of experiences enabling them to develop their skills and follow their interests.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have a strong voice and what they have to say is always listened to.

All children confidently communicated their needs well and their requests were responded to immediately. For example, when a child asked for cream on her fruit at lunchtime a staff member responded straight away and said 'let's go and get some together', the child was very pleased and returned to the table smiling. All children made their own choices and, having eaten their lunch, they excitedly returned to their playroom whilst chatting enthusiastically about what they were going to play with during the afternoon. All children participated exceptionally well in their chosen activity, each eager to play with their favourite item of play.

All children actively make their own decisions as they are fully aware of the wide ranging choices and options available to them.

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

Children feel extremely safe, happy and valued.

All children unquestionably understood the daily routine and happily stood in line behind 'Helpwr y Cylch' (the Cylch's helper) who led them all back to the playroom after lunch. All children took turns in being 'Helpwr y Cylch' with the child in charge at our visit taking the role seriously and enjoying the important responsibilities of the role. Children unreservedly made friends, calling over to their peers to join them at play and all hugging a friend who had been hurt, making their friend feel better. Children excitedly showed us all the activities they could participate in and where everything was kept and confidently told us what they liked doing best. For example, one child could hardly wait for staff to open the door of their Ty Bach (Little House) and pulled us over to have a look inside before the child ran inside and, smiling broadly, pointed to all the items they could play with.

All children are exceptionally well settled and repeatedly express their enjoyment of all the activities they are able to take part in.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact extremely well.

All children interacted and listened to instruction particularly well, even though on one occasion a child was reluctant to help tidy up, with little encouragement and plenty of praise, the child did. Children were becoming self – aware and understood the consequences of not interacting positively and on the one occasion this occurred, the child clearly knew the action to be taken and said ‘sorry’. Children were seen actively supporting their friends to be kind to others, such as prompting their friend to share an item of play with another and when this did not initially work, the child went and found an identical item to give to their friend. One child excitedly told us, staff and her friends it was her birthday and at the end of the session all the children and staff just as excitedly gathered around her and sang happy birthday, all smiling and happy to celebrate the event.

Children are successfully beginning to understand their feelings and emotions and are learning how to express them exceptionally well.

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

Children are enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoy their play and learning.

All children were highly motivated as they participated in their choice of play and learning. They had been learning how caterpillars grew into butterflies with one child pointing to the wall display and proudly told us exactly what happened before the transformation took place. Children loved the water play activity, using the toy syringes to see how many it would take to fill a container. They used coloured play dough and focused intently on cutting out leaf and flower shapes before meticulously placing them on pictures of flowers and trees, smiling broadly when they succeeded and being praised for their achievement. They were all eager to go out to play; their joy of having so many activities outdoors as apparent as those they had to choose from inside. A group of children shook and giggled with excitement when the balancing apparatus was brought out, each in their turn using all their skills to successfully walk across the planks of wood set out on used tyres. Others immediately ran into the Ty Bach, donning dressing up clothes, playing in the home corner with one using the toy cleaning resources to ‘wash’ the Ty Bach windows. There were no restraints in any of the activities children wanted to participate in and they thrived as they had a comprehensive range of exceptional learning opportunities.

All children gain an inspiring and exceeding sense of achievement and great value from their play and learning experiences.

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

Children develop, learn and become independent exceptionally well.

All children developed their self – help skills well, trying their best to put on their own sun cream before going out to play and all were fully aware of the need to put their cups and

plates away in the right place after lunch, which they all did. All children were motivated and followed their own personal interests, choosing to play with friends, on their own or alongside a staff member when participating in activities. Children learned about good physical health such as playing in the fresh air, having water to drink and either eating a school dinner or through their parents being asked to provide them with a healthy packed lunch. Children were imaginative, for example using all the resources they needed to play 'shop' and giggled when they handed us the pretend mobile phone to talk to their parents. All children had an extensive range of opportunities to develop their language and although most came from a non Welsh speaking home, they were all progressing exceptionally well in learning this second language. For example, a child counted and named different fruits and their colours set out on individual picture cards and lollipop sticks and using all her knowledge and thought processes managed this complicated task. The child stopped to think and corrected herself when saying 'tri piws plwm' (three plums purple) to 'tri plwm piws' (three purple plums) and again when reaching 'five oranges' added pump oren 'oren' (five orange 'oranges'). This was strong evidence as to how particularly well children were developing the Welsh language which set them well on the road to their future education.

Children have a significant and stimulating range of experiences enabling them to develop their skills and follow their interests.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are well organised, competent and motivated. They successfully promote children's all round development through varied and interesting planned activities and their caring and responsive approach. Staff are well qualified and experienced and work effectively to meet children's needs. They understand how to keep children safe and healthy and promote positive interactions through a consistent approach and being good role models.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff are competent in keeping children safe and healthy.

Staff followed a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in order to keep children safe and healthy. For example, through discussion we found they knew what to do should they have a safeguarding concern as per the service's policy in keeping children safe. Staff explained an incident when a child needed specific emergency attention, where they not only used their expertise and knowledge gained from their Paediatric First Aid courses but also those of a school staff member who was a 'First Responder'. On this occasion the child's medical needs were addressed promptly and without delay. Staff understood the importance of good hydration, making sure children had drinks of water during the session and promoted good health through the daily activities. Although incident and accident records were kept with parents signing to acknowledge being informed, we asked staff to record their conversations with parents when their child sustained a head injury. This will then provide staff with a clear account as to how the injury was managed and the action taken as a result. Staff encouraged children to wash their hands when using the toilets showing an understanding of managing potential cross infection but could benefit from completing Public Health Wales' Infection Prevention and Control Audit Tool to demonstrate how cross contamination is managed and where possible eliminated within the service.

Overall, staff follow and promote healthy practices in keeping children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff manage interactions positively and effectively.

Staff managed interactions extremely well and made sure there was plenty for the children to do by providing them with wide ranging experiences to sustain their interest and keep them busy. For example, when some children had finished their lunch before others they could choose a selection of activities to keep them occupied whilst waiting for their friends to finish. Staff never missed an opportunity to thank children for showing kindness, listening to instruction or sharing and always celebrated the event through plenty of praise directed at the individual. Staff used direction to good effect and when, for example, children stood on equipment to see their siblings playing in the school field, asked them not to, followed

quickly by engaging the children in discussions of topics of interest to them. We have to note staff managed challenging behaviour and promoted positive interactions extremely well.

Staff are kind and gentle in their approach, model positive behaviour exceptionally well and make sure there is plenty for the children to do to keep them interested, busy and stimulated.

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

Staff fully promote children's play, learning and development.

Staff knew the children extremely well and provided plenty of support when needed, giving children time to follow their own interests and ideas. For example, staff had arranged a themed area linking into the 'Hungry Caterpillar' story where staff sat alongside children to talk about the different items, the names of the fruit, their colours and counting. They showed a genuine interest in the children's choice of activities asking them how many leaves they had cut out with the play dough and what colour were they, thus extending their play and learning. Staff used the school's nursery classroom well making sure children experienced all of the activities set out in accordance with the Welsh Government's Foundation phase of Play and Learning. They told us they took into consideration the school's themes when planning for activities so children attending the school's nursery had a better understanding of the topic and could share this knowledge with the younger children. Although staff needed to keep records of development relating to the children attending the school's nursery class, they did track the younger children's progress and from the records seen staff used their observations well in order to plan for the children's future play and learning. For example, children's development had been mainly aimed at promoting their listening skills with staff telling us this had worked well as all children were developing this fundamental but important skill. This was seen in practice, with children engaging enthusiastically with each other and staff and demonstrated staff knew exactly how to get the best from the children through planning activities to suit their ages and stages of development.

Staff are dedicated and very enthusiastic in promoting children's play, learning and development.

Environment

Summary

Leaders ensure children are cared for in a stimulating and secure child centred environment providing them with a positive ethos for play and learning. Effective procedures are followed to ensure children are kept safe and resources are clean and of good quality.

Our findings

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

Leaders ensure the environment is safe.

Leaders ensured the environment was secure, both indoors and outside and we were asked to sign the visitor's book, meaning leaders ensured no unauthorised persons could access the premises. Leaders maintained written risk assessments and fire drills were undertaken at the same time as the school's fire drill exercises. Leaders ensured children were supervised appropriately as was seen at inspection with staffing ratios sufficient.

Leaders ensure the premises are secure and have established procedures to keep children safe.

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

Leaders provide an exceptionally comfortable and stimulating environment where children develop and grow.

Leaders ensured children had fun and were cared for in a well maintained, warm and welcoming environment, which was light, airy and clean. Leaders made the most of the playroom (used by the school for young children attending short sessions each morning), with all resources thoughtfully set out to promote the children's natural curiosity to learn, both indoors and outside. Leaders ensured children had their own room to eat in, separate to the playroom, but on walking back through the school to the playroom, it was evident how happy and at home children were, being greeted by staff members and having opportunity to look around their future learning environment. The new outdoor Ty Bach provided children with a space where they could sit and learn, no matter the weather. Leaders ensured children had plenty of opportunities to enhance their physical health offering them suitable challenges in the extensive choice of the surrounding school fields. The whole environment supported children to be independent and catered for their all round development and learning.

Leaders are committed to making sure the environment provides plenty of play opportunities suiting the children's ages and stage of development.

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

Leaders provide plenty of resources suiting the children's ages and stages of development.

Leaders had suitable procedures in place to ensure resources and equipment were clean and in good repair. The choice of resources encouraged children to follow their interests and develop different skills. For example, crates had been purchased which children could use for different purposes, such as construction and balancing and child sized gardening tools were set out alongside the Spring flower bed. Furniture was appropriately sized which enabled children to eat comfortably and undertake table top activities. Leaders provided children with natural, recycled and household items as additional resources which promoted an ethos of sustainability within the service. Leaders ensured children had comfortable areas to relax or read and a wide range of good quality and clean learning resources to promote children's play and learning.

Leaders ensure the extensive range of resources and equipment supports the development of children's skills and knowledge.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leaders have a clear vision for the service with emphasis on a child centred approach and an active promotion of children's development. Leaders have created a positive ethos and established a strong staff team who have clear roles and responsibilities and deliver high quality care to the children. There are established partnerships with parents and professionals and exceptionally strong relationships with the school.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The leadership and management of the service is good.

Leaders generally worked with due care and attention in order to meet minimum standards and regulation but needed to send us a copy of their statement of purpose noting the new hours of opening. Leaders made sure staff fully understood their roles and responsibilities to ensure the smooth running of the service and in their delivery of providing children with the care they needed. Leaders were on hand daily to offer support and guidance, meaning any arising problems could be dealt with quickly and without delay. Leaders were committed in providing the children with the best care possible by making sure children were looked after in an inclusive environment, their care being equally as important as all children attending the school.

Leaders have created a positive ethos making sure children and staff feel valued.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders make positive changes in order to move the service forward.

Leaders completed ongoing assessments of the service regularly during the year and made improvements as and when needed. A significant improvement for the future was to sign up to the Welsh Government's Healthy and Sustainable Pre School scheme after the May half term holidays, again showing leaders were committed to improving children's care and development. Leaders were aware of the need to complete a written annual quality of care report within a year of their registration with us and to include the views of parents, children and staff.

Leaders have established processes in order to monitor and improve the service.

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

Leaders ensure staff are well supported in their roles and manage resources well.

Leaders ensured staff were qualified, competent and experienced and told us staff were highly valued, not only within the service but within the school environment. For example, one staff member (the person in charge) also worked as a support teacher within the school where her committed and natural approach in her care of all children had not gone unnoticed. Leaders ensured both staff were encouraged to attend training and courses to update their knowledge in caring for children.

Leaders ensured staff were suitable to care for children with the relevant checks in place including completed induction training. The service was well organised with staff and leaders keen to improve the quality of care given to the children, thereby continually offering a better service. Leaders met with staff daily in order to discuss any issues in relation to the service and to share ideas and good practice. Leaders were fully aware of the need to undertake annual staff appraisals within a year of the service being operational.

Leaders manage the service and staff well and as a result children benefit from an effective service.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders have positive partnerships with parents, professionals and an exceptional relationship with the school staff members.

Leaders kept parents informed about their child's time at the service on a daily basis as was heard when parents collected their child at the end of the session. Parents shared information about their child before their child started so leaders could share each child's daily routine, preferences and needs with the staff team. Positive relationships with professionals visiting the service, such as the Foundation Phase advisory teacher, had been well established and enabled staff to improve practices in relation to children's play and learning. There were excellent partnerships between the service and school; the school classroom became the children's afternoon playroom, staff were supported extremely well by the head teacher (also one of the service's leaders) and the school teachers themselves who, staff told us, were always on hand and willing to help wherever needed. This genuine and strong partnership showed both school and service staff were committed and determined to work together as a unified team of professionals to ensure children attending the service from their very first day, experienced the best possible care.

Partnerships with parents and professionals are good. The exceedingly well established relationship between the school and service staff demonstrates this excellent and successful partnership strongly contributes to the improvement of children's well – being.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

First inspection since registration in October 2017.

5.2 Areas of non compliance from this inspection

We informed the deputy manager they were non compliant with the following Regulation. We did not issue a non compliance notice as we did not find evidence, on this occasion, this impacted on the children's well being. This matter must be addressed.

Regulation 15 of the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 – the registered persons must present us with an updated copy of the service's statement of purpose noting the new hours of opening.

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

Leaders could consider;

- Recording all children's development;
- recording conversations with parents when their child has sustained a head injury and
- complete Public Health Wales' Infection Prevention and Control Audit Tool

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. We inspected on 24 May 2018 arriving at 12.00 hours and leaving at 16.00 hours.

- we observed the children and the care they received;
- we spoke to the person in charge, registered person and staff;
- we spoke to the children present;
- we looked at the areas used by children;
- we looked at a wide range of records, including attendance, policies and procedures, the statement of purpose, children and staff files and development records and
- we provided the registered persons with feedback of our findings.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Sessional Day Care
Registered Person	Rhian Corps Annwen Williams
Person in charge	Rhian Corps
Registered maximum number of places	18
Age range of children	2-4 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday during school term time 11.30 – 15.30 hours
Operating Language of the service	Welsh
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	Registered in October 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	24 May 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	Yes
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service working towards providing the Welsh Language 'Active Offer' and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture
Additional Information:	

