



Childcare Inspection Report on

Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd

**Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmnedd
New Street
Glynneath
Neath
SA11 5AA**



Date of Publication

4 December 2018

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Description of the service

Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd was registered in 2002 and provides sessional care for a maximum of 20 children from two years. They operate from a portacabin on the grounds of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmnedd. The hours of operation are 8.45am to 11.45am Monday to Friday. The registered person and the person in charge is Tracey Evans. The language of care is Welsh. Flying start places are available at the playgroup.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children attending Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd are very happy and well settled. They are cared for by nurturing, kind and established staff who are committed to meeting their individual needs. The children evidently enjoy their time at the service and benefit from planned activities and unstructured play opportunities. Parents are happy with their children's progress and the service that is provided.

2. Improvements

The service has moved to a portacabin with an enclosed outside area.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We recommend that children are given further opportunity to be independent at snack time.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children at Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd are listened to and are able to make choices. They are happy, secure and enjoy the opportunities available to them. They have some opportunities to foster their independence.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children at Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd have choice, are listened to and communicate with each other and the adults who care for them.

Children had opportunities during the session to make personal choices. During a craft activity children freely chose various coloured shapes to glue onto their elephant to represent “Elfed yr eliffant.” Outside children chose from a variety of mark making equipment and marked the paper freely. When children made requests, they were listened to and reacted to positively. For example during snack time children asked for more milk to drink and were given more milk. Children happily approached staff for help, to show them something or to ask to take part in an activity. Outside a child excitedly approached a member of staff and drew their attention to a butterfly on the fence. The child smiled proudly as the staff member said “Waw” and called other children over to see the butterfly. Inside a child asked if they could join an activity to sort objects into the correct coloured boxes. The child smiled happily as a staff member pulled out a chair for them to join in. A child approached staff to hold their doll while they opened the clips to their buggy. They smiled happily at the staff member as they handed back the doll.

Children have a strong voice.

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

Children are content and well settled at the service. They are happy, relaxed and feel valued by staff.

Children played happily at the service. One child approached staff on numerous occasions during the session for reassurance and a hug. Each time the child approached a member of staff reacted positively. They were given a hug before returning happily to play. Children were relaxed and completely engrossed in their play. Outside children played shop. They filled their basket with roleplay food before placing their shopping on the back of their bike and peddling away happily. Inside, children sang to themselves as they lay on the floor and pushed cars down a ramp. Parental questionnaires confirmed that children enjoyed their time at the service. For example one wrote, “My child really enjoys his time at cylch meithrin.”

Children consistently feel safe, happy and valued.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are beginning to understand their feelings and are beginning to share, take turns and co-operate.

Children play alone, alongside each other and in pairs. Outside one child took a doll over to their friend and placed it in their buggy. The two children then followed each other around happily pushing their buggies. Children took turns, one child peddled whilst another stood on the platform at the back of the bike and then the children, naturally reversed roles. Inside a child made their friend a cup of tea in the roleplay corner and gave them a plate of roleplay food. Their friend smiled gratefully and pretended to eat and drink. Children involved staff in their play giving the staff cups of tea and roleplay food. Children played side by side with each other as they rolled out playdough. They shared the rolling pins and the cutters. Children followed each other around whilst carrying large dinosaur figures and roaring at each other with huge smiles on their faces.

Children interact well with each other.

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

Children are engaged and interested in their play. They sustain interest in activities and are familiar with structured play and free play.

Children explored their environment freely and confidently got out toys and resources as they wanted. Children happily matched coloured cutlery to a laminated picture in the roleplay corner. They enthusiastically played musical instruments laughing heartily as they did so. One child got out dinosaur figures for themselves and their friend. The children played happily with the dinosaurs. Children concentrated for a considerable amount of time choosing coloured shapes and gluing them. Children became animated and excited when it was time to go outside to play. They enjoyed peddling bikes, playing shop, pushing buggies and mark making. The children enthusiastically joined in action songs during circle time and enjoyed seeing the large puppet named Sion.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning.

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

Children have opportunity to develop their skills and independence.

Children washed and dried their hands before snack. They spread their own butter on their toast during snack time. They tidied up at various times during the session and were obviously used to the routine. At the end of the session children were encouraged to recognise their own bag and coat and to put them on themselves.

Children develop well and have some opportunities to practice their independence.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff consistently meet children's needs because they know them well. They are committed to providing varied activities for the children.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff are aware of the service's child protection policy and know the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child. The service promotes healthy lifestyles.

Staff knew that safeguarding children was a high priority and had good understanding of dealing with concerns or disclosures when given scenarios. Staff had updated paediatric first aid training and there were clear procedures in place to deal with incidents. Staff and parents signed accident and incident logs. Staff ensured that children washed their hands before sitting down for snack. Toast, fruit with water or milk were provided as a healthy snack. The outside area was an integral part of the service and the children had the opportunity to play outside daily. The service had joined the healthy and sustainable preschool scheme and they had completed the nutrition and oral health aspect. Children take part in a national teeth cleaning scheme.

Staff are competent at keeping the children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The service has a promoting positive behaviour policy and staff are consistent in their approach in managing interactions.

Staff praised children for good behaviour and responded to children who wanted a cuddle or reassurance. Staff spoke kindly and reassuringly to a child who approached them on several occasions seeking reassurance. They reassured the child that their parent would be collecting them in a short while and gave them a cuddle enabling the child to return to play happily. Staff reacted positively and consistently throughout the session. For example, one child was singing to themselves as they played alone. The staff member commented "That is beautiful singing." When a child finished gluing a staff member remarked "Hyfryd! Da iawn!" staff are good role models, speaking politely and kindly to each other and the children.

Staff manage interactions well.

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

Children are looked after by caring and nurturing staff who know children's preferences and individual abilities.

Staff implemented the principles of the foundation phase and planned activities around the various areas. Staff planned activities around a theme such as colours. Stories such as "Elfed yr eliffant" were used as stimuli. Activities such as sorting objects into colours and gluing different coloured paper onto an elephant were planned. Each child had a key worker who would observe focused activities and keep individual tracking records. Individual developmental records recorded details such as scissor skills, matching colours, counting to ten in Welsh and holding a pencil in a tripod grip. Staff recorded children's preferences such as favourite snack and toys prior to them starting at the service.

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

3. Environment

Summary

The environment allows children to play in a safe area with a range of opportunities and resources. The portacabin is set up to meet the areas of the foundation phase. There is a designated outdoor area, which is well resourced and enclosed.

Our findings

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

Leaders ensure the environment is safe, clean and secure. They ensure risks are eliminated as far as possible.

The outside gate was kept closed and opened by staff to allow children to enter and leave the service. A visitors' book was actively used to record all visitors to the service. Risk assessments were completed for the indoor and outdoor area and risks eliminated as far as possible. All cleaning equipment was kept safely in a cupboard in the kitchen area, which was enclosed by safety barriers. All equipment was PAT tested. The service had registered with the food standards agency. Fire drills were logged and carried out regularly. A current liability insurance certificate was displayed on the service's notice board.

Staff efficiently ensure the safety of the environment.

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

The environment is welcoming and child friendly with children's work displayed on the walls.

The portacabin had been organised in a range of play areas. These included for example; a reading corner, roleplay corner, small world area and creative area. Displays included the three little pigs and an underwater scene. The outside area was an integral part of the service and was enclosed. A ramp allowed direct access from the portacabin to the outside area. The area was well developed with ample play opportunities for children. A shed provided a roleplay shop, raised beds provided a mini beasts area and a picnic table provided a mark making area. Mats were placed on the floor so that the children could play with small vehicles and moveable sand and water troughs allowed children to play in numerous ways.

The environment is well suited for the children.

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

Children benefit from good quality resources, equipment and toys.

The equipment and resources were of good quality and suitable for their purpose. Staff provided child sized furniture to allow children to sit at tables independently and to access toys and equipment. Resources and equipment were in good condition and clean. There were ample amount of resources for the children to choose from. Multicultural books and toys were available and used when looking at a particular theme. Small toilets and sinks were easily accessible to the children.

Leaders and staff provide and maintain good quality resources and equipment.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leaders at Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd ensure that the service is well run and correctly staffed. They ensure that children's needs are met and that the staff are provided with regular training opportunities. The service has good links with the community.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders are compliant with the child minding and day care (Wales) regulations 2010 and meets the national minimum standards for regulated childcare for children up to the age of 12 years.

Leaders ensured that the staff fully implemented the service's policies. Policies are reviewed annually and new policies had been created including; digital images policy, nappy changing policy, positive behaviour and equality and diversity policy. The team of staff work well together effectively with the support of the leader. The statement of purpose complied with the national minimum standards and was updated regularly. Staff worked well together and evidently had positive relationships with parents, who gave complimentary feedback about the service. This was confirmed in parental questionnaires which stated for example, " We recommend the cylch meithrin to anyone and staff are very friendly and approachable."

Leadership is effective at this service.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders review the service regularly and take into consideration the views of the parents and staff.

Leaders reviewed the service annually and produced a report. Leaders told us they were always looking for areas to develop, improve and plan for the year ahead. This was evident in this year's report that highlighted the need to find new premises. As a result, the service had moved to a new premises based in a portacabin in the grounds of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmnedd. Leaders had also joined a national healthy preschool scheme and had achieved the first aspect which, included nutrition and oral health. Plans were in place to achieve the next aspect of the scheme.

Self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good.

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

Leaders ensure that the service is correctly staffed and that there are enough activities on offer for the number of children attending.

Staff files contained all relevant documentation and all necessary checks had been carried out. Staff were suitably qualified. Annual appraisals were carried out and identified training needs and personal targets for development. Individual staff supervisions were carried out regularly. All core training was up to date and staff had attended a number of other training such as; behaviour management for challenging behaviour, mini me yoga, bereavement training and epilepsy training.

Management of staff and other resources is good.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders and staff enjoy good relationships with parents and carers. They have good links with the feeder school and other outside agencies.

Parents and carers at the service spoke very positively about the service and the staff. This was confirmed in parental questionnaires that stated, "I think the Cylch Meithrin is a huge benefit to the community and provides opportunities for the children to socialise and learn in a friendly and positive learning environment." Parents told us that they were happy with the information they had received about the service and felt well informed about the development of their child. The service shares their outside area with the school's nursery class. The Head teacher told us that she felt the children benefitted from being on the same site as the school as this helped the transition into the school's nursery class. Parents also informed us that they felt it was beneficial to the children to be on the school site. Leaders ensure that children with additional needs were given the support they needed through seeking advice and guidance from outside agencies.

The service has excellent partnerships with parents, links with the community and outside agencies.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommend that children are given further opportunity to be independent at snack time.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

An inspector undertook two visits to the service on 27 and 28 of September 2018 lasting a total of 4 hours. Feedback was given at the end of the inspection.

We:

- inspected a sample of documents and polices including staff files, children's files, training records and accident logs;
- inspected areas used by the children;
- observed children using SOFI (short observational framework for inspection) tool and general group observations, and
- spoke to the registered person, person in charge, staff and children.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Sessional Day Care
Responsible Individual	Tracey Evans
Person in charge	Tracey Evans
Registered maximum number of places	20
Age range of children	2-3 years
Opening hours	8.45am-11.45am Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	Welsh
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	8 October 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	27 and 28 September 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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 that provides an "Active Offer" of the Welsh language. It provides a service that anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.
Additional Information:	