



Childcare Inspection Report on

Cylch Meithrin Y Gromlech - Dyffryn Ardudwy

**Safle Ysgol Gynradd Dyffryn Ardudwy
Dyffryn Ardudwy
LL44 2EP**

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



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Description of the service

Cylch Meithrin Y Gromlech is located in its own building adjacent to the primary school in Dyffryn Ardudwy, Gwynedd. The service is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children at any one time and operates between the hours of 8:50 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. Monday to Friday during the school term. The premises has its own facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area. The service receives funding to provide early years education and is subsequently inspected by Estyn. The registered person is Gwenfair Williams and the person in charge is Lyn Bisseker. The service implements the Welsh Government's Active Offer in relation to the Welsh language.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy, feel comfortable expressing their views and have positive relationships with staff. Staff encourage positive behaviour and are aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and healthy. Resources are of good quality and all areas are welcoming and interesting to children. Leaders ensure all hazards to children's safety are identified and measures are put into place to minimise or eliminate these as appropriate. Good relationships have been formed with parents and external partners, and information is shared effectively.

2. Improvements

Since the previous inspection, new resources and furniture have been purchased and the outdoor area has been developed so the environment is welcoming and suitable for children's needs.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made some recommendations relating to two aspects of record keeping and further developing the quality of care review.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are happy, settled and enjoy attending. They feel confident to express their views and are able to make choices and follow their interests as they wish. They have positive relationships with staff and other children and enjoy the play activities available to them. Children also have opportunities to learn independence and self-help skills.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are able to express themselves and feel comfortable in doing so.

Children expressed their views and opinions confidently during circle time and were eager to take part, sharing their experiences and offering ideas when listening to a story. All attempts at communication with the staff were valued and the children were confident they would be listened to by the staff. Children were able to make choices about what they wanted to do and moved freely around the activities available. They were also confident to make their wants and needs known. For example, one child expressed their wish to paint and was promptly supported to fetch an apron and choose which colour paint they wanted. Another asked for help to fetch the Duplo blocks, which was provided.

Children confidently express their views and know they will be listened to by staff.

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

Children are happy and have formed bonds of affection with staff who know them well.

Children were happy and comfortable in their surroundings. Children were familiar with the activities available and the daily routine and had formed bonds of affection with staff. They knew they were able to seek help from the staff when they needed it. For example, one child started to cough after running around outside and went to seek comfort from a staff member, who responded promptly to their needs. Children were confident to approach us and talk about what they had done at home; one child was eager to show us their artwork and another brought a book over to show us and told us about what they liked to play with. This showed they felt secure in their surroundings.

Children are settled, content and cope well with separation from their parents.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are beginning to form friendships and learning to cooperate with each other.

Children were happy to take turns, share resources and enjoyed doing things together. For example, during circle time they waited patiently for their turn to go and search for an item in the play room which was of a particular shape or colour. During outdoor play, the children all lined up and waited patiently for their turn to walk along a 'wall' they had created using

plastic crates. They excitedly watched as their friends took their turn and cheered when they got to the other side. Children had fun playing with their friends and were eager to involve each other in activities. For example, two children played together with the building blocks. They happily chatted together and instructed each other on how to build a castle, using the toy tools to 'fix' parts.

Children cooperate well and enjoy each other's company.

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

Children can choose and participate in activities they enjoy.

Children were interested in the activities on offer, were busy and engaged throughout the session and were naturally motivated to explore the resources available. For example, three children played imaginatively with the toy cars and the road mat. They cooperated well and chatted together whilst they rolled their cars along the road in a line. Lots of laughter and happy chatter ensued as they enjoyed pretending to make the figures 'cross the road' and made the cars stop at the traffic lights. A group of children played for an extended period in the pebbles. They were engrossed in their play and had lots of fun looking for smooth stones, which they said were '*dinosaur eggs*'. They used spades and toy diggers to search in the pebbles and chatted enthusiastically together as they did so. They were excited each time they found an 'egg' and were eager to show staff and us what they had discovered.

Children enjoy their play, are interested in the experiences provided to them and are able to concentrate well.

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

Children have opportunities to follow their own interests and learn to be independent.

Children had opportunities to lead and direct their play and were naturally motivated to choose activities as they wished. Resources were stored in a way which enabled children to access them easily and independently. Children were encouraged to tidy up after themselves at the end of activities and during snack time and were able to complete simple self-help activities independently. A '*Helpwr Heddiw*' / '*Today's Helper*' helped to complete the daily weather chart and distribute the fruit at snack time, encouraging independence.

Children have a range of experiences that enable them to develop their skills and follow their interests.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Staff are aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and healthy, and implement the service's policies and procedures accordingly. They promote positive interactions and ensure children have clear boundaries. Staff are aware of children's individual needs and ensure they are met.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

Staff understand their duties to keep children safe and healthy.

Documents we viewed showed staff had received training on safeguarding children and staff were able to tell us the correct procedures to follow if they had a concern about a child. Staff also had current Paediatric First Aid qualifications, meaning they were able to deal with emergencies and minor injuries. Any accidents which did occur were documented appropriately, dated and signed by both staff and a parent or guardian. Records showed fire drills had been performed at regular intervals, ensuring children and staff knew how to exit the premises safely in an emergency.

Staff promoted healthy lifestyles by providing children with nutritious snacks and organising plenty of physical activities outdoors, ensuring they had opportunities for physical exercise and fresh air. Staff encouraged and supported children to wash their hands as required, ensuring the risk of cross contamination was reduced.

Staff are aware of their duties and follow procedures effectively in order to keep children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Staff encourage children to behave appropriately and use good manners using positive behaviour management strategies.

Staff spoke to children with warmth and affection. Any arguments or unwanted behaviours were dealt with promptly by redirecting children to another activity and gently explaining why this wasn't appropriate. They also modelled positive behaviour and helped children to learn what was expected of them. For example, staff gently but firmly explained to children why they should not stand on the chair during snack time. Praise and stickers were given throughout the day for sharing resources, completing activities and trying new things. Good manners were also encouraged with a few gentle prompts and praise given when children said '*Please*' or '*thank you*'.

Staff have positive relationships with the children and model good behaviour and appropriate language.

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

Staff provide a caring atmosphere and recognise children's individual needs.

Staff were on hand to provide encouragement and answer questions that enabled children to develop their skills and understanding during play activities. This was carried out in a relaxed manner that children were comfortable with. Staff asked questions aimed at the children's level of understanding and children whose first language was not Welsh were offered additional support with their Welsh.

Staff know children well and recognised their individual needs. They recognised which children would require more support to concentrate on activities and provided it accordingly. Activity plans outlined the skills targeted in each of the seven areas of the Foundation Phase Framework. Records were kept of each child's development and these were kept along with observation notes noting their achievements. Treasure books were also created for each child by collating samples of their work, along with individual CDs of photographs of the children taking part in activities. These were given to parents at the end of their child's time at the service.

Staff plan appropriate activities and provide support to meet children's needs and aid their development.

3. Environment

Summary

Leaders ensure children are cared for in a safe environment and risks are minimised where possible. Resources are of a good quality and all areas are welcoming and interesting to children. Leaders ensure resources and equipment are suitable to aid children's development.

Our findings

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

Leaders prioritise the safety of children and ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities and follow procedures accordingly.

The doors to the premises were kept locked and we were asked to show our identification on arrival at the premises. This prevented unauthorised access, ensuring the children were safe. Leaders have appropriate measures in place to keep children safe in the event of an emergency as accurate records of daily attendance were maintained. Leaders had identified hazards within the premises and these were included in comprehensive written risk assessments showing how risk was managed and where possible eliminated. These were regularly reviewed and amended as necessary. However, we found plastic aprons were stored on the windowsill within children's reach, posing a choking hazard. We alerted the person in charge, who stated this was an oversight due to maintenance workers having moved these to complete work over the weekend. These were moved to a safe storage area immediately. Completing daily safety checks prior to children's arrival would enable leaders to ensure all areas were safe for children's use and free from potential hazards.

Leaders have appropriate measures in place to minimise the risks to children's safety.

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

Leaders ensure the environment is suitable for the needs of the children.

Leaders had made good use of the indoor space by laying out resources and furniture into learning areas in line with foundation phase principles. The play rooms were bright, colourful and welcoming. There was plenty of space and items were stored and labelled well with pictures so children could understand what was in each box. Furniture and resources were all suitable for the needs of the children. Tables and chairs were at the right height and low level facilities enabled children to use the toilet and practice self-help skills as independently as possible. The walls were colourful with educational posters and pictures on display, for example a weather chart, letters and numbers. There were also plenty of samples of the children's work, giving them a sense of belonging. The outdoor areas offered plenty of opportunities for exploration and play to develop children's imagination, including a mud kitchen, gravel area, planting area and construction area.

Leaders ensure they provide an environment, which is comfortable, welcoming and suitable for the needs of the children.

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

Leaders ensure resources and equipment are suitable for the children's needs.

Leaders provide children with toys which are in good condition and are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. Suitable resources and equipment were available to aid children's independence, such as steps and seats to support toilet training and all were clean and in good repair.

A range of areas were available for children to explore, including a role play corner, construction area and opportunities to explore natural materials. An appropriate selection of multi-cultural dolls and books was available, promoting cultural awareness and providing children with a greater understanding of the world around them.

Leaders ensure children have access to suitable resources which enable them to carry out activities independently.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leaders ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities and communicate their vision for the service well. Steps have been taken to gather feedback and improve practices. Good partnerships have been formed with partners in order to improve outcomes for children and ensure their needs are met.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leaders ensure the policies and procedures are adhered to and promote the use of the Welsh language.

Staff were aware of the importance of working within the service's policies and implemented them in their day to day work. For example, we saw that they followed the behaviour management policy by using positive methods and distraction techniques to manage any unwanted behaviour. All the policies we viewed were appropriate and had been reviewed. Some policies had been reviewed in February 2018, while others had not been reviewed since November 2017. We reminded the person in charge of the need to renew these annually.

We heard staff speaking Welsh throughout the day and also offering support in English to children who were unable to understand Welsh. Leaders and staff were all committed to providing the 'Active Offer' and to promoting the use of the Welsh language.

Leaders ensure policies and required documents are in place but need to ensure these are reviewed annually and contain all the required information.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Leaders seek feedback about their service from staff, children and parents in order to improve their service.

Leaders had gathered feedback from parents and children. Staff were able to discuss their views during staff meetings and by completing questionnaires. Parents were also asked to complete questionnaires giving their views of the service. Leaders had used this feedback to form an action plan in order to implement changes and improve practices based on the feedback received and any other areas they had identified for improvement. However, it was not evident how children's views were considered when planning for improvements.

Leaders are committed to improving their service and are reflective of their practice but need to include children's views when planning for improvements.

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

Leaders are keen to ensure staff are well trained and receive support in order to carry out their roles effectively.

Both staff files we viewed contained all the required information, showing leaders followed a robust recruitment process. Both the person in charge and staff member had completed self evaluation forms and annual appraisals had been held for both so they were able to suggest any training they would like to undertake in order to improve their practices. The staff member stated she was able to approach the person in charge at any time to discuss any issues or training needs and the person in charge stated she was able to regularly meet with the registered person and management committee. However, there were no formal records of any 1:1 supervision taking place other than the annual appraisals. Leaders should a record is kept of these sessions in order to plan any training and ensure issues discussed are dealt with.

Leaders ensure they manage, support staff sufficiently well in order to enhance the experiences of children.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Leaders share information with parents effectively.

We saw evidence on file of information gathered from parents detailing children's specific needs, likes and dislikes. Staff had positive relationships with parents and shared information verbally at the end of each session. We saw the person in charge and staff member talking with parents when they came to collect their children, sharing feedback with them and asking questions about the children. Parents told us staff were approachable and their children enjoyed attending. They told us they received plenty of information both verbally and through the service's social media page. The parents' handbook we viewed contained plenty of information to ensure parents understood the services and facilities provided so they were aware of what the service offered before their child began attending. The person in charge also told us they receive regular visits from an advisory teacher from the local authority and from a support officer from the umbrella organisation. This was backed up by a log of these visits in the visitor's book.

Leaders ensure they work closely with parents and information is shared effectively.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We made the following recommendations for leaders to consider:

- Implementing a daily checklist to check all areas for any hazards so these can be dealt with prior to children's arrival;
- seeking feedback from children and incorporating their views when completing a review of the quality of care; and
- keeping a record of staff supervision sessions in addition to staff appraisals.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

One inspector visited the service on the 13 March 2019 between 9:25 a.m. and 1:10 p.m.

We:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed practice and completed observations to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided by staff;
- spoke to the children, person in charge, staff and 3 parents;
- looked at the areas used by children and resources on the day of our inspection and
- gave detailed feedback to the person in charge over the phone on 25th March 2018 of what we found and what needed to be addressed.

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	Gwenfair Williams
Person in charge	Lyn Bisseker
Registered maximum number of places	24
Age range of children	2 ½ - 4 years old
Opening hours	8:50 a.m. – 12:50 p.m. Monday to Friday during the school term.
Operating Language of the service	Welsh
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	27 November 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	13 March 2019
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 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:	