



## Inspection Report

**Meithrinfa Hen Ysgol**

**The Old School  
Chapel Street  
Porthmadog  
LL49 9DS**

**Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg**

**This report is also available in Welsh**



**Date Inspection Completed**

26/03/2024

**Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2024.**

*You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)  
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.*

## About Meithrinfa Hen Ysgol

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Meithrinfa Hen Ysgol
Registered places	72
Language of the service	Both
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	20 February 2020
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

<a href="#"><u>Well-being</u></a>	<b>Good</b>
<a href="#"><u>Care and Development</u></a>	<b>Good</b>
<a href="#"><u>Environment</u></a>	<b>Excellent</b>
<a href="#"><u>Leadership and Management</u></a>	<b>Good</b>

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

### **Summary**

Children’s wellbeing is at the heart of the setting. Children feel happy and safe as they develop positive relationships with staff. They interact well and value the friendships they make. Children enjoy their play and learning as they have access to an extensive range of exciting activities and resources.

Staff know the children well. They are caring and knowledgeable about the individual needs of children. Staff support children to communicate effectively as they model good language skills and make time for sociable experiences. They plan interesting and innovative experiences to support children to develop a range of skills.

Leaders have a clear vision for the environment and ensure it is a safe and secure space for children. Leaders are motivated and dedicated to providing an environment that is both innovative and stimulating, creating exciting and inviting spaces where children can develop and learn. They prioritise providing resources that are purposeful and support children’s holistic development.

Leaders are actively involved in the running of the setting, helping to ensure it is managed well. They have a clear understanding of the importance of self-evaluation to review the quality of care and consistently consider new initiatives to help them further develop their setting. Leaders manage staff well and develop a good relationship with parents.

Children have a strong voice and make appropriate decisions about their play experiences. They move freely and confidently around their environment, choosing from the variety of resources made available. Children communicate well as they are confident their ideas, needs and interests will be responded to effectively. For example, older children choose when and if they have snack and younger children know they can follow their own routines in relation to sleeping when they are tired. Children use verbal and nonverbal forms of communication effectively to express themselves and their needs.

Children settle well as they feel safe and happy at the setting. They develop positive relationships with the staff, helping them to feel relaxed. For example, children showed excitement and were keen to greet staff who came into their room. Children enjoy their experiences and value the friendships they make. They enjoy playing alongside their peers and choosing who to sit by at snack time. Children feel valued as their interests are always considered and their needs are known.

Children interact well and learn to develop a sense of right and wrong. Nearly all children follow the expected rules and learn to manage their own behaviour as they understand the expectations and boundaries. They show respect towards others and the resources as they learn to share and use items appropriately. Children express empathy towards others and learn to understand and consider the needs of others. For example, children of all ages took part in a game of football, which they all played together cooperatively, insuring everyone was involved.

Children engage well and are enthusiastic to take part in the play and learning opportunities available. They have access to a good range of appealing activities that allow them to follow their interests, indoors and outside. Younger children enjoy exploring the textures available for them as they play with the oats and mix them with water. Children have access to innovative and exciting outdoor play experiences, including a forest school where they learn about the world around them and where they are supported and encouraged to take measured risks, such as using tools and making fires. This results in them being proud of their achievements.

Children have access to a good balance of child and adult led activities that support them in developing a range of skills. They take part in challenging opportunities which helps them gain confidence and develop their creativity. For example, babies using the climbing apparatus and children learning about germs from the activity prepared by staff. Children are given opportunities to plan their own learning as they are asked what they would like to do and can influence their experiences. For example, older children requested to go to the beach and wanted to cook spaghetti bolognese for their lunch.

## Care and Development

Good

Staff implement effective policies and procedures to keep children safe. They understand safeguarding and the procedure to follow should they have concerns about a child. They ensure children are supervised sufficiently; however, staff are not always confident to ask for support during busy times of the day such as lunch, which can result in rooms becoming a bit hectic. Regular fire drills are completed so staff and children are aware of the procedure to follow in an emergency.

Staff are effective in promoting and encouraging children to lead a healthy lifestyle. They provide nutritious food choices for snacks and lunch and only offer milk or water to drink. Staff ensure children are encouraged to remain hydrated as drinks are available and offered throughout the day. Staff are extremely effective in ensuring children have regular opportunities to be active and get fresh air. For example, babies have free access to climbing equipment indoors and children regularly access the outdoors, are taken on walks and visits to the woodland area.

Staff have a caring approach towards the children. They show respect and interest in what children do, promoting positive interactions and social skills. Staff sit at the children's level, modelling and encouraging good manners and responding to any questions or comments the children may have. Nearly all staff are consistent in managing and promoting positive behaviours. They use age-appropriate strategies to diffuse possible unwanted behaviours and encourage older children to manage and resolve situations independently when appropriate. For example, allowing children to resolve a dispute during a game of football. Staff use praise effectively to promote children's sense of pride and self-esteem.

Staff have a good knowledge of child development and understand the individual needs of children. They implement positive strategies and routines to support children so they can develop and learn effectively. Staff are focused on allowing children to follow their interests and they consider these when arranging activities and preparing resources. They provide a range of exciting and inspirational resources and activities that encourage creativity and problem-solving skills. For example, developing their senses by providing a tuff tray filled with frozen peas, salad leaves, and carrots to create a farmyard scene and different coloured water, pipets, and flower petals for children to use to make their own perfume. Staff support children to communicate in their first language, using Welsh and English consistently.

**Environment****Excellent**

Leaders ensure the setting is a safe and secure environment for children. Access into the premises is controlled and visitors are recorded. Registers are kept of children's and staff attendance so everyone can be accounted for. All external doors and gates are secure, so children are unable to leave unsupervised and there is no unauthorised access. Leaders conduct risk assessments on all areas used, regular activities completed and any walks or trips. These show updates are made regularly, and any hazards are identified and suitably managed. They have created an environment which successfully allows children to experiment and take measured risks. Plans are in place to further develop staff knowledge by completing training on identifying and managing hazards and risks specifically on walks in the community.

Leaders are motivated and dedicated to providing an environment that is stimulating and encourages learning through play. They have created exciting, inviting, and innovative spaces. All areas are utilised very well to create areas of learning for children that are inspirational and encourage exploration, problem solving and skills development. Each room is effectively designed to meet the needs and ages of the children. For example, the baby room has lots of space for children to move around safely as they start to crawl and walk and rooms are arranged with inspiring areas of learning that effectively support learning and development. Older children have different spaces available to allow them to have a range of opportunities and experiences. For example, inspiring outdoor spaces that are designed to encourage physical activities, such as riding bikes, climbing apparatus and ball games. An area that has lots of different surfaces and resources that create a woodland feel. The natural shelter provides space for children to play games, have food or experiment with the materials and activities available, whilst the wooden hut provides a cosy area for children who may not want to be outside. The outdoors is a real strength of the setting and leaders have worked hard to create this inspiring space where children thrive and develop lots of skills, confidence, and self-esteem.

Leaders have a clear vision for the environment. They prioritise providing resources that are purposeful and support children's holistic development in an exciting and innovative way. They have equipped the environment with extremely interesting resources that engage children and inspire them to play, learn and be creative. The availability of a vast number of natural materials inspires children to experiment and learn about different textures and processes. For example, children were motivated to learn about germs from the dirty inflated rubber gloves and different cleaning materials staff had made available. Leaders enhance children's experiences by equipping areas with real life resources, such as make up, hairdryers, hats, and brushes, which children thoroughly enjoyed using to dress up themselves and the staff. All equipment is well maintained and stored at a suitable height, so children can access them independently.

## Leadership and Management

Good

Leaders are actively involved in managing the setting, giving them a clear understanding of the service and care provided. They have written a statement of purpose that includes all the required information and gives parents a clear idea if it is the right care for their child. Paperwork is well organised and records including children's registration documents are stored securely and completed so information is easy to find. Generally, policies and procedures reflect current practice and are kept up to date. However, the staff disciplinary policy was not clear on some definitions of practice and the procedures that would be followed.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the importance of self-evaluation to review the quality of care. They effectively seek and consider the views of staff, children, and parents to make changes. For example, providing more training for staff to implement the new way of planning and supporting children's play and learning. Leaders are consistently evaluating and considering new initiatives to help them develop their setting. For example, they have worked alongside other nurseries and considered their knowledge and research to further develop the woodland area to enhance experiences and benefit children.

Leaders manage staff well and they hold regular supervisions and appraisals to ensure information is shared and training needs identified. Staff we spoke with said they enjoyed working at the setting and felt supported. Leaders have a robust recruitment process in place to ensure staff have the appropriate experience and training to work with children. They have developed a team of staff who work well together to ensure the setting runs smoothly to meet the needs of all children.

Leaders have a good relationship with parents. They have recently introduced an App so information, photos and details of the children's day and experiences are shared effectively. Comments made by parents in responses from questionnaires included, "*exceptional care*" and "*care is outstanding*". Leaders work closely with other settings to share good practice to support them in implementing new ideas that benefit the children. They support children to develop a sense of belonging within the community by taking them on walks and visiting local places of interest such as the local park and beach.



### Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
<b>New</b>	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
<b>Reviewed</b>	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
<b>Not Achieved</b>	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
<b>Achieved</b>	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

### Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
	Regulation 30: Keeping Records	Achieved
	Regulation 28: Suitability of workers	Achieved

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice	
Recommendation(s)	
To ensure staff are confident to ask for help and support when needed, especially during busier times of the day.	
To review the staff disciplinary policy so it is clear on some definitions of practice and the procedures that would be followed.	

Ratings	What the ratings mean
<b>Excellent</b>	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children’s well-being.
<b>Good</b>	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
<b>Adequate</b>	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
<b>Poor</b>	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children’s well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

### Was this report helpful?

We want to hear your views and experiences of reading our inspection reports. This will help us understand whether our reports provide clear and valuable information to you.

To share your views on our reports please visit the following link to complete a short survey:

- [Inspection report survey](#)

If you wish to provide general feedback about a service, please visit our [Feedback surveys page](#).

**Date Published** 16/05/2024