



 **mudiad
meithrin**

arbenigwyr y blynyddoedd cynnar
Welsh early years specialists

annual report

2014 - 2015

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“It is our aim and privilege to facilitate care and education of a high quality through the medium of Welsh for young children from all walks of life throughout the country, by expanding our services as part of a national undertaking to defeat poverty and provide opportunities for all children in Wales to benefit from early years experiences through the medium of Welsh.”

The big challenge facing Mudiad Meithrin is to overcome barriers to ensure care and education of a high standard by the following means:

- a competent, professional and caring workforce which is constantly developing and that has the ability to work through the medium of Welsh at grassroots level in the cylch;
- provisions that are able to conduct their work and continue to provide and expand affordable services to all children in the catchment area by having a strong business plan in place;
- ensuring that every family in every community understand the benefits of care and education through the medium of Welsh for their children whatever their language and background;
- working with local committees of volunteers and innovate with new models for our provisions (cylchoedd).

“Wherever there are children, Mudiad Meithrin – and so too the Welsh language – should be there”

About us

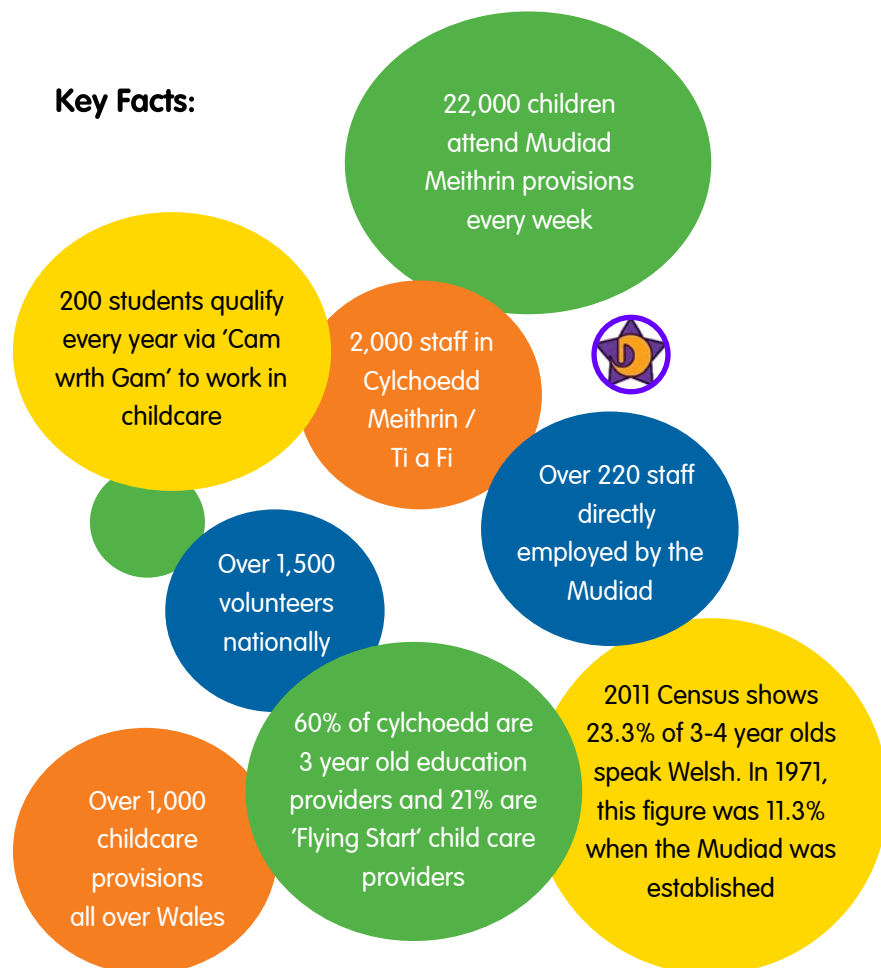
Mudiad Meithrin: a national voluntary organisation of cylchoedd meithrin, cylchoedd Ti a Fi, wraparound care, meithrin sessions and Welsh-medium nurseries that provide early years experiences, childcare and education of a high quality for approximately 22,000 children each week.

Child Development: as play is integral to every aspect of children's development, the experiences and activities offered across our range of provision are based on learning through play and providing experiences within the curriculum of the Foundation Phase. Special emphasis is placed on language development and the personal, social and emotional development of the children.

"Cam wrth Gam": Mudiad Meithrin's training company that trains 200 students per year to achieve the Level 3 Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development (CACHE) and that runs various Children's Care, Learning and Development courses in secondary schools in order to provide the qualification to work in early years.

"Academi": home to all the training, development and learning work of Mudiad Meithrin that provides opportunities for staff and volunteers and all our provisions to develop a wide range of skills and experiences.

Key Facts:



Our main objectives and targets

The main annual objectives and targets relate to various policy areas that all lead ultimately to creating the conditions that enable us to set up sustainable, welcoming and friendly provisions. In the same way, we aim to encourage a robust, flourishing Welsh-medium early years sector where the welfare and safety of the child is fundamental.

Our main objectives are:

- Provide support, guidance and help for our provisions at grassroots level in all aspects of their work
- Open new provisions in order to expand opportunities for childcare
- Ensure that 200 early years practitioners qualify to implement the Foundation Phase across the sector
- Contribute in local discussions about Welsh education by identifying gaps, planning strategically and promoting education through the medium of Welsh
- Assist our provisions to register, improve quality and become a "cyllch designated as excellent"
- Ensure that every child and adult - regardless of their background or needs - are included in all aspects of our work (i.e. inclusion in its broader sense)
- Maintain and raise the skills of the workforce and develop a programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities
- Promote and encourage childcare as a career
- Work with partners to expand play and pre-school childcare
- Use the latest technology to communicate with parents and the wider community about childcare
- Represent the childcare and education sector at various meetings
- Create innovative and alternative models to offer care and education and encourage progression to Welsh-medium education



An overview of our work

Our settings

Cylchoedd meithrin, day nurseries, cylchoedd Ti a Fi and after school clubs are some examples of the type of settings that are members of Mudiad Meithrin. They are distributed across the country with 288 in the north west, 186 in the north east, 260 in mid Wales, 186 in the south west and 249 in the south east. The earliest cylchoedd are older than the Mudiad itself, whilst several new cylchoedd have opened as recently as this year.

Providers are looking to respond to parental demand for flexible and convenient childcare - by increasing hours, offering care at lunchtimes, providing after school care, facilitating transport and working in partnership with other organisations. Almost 60% are education providers in the Foundation Phase and are therefore subject to 'Estyn' inspections and also to CSSIW inspections. Both of these regulatory bodies therefore guarantee a baseline standard and quality at each cylch. In a similar way, staff ratios (the number of staff per child) are higher than the ratio required in schools, which has an added welfare benefit to the child. A growing number of nursery groups are part of Flying Start, the Welsh Government's scheme to

tackle poverty, thus making intensive use of language and play schemes, Makaton, Elklan etc

Our people

Ours is a large community of over 3500. We aim to offer fair and consistent working conditions to our national workforce and induct and support everyone who volunteers in the Mudiad's name. Through 'Academi', the new home for all the training, development and learning purposes of Mudiad Meithrin, we offer CPD opportunities to the Mudiad's workforce and volunteers and to its cylchoedd, and we take advantage of various training schemes including on-line training, both locally and regionally. We communicate with cylchoedd meithrin staff in various ways: new seasonal newsletters and letters, e-bulletins, Twitter / Facebook, the website and the intranet, and through regular visits and communication from the Support Officers (Mudiad Meithrin's frontline staff). In order to reward and celebrate good practice, we have schemes that recognise people's achievements (in our provisions) by means of a celebration ceremony.



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Our projects

Working with partners is a vital element of our work. This year saw the birth of several exciting projects such as 'Bodo', a language enrichment plan, (in conjunction with 'Merched y Wawr'), a student qualification scheme BA Early Childhood Studies (jointly with the 'University of Wales Trinity Saint David'), planning to open a crèche at the Welsh Language Centre in Cardiff (formerly the Old Library), becoming a member of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, working with the charity Makaton on a new resource called Dewin a Doti ... and many more locally that cannot all be named!



Our partners

Due to the multi-faceted nature of our work and our status as a voluntary organisation which provides childcare and education through the medium of Welsh, we are working together with a number of partners such as the following:



- Welsh Government: 'Welsh in Education Unit', Children and Families (Tackling Poverty) – Flying Start, Communities First, Training and Qualifying / Foundation Phase / Economy, Science and Transport Department
- Twf, Mentrau Iaith Cymru, S4C, BBC Cymru, yr Urdd, National Eisteddfod of Wales, Merched y Wawr, Association of Translators, Young Farmers Movement, Celebrating the Welsh language, Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg
- Clybiau Plant Cymru (*CPCCKC*), Wales Pre-School Providers Association (*Wales PPA*), National Day Nurseries Association (*NDNA Cymru*) and Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (*PACEY Cymru*);
- Local Authorities, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (*CSSIW*), Estyn and 'Aware' the Early Years network;
- The Care Council for Wales, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (*WCVA*), Children's Commissioner, Welsh Language Commissioner; Learning Disability Wales
- CACHE verification body, Further Education Colleges, primary and secondary schools

Basically, we are keen to expand the scope of our work and as such, are happy to be working with a variety of organisations and groups both locally and nationally.

In addition, through charitable activities, Mudiad Meithrin supported several charities over the course of the year such as Save the Children, Children in Need, St David's Hospice and Cancer Research Wales to name a few.

A few words from the Chair

Rhiannon Lloyd



"I am pleased to bring this report to your attention.

It has been a busy year of development and innovation to meet new expectations and challenges, and a great deal of excellent work was achieved in the best tradition of Mudiad Meithrin.

Thank you to the Chief Executive for her vision and enthusiasm and to all the staff for their dedication and hard work.

The Mudiad's achievements are a strong influence on the future of children in Wales and their families, and with a truly unique approach, it will ensure an increase in the number of Welsh speakers and the growth of schools and Welsh education across Wales.

Congratulations and best wishes for 2015-16."



A few words from the Chief Executive Dr Gwenllian Lansdown Davies



"If I had a pound for the number of times I have been asked over the past year, "Are you enjoying the job?" I would be an extremely rich woman. I'd be even richer if I had a pound for every time I say that I have the best job in the world! Although a cliché, it is an honour to lead Mudiad Meithrin. I feel that I am standing on the shoulders of giants of the past, as part of the silver thread of a historical mission which has its roots in giving a good start to the next generation through the medium of Welsh; at the same time, I feel like a small part in what is an enormous machine of people, communities and groups who strive hard to ensure quality education and care, and fun and adventurous experiences for young children. And even though the motivation, passion and vision are the same, changes must be made. I felt at the beginning of my term in office that I wanted to try to visit cyлноedd meithrin across the country in order to immerse myself in such a complex organisation. This led in turn to the

opportunity to talk and listen to frontline staff. The culmination of this process was *Dewiniaith*, a visionary document for Mudiad Meithrin for the next decade. The document has been subject to an extensive consultation. Although, obviously, any vision will have to adapt and respond to new challenges, the hope is that *Dewiniaith* will set ambitions for achieving all aspects of our work in the organisation.

And of course, we need people in order to deliver. Our provincial and national staff alike, our lay members who serve on the Mudiad committees and the staff at our provisions, have all seen many changes (owing to restructuring and reviewing our committee system). Each stage of change is challenging needless to say. I am confident however, that the changes will respond to a new stage in the history of Mudiad Meithrin and will benefit the hardworking and talented workforce of individuals who are part of Mudiad Meithrin's team.

Childcare - which is a standard service that is offered through our provisions - is becoming increasingly more prevalent in the political world as parents demand, quite reasonably, affordable childcare of a high standard and, most importantly, one that is available within a reasonable distance. In the same way, the realisation that childcare is part of the solution to overcome poverty by enabling parents - Mothers specifically - to return to work underlines the need to expand the nature and range of services offered. This will be the challenge for us, as for all other childcare and education organisations, over the next period.

As in all previous periods, Mudiad Meithrin will respond eagerly to the challenge ahead."





Measuring performance and demonstrating the value of our work

Everyone is always busy, so it's important to observe our activities in order to measure performance and demonstrate the value of our work.

When the Mudiad was established in 1971, the Census figures for that year indicated that 11.3% of children aged 3-4 in Wales could speak Welsh. There has been a gradual increase in this percentage in every decade since then, and it was pleasing to note in the 2011 Census that figures had increased significantly in the last decade, and that 23.3% of 3-4 year olds can speak Welsh. Undoubtedly, the hard work done in the cyлноedd meithrin and the cyлноedd Ti a Fi over the years has contributed greatly towards achieving this progress.

Here is a quantitative summary measuring whether we as an organization, are achieving against some of our main targets in comparison with the same period last year:

21,907

544

Number of cylchoedd meithrin:
(in 405 locations)

Number of children in our provisions
(12,682 in our cylchoedd meithrin, 7,725 in our cylchoedd
Ti a Fi and about 1,500 in our day nurseries)

121

Number of cylchoedd meithrin that provide a range of services including a breakfast club, lunch, wraparound care and an after school club

383

Number of cylchoedd
Ti a Fi

2 'cylch meithrin' and 19 'cylch Ti a Fi'

Number of new provisions

25

Number of provisions that have expanded their service

98% satisfied or above, 77% very good or excellent

Number of provisions which are happy or very happy with the service that we provide to them, at a local and national level



Here is a qualitative summary of initiatives that have demonstrated progress or success over the year:

Many cylchoedd meithrin have extended their service over the past year, in response to an increasing demand from parents for all day care which is flexible and convenient. The figure has increased by 30% from the previous year. The range of services now offered by cylchoedd meithrin include breakfast clubs, lunch and after school clubs, wraparound care with the local school, care and education in the morning and / or afternoon, Flying Start service.

In addition to this, the fact that new cylchoedd meithrin that have been set up is encouraging and again are in response to parental demand for such a service. A number of cylchoedd have been set up in new areas where there is no early years provision through the medium of Welsh. The hope is that the cylchoedd Ti a Fi will flourish and that there will be opportunities to develop new cylchoedd meithrin in order to allow progression for the children.

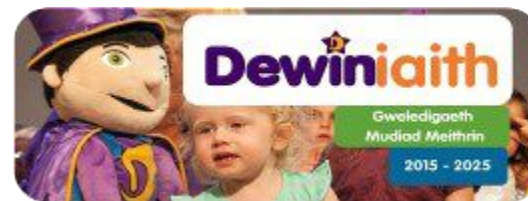


Here is a summary of plans that have not developed as required or that have been challenging:

Setting up new cylchoedd meithrin is a growing challenge, and this is reflected in the relatively low number of cylchoedd set up this year. However, there are many initiatives under way to set up new cylchoedd, and we hope to see the fruits of our work this year. A local strategic plan can take time, and a lot of work is now involved in setting up a new provision, especially to register with CSSIW. Mudiad Meithrin is eager to continue to co-operate with the Local Authorities in responding to the Welsh Language Strategy Plans and Feasibility Assessments, and is negotiating with schools to offer wraparound care through the cylch meithrin service.

Although a high number of new cylchoedd Ti a Fi have been set up this year, some cylchoedd have also closed during the year. The challenge of keeping a Ti a Fi provision open continues, and the problems arising are often due to not having a consistent leader to ensure a dedicated service that attracts parents back repeatedly. Mudiad Meithrin's Ti a Fi Leaders scheme offers a partial solution to this challenge, but unfortunately, we are unable to provide the same service to all cylchoedd Ti a Fi because of the financial constraints. We will review this scheme soon, along with Ti a Fi provisions in general, in order to set a clear strategy for developing and maintaining the cylchoedd that are so crucial to the success of our cylchoedd meithrin and Welsh education.

Dewiniaith in action



The intention of Dewiniaith was to offer a vision for the work of Mudiad Meithrin and, thereby, provide a framework for developing an action plan that would give shape to our strategic work. This was done, and here is a summary of some of this year's targets showing whether the scheme was realised or not.

Dewiniaith target	Logic	Realised?
Launch a pilot scheme called 'cylchoedd canolog' that brings 15 cylchoedd under the control of the Mudiad centrally	Respond to the concerns of the regulatory bodies of the voluntary model	The scheme is in place with the approval of CSSIW
Reviewing Siop 'Mabon a Mabli'	Ensure that the brand and the content is contemporary and comprehensive	A review was undertaken and Siop Dewin a Doti has now been launched
Launch a new services and registration package for the cylchoedd	Ensure a greater choice of packages for the cylchoedd	The package has been offered
Experiment with a new system of direct grants for the cylchoedd	Obtaining grants at different rates	The new system is in place
Review national committees	Ensure better democratic arrangements internally	A new committee procedure is in place
Review the staff handbook	Ensure consistency and fairness in working conditions	A new version was launched
Review the internal quality scheme of 'y cylch rhagorol'	Ensure a higher baseline for our provisions	The scheme is in place
Launch a progression campaign called #cychwyngorau	Target cylchoedd where the percentage of pupils progressing on to Welsh-medium education is under 86%	The campaign is in place
Redesign our presence at the National Eisteddfod	Create a fresh new image for the unit	A new unit was used.
Launch 'Academi', a training and development centre	Place an emphasis on CPD and sharing skills	'Academi' has been launched
Work on a series of new Dewin and Doti stories as a language resource for the cylchoedd	Respond to demand from the cylchoedd for more resources	The series is being created

If you would like any further details about *Dewiniaith*, please contact post@meithrin.cymru or visit our [website](#) for an electronic copy.

Executive Committee Members

Rhiannon Lloyd (Chair)
Rhodri Llwyd Morgan (Vice-Chair)
Gruff Hughes (Former Chair)
Geraint James (Financial Secretary)
John Arthur Jones (Treasurer)
Rhianwen Huws Roberts
Mai Roberts
Anita Evans
Elaine Senior
Nia Tobias
Rhianydd Duffield

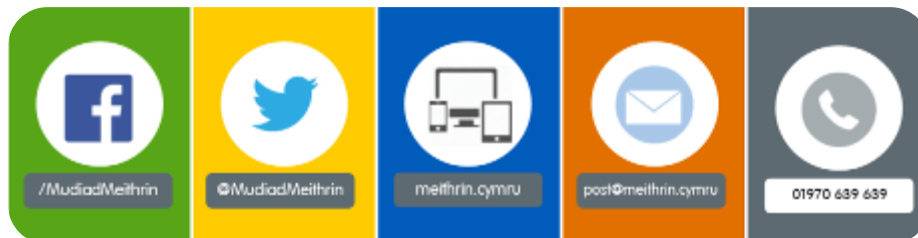
Thanks

Mudiad Meithrin would like to thank all those who work or volunteer, be it locally or nationally, in the name of the Mudiad for their work. Special thanks to those members of staff who left the Mudiad during the past year and in particular, the former Chief Executive, Hywel Jones, for his tireless contribution.

A copy of our audited accounts will be available on our website by January 31st, 2016.

To request a paper copy, please e-mail post@meithrin.cymru

How to contact us and hear about our work



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