

Children's Rights in Nurseries in Wales – Mudiad Meithrin

Embedding Children's Rights

Our staff in our Nurseries in Wales are aware of children's rights, and as good practice we regularly seek out training, support and further information about children's rights.

We link children's rights to specific areas in our nurseries, so that children recognize their rights. We explain the concept of the importance of privacy, e.g. in the toilet and when changing nappies. We ask the children to express an opinion and make choices as regards resources and activities. In each of our settings there is a 'buddy bench' – somewhere a child can sit if they have no company or friends to play with. The other children see this and it gives them an opportunity to introduce themselves and welcome the child to join in their play. There are opportunities across the provision for children to discover, play and learn in a safe, inclusive space. Our staff are always there to support and to give a lead where needed.

We share information on our children's development via termly letters, e-mail, facebook and posters and pictures in our reception areas for parents and carers. Our Declaration of Purpose includes text confirming our commitment to children's rights.

Equality and Non-discrimination

We celebrate diversity amongst our children by recognizing our families' religions and creeds. We observe several religious celebrations during the year, and the Dewch i Ddathlu (Come and Celebrate) guidance by Mudiad Meithrin supports us to do this purposefully and confidently. We invite our parents/guardians in to talk to the older children about their country, style of dress and traditions.

Our staff talk to parents/carers about where and how they can receive financial support to help with childcare fees. Every term we arrange a social or fundraising activity in order to develop a strong relationship with our parents/carers and our community. We also support them to find classes to learn Welsh. We have a Syrian family here at the moment, and we have translated the registration forms and the welcome pack for them.

In order to ensure that children see themselves and people like them in our settings, we display murals and posters on the walls which show equality, diversity and various disabilities. There are plenty of books showing single sex families, single parents/carers, and individuals with disabilities and various medical conditions. We have a collection of dolls of various ethnicities, a Down's syndrome doll, a doll with a cleft lip, a stoma bag, a Barbie in a wheelchair and one with a prosthetic leg.

When registering children, the option for noting the child's sex is as follows – boy/girl/not noted/non-binary.

We invite members of the community in to the nurseries from church, mosque, chapel and synagogue to talk to the children. Staff from the Chinese, Indian and Italian restaurants have also visited us to talk about their culture, their traditions, celebrations and the significance of food for them. The children had a wonderful time tasting, asking questions, giving opinions and cooking these foods.

We have a Syrian family here at the moment, and we have translated the registration forms and the welcome pack for them.

Empowering Children

We give the children a chance to note and express any issues which matter or are of interest to them through our planning process; we gather children's opinions on the things they like and dislike doing. These conversations influence the provision and the experiences we offer, e.g. in the role play area, and by including objects the children have brought from home in the permanent provision.

Circle time is a perfect opportunity for children to talk about the objects from home and discuss what's on their minds that day. No child has to participate in any activity if they don't wish to do so. We gather our children's opinions on the provision and the experiences offered by asking them to tick images of the activities and resources they like – this directly influences our plans. We attempt to be in the moment with the children at all times, in order to ensure we provide valid, purposeful experiences to extend their learning when pursuing their interests and the things they enjoy doing.

Participation

We are confident that our children's voices are heard by making time to listen to children speaking, sharing opinions, their news and their personal experiences. Our practitioners encourage the children to talk amongst themselves at lunch time and snack time. These social occasions are very important and our practitioners sit, eat and drink with the children. No child is forced to participate if they don't wish to do so, and they are welcome to listen.

On our registration forms we ask about our children's likes and dislikes, and we discuss the focus of their children's attention with parents/carers on a daily basis. There is a visual timetable available for parents/carers, so that they can see what happens from day to day. We always welcome ideas for activities, visits and resources from our children and our parents/carers.

All our work in the Mudiad Meithrin nurseries is based on our children's happiness.