

Cylch Meithrin Nefyn

The pandemic has been a very difficult time for children, what difference has attending a Cylch Meithrin during the last year had on the physical and mental health and well-being of children?

Certainly, children's social skills have been affected by lockdown, as well as the language of some children. After reopening, it is obvious that the children enjoy being at the Cylch to be able to do activities and play with children of the same age. Following the second lockdown, some children stayed home until February half term. It was clear that the short period from Christmas had affected some. Some were quieter and had lost a little self-confidence.

Since the Cylch Meithrin has been able to re-open, what difference do you think attending a Cylch Meithrin has had on parents / guardians?

I'm sure the Cylch has been a blessing for some parents. For those working from home, I'm sure having some time without children at home has allowed them to work in peace and quiet for a while. It's been an opportunity for parents to go back to their home habits, such as being able to go grocery shopping without having to bring their children with them.

What activities did you do with the children?

Since starting back, we have been spending a lot of time outdoors, planting, searching for insects and exercising like going to the school park and having access to the bikes and large cars/tractors. We've also had tadpoles and a rabbit visit the Cylch. All the children have enjoyed making crafts and painting. Some may not be fortunate to have these experiences at home.

As Cylchoedd Meithrin re-opened, did this have an impact on your staff, and if so, what?

All staff were initially concerned to get back. The fact that we were not prioritised to have the vaccine (when available) was worrying. But since we've received the LFT tests, it's given us more security as staff to come to work safely.

What were the challenges as you re-opened your Cylch Meithrin? How did you overcome these?

The main challenge was to prepare the class before opening. As all resources / toys had to be cleansed/disinfected after a Cylch session, the number of resources / toys we had to turn around had to be reduced from time to time. Fortunately, all the children who came to the Cylch in September were new, and therefore had no expectations of how many resources / toys were available to them. The Cylch was grateful to receive a re-opening grant to be able to purchase a new shed for the storage of all the spare resources we have.