



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Ysgol Gymraeg Parc Y Tywyn
Heol y Bardd
Burry Port
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA16 0NL**

Date of inspection: September 2019

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Ysgol Gymraeg Parc y Tywyn

Ysgol Gymraeg Parc y Tywyn is situated on the outskirts of the village of Burry Port, in Carmarthenshire local authority. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 256 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 8 full-time and 23 part-time nursery age pupils. They are divided into eight single-age classes and two mixed-age classes.

Over a three-year-period, around 10% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is significantly lower than the national percentage of 18%. Twenty five per cent (25%) of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified around 12% of its pupils as having special educational needs. This is lower than the national percentage of 21%.

The school was last inspected in January 2012 and the current headteacher was appointed in September 2018.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The homely and inclusive environment contributes effectively to pupils' sense of pride in their work and belonging to their school. They are happy to attend, behave very well and develop positive attitudes to learning. During their time there, most make sound progress and achieve well.

Teachers provide interesting learning experience for their pupils, which meet most of their needs. The school has a Welsh ethos and provision encourages pupils to make full use of the Welsh language in all aspects of their life and work. As a result, pupils show pride towards the language and an obvious appreciation of the culture and history of their local area. They use their local dialect completely naturally.

The headteacher works effectively with staff and the governing body. This promotes strong teamwork and has a positive effect on the school's learning environment.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' reading skills in key stage 2
- R2 Ensure regular opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R3 Strengthen the role of governors in monitoring the quality of provision and standards to enable them to challenge the school's performance effectively

What happens next

The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many pupils' literacy and mathematical skills are lower than expected for their age. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and achieve well by Year 6.

Many pupils across the school have strong oral skills. A majority of pupils who are unable to speak Welsh on entry to the school use the language purposefully by the end of the reception class. In the foundation phase, many pupils use the Welsh language confidently in lessons and informal situations. Most pupils in Year 2 discuss confidently and maturely when comparing Christmas and Divali celebrations. At the top of key stage 2, most explain their choices concisely and maturely, for example when discussing 'should mobile phones be used in school?'. They speak Welsh and English confidently, and use formal language where appropriate. When speaking Welsh, they use their local dialect wholly naturally. On the whole, most pupils' listening skills are very effective.

In the foundation phase, most pupils' reading skills are developing positively for their age and ability. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds, and are beginning to create words confidently. By Year 2, most develop to become robust readers and read with accuracy and fluency. They enjoy discussing books and characters from different stories, for example the adventures of Mostyn and the blackberries. In key stage 2, a majority of pupils have an appropriate understanding of what they are reading in Welsh and English. Most arrange information from different sources suitably, for example when tracing Edward Jenner's life history. However, only a minority of pupils have sound enough reading skills, and only a few pupils elaborate when discussing their favourite books.

Most pupils' early writing skills are developing positively. They use varied vocabulary and language increasingly in Years 1 and 2. On the whole, they write interesting pieces and write independently for different purposes, for example as they recall the story of Gelert. More able pupils write maturely and at length effectively, for example when recording the daily activities of a zoo keeper. In key stage 2, many pupils present their ideas effectively and show a sound grasp of spelling patterns, paragraphing and punctuation in both languages as they record history, for example about the Plague. They write confidently in a range of genres across the curriculum, for example when comparing Wales with Mexico and writing a forensic report.

In mathematics lessons, most pupils make good progress in developing specific numeracy skills. In the foundation phase, most recognise, order and use numbers soundly in their activities across the areas of learning. For example, they collect, count and sort natural materials from the outdoor area, and estimate and measure the span of their hands and the length of their feet by using non-standard objects confidently. Many older pupils collect data about their favourite animals based on the story 'Annwyl Sŵ' ('Dear Zoo') and show it in the form of a bar graph. In key stage 2, many pupils have a sound understanding of place value. They present mathematics work at a level that is in line with their age and ability. By Year 6, they write and handle numbers up to six digits successfully and use mental strategies confidently.

when multiplying and dividing whole numbers and decimals. Most pupils use their number skills confidently to reason, collect, record and analyse data. They collect, display and analyse data correctly when investigating the effect of the cold temperature on penguins. However, their use of their numeracy skills in various subjects is limited.

Most pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop purposefully as they move through the school. In the foundation phase, many use an electronic tablet independently when taking pictures and giving instructions to move an electronic toy to find letters. They also create short films to show the journey of 'Elfed yn y Jwngl' ('Elmer in the Jungle') and are able to save their work confidently on a commercial program. In key stage 2, most pupils create multimedia presentations effectively. They make green screen films, for example to create a news bulletin about an alien landing in the local park. Most pupils in Year 6 use their skills to create live advertisements to promote pupils' rights and create a database on the weights of different animals in the Antarctic. They use spreadsheets confidently in order to compare food prices in two supermarkets and use them to calculate the cost of a Christmas party.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and are comfortable approaching peers and adults for advice and support. Pupils are very polite towards staff and each other, and nearly all are kind and caring. Nearly all pupils behave very well and take great pride in their school. They are keen to share their opinions and successes with visitors.

Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. They are diligent and enthusiastic learners, and stay on task for extended periods. Across the school, most pupils work well together in the classroom and show an enthusiastic interest in their work as they discover the effect of different drinks on eggshells. This contributes very successfully towards the school's inclusive and homely ethos, and has a positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing. Most pupils develop perseverance and resilience successfully, and respond positively to the 'tri cyn fi' ('three before me') strategy and 'ffrindiau ffyddlon' ('faithful friends') to overcome challenges when working individually.

Many pupils are beginning to contribute their ideas effectively towards planning daily challenges in the foundation phase and 'meysydd mentro' in key stage 2. The school's older pupils contribute towards their activities and develop their skills to improve their own work successfully, but they do not work independently enough regularly.

Many pupils are keen to shoulder responsibilities and undertake their roles well. In the last year, the school council has introduced different rights for its peers and has started to contribute to the school's strategic direction by measuring the effect of the policy for responding to pupils' written work. Groups of other learners, such as the digital wizards, support a number of pupils' ICT skills effectively, particularly in the foundation phase. Under the guidance of the eco council, most pupils have a sound awareness of sustainability by preventing the waste of water, energy and paper. Members of the 'Criw Cymraeg' show positive attitudes towards the Welsh language

and are beginning to have an influence on nurturing Welshness across the school. They strive to encourage all pupils to promote the Welsh language successfully during lessons and break times.

Most pupils understand the importance of keeping themselves fit and healthy. They participate enthusiastically in physical education as part of their curriculum, walk a mile a day and the 'ffrindiau ffirwydd' ('fitness friends') daily multi-skills activities. Most pupils understand the importance of using the internet safely.

Many pupils become moral and conscientious citizens through a number of varied activities, such as holding a fair trade fortnight, contributing to the local food bank and working with a Member of Parliament to dispose of plastic in the area. They take pride in the opportunity to contribute to activities in the community and in services at the church. This has a positive effect on developing many pupils' sound understanding of social issues and the needs of others.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

All staff have an effective working relationship with pupils, which fosters a positive and supportive environment for learning. Respect between pupils and adults is an important feature of the school's work.

Most teachers ensure that their lessons have a good pace. They set clear learning objectives and use a range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interest. They remind pupils of their previous learning successfully. In the best examples, teachers set exciting tasks in order to ignite pupils' imagination. The quality of their presentations and questions is very probing, which ensures that nearly all pupils apply themselves fully to the task. Assistants provide good support in order for pupils to complete their tasks and benefit from them successfully. All of the school's staff work together effectively and have high expectations in terms of all pupils' behaviour.

Staff give pupils regular opportunities to assess and reflect on their own performance and that of their peers. By using different strategies from an early age, pupils have a strong understanding of what they are doing well and understand what they need to do to improve their work further.

The principles of the foundation phase have been established successfully. Staff develop pupils' skills effectively by providing exciting and interesting experiences for them through focus activities, both inside and outside the classroom. They motivate pupils effectively to discover and learn independently from the outset. Teachers use the outdoor areas purposefully to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and social skills effectively. A good example of this is the use that they make of the nearby beach and harbour to spark pupils' imagination to write creatively.

The school provides a broad and contemporary curriculum that engages most pupils' interest effectively. Work is based on themes, and the curriculum is enriched successfully by inviting visitors to the school to talk to pupils and organising a variety of purposeful educational visits. For example, pupils are given an opportunity to camp at the foot of Snowdon as part of Year 5 and 6 theme work to learn about different landscapes.

By following the requirements of the digital competence framework, staff plan and provide regular and effective opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills across the curriculum. They also use equipment, such as digital glasses, for example to create an imaginary forest, which develops pupils' thinking and oracy skills effectively. On the whole, staff plan a number of opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy and writing skills successfully in both languages. However, provision to develop their numeracy skills in different contexts across the curriculum is not as rich.

Recently, the school has adapted the curriculum to include aspects of the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales. Pupils across the school contribute to activities that relate to their current theme. For example, pupils in Year 1 have chosen a hospital as a role-play corner and, in Year 3, based on the story of The Gruffalo, pupils are researching the length of different animals' teeth. Pupils in key stage 2 take more responsibility for choosing the level of challenge in their tasks. As a result, most pupils develop as confident and mature learners.

Staff are effective language models and promote the Welsh language and Welshness well. This nurtures pupils' pride and knowledge of the local area and Welsh culture. Staff encourage pupils to study famous characters, such as Hedd Wyn, and learn about local historical events, such as Amelia Earhart's landing in Burry Port.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school ensures an inclusive, caring and happy ethos for all pupils. The quality of care, support and guidance has a successful effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

The school has established robust procedures to track pupils' progress and wellbeing. These are beginning to have a positive effect on planning in order to provide effective support for the needs of individuals and specific groups of pupils. This enables pupils to make sound progress from their starting points.

All pupils with special educational needs have individual plans, which include challenging, specific and quantitative targets. The school works well with specialist agencies, such as welfare officers, to produce these plans. Provision is adapted specifically to meet pupils' needs and the school provides purposeful support for families. Plans are reviewed regularly in consultation with pupils and their parents, and are adapted purposefully as necessary.

There is a robust partnership between the school and parents, based on the school's open door policy. As a result, there is robust co-operation between parents and the school. The school provides appropriate information and support in order to help parents to support their children's work. Parents contribute to, and adapt, their children's one-page profile and receive regular information about the termly themes through their engagement and their children's homework.

Staff provide numerous opportunities for pupils to shoulder responsibilities and make sensible decisions for the benefit of their community. Through the work of the children's voice groups, such as the Globe Council's peace project, pupils' understanding of values, rights and respect develops their moral skills soundly. This

is very prominent in the pupils' friendly behaviour towards each other, all adults at the school and visitors. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development effectively by providing appropriate collective worship assemblies, religious education lessons and by participating in annual events in the community, such as the Remembrance service. The school encourages pupils to be responsible citizens by raising their awareness of the needs of others through fair trade activities and raising money for charities regularly.

There is a purposeful variety of opportunities for pupils to perform at school, in the community and further afield. Good examples include performing in a concert with the local male voice choir and competing in the Urdd Eisteddfod. This has a positive effect on pupils' self-confidence. There are also numerous opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills effectively by working with Welsh poets and artists. Educational visits to places of interest, such as London and the residential course to a camp in Pendine, nurture pupils' social skills and their ability to work successfully as a team.

The school has robust arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily, and to ensure that pupils understand how to stay safe. Through a number of curricular and extra-curricular activities, pupils have a good knowledge of what they need to do to stay healthy. A number of experiences are provided outside school, such as climbing Snowdon and triathlon activities, in association with a local leisure centre. These valuable opportunities develop pupils' fitness well.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher's effective leadership sets a clear and robust direction for the development of the school. In the period since he was appointed, he has ensured continuous improvements in terms of ensuring consistency in strategies and raising expectations in terms of standards. Staff share the robust vision in relation to promoting Welshness, fostering respect and encourage pupils to do their best. They convey this very successfully to pupils, parents and governors.

Managers have redefined staff's roles and responsibilities successfully. In a short time, they have succeeded in creating a very effective ethos of co-operation amongst staff and, together, they have made positive improvements. The headteacher and senior management team have implemented a number of valuable strategies to improve provision and pupils' standards. A good example of this is the detailed attention that is given to pupils' progress and the sound planning, which ensures effective continuity and challenge in pupils' learning.

All of the school's staff have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is a detailed timetable for conducting a number of purposeful self-evaluation activities, which provide an honest and accurate picture of the school and intertwine purposefully with the areas in the improvement plan. Staff scrutinise work, analyse data, observe lessons, conduct learning walks and, more recently, share good practice. They use feedback purposefully in order to maintain pupils' good standards and improve provision. The improvement plan includes a

number of purposeful priorities and allocates resources and staff effectively in order to fulfil them. A characteristic example of success is the improvements to pupils' writing skills in the foundation phase.

On the whole, the school responds well to national and local priorities, such as developing pupils' literacy skills across all areas of learning and raising their standards of spoken Welsh. The school is planning effectively for the digital competence framework and has begun to meet the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales suitably.

The school is developing as a successful learning community. Effective performance management arrangements are in place, which set suitable objectives to develop staff's skills further and are based on priorities in the improvement plan. They are beginning to benefit from purposeful opportunities to share good practice both inside and outside the school. For example, after staff visited and worked with local schools, they introduced a new scheme to respond to pupils' work. This is having a positive effect on raising the standard of pupils' work and their contribution towards improving their own work.

The chair, along with a number of members of the governing body, is experienced and has an appropriate understanding of the school's performance. They receive an honest and comprehensive report from the headteacher about the school's life and work. However, their role in holding the school to account for pupils' standards and attainment has not been developed in full.

The school has a very good supply of resources, which are used effectively to enrich pupils' learning experiences. The headteacher and governors manage expenditure very carefully and this aligns closely with the school's strategic priorities. The pupil development grant is used well to improve provision to develop the literacy and numeracy skills and wellbeing of pupils who are eligible to receive it. As a result, these pupils make sound progress from their starting points.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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