



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

A report on

**Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes
Caernarfon Road
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2UT**

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by

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

About Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes

Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes is a voluntary aided Catholic school in Bangor in Gwynedd local authority. The school serves the Roman Catholic parishes of Bangor, Bethesda, Porthaethwy and Llangefni, and a few pupils travel significant distances to get to school.

There are 126 pupils on roll, including 11 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are taught in four mixed age classes.

Around 14% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is lower than the Welsh average of 19%. The school states that 41% of pupils are on the additional needs register and this is considerably above the national average of 21%. The majority of pupils are from ethnic groups other than white British and, as a result, the school has a high percentage (66%) of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Only a very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school was last inspected in September 2011 and the headteacher has been in post since 2015.

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

Leaders work well together and have established a caring ethos along with a successful focus on ensuring that pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. Effective quality improvement procedures have ensured sustained progress over time in standards, provision and leadership. A clear strength is the way the school develops the literacy skills of the high percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language. Most pupils enter the school with skills that are below the expected level for their age. By the time they leave school, nearly all pupils make strong progress and achieve well from their starting points. Standards of wellbeing and pupils' attitudes to learning are good.

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

- A1 Ensure opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to develop the full range of information and communication technology (ICT) and numeracy skills
- A2 Increase the use of the Welsh language by pupils in informal situations
- A3 Make better use of lesson observations and book scrutiny to enable leaders to identify areas that need improvement

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, most pupils' skills are below the expected level for their age. By the end of their time at the school, nearly all pupils make good progress and achieve well from their starting points. This includes pupils with additional learning needs and the majority of pupils who have English as an additional language.

Many foundation phase pupils develop effective speaking and listening skills and talk to visitors eagerly about what they do in school, for example when describing how they look after Rosie, the school hen. Many express their opinions and answer questions well. In key stage 2, most pupils listen carefully to presentations and show good understanding of the main points. By Year 6, most express ideas and opinions clearly, working well together to help the group reach agreement, for example in a class debate on the rights of the child.

Many pupils become confident, independent readers over time. In the foundation phase, they develop effective phonic strategies and use picture or context clues appropriately to decode unfamiliar words. In key stage 2, many become keen readers. They use higher order reading skills, such as skimming and scanning, to look for information about countries online or in books. Many read for pleasure and discuss details about the main characters in their books.

Many pupils write well for a variety of purposes at an appropriate level. For example, many foundation phase pupils recognise the features of a letter, and use these correctly when writing letters about their holiday. By Year 2, many structure their writing logically, for example by considering the beginning, middle and end to their stories or when writing instructions to bake a cupcake. Most key stage 2 pupils write competently, and the majority plan their writing thoughtfully. They use appropriate vocabulary and language suitable for their audience, for example when creating a persuasive leaflet or when writing a newspaper article about the Tudors. Many pupils produce fluent and legible handwriting, although the presentation of a very few is untidy.

Most foundation phase pupils develop good numeracy skills, and use them across the curriculum. By Year 2, most understand number patterns and place value up to a 100 and many pupils' monetary and measurement skills are firm. For example, they identify different combinations of money to pay for items up to £1, read temperatures on a thermometer and order temperatures correctly, including those below zero. Many recall number facts well and use their reasoning skills successfully to work out the cost of two cupcakes of different prices and the coins they would use to pay. Many pupils use data increasingly accurately and present it in different forms, such as when creating a bar graph on pupils' favourite food.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils' standards in mathematics lessons are good. They understand place value and recall number facts well, applying what they have learned confidently in new situations. They deal with numbers in the millions when analysing data linked to their class topic 'If the world were a village'. Nearly all represent data purposefully using lists, tally charts, tables, diagrams and frequency

tables. Most develop good numerical reasoning skills when solving real-life problems, such as deciding the most effective way to present data in their topic work or organising a children's party to a set budget. However, due to a lack of opportunity, key stage 2 pupils do not use their numeracy skills consistently enough across the curriculum.

Throughout the school, many pupils acquire understand how to stay safe online. In the foundation phase, most develop their ICT skills successfully in literacy and data handling activities. In key stage 2, many pupils successfully log into their Hwb account independently, produce information sheets and search for information from the web about their thematic work. Many create accurate graphs as part of a science experiment, for example to show what pupils recycle at home. However, key stage 2 pupils do not interrogate, use or create databases and their modelling skills in using spreadsheets are underdeveloped.

Many pupils have positive attitudes towards learning Welsh. From the beginning of the foundation phase, many follow basic instructions well and use simple words and phrases confidently. In key stage 2, many build on their speaking skills appropriately, using the past tense and including more detail in their answers. Many express opinions supported by reasons. However, pupils do not use enough Welsh during informal situations. Many read their own work successfully and older pupils read simple texts with some understanding. Across the school, pupils write in Welsh for a range of purposes. A majority of younger pupils have a sound grasp of basic sentence structures. For example, they describe characters, and write about their likes and dislikes. By the end of key stage 2, pupils write for different purposes, including instructions, with increasing accuracy and detail.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

The behaviour of nearly all pupils is one of the school's strengths and reflects the caring ethos of the school well. Pupils are very polite towards each other, staff and visitors. Older pupils are particularly caring towards younger ones, and the way everyone welcomes new pupils from diverse backgrounds and makes them feel at home is a particular strength. This helps to create an inclusive ethos within the school.

Most pupils feel safe at school and know whom to approach for advice or support when they are worried about something. Pupils' understanding of the importance of staying safe on the internet is sound across the school.

Nearly all pupils are very aware of the needs of others within the school, locally and abroad. As a result, they raise money and contribute towards a local epilepsy charity and a national charity that is involved in a worldwide polio eradication programme.

Most pupils concentrate well in lessons and stay on task. Many persevere for extended periods and generally complete their work successfully. They are not afraid to make a mistake and suggest different ways of solving a problem, such as when conducting numeracy tasks.

Increasingly, pupils contribute appropriately to decision-making in the school and most are enthusiastic about taking on posts of responsibility. The recent work of

members of the different pupil committees has an important influence on school life. Members of the school council work collaboratively and with confidence to represent the views of their peers and they report back to them regularly. They ensure that pupils are happy during playtimes and have recently introduced a 'friendship stop' for those that feel lonely. Members of the active Rota Kids group have helped raise money through selling decorated cakes and Valentine's cards in order to improve the garden and secure a school netball kit. They are particularly active in raising community awareness of the need for care when driving past the school.

Pupils' understanding of a healthy lifestyle is developing well. Many take part in activity clubs after school and enjoy the football training offered by the local football team. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the problems caused by substance, alcohol and tobacco misuse and anti-social behaviour. Older pupils promote eating healthily through organising the buying and selling of fruit during playtimes.

Most parents and pupils respond positively to the frequent efforts of the school and the wellbeing officer to increase attendance rates. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving and for the past two years compares well with that in similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. All teachers secure pupils' interest successfully and use a range of stimulating introductions to lessons. This ranges from using the school hen in the foundation phase to using carefully-chosen online clips to stimulate interest in upper key stage 2. There is an effective working relationship between the pupils and all staff. Staff create a supportive and stimulating learning environment, which allows pupils to respond well to tasks. They manage pupils' behaviour very effectively and this is a strength across the school.

Staff know the pupils well and have a good understanding of their abilities. They respond purposefully to their needs and interests by preparing work that is planned for pupils' different requirements. They are particularly skilful in developing the linguistic skills of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The progress these pupils make by the end of Year 6 is testament to the strength of the provision the school offers. Staff work well together, and with volunteers trained by the university, to develop the reading skills of pupils for whom English is an additional language. As a result of effective intervention strategies, these pupils make strong progress in their reading and comprehension skills.

Teachers share lesson aims with pupils purposefully and explain tasks clearly to ensure that all pupils understand what to do. Teachers question pupils skilfully to develop their understanding and assess their knowledge. Teachers' feedback to pupils is purposeful; it praises and challenges pupils' understanding suitably. Teachers provide pupils with useful written feedback, which celebrates strengths and identifies clearly how pupils can improve their work. Generally, teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient time to respond to feedback. As a result, nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to improve their work, and make good progress.

Foundation phase teachers provide an appropriate range of teacher-led and child-led activities, which develop their skills well, including opportunities for pupils to investigate and practise their physical and creative skills. Many activities enable

pupils to make decisions and work independently. For example, pupils follow instructions from electronic devices and then record their work using tablet devices before moving to the next task without teacher guidance.

The school plans appropriately to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Teachers provide a variety of interesting activities to develop literacy skills across the curriculum and respond successfully to pupils' needs. However, not all teachers implement the school's numeracy plans fully. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their numeracy skills often enough. Provision for ICT in the foundation phase is good and ensures that pupils experience the range of skills. Provision for the communication skills strand in ICT in key stage 2 is good, but teachers do not give pupils opportunities to interrogate or create databases or use spreadsheets for a purpose across the curriculum.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has a highly inclusive ethos, and teachers support pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, well. There are effective procedures for helping pupils understand how to make healthy lifestyle choices, such as the promotion of the popular fruit tuck shop. Throughout the school, there is an appropriate emphasis on developing positive attitudes to an active lifestyle. For example, pupils have regular opportunities to take part in the diocesan competitive sports tournaments and they take advantage of active workshops delivered by the Urdd. This helps to build pupils' confidence as well as developing their social skills as they meet and strengthen friendships with pupils from other schools.

The school supports pupils' personal and social development successfully. There is a suitable focus on providing meaningful opportunities for pupils to take on important responsibilities as part of the school community. Pupil voice and decision-making through groups such as the school council, Rota Kids and 'Cryw Cymraeg' are developing appropriately and allow pupils the opportunity to make decisions that impact positively on school life. An example of this work is the positive effect members of the 'Cryw Cymraeg' have on raising the profile of the Welsh language through celebrating pupils' efforts and achievements in school assemblies.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to learn about their culture, the local community and the wider world in their lessons, through assemblies and regular enrichment activities, including visits to places of interest. For example, pupils receive opportunities to learn about famous Welsh legends, such as Twm Sion Cati and the Welsh saints and gain a suitable insight into Welsh heritage. The whole school benefits from regular opportunities to learn about other cultures. Through an international project, pupils gain a valuable insight into the lives and heritage of different communities such as those in China. This offers pupils worthwhile experiences to compare and contrast their own and others' lifestyles. These activities inspire pupils to become enthusiastic learners and to appreciate similarities and tolerate differences in others.

Teachers assess pupils' skills accurately when they start school. There are appropriate systems in place for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and wellbeing as they move between year groups. This helps teachers to identify pupils

in need of additional support. The school provides a useful range of interventions to help identified pupils make good progress, including careful planning to support pupils with additional learning needs effectively. A particularly good feature is the way the school plans creative learning experiences to develop the language skills of pupils for whom English is an additional language. As a result of effective intervention strategies, these pupils make strong progress in their reading and comprehension skills.

Staff collaborate effectively to identify helpful targets for pupils with additional learning needs. They share these regularly with parents, and make good use of advice from outside agencies when the need arises. They review pupils' progress against their targets regularly and involve pupils and parents in the annual review.

The school has a strong nurturing ethos, with an active focus on supporting pupils' spiritual and emotional wellbeing. For example, whole school and class assemblies provide daily opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of values and celebrate each other's achievements. The moral and spiritual emphasis helps pupils to develop respect for themselves and others, valuing the differences and similarities between people.

The school monitors and tracks pupils' attendance well, and recent work with the wellbeing officer ensures that pupils and parents understand the importance of regular school attendance.

The school building and grounds are safe and secure. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

Since the headteacher's appointment, there has generally been a continuous improvement in standards, outcomes and provision. She and the deputy headteacher have worked well with the governors and the regional consortium's challenge adviser to provide a clear sense of direction for the school. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring the wellbeing of pupils and achieving good standards. Leaders ensure that staff meetings focus clearly on standards and provision. Staff work together well to create a caring and respectful ethos throughout the school.

Leaders use an appropriate range of first-hand evidence to inform their evaluation of strengths and areas for development. These include learning walks, the analysis of data and gathering the opinions of parents and pupils. However, leaders' use of lesson observations and pupil book scrutiny as part of the self-evaluation process is too infrequent. As a result, although the self-evaluation report identifies and summarises many of the strengths and areas for development appropriately, it misses a few important areas for further development. An example of this is not identifying the lack of numeracy provision across the curriculum.

The current school development plan is an effective tool that includes relevant and specific priorities. These focus well on sustaining and raising standards. It is a practical document, with clear success criteria and realistic timescales, and it allocates appropriate resources to support the work. Senior leaders, governors, teachers and staff work effectively in small teams to deliver the outcomes against

each priority. A particular strength of the school is the way these teams monitor progress against the priorities rigorously, using a good range of methods to gather evidence. Governors work well with senior leaders and staff to support the required action in these priorities and to challenge progress appropriately. This supports school improvement well.

There are appropriate performance management procedures and most staff benefit from suitable professional learning opportunities, linked to their performance objectives and to the school development plan. These provide worthwhile opportunities for staff to contribute to the strategic direction of the school and to increase staff's direct involvement in securing improvements. An example of this is the collaborative work with the local university in targeting the development of reading skills of pupils who have English as an additional language.

Governors are supportive of the school and visit regularly to monitor aspects of the school's work at first-hand. They use the information from these visits to update the full governing body at meetings and to provide an appropriate level of challenge as critical friends. There is a suitable range of sub-committees where governors support and challenge senior leaders well, for example in making decisions in areas such as staffing and finance. Leaders make effective use of the pupil development grant. For example, staff have been trained to deliver programmes to improve pupils' standards in English and to support the development of pupils' social and emotional skills. These skills have a positive impact on learning, behaviour, attendance, and the emotional health and wellbeing of pupils.

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.

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