



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

A report on

Ysgol Gymuned Llannerch-y-medd

**Llannerch-y-medd
Anglesey
LL71 8DP**

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Gymuned Llannerch-y-medd

Name of provider	Ysgol Gymuned Llannerch-y-medd
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	139
Pupils of statutory school age	105
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	18
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	13.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	36.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	67.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/09/2015
Start date of inspection	09/10/2023

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Ysgol Gymuned Llannerch-y-medd has a happy and friendly ethos. Pupils, staff and parents take pride in its homely and inclusive environment. The vision of setting '*Llwybr Llwyddiant Llannerch-y-medd*' ('Llannerch-y-medd Success Pathway') reflects the school's ethos to encourage pupils to reflect on their values and act on them. Everyone is respected and they are very caring towards each other and the community. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are sound and their behaviour is excellent.

Most pupils make good progress from their starting points. They develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills purposefully by the end of their time at the school. However, teachers do not always ensure regular opportunities to develop pupils' independent skills. Teachers plan interesting learning activities to engage pupils' interest. Staff have an excellent working relationship with pupils. They ensure that lessons have a suitable pace and provide stimulating learning experiences. However, opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback to improve their work and take more responsibility for their learning are limited.

Provision to support the learning skills of pupils with additional learning needs are purposeful. As a result, pupils make good progress over time against their targets and previous attainment.

The school's self-evaluation and quality assurance arrangements are robust. Members of the governing body support the headteacher and staff successfully. They have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge.

Recommendations

- R1 Provide opportunities to promote pupils' independent skills
- R2 Ensure consistency in teachers' feedback to support pupils to improve their work and take more responsibility for their learning

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

On entry to the school, most pupils' knowledge and skills are similar to what is expected for their age. As they move through the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who are eligible for free school meals, make sound progress in their learning.

Most pupils develop their speaking and listening skills purposefully. The youngest pupils are keen to talk to their teachers and visitors. They speak enthusiastically about what they are doing, for example when pupils in the reception class talk enthusiastically about how to maintain a fire to keep the Gruffalo warm in the forest. As pupils move through the school, many talk intelligently with their peers and adults, for example when analysing and interpreting the work of the artist Josie Russell in detail. Most Year 6 pupils talk confidently about their work and listen carefully to questions, before answering them eloquently, including debating the effect of holiday homes and second homes on the community.

Nearly all of the youngest pupils develop reading skills successfully and come to recognise the sound and form of letters from an early age. They use suitable methods to attempt to read unfamiliar words. They begin to apply their reading skills in different contexts. By Year 4, many pupils become skilful readers and read with expression. As pupils' skills mature, many are able to scan effectively and they have good comprehension skills. For example, after researching Patagonia online, they interpret information clearly to create a simple presentation to be shared with younger pupils.

The youngest pupils develop early writing skills well. Nearly all begin to experiment with mark making and many begin to write for different purposes successfully. Most of the youngest pupils develop sound writing skills by the end of Year 3. They write with increasing accuracy and use punctuation and verbs successfully, for example when writing a portrayal of Barti Ddu. Most of the oldest pupils recognise the features of different genres of writing and emulate them successfully in their own work; for example, when writing the diary of a drover by considering the requirements of the reader. Most pupils develop legible handwriting and many present their work neatly.

Most pupils develop a sound understanding of mathematical concepts. The youngest pupils come to recognise numbers and simple 3D shapes and develop a good understanding of measurement. Most apply their numeracy skills effectively in their activities both inside and outside the classroom, for example by measuring accurately an imaginary monster they have made from dough. By the end of Year 6, many use their numeracy skills suitably in their work across the curriculum.

Across the school, most pupils develop a beneficial range of digital skills which help to support their learning. For example, the youngest pupils use animation equipment to create a video to teach pupils how to stay healthy. Older pupils research and analyse data on the population of Anglesey's villages successfully.

Most pupils develop their creative skills effectively, for example by emulating the style of famous and local artists successfully in their own work. They use a variety of materials and styles skilfully to produce attractive artwork. Across the school, pupils develop robust physical skills and take full advantage of a variety of opportunities to keep fit during lessons or leisure time. Nearly all pupils use the all-weather playing field effectively to develop their physical skills effectively.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Pupils' well-being is a strength. Nearly all pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They understand the importance of following the school's rules and respect each other. Nearly all pupils feel safe and appreciate that people listen to them at school.

Nearly all pupils control their emotions appropriately. They feel that adults value and support them emotionally through opportunities to discuss their feelings, for example through daily well-being checks. Across the school, nearly all pupils have positive working relationships with adults and each other. As a result, they engage purposefully with their learning and are confident when contributing ideas and asking for support. However, there is a tendency for pupils to be over-reliant on support from adults, which hinders the development of their independent skills.

The behaviour of most pupils is excellent both in the classroom and outdoors. The classrooms are calm and pupils respond well to each other. As they move around the school, most pupils are careful and considerate of others.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to engage with new learning opportunities and show good levels of resilience when undertaking unfamiliar tasks. Most pupils discuss their work and previous learning confidently. They respond well to oral feedback from teachers and assistants to improve their work. In the few examples of best practice, pupils revisit their work appropriately to improve the content following written feedback. However, pupils do not respond to feedback regularly enough, therefore they do not always understand the next steps in their learning.

Many pupils are increasingly becoming principled and knowledgeable citizens. They show an increasing sense of empathy and compassion towards others and their awareness of diversity and equality is developing appropriately. For example, older pupils discuss the story of Malala Yousafzai and her campaign to ensure that girls have the right to an education in Pakistan. Most pupils are beginning to show an awareness of children's rights and are able to explain how these have an effect on their own everyday lives and the lives of others.

Most pupils know the benefits of eating and drinking healthily and understand the effect this has on their bodies. For example, the youngest pupils explain confidently the importance of exercise and getting enough sleep for being healthy. Most pupils engage well with a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by staff during break times and after school. These opportunities encourage pupils to develop an appreciation of healthy living while at school and support them to continue to make healthy choices at home. Across the school, most pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay safe online.

The pupil's voice is active in the school through the various councils. Pupils take great pride in their elected roles and are beginning to influence improvements across the school, for example in asking to start a girls' football team. Many undertake these roles confidently and explain successfully how the school's activities have an effect on the wider community.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school has a clear vision for learning that reflects the principles and cultures of the Curriculum for Wales for all pupils. Across the school, learning experiences promote this vision successfully and teachers deliver a stimulating curriculum that is embedded in the local area and develops pupils' skills effectively.

Teachers have a reflective and co-operative attitude towards planning the curriculum and refine their plans to consider the most suitable approaches for their pupils. They are beginning to develop an awareness of the progression principles of the Curriculum for Wales. This helps them to develop an overall understanding of pupils' progression across the school and devise the next development steps for individual learners. Teachers and assistants have excellent working relationships with pupils, which creates a purposeful, calm and supportive environment. As a result, pupils feel that someone listens to them. They are also happy to ask questions freely if they need support with their learning. Teachers and assistants have a good knowledge of pupils' needs.

Staff manage pupils' behaviour firmly and ensure that nearly all pupils engage fully with lessons and learning experiences. Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils and this contributes successfully to the sound progress that most pupils make from their starting points. Providing opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning is developing. However, across the school, staff have a tendency to over-direct activities, which hinders pupils' creativity and ability to make choices independently.

A notable feature of the school's work is the way in which teachers and assistants encourage pupils to take pride in the Welsh language and the culture and heritage of Llannerch-y-medd and Wales. By planning rich themes, teachers develop pupils' sound awareness and understanding of their neighbourhood by providing live and meaningful experiences. They plan a variety of interesting activities and experiences that reflect the nature and context of the school and its place in the local community successfully. For example, a range of visits are organised both locally and further afield, such as a trip to Oriel Môn to study the work of the artist Kyffin Williams.

Teachers share clear objectives at the beginning of lessons and success criteria are used consistently. As a result, pupils self-evaluate their own efforts and those of their peers confidently. All staff use various questioning techniques effectively to extend pupils' understanding. Staff provide pupils with valuable written feedback during activities to support and extend their learning. In the few examples of best practice, teachers provide simple and effective written feedback and pupils respond to it regularly, which provides them with clear guidance on the next steps in their learning. However, across the school, this is inconsistent. As a result, pupils do not respond confidently about what is good in their work and the next steps in their learning.

The school tracks pupils' progress thoroughly and makes purposeful use of various assessments, which ensure that they receive the support they need to succeed. As a result, most pupils make sound progress in all aspects of their learning.

Care, support and guidance

Ysgol Llannerch-y-medd is a friendly, welcoming and inclusive community that promotes happiness, courtesy and excellent behaviour. There is a caring feeling towards all pupils. Staff create an inclusive and safe learning environment where pupils feel valued. Teachers and assistants work well together to promote and develop pupils' well-being. They place a high priority on ensuring that they address the needs of all pupils. There are robust and effective arrangements in place to support pupils' emotional, health and social needs. Staff foster a strong relationship with pupils, which promotes beneficial attitudes towards their well-being. For example, staff provide valuable and timely opportunities for pupils to use the Well-being Corner on a daily basis.

There is highly effective provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The ALN co-ordinator has thorough processes to identify pupils' learning needs and well-being. As a result of the early and skilful planning of provision, pupils receive support that meets their needs successfully. Staff have purposeful arrangements for tracking the progress of pupils with ALN, which relate to the targets in their individual development plans and their progress from their starting points. As a result, most pupils who need additional support with their learning or well-being make sound progress. The ALN co-ordinator works effectively in partnership with assistants, staff from other schools and external agencies, such as the communication and interaction teams, to provide effective interventions for pupils. The school is preparing well for purposeful planning and action as part of the process of reforming provision for ALN.

One of the school's strengths is the way in which staff promote and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and culture. The school is the focal point of its community and takes full advantage of opportunities to hold activities in the local area, for example by laying a wreath on behalf of '*Plant y Fro*' (the children of the local area) as part of the Remembrance Day service. They also identify with the wider world through various links with a school in Patagonia to deepen their understanding of cultures and traditions around the world.

Staff promote the importance of eating healthily and encourage physical fitness through a range of physical education activities, which include suitable opportunities to take part in sports competitions. Staff use the community playing fields regularly to organise and provide a range of activities that contribute well to pupils' well-being and enjoyment of their learning. The outdoor play areas on the playground are attractive and encourage pupils to undertake physical activity during lessons and break times successfully.

Arrangements for collective worship provide valuable opportunities to support pupils in learning about issues relating to various beliefs, in addition to reflecting on fundamental questions and their own values. Across the school, staff support pupils to understand issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. They also develop

values that develop pupils to understand their own needs and rights and those of others.

Staff provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to voice their opinions to contribute to their learning and to school life. This enriches their experiences and prepares them well to take responsibility for their decisions. For example, the school council has written to the local authority to express concern about an increase in the amount of litter that accumulates around the school and the number of bins available to help solve the problem. Most pupils express an opinion about their learning by planning for the class themes. Staff ensure that pupils have a wider influence on the life of the school and beyond. For example, they sell cakes to raise money for local charities and Cancer Research.

Staff promote a culture of safeguarding effectively and the arrangements are not a cause for concern. There is a robust system for reporting safeguarding concerns about pupils, and staff make timely referrals to external agencies, where appropriate. The school has robust processes for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Leadership and management

Leaders have a clear vision based on creating a happy and caring learning environment to deliver '*Llwybr Llwyddiant Llannerch-y-medd*'. This ensures that pupils develop their well-being and basic skills successfully within a familial environment. As a result, there is a strong sense of trust, pride and respect between pupils and staff, which permeates the school's close-knit community.

The headteacher has high expectations of herself, staff and pupils. This creates an environment where everyone is ambitious and aspires for the best. The headteacher distributes allocates responsibilities successfully, for example by restructuring the curriculum groups following an audit of the staff's skills. The school's performance management procedures are effective. All members of the teaching staff have individual targets which link purposefully to the priorities for improvement and meet their professional learning needs. As a result, all members of staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how they contribute to the school's development.

The school has a strong relationship with parents and the continuous co-operation and communication promote the school effectively in its community. Leaders know the needs of the pupils, the school and its community exceptionally well. It provides valuable opportunities for parents to support pupils' skills, for example by sharing information about how to use Hwb to complete homework. The school's parent and teacher association is very active in holding events that support the school to reduce the effects of poverty. As a result of holding a treasure hunt, money was raised to contribute to the costs of educational visits. This reduces the financial burden on families.

Leaders have established robust arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school's work, which includes a wide range of stakeholders such as staff, governors and pupils. They gather first-hand evidence and analyse the evidence carefully. As a result, leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders identify suitable priorities that give due attention to these

issues. They align successfully with national priorities, for example by developing an approach to the Curriculum for Wales and reducing the impact of poverty on pupils' attainment. Leaders monitor progress against the priorities regularly, responding to specific milestones and evaluating the effect of expenditure.

Members of the governing body are supportive of the life and work of the school. They discharge their duties conscientiously. The headteacher's reports ensure that governors receive appropriate information about the school's performance. Governors also gather their own information and contribute appropriately to self-evaluation processes, take part in learning walks, listen to learners and scrutinise pupils' work. As a result, they support the headteacher well in their role as critical friends. Governors are knowledgeable about national priorities, such as the Curriculum for Wales, safeguarding and the effect of poverty on the lives of parents and pupils within their own community. They use their expertise appropriately to support aspects of the school's work. For example, they monitor provision for ICT. This supports the school to maintain robust standards in pupils' skills.

Leaders manage the school's budget effectively. They make suitable decisions about expenditure for the benefit and experience of the pupils. Recently, they have invested significantly in the outdoor areas for pupils. This has a positive effect on enriching provision and learning experiences across the school. Good use is made of the pupil development grant to provide sessions to promote pupils' well-being which, in turn, has a beneficial effect on the confidence and behaviour of pupils with emotional and social needs.

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/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- 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' well-being, 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 (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

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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