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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Cylch y Garn Community School
Llanrhuddlad
Holyhead
Anglesey
LL65 4HT**

Date of inspection: May 2011

by

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



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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

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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

Cylch y Garn School stands on the outskirts of the village of Llanrhuddlad in the north of Anglesey. It contains a community hall that is used extensively by societies in the area outside school hours. It is a bilingual primary school that mainly serves three nearby villages, namely Llanrhuddlad, Rhydwyn and Llanfair yngornwy.

Pupils start full-time at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday. At present in the school, there are 28 full-time pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 and four nursery children for five mornings a week. There has been a significant decrease in the numbers of pupils during the last two years. The pupils are taught by two full time teachers, and one part-time teacher, who are supported by three part-time members of support staff.

The area is described as one that is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Seven per cent (7%) of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly lower than the county and national percentage. There has been a consistent and significant decrease in the percentage that claims free school meals during the last three years.

Welsh is the language of the home for 57% of the pupils but it is now judged that 71% of them speak Welsh to first language standard. Welsh First Language Study Programmes are taught. There are no pupils from different ethnic backgrounds at the school.

The school has pupils from the full range of ability and their attainment varies greatly when they start at the school. Thirty per cent (30%) of the pupils have special educational needs, which is higher than the county and national percentage. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher has been in post since November 1999. The school was last inspected in April 2005.

The individual school budget for 2010-2011 per pupil for Cylch y Garn Community School is £4,400, which compares with the maximum of £15,158 and a minimum of £2,685 for primary schools in Anglesey. The school has the ninth highest budget per pupil out of the 52 primary schools in Anglesey.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- in general, the pupils are making appropriate progress in their learning;
- the pupils are making very good progress in their use of the Welsh language;
- the pupils' attitude towards learning is positive;
- the teachers provide a range of learning experiences, which, on the whole, respond to the needs of most of the pupils; and
- there is a good relationship between the teachers and pupils.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school has responded positively to the recommendations of the previous inspection;
- the governing body knows the school well and is effective as a critical friend.
- the self-evaluation process has identified the appropriate areas for development; and
- the school has started to address important priorities such as assessment for learning and developing learning communities.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

R1 raise the standards of higher ability pupils

R2 implement the requirements of the Foundation Phase fully;

R3 continue to develop assessment for learning throughout the school; and

R4 develop pupils to be more independent in their learning and take responsibility for their own learning.

What happens next?

The school will prepare an action plan that shows how it will address the issues above within 45 days. Because some deficiencies have been identified in important areas, the local authority will monitor the implementation of the plan and report to Estyn on progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

During their period in the school, nearly all the pupils make appropriate progress in their learning.

In learning sessions and in their workbooks, the standards and progress of most of the pupils are consistent with and appropriate to their age and ability, and they achieve their tasks successfully across the curriculum. The pupils that have additional learning needs make consistent progress and, on the whole, reach standards that are suitable to their ability and attainment. However, the school's most able pupils do not always achieve at a level that corresponds to their ability.

The pupils' communication skills are good. Orally, they are able to discuss varying subjects effectively in Welsh or in English, using appropriate vocabulary. Many of the pupils read at a level that is appropriate to their age and ability, and are making consistent progress. The best at the top of the school search effectively for information from a variety of sources and, as a result, they enrich their learning. The majority of pupils are successful in extended writing across a variety of learning areas.

The number of pupils who are in the cohort to be assessed at the end of the two key stages annually varies and it is very often low. This means that the results of one or two pupils can, at times, heavily influence the performance of the cohort. As a result, over a period of three years, the school's performance in teacher assessments at the end of the key stages is inconsistent, and it is not possible to come to meaningful conclusions about them.

In key stages one and two when looking at the school's performance in Welsh, English, mathematics and science over a period of three years, the comparison with the results of the family of schools, the local authority and Wales varies greatly.

In key stage two, in comparison with similar schools in terms of the percentage who are entitled to free school meals, the school alternated between comparing favourably and unfavourably. However, in key stage one, the school was consistently among the lowest 50% of similar schools over a period of three years.

There is no clear, consistent pattern of difference between the results of boys and those of girls, and the pupils who are entitled to free school meals achieve at the same level as the remainder of the pupils.

The pupils are making very good progress in their use of the Welsh language and many of them use the spoken language fluently and effectively on all kinds of occasions, both formal and informal.

Wellbeing: Good

The pupils all feel safe in school and turn confidently to adults for help and instruction. They enjoy taking part in physical activity and understand the essentials of eating healthily and understand that they contribute to a healthy body and mind.

Pupils of all ages play together happily at break time and lunch time. The pupils develop into complete and active individuals who are prepared to contribute to the school's work within their classes and in community activities.

The pupils' attitude towards learning is positive, on the whole. They work effectively together in their lessons and in their activities. However, many of the pupils are not wholly confident when working independently and taking responsibility for their own learning.

Attendance for the school year 2009-2010 was 96% for pupils of compulsory age which puts the school in the top 50% of similar schools on the grounds of entitlement to free school meals. There were no unauthorised absences during the year 2009-2010. The pupils come to school and to the learning sessions punctually.

The pupils' behaviour is good. The pupils are courteous to one another and to adults at all times. The majority of the pupils take part in extra-curricular activities such as weekly sports clubs, and Urdd activities.

The school council is active and contributes positively to school life. The pupils cultivate a good understanding of aspects such as the green school, and initiatives such as the campaign to decrease and recycle waste has raised their awareness of issues involving the local community.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Adequate

The teachers provide a range of learning experiences that respond to the needs of most of the pupils, on the whole. Despite this, the provision does not always challenge the more able children to move on in their learning or give them enough opportunities to be independent in their learning. There is too much emphasis on the teacher's direction and, as a result, tasks tend to be limited.

The principles of the Foundation Phase are not fully implemented. Although the teachers give the pupils opportunities to contribute to the direction of the theme, there are only a few opportunities for them to make choices about their learning.

The school is in the process of revising the school's schemes of work to comply with the curriculum's requirements and to further develop the requirements of the Foundation Stage. The school is also in the process of ensuring a central place for the skills in their revised schemes of work, but so far, the work has not been completed. However, the teachers provide interesting lessons that pay due attention to the key skills. The attention given to developing pupils' thinking skills is less prominent.

The pupils have many opportunities to learn about their area through a study of local artists such as Sir Kyffin Williams, or learn about the local birds of Cemlyn beach and the creatures of Porth Diana, or through history work such as the theme of Borthwen Brickworks and Mynydd Parys.

The children have suitable opportunities to learn about other cultures through the medium of themes such as Diwali, and in responding to current events such as life in Japan following the earthquake.

The school emphasises sustainability through the medium of a number of initiatives such as the school's internal lights turning themselves off, and the paper and clothes recycling scheme through Menter Tyddyn Môn.

Teaching: Good

On the whole, the standard of teaching is appropriate, and the teachers and support staff support the learning in a sensitive manner. The teachers use good oral language that is a model for developing the pupils' oral language. The teachers ask sensible questions in a supportive way. They use learning resources effectively in order to support the learning. A caring relationship obviously exists between the teachers and their pupils.

In every class only a little attention was given to setting success criteria for learning sessions, although the lessons have obvious aims. Each pupil's progress is monitored through a detailed tracking scheme. A foundation assessment is made in line with the county's procedure and detailed records are kept of the development of Foundation Phase pupils by the teacher and the assistant. Pupils' reading progress is tracked in detail through tests, and they are grouped appropriately for activities.

Assessments at the end of a key stage are standardised internally. A valuable resource for assisting in this work is the four core portfolios. The examples have been levelled appropriately to agree with the outcomes of the Foundation Phase and the National Curriculum levels.

The pupils' books are marked regularly. There is increasing evidence of assessment for learning being carried out in the pupils' books – for example, through a two star and a wish system that notes what they have achieved well and how the pupils can move ahead with their learning. So far, the assessment for learning is not implemented widely enough and is not deeply enough rooted to have an obvious effect on the pupils' progress. The opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment are very rare.

The annual reports to parents meet the statutory requirements. The parents and carers feel that they are receiving good information about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The close attention given to the aspects of health and welfare is one of the strengths of the school. All the staff work together effectively to create a familial, supportive climate. The school has relevant policies involving health and safety but a number of

them have not been reviewed formally by the governors for some years. Risk assessments and safety inspections are conducted regularly, and recommendations have been implemented.

The school assemblies create an appropriate sense of devotion. The school cultivates strong values that boost a clear awareness of good and evil. They show empathy with others by regularly collecting money for good causes. Healthy living is promoted effectively through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Through a close relationship with the local community, the pupils come to know their area and their culture well.

The school makes effective use of specialist services such as the Health Authority, the Speech and Language Therapy Department and the Community Police.

The school has an appropriate policy and clear procedures for safeguarding.

Approximately 30% of pupils have been identified as those with additional learning needs, which is significantly higher than the local authority average. These pupils are supported caringly by learning support staff. The school has invested effectively in additional staff beyond the county budget in order to decrease the numbers in the key stage two class, so that the pupils with additional learning needs get further attention.

There is a designated member of staff and a governor with responsibility for additional learning needs. Frequent meetings are held with parents, to discuss pupils' development and detailed records of them are kept. This commentary is a very useful record and is good practice.

Learning environment: Good

All pupils have equal access to the school's curriculum. There is no discrimination or stereotyping. Boys and girls take part in activities that are traditionally associated with the other gender. If needed, ramps allow wheelchair access to different parts of the school.

The school's homely and friendly atmosphere fosters tolerance. The pupils become aware of the traditions and customs of other countries. Following contact with an orphanage in Nepal, goods were sent to help them with their work. The pupils speak proudly about this project.

There is adequate space for the current number of pupils but the design is not convenient by modern standards. Unless the external doors are used, it is necessary to walk through one classroom to get to the other.

There are colourful displays to support the current themes, recording activities and visits and honouring the work and successes of the pupils.

There are attractive outside areas, including the foundation phase area, a garden and two large fields.

The building is well maintained. The building and the site are kept particularly clean and tidy. There is a range of appropriate resources to deliver every aspect of the curriculum.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The strong leadership of the school's headteacher promotes values that contribute to a supportive ethos for the pupils and the staff. It is appreciated that the contribution of every member of staff is valuable which leads to working together effectively for the benefit of the school. The detailed job descriptions summarise the duties of every member of staff. They understand their responsibilities and act upon them. Weekly staff meetings are held and these put appropriate emphasis on the priorities for improvement. They also provide valuable opportunities for the staff to work together on elements such as scrutinising pupils' work and standardising it.

The school analyses data thoroughly on its performance and it is used to move pupils along. Information on pupils' progress from standardised tests, especially in reading and mathematics, supports teachers' assessments.

The school has performance management arrangements that help staff to improve their practice. The arrangements lead to suitable targets that encompass individuals' training and development needs and the whole-school priorities. The arrangements extend appropriately to all the school's teaching and support staff.

The governing body is effective as a critical friend to the school. It knows the school well and is aware of the issues that arise from the school's performance in comparison with similar schools. The members of the body have responsibilities as individuals and there are effective arrangements for them to observe the teaching and the learning. The body contributes to determining the priorities of the school development plan and making relevant financial decisions. They receive reports that derive from monitoring and evaluating standards. They also receive a written report on the outcomes of the self-evaluation process.

Good attention is paid to local and national priorities.

Improving quality: Good

The school has established procedures to review all the elements of its work through over a period of time. Self-evaluation gives appropriate attention to data analyses and outcomes of the monitoring procedures. Full consideration is given to continuous evaluations of pupils' welfare. Consideration is also given to the opinions of pupils, parents and the local authority's education service. However, the self-evaluation report does not always give the school's opinion clearly enough on areas to be developed.

The majority of the school's priorities for improvement are clearly linked to the school development plan. For example, raising reading standards, and developing assessment for learning procedures have been identified as two of the current

priorities. Strategies to meet the improvements have been identified. These include a range of procedures which determine the staff's lead responsibilities for co-ordinating them. They also include success indicators, specific timetables and a record of allocated resources. The school has made good progress in responding to the recommendations of the last inspection.

Arrangements for teachers to observe lessons directly have been established recently but the outcomes of the procedure have not fully influenced the school's self-evaluation processes so far. The school has started to take advantage of its involvement in a professional learning community with two nearby primary schools to develop strategies to raise standards in reading.

Partnership working: Good

The school has established a good range of partnerships with parents, other schools and local community groups. The relationship with the parents is a supportive one, and the school benefits from valuable contributions to activities such as art, listening to readers and music. Their contribution to creating an outside area in order to promote the requirements of the Foundation Phase has been of particular benefit. The school also benefits from the support of an active friends society.

Effective working contacts exist with the support services of the local authority and the health service. Close co-operation with two nearby schools creates opportunities to share expertise and planning. For example the school's pupils benefitted significantly from a scheme to jointly fund the services of a local artist to develop art work and exhibitions. The arrangements that have been developed to facilitate transition to the secondary school are a strength.

The school benefits from the hall and other community resources which are situated on the site and the regular use of the resources by local societies and organisations strengthens their relationship with the school.

Resource management: Good

The school is staffed appropriately in order to teach the curriculum effectively and effective use is made of the staff's expertise and experience. Effective use is also made of the time provided for planning, preparation and assessment and the school meets the requirements for decreasing teachers' workloads. Good use is made of the learning support staff throughout the school, including the Foundation Phase and supporting pupils with additional learning needs. In general, the school has a good supply of resources that are managed appropriately.

The budget monitoring procedures are effective and of assistance in ensuring that all the resources available to the school are allocated in a cost-effective way.

In general, the outcomes for pupils are good and the school offers good value for money in terms of the use made of the budget allocated to it.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Sixteen responses to the questionnaires for pupils were received, namely all the school's key stage two pupils. The response was very positive and all the pupils agreed with all the statements in the questionnaire, except one. Two of the pupils (13%) believed that there were not many opportunities for them to do physical exercise regularly.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Only four responses to the parents' questionnaire were received, and it is not possible to come to meaningful conclusions on the basis of the evidence. The answers to all the questions were very positive from all parents except for one parent or carer who did not know whether the pupils behaved well at school.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Terwyn Tomos	Reporting Inspector
Iwan Roberts	Team Inspector
John Roberts	Lay Inspector
Janet Wyn George	Peer Inspector
Miss Jane Ann Roberts (Headteacher)	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11