



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Ysgol Reoledig Pant Pastynog
Prion
Denbighshire
LL16 4SG**

Date of inspection: November 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

Ysgol Pant Pastynog serves the villages of Prion, Peniel, Saron and Nantglyn near the town of Denbigh, and the nearby rural area. The school is under the voluntary control of the Church in Wales.

There are 58 pupils on roll, including seven nursery age pupils. There has been a large increase in the numbers of pupils since the time of the last inspection in the autumn term, 2005.

Seventy-nine per cent of the pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Eleven per cent of the pupils are from 'another white' ethnic background, including two pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

No pupils are entitled to free school meals at present. Seventeen point six per cent of the pupils are on the school's additional learning needs register, and 4% have a statement. These figures are close to the national averages

The current headteacher has been in post since September 2005.

The individual school budget per pupil in 2011-2012 for Ysgol Pant Pastynog is £4,510. The maximum amount per pupil in primary schools in Denbighshire is £9,248 and the minimum amount is £2,719. Ysgol Pant Pastynog is 20th out of the 52 primary schools in Denbighshire in terms of school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

Ysgol Pant Pastynog's performance is good because:

- pupils' motivation is high and the progress that they make in lessons is good;
- standards of behaviour and attendance are very good;
- the range and quality of the learning experiences is good, and the way in which the numerous links with the community and several visits enrich the curriculum;
- the school arranges effective provision to help individual pupils and groups that need additional support with aspects of the work; and there is
- effective provision in order to promote pupils' wellbeing and their development as complete and responsible individuals.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is a recent pattern of improvement in pupils' achievements in the end of key stage 2 assessments;
- the headteacher's leadership sets a clear direction and high expectations for further improvement;
- the school addresses aspects where further improvement is necessary by targeting additional support effectively; and
- the governing body knows the school well and contributes effectively as critical friends.

Recommendations

The school should:

- R1 ensure further improvement in the numbers of pupils who achieve at the higher levels at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2;
- R2 ensure that pupils in the Foundation Phase make full progress in their understanding and skills in the playing activities and in their writing skills;
- R3 continue with the work of planning progression in the skills, especially to ensure that pupils of higher ability have tasks that extend them fully; and
- R4 spread across the school the good practice in the quality of marking in order to ensure better consistency.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In lessons, pupils apply themselves to tasks and make continuous progress against the aims of the lessons. At times, there is not enough progress in outside learning activities in the Foundation Phase, and at that time pupils do not use their thinking skills sufficiently. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds participate fully in the lessons and make significant progress in terms of their grasp of Welsh.

Pupils who receive additional support for aspects of their work are making significant progress. In some aspects of their work, pupils of higher ability are not achieving as well as they could in lessons.

Pupils listen to their teachers very well and are very willing to offer answers or comments when speaking in a whole-class situation. In key stage 2, the way in which the pupils are able to offer more extended answers spontaneously is a strong feature. They communicate freely and confidently in Welsh and English. The quality of oral expression in Welsh is a strength, and pupils show an increasing grasp of a range of specialist vocabulary and terms.

Almost all pupils are making appropriate progress in their reading skills. They can read aloud books that offer an appropriate challenge in Welsh and English correctly and meaningfully. In key stage 2, many pupils have higher reading ages than expected.

Pupils are developing into independent readers and taking an interest in books. They are developing their ability to offer a personal response to various aspects of what they read. They develop the ability to produce extended reviews of books and they use their reading skills effectively to collect and present information from a variety of sources.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils become able to write independently in their own words for a range of purposes. The use of an increasing vocabulary, but not enough of pupils' work shows full progress, especially in terms of length and their grasp of basic punctuation.

In key stage 2, many pupils are making good progress in their ability to write at length. They plan their work carefully and can make improvements when redrafting. The work shows a good awareness of the different features of writing and the ability to paragraph appropriately. Pupils are making good progress in punctuating their work appropriately and the content of imaginative work is interesting. They use their writing skills effectively in other subjects, making increasing use of specialist terms. The standards of accuracy of written work in Welsh and English are good.

In the Foundation Phase, the percentage of seven year old pupils who achieve the expected level (level 2) is generally higher than the average of the family of schools

and the figures for Wales. In comparison with that of similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals, the school's performance has been among the lower 50% for a period in Welsh, mathematics and science in combination, but has varied in the subjects individually. Apart from in Welsh in 2011, no pupils have reached level 3 in any subject during recent years.

In key stage 2, the percentage of 11-year-old pupils who achieve the expected level (level 4) in Welsh, English, mathematics and science in combination has been lower than the figures for Wales and the family of similar schools during the past five years. Different from the other subjects, the achievements at level 4 in Welsh are considerably higher than the average for the family of schools. Boys' achievements in mathematics have been significantly lower than those of the girls over time in comparison with the figures for the family and for Wales.

The school's performance in key stage 2 in general has been among the lowest 25% out of similar schools nationally during recent years, although it was in the highest 25% in 2011 in the individual subjects except mathematics.

The achievements of 11-year-old pupils at level 5 in Welsh and English have compared favourably with those of the family in the last two years, but not so over time in mathematics and science.

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils have good awareness of the need to develop healthy personal habits, including fitness. One in every two participates in sports activities after school. Pupils feel safe and happy in school and know to whom to turn for support and advice.

The levels of motivation of almost all pupils are high and they apply themselves enthusiastically to the learning activities. They get on well together and standards of behaviour are high. Attendance levels in the school compare very favourably with those of similar schools.

Many pupils are developing a wide variety of personal and social skills through their involvement with a wide range of local bodies and organisations, including Eglwys Sant Dyfnog and local chapels. The school council is progressive in the way in which it acts as a forum to plan and discuss skilfully a wide range of issues and contribute to decisions. The way in which the school's pupils are developing into complete and confident individuals is a strong feature.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The school plans stimulating learning experiences that gain pupils' interest across the school. Pupils have beneficial opportunities to contribute their own ideas when planning the term's themes. There is appropriate provision of extra-curricular activities.

The school has paid appropriate attention to schemes of work in order to develop skills across the curriculum. In some cases, there is not sufficiently detailed planning for play activities in the Foundation Phase to ensure sufficient progress in skills and understanding.

The rich provision of experiences in order to promote pupils' understanding of aspects of Welsh culture and the Welsh dimension are central to the school's life and work. The school takes full advantage of the regular visits by poets and literary figures and the pupils deepen their understanding of aspects of literature and art through workshops. The noteworthy opportunities to take part and experience success in county and national competitions such as the book quiz and eisteddfodau do much to enrich and extend pupils' experience of Welsh culture.

The school does a great deal to develop pupils' understanding of sustainability, Fair Trade and global citizenship. A link has been established with a children's home in Nepal and pupils had an opportunity to attend a concert by the Watoto Choir, Africa and a workshop on African Music. The school takes full advantage of the backgrounds of pupils' families who come from other countries.

Teaching: Good

There is a good working relationship between staff and students in each class, and the teachers and assistants create an active and supportive ethos. The school makes appropriate use of the support staff in order to give additional support to specific groups and individuals.

Teachers share the lessons' aims appropriately with pupils and plan a series of activities that ensure that pupils continually work productively. They discuss success criteria with pupils at the beginning of lessons and pupils have good awareness of their personal targets. In the few lessons where the teaching is not as good, the learning activities do not encourage pupils to think sufficiently and develop their understanding and skills. At times in lessons, the work does not challenge pupils of higher ability sufficiently.

Teachers make good use of resources, with regular opportunities for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills in lessons.

The school makes extensive use of data to track pupils' progress and provide additional support as needed. Much of the marking is thorough and gives detailed feedback to pupils on the quality of their work, but there is some inconsistency in showing pupils what to do to improve and the next steps.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to standardise and moderate teachers' assessments. Through termly reports and meetings, parents receive clear information on their children's achievements.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community where pupils' wellbeing is given a high priority. The advantages of living healthily and developing pupils' physical health are

promoted effectively across the curriculum and in a number of extra-curricular activities. The daily, whole-school five minute session to boost pupils' fitness is a beneficial innovation.

The provision for personal and social education is very good, and the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development effectively.

The school has appropriate arrangements for identifying additional learning needs and it works effectively with external agencies and specialist services. Pupils' individual education plans identify clear targets and specific activities in order to ensure progress. There is effective additional support for pupils who need to improve their basic literacy skills.

The school provides a good number of activities that give opportunities for pupils to develop particular talents, especially in musical and cultural fields.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community and the active and supportive ethos develops positive attitudes and respect. Tolerance and racial equality receive appropriate attention in the personal and social education programme.

The building provides plenty of room and appropriate facilities and the school makes full use of them. The displays in the classrooms and across the school create an interesting environment that celebrates pupils' work and successes. The buildings and the site are well maintained, and appropriate adaptations have been made for pupils with physical disabilities.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision and high expectations. Staff responsibilities have been defined clearly and staff work together effectively to implement the priorities for improvement. The school makes extensive use of performance data in order to identify aspects that need improvement. This has led to providing additional support to groups of pupils and to improvements in aspects of achievement at the end of key stage 2.

The governing body know the school well. They are familiar with analyses of performance data and contribute to setting the school's strategic direction by discussing the priorities of the self-evaluation report and the school development plan. Regular reports on progress against the objectives of the school development plan, along with regular visits to the school, enable the governors to operate effectively as critical friends.

The school gives extensive attention to current national priorities. This is especially true in the areas of assessment for learning, raising literacy and numeracy standards and working with other schools as professional learning communities.

Improving quality: Good

The school has effective procedures for self-evaluation, including an appropriate system of visits to monitor learning and teaching in classes. Subject co-ordinators prepare useful reports based on examining samples of pupils' work. The reports summarise the strengths and areas for development in the individual subjects and they are used effectively to identify priorities for improvement. The school also has appropriate arrangements for discovering the opinions of parents and pupils through questionnaires and the information is used to contribute appropriately to the process of improving quality.

The school's self-evaluation report is a comprehensive and concise document that identifies accurately the aspects in which improvement is needed.

There is a close link between self-evaluation and the priorities of the development plan. The school development plan is a concise and probing document that includes clear priorities with an appropriate focus on raising standards. There are suitable strategies for achieving the intentions, and good use of specific criteria to measure success, along with specific time limits. The current development plan also identifies specific priorities for the long term.

The quality of the school's involvement within its professional learning community and other schools in the cluster is a prominent feature, with clear evidence that this leads to raising standards. The school and individual staff contribute effectively to a number of projects and working parties and have shared good practice by being part of the national *laith ar Gân* project.

Partnership working: Good

The school has established a range of effective partnerships. There is a strong partnership with parents. Parents' evenings have been held in order to share information about aspects including the Foundation Phase, and to give guidance to parents on reading and the provision for developing skills.

There are numerous links with the local community and this has an extensive influence on the learning experiences. Members of the community come to the school to talk to pupils in order to expand their understanding of the world of work. The community receives regular information from the school through a newsletter that is distributed to all the homes in the area. This is an innovative practice.

There is a strong link with other schools in the local cluster, including working together in literary and creative workshops, and sharing ideas on how to run the school council. These links also aid the moderation process and standardising assessments jointly at the end of key stage 2. Visits between the 'trio' of local schools have been a way of exchanging good practice and have contributed to raising standards of writing.

Resource management: Good

The school makes effective use of staff specialisms through exchanging classes to teach some subjects. Suitable arrangements are in place for managing staff performance, including non-teaching staff.

The school has plenty of learning resources and they are used effectively.

Expenditure is monitored carefully, with specific sums having been earmarked for implementing the objectives of the school development plan.

The school offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Comments on performance data

Performance data appendix

As there is a comparatively small number of pupils in the school, the data must be treated carefully as one child counts as a high percentage of the cohort in each year.

In the assessments at the end of key stage 1, the percentage of pupils who achieve the expected level (level 2) in Welsh, mathematics and science in combination has been higher than the figures for Wales and the family of similar schools in four of the last five years. This is also true for these subjects individually, in addition to oracy, reading and writing in Welsh. The percentage of pupils who achieved level 3 in Welsh in 2011 was higher than the average for the family of similar schools. Apart from this, no pupils have achieved level 3 in any subject during the last five years.

Over the last four years, the school's performance in key stage 1 has been in the lower 50% in comparison with performance levels in schools that have similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) in Welsh, English, mathematics and science in combination has generally been lower than the average for the family of schools over recent years. This reflects the pattern in mathematics and in science, although all pupils achieved level 4 in science in 2011.

In Welsh, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 4 or higher has generally been considerably higher than the figure for the family of schools over the last four years. Performance in writing in Welsh has been lower than the figures for the family and for Wales in two of the last three years. In English, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 4 has been lower than the family and Wales in three of the last five years, especially in writing. In 2011, every pupil achieved level 4 in English.

In 2011, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 4 in Welsh, English and science in combination places the school among the top 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of the entitlement to free school meals. However, over time, the performance in English, mathematics and science has been among the lowest 25% of that for similar schools during recent years.

Achievements at level 5 in Welsh and English have compared favourably with those of the family during the last two years. In general, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 or higher has been lower than the figures for the family of schools over the past five years, especially in mathematics and science.

In key stage 1, there is no consistent pattern of boys' underachievement in comparison with girls'. The percentage of boys in key stage 2 that reach level 4 or higher in mathematics has been significantly lower than that of the girls in comparison with the situation in other schools in the family and in Wales.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

The learner questionnaires were completed by all pupils in key stage 2 (31 pupils).

The responses are very positive, and generally higher than the average for primary schools. A small number of pupils indicate that homework does not help them to understand and improve their work and that the behaviour of some pupils is not good.

Parent/Carer questionnaires

Twenty-five completed questionnaires by parents/carers were received. Levels of parental satisfaction are high, and higher than the average for primary schools. Parents all agree that their children are making good progress in the school and that appropriate additional support is available as necessary. Almost all parents indicated that they are very satisfied in general and that they agree strongly that the school is well run.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Iolo Dafydd	Reporting Inspector
Ray Owen	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Eluned Lewis	Peer Inspector
Mair Williams	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

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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