



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Cefn Coch  
Penrhyndeudraeth  
Gwynedd  
LL48 6AE**

**Date of inspection: June 2018**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Cefn Coch

Ysgol Gynradd Cefn Coch is situated in the village of Penrhyndeudraeth in Gwynedd. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 179 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 20 part-time nursery age pupils. They are divided into eight single-age classes.

Over the last three years, around 13% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage (19%). Around 80% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 15% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is lower than the national percentage of 21%. Very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2010. Since September 2016, he has also acted as the headteacher of another nearby school. The school was last inspected in February 2012.

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

## Summary

The strength of the working relationships between pupils and staff is an exceptional feature of the school's work and contributes extensively to its effective learning environment. Teachers provide a wide range of rich and stimulating learning experiences, which ensure that pupils develop as confident, independent learners. Standards of behaviour and self-discipline are high in nearly all lessons and around the school.

Most pupils make sound progress and achieve well. An exceptional feature is their accomplished and skilful use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their work across the curriculum. A very strong Welsh ethos encourages pupils to make full use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life. They show high levels of motivation, interest and pride in their work.

Excellent provision to develop pupils' creative and expressive skills, use their imagination and take part in performances contributes highly effectively to improving pupils' outcomes and wellbeing.

The headteacher provides highly effective leadership and a clear strategic direction for the school's work. A culture of improvement, continuous review and planning for improvement has been embedded firmly. A particular feature is the way in which responsibilities are distributed highly effectively. This has led to a strong teaching community in which staff learn from each other effectively.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve pupils' ability to apply their reasoning and enquiry skills, particularly in key stage 2
- R2 Ensure more opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to make choices in relation to their learning

## **What happens next**

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to developing innovative strategies to promote pupils' expressive and creative skills to improve their outcomes and wellbeing, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, most pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are similar to those that are expected for their age. As they move through the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress and achieve well. Most pupils take pride in the Welsh language and use it naturally when talking to each other. The Welsh oracy skills of the few pupils who come from non-Welsh speaking homes develop at a very early stage.

In the foundation phase, most pupils' speaking and listening skills develop quickly. By Year 2, they concentrate well and discuss their tasks with increasing confidence, by using broad and accurate vocabulary. They answer questions intelligently and give mature reasons for their answers, for example when discussing the dinosaur egg. By Year 6, most pupils contribute effectively to group discussions, for example when planning an imaginative story jointly. They discuss their work intelligently in Welsh and English, and change freely from one language to the other, for example when discussing Malala Yousafzai's stand for women's rights in Pakistan.

Most pupils enjoy reading and make good progress each year. By Year 2, many read correctly, fluently and meaningfully. Most are able to discuss their favourite books and characters intelligently. Most pupils in key stage 2 read intelligently and maturely in Welsh and English. They use their skills skilfully to gather information from different texts, including the internet, for example when learning about the life of the Celts. By Year 6, many scan for information skilfully, for example when learning about renewable energy.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their early writing skills successfully, for example as pupils in the reception class write an effective range of simple sentences to describe themselves. By Year 2, most write independently and extend their ideas effectively, for example when writing extended stories, such as 'I Will Not Ever Never Eat a Tomato', in addition to interesting factual pieces about Kenya and its people, following work on 'Crepog Mam Papya'. Most pupils in key stage 2 build on their writing skills successfully in both languages, and paragraph and punctuate correctly. By Year 6, many show a sound awareness of the features of a wide range of writing forms, for example when writing a letter to the governors to ask to borrow an amount of money to establish a business venture.

Most pupils in the foundation phase have a good understanding of number strategies. They use them confidently to solve problems successfully across the areas of learning, for example when helping Wil Wiwer to sort mixed-up letters or when planning and building a bridge to cross the playground. By Year 2, they handle money correctly and develop a good understanding of measurement, time and data. In key stage 2, most pupils build well on previous learning and, by Year 6, they use a wide range of methods confidently to calculate mentally. They apply themselves successfully to solve problems, for example when creating a scale that will enable them to fit the planets in the solar system on the school playground. However, only a minority of pupils in key stage 2 apply their reasoning and enquiry skills regularly enough in subjects across the curriculum.

Across the school, pupils make very effective use of the full range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their work in the areas of learning and across the curriculum. Nearly all pupils in the foundation phase are very confident and use a range of programs that enrich learning effectively. In key stage 2, nearly all pupils make mature choices about which equipment to use to complete specific tasks. They apply their ICT skills to a high standard across the curriculum, for example when creating multimedia presentations in order to present their work on the life of the Celts. They create and use databases intelligently to support their work on the habitats of minibeasts. By Year 6, nearly all pupils use the internet very successfully to search for information, for example about the solar system. An exceptional feature of their work is their accomplished and skilful use of a wide variety of programs to create interesting and creative films to a very high standard. This develops their creative skills highly effectively.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent**

Nearly all pupils take pride in their school and are proud to be a part of its community. Nearly all pupils' standards of wellbeing and attitudes towards learning are exceptionally positive. Nearly all pupils have high standards of behaviour and self-discipline in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and welcoming towards visitors. Nearly all pupils show a very high level of care towards each other and others in lessons and in informal situations. Older pupils take responsibility maturely to promote and support the wellbeing of their peers. 'Cyfeillion Cŵl' ensure that their younger peers are happy during break time and show them how to play successfully. Nearly all pupils feel safe at school, enjoy attending regularly and show an obvious willingness and enthusiasm towards learning. They are aware of whom to approach when they have any concerns, and are confident that the staff listen to them.

The strength of the working relationships between pupils and staff is an exceptional feature of the school's work, and contributes extensively to its effective learning environment. As a result, pupils across the school show an increasing ability to plan jointly and express an opinion about what they learn. By contributing towards planning practical themes in areas across the curriculum, most pupils are committed and motivated successfully to complete their learning tasks. They show an interest in all class work and stay diligently on task for extended periods.

From an early age, most pupils have a sound understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. At the top of the school, they have a mature understanding of their attainment and the next steps in their learning. An excellent example of this is the maturity of a group of older pupils when discussing their success in a national filmmaking competition.

Staff's commitment to introducing strategies that develop pupils' creative skills makes a highly effective contribution towards ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning experiences in full and show high levels of motivation, interest and pride in their work. As a result, most are ambitious, able, confident and independent learners who work together in harmony. Pupils' lively enthusiasm when presenting creative performances is infectious. Pupils present a live radio programme twice a week, and use their ICT skills very skilfully to create films of a high standard to be broadcast on their television channel. This develops their creative skills and confidence highly effectively.

The pupil's voice is given due attention in all aspects of school life, and pupils take pride in what they have achieved to improve the school. They take full advantage of extensive opportunities to express their views and influence the school's life and work. Pupils are grateful that leaders trust them and take their ideas seriously. They do so through a variety of committees, including the school council. Members are enthusiastic and understand that they represent the views of other pupils within the school community. An excellent feature is the mature contribution of the digital crew towards teaching other pupils how to use ICT to control a toy along a designated path in the hall, and when helping their peers to use the internet safely.

Pupils contribute extensively to the community and take pride in the opportunity to support activities, such as thanksgiving services in the chapel and concerts in the community hall. A particular feature is the school council's contribution towards organising the Welsh language charter concert to promote the message 'How can we improve the social use of the Welsh language in Penrhyndeudraeth?'. Pupils contribute regularly towards various charities, for example to support local families, and work with members of the community to improve the circumstances of children in Nepal. This has a positive effect on their understanding of other people's needs, in addition to developing a sense of pride in their community.

Most pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and have a good awareness of the effect this has on the body. They appreciate the wide range of physical activities that are available and many attend them regularly. This makes a very positive contribution towards developing their fitness and social skills. Nearly all understand the importance of keeping themselves safe at school, at home, on the road and online.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

The quality of teaching across the school is good. Staff establish an effective working relationship with pupils, which fosters a supportive and industrious learning environment. This leads to effective co-operation and develops pupils' enthusiasm towards learning. Teachers ensure that there are opportunities for all pupils to receive a range of practical, stimulating and rich learning experiences. Engaging themes that meet all areas of the curriculum, and interesting and imaginative work programmes, extend most pupils' knowledge and understanding, and strengthen their engagement in their work very effectively.

There is a very strong Welsh ethos, and provision encourages pupils to make full use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life. All staff take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' language, which contributes successfully towards their oracy skills. Teachers plan numerous opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of their Welsh heritage and culture; for example, pupils work with famous authors to produce an imaginative story for young children. Teachers organise a variety of visits to historical sites, such as Harlech castle, which ensures that pupils are given valuable opportunities to develop their awareness of the influence of Welsh princes, such as Owain Glyndŵr, on the area.

Most teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods, which ensure that pupils apply themselves fully to their lessons. They have a sound understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and link their lessons effectively with previous

learning. In the few classes where teaching is at its best, teachers plan very creatively to stimulate and motivate pupils very effectively. Imaginative presentations and the pace of lessons are a strong feature of teaching. Teachers use open-ended questions very successfully to encourage pupils to think for themselves. As a result, most pupils have the confidence to venture, and undertake tasks very enthusiastically and independently. In the few examples where teaching is less effective, at times, adults have a tendency to over-direct activities, for example when introducing scientific investigations. This limits opportunities for pupils to make choices about their learning.

Teachers provide pupils with sound oral and written feedback, and encourage them to persevere and reflect further on how to improve their work. Staff intervene sensitively to support pupils at appropriate times during the lesson, for example to encourage them to check their progress against lesson objectives and success criteria. This ensures that pupils, at a very early stage, understand how well they are doing and know how to improve their work.

The principles of the foundation phase have been embedded in full. Teachers consider individuals' needs and interests through skilful cross-curricular themes, which include pupils' input and voice successfully in all classes. This ensures a range of rich learning experiences that motivate and challenge pupils, so that they apply themselves fully to their learning.

The literacy, numeracy and digital competence frameworks have been embedded firmly in the school's plans. Teachers provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop their oral skills, for example by contributing regularly to the radio station. A varied and interesting range of books in the classrooms are an effective incentive to attract pupils, and has a significant effect on their reading skills. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to read a range of materials as part of their thematic work, and to write effectively in a range of forms. There are sound opportunities for foundation phase pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the areas of learning. In key stage 2, teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' number and problem-solving skills. However, they do not ensure enough opportunities for them to apply their reasoning and enquiry skills regularly enough in subjects across the curriculum, for example in science. Provision for ICT is highly effective across the school.

### **Care, support and guidance: Excellent**

The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their expressive and creative skills. This contributes highly effectively towards ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning experiences in full and show high levels of motivation, interest and pride in their work. An exceptional feature of provision is the way in which teachers encourage pupils to use their imagination and ICT skills when taking part in the creative arts. This contributes very effectively towards nurturing the pupils' passion and enthusiasm towards learning and presenting expressive art work of a high standard. A highly effective example is pupils' work in broadcasting 'Radio Cŵl', and creating a series of programmes for their television channel. This contributes highly effectively towards raising pupils' awareness of the advantages of using the Welsh language in a modern context and current events. Pupils take pride in their success in a competition throughout Britain to create an imaginative adventure film.

Staff provide an excellent variety of opportunities for pupils to perform at the school, in the local community and beyond, and develop their self-confidence and pride in themselves. Highly effective examples of this include the opportunity to perform with Ballet Cymru and to create a compact disc with pupils from a local special school, which also develops their ability to work with others.

Teachers plan numerous opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of their Welsh heritage and culture, for example when creating a multimedia presentation about Hedd Wyn and the young local men who died in the First World War. The work had a particular effect on pupils, not only in developing their oral and ICT skills, but also on their understanding of the emotional and traumatic effect of the war on the local area.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very successfully. An exceptional element is the prominent emphasis on promoting the school's shared values and personal perseverance through the school's wellbeing strategy. The caring attention that the school's staff give towards considering the pupil's voice and children's rights contributes effectively towards opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and make sensible decisions. This can be seen clearly in the way in which pupils treat each other. Staff organise rich opportunities for pupils to reflect in collective worship sessions, for example about the importance of respecting every individual. While studying the effect of different religions on cultures around the world, pupils are given valuable opportunities to develop their understanding of the wider world and nurture respect for people from different cultures and backgrounds. Staff encourage pupils to become responsible citizens who are willing to help others, for example by raising money for charities. This has a positive effect on their understanding of other people's needs.

The school has effective and thorough procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. This helps staff to identify any pupils who need additional support or challenge quickly and arrange appropriate intervention. The system ensures caring support for individuals and groups of pupils. The school works closely with a variety of external agencies to provide valuable support for pupils. As a result, there are effective plans in place that enable most pupils to make sound and consistent progress. Staff support pupils with additional needs, including emotional and social aspects, skilfully. Specific support programmes enable pupils to make good progress against their personal targets.

The school establishes productive relationships with parents. Appropriate communication methods ensure that parents are able to raise any issues that may affect their child's learning and wellbeing in a timely manner. Parents appreciate this and, as a result, they are more aware of what they can do to support their children's learning. The 'friends of the school' contribute significant funding, for example by providing attractive equipment for the foundation phase outdoor area, and purchasing ICT resources that enable the school to implement the Digital Competence Framework.

The school has appropriate procedures to promote eating and drinking healthily. As a result, most pupils have a clear understanding of eating healthily and keeping fit. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs, which contribute successfully towards developing pupils' wellbeing and fitness.

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

### **Leadership and management: Excellent**

The headteacher provides innovative and robust leadership and sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school, which promotes a strong and consistent culture of raising standards. He has an innovative vision for developing the school, which is shared enthusiastically with the deputy headteacher and all staff and governors. His high expectations derive from clear educational values and ambitious objectives for all pupils. The headteacher is particularly effective in identifying staff's expertise and strengths and, as a result, allocates responsibilities very purposefully. Members of staff appreciate his trust in them to develop areas of learning in order to raise pupils' standards. Leaders succeed in achieving national and local priorities excellently, such as developing pupils' ICT and digital competence skills. The headteacher also guides officers from other authorities on the effectiveness of the school's Welsh Language Charter strategies.

The headteacher and all staff face changes and up-to-date developments in education enthusiastically and confidently. They are committed to promoting pupils' creativity by organising a number of stimulating and exciting experiences, for example undertaking a project with authors to develop and promote pupils' oracy, written, creative and digital skills. This aspect is one of the school's strengths. Leaders have worked very successfully with teachers to develop the curriculum and ensure continuity and progression in provision to develop pupils' skills through highly effective teamwork. The headteacher and staff encourage and promote a positive and successful ethos of co-operation. Assistants are an integral part of the team and contribute highly effectively towards improving pupils' standards, wellbeing and social skills.

The school has extremely robust performance management arrangements, and successful training opportunities support them effectively. The headteacher promotes staff's professional development as leaders at the school, and beyond, very successfully, for example by promoting the Digital Competence Framework and management issues. This provides opportunities to share and develop professional learning practices, which has a very positive effect on pupils' experiences, the standard of their work and their attitude towards learning. Nearly all members of staff benefit from taking part in a wide range of professional learning activities that meet the school's priorities and the staff's personal aspirations very effectively.

A strong feature is the way in which the headteacher has developed the role of the governing body during recent years. He has ensured that they have a sound understanding of the school's performance and procedures through a programme of visits and relevant observations. An effective example of this is the challenging and rigorous way in which the governors consider pupils' standards and progress. The governing body is a very supportive group that provides constructive support to the leadership team and shares professional, valuable expertise in specific areas. Its regular strategic input into the school's self-evaluation arrangements is effective.

The school has a strong culture of continuous self-evaluation, which focuses clearly on pupils' outcomes. Rigorous and detailed procedures enable leaders to monitor

and evaluate the school's performance very effectively. This ensures a successful climate of targeting and challenging pupils to reach their full potential and make achievable improvements. Leaders use a good range of data effectively to evaluate pupils' achievements and progress. They encourage the views and opinions of pupils and parents continuously, for example when expanding the role of the school council in monitoring numeracy priorities in the school development plan by seeking pupils' views on problem-solving work. This has a very positive effect on pupils, who appreciate that the headteacher considers and includes their views. The school's comprehensive development plan focuses directly on the outcomes of the self-evaluation process, and includes details about the main priorities clearly. A strategic monthly calendar is a very successful tool in ensuring regular, organised and continuous monitoring.

The school has numerous good resources, and leaders ensure purposeful use of the school budget to improve provision. Expenditure is managed and monitored prudently, and links carefully with the priorities in the school development plan. The school is successful in terms of ensuring significant additional funding through various particular grants, which have a strong effect on pupils' standards and creative development. The school makes effective use of the school development grant to improve standards of literacy and numeracy, for example to develop Welsh reading in the early years. Nearly all pupils who receive support make the expected progress.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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

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

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

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Publication date: 28/08/2018