



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn  
Commercial Street  
Pengam  
Blackwood  
NP12 3ST**

**Date of inspection: March 2018**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn

Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn is situated in Pengam, in the south east Wales valleys. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 199 pupils between three and eleven years old on roll, including 30 part-time nursery age pupils. Pupils are divided between four mixed-age classes and three single-age classes.

Around 12% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage of 21%. A minority of pupils speak Welsh at home and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 17% of its pupils as having additional learning needs and very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2011 and the school was last inspected in March 2013

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

Most pupils make strong progress from their individual starting points. Most have positive attitudes towards learning. They work well together, are willing to take on responsibilities and are proud of their school.

On the whole, the quality of teaching is good. In general, teachers present lively lessons and use effective teaching styles that engage pupils' interest successfully.

Provision for pupils' wellbeing is one of the school's strengths. Good quality support is given to pupils with specific learning needs and emotional needs.

The school's leaders are conscientious and have a clear vision, which creates a successful caring and inclusive Welsh ethos. The staff are a dedicated and active team, and governors support them well. The whole school community is committed to the continuous emphasis of encouraging 'Welshness, effort and respect'.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that more able pupils are challenged to achieve as well as they should
- R2 Ensure that self-evaluation procedures are evaluative and comprehensive, and that they lead to specific improvements
- R3 Provide enough opportunities for pupils to work with increasing independence, including in the outdoor area

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many pupils' literacy, numeracy, and personal and social skills are similar to what is expected for their age. Over time, most pupils make strong progress as they move through the school and they achieve in line with the expected level by the end of key stage 2. Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards their targets.

Across the school, most pupils listen well to adults and other pupils, and they follow instructions carefully. They express their ideas clearly and enjoy talking about their work with visitors. Most pupils in the foundation phase talk purposefully with each other, for example during a role-play activity when they re-tell the story of the seven little goats and the big bad wolf. Most pupils in key stage 2 talk fluently in Welsh. For example, older pupils share their ideas and express their opinion confidently in a range of contexts. Most pupils across the school take pride in the Welsh language and use it naturally when talking to each other.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their reading skills. They show a sound grasp of initial sounds from an early age, and they apply this phonic knowledge well when reading unfamiliar words. Many older pupils in the foundation phase read fluently with clear expression. In key stage 2, many older pupils discuss authors such as T. Llew Jones and Eurgain Haf in Welsh, and David Walliams in English. They also scan for information skilfully.

Pupils use their writing skills effectively in other subjects. At a very early stage, many pupils start to form letters correctly and write an increasing range of sentences competently, for example when describing a member of their family. By Year 2, most write confidently and vary their sentences sensibly to create effect in their work. They use a full stop and a capital letter correctly in myths such as Branwen. Across key stage 2, most pupils develop their work interestingly across a range of writing forms. Many pupils in Year 4 write effectively when re-telling the story of one of the tales of the Mabinogi. In Year 6, a majority use paragraphs to present their work methodically, and often use interesting words to create effect. For example, in their creative story about a storm, many draft and refine their work well to improve its quality.

In mathematics, most pupils achieve well and apply their numeracy skills well across the areas of learning. In the foundation phase, many pupils develop their calculation skills appropriately in mathematics lessons and when undertaking practical activities in the learning areas. For example, in a traffic survey, they use block graphs and pictograms competently when using a computer program. In key stage 2, most pupils' standards in mathematics lessons are good. Many solve problems successfully when completing investigations that correspond with their theme. They use their mental skills with a good awareness of numeracy in different contexts. Most pupils across the school apply their numeracy skills regularly in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 2, they use their time skills to bake biscuits and, in Year 4, they look at buildings in the community and record them in a pie chart. In Year 6, they create a line graph in a scientific experiment to show the

distance a car travels down different slopes. Another good example by older pupils is the way in which they solve the wages and expenditure of two soldiers from the Stuart period.

Most pupils have good information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In the foundation phase, a majority of pupils use word processing programs, for example in order to send e-mails to a character from the book, Little Red Riding Hood. They use simple painting programs to create pictures and add text, change colours and font size confidently. Many older pupils use equipment well when recording a performance in the outdoor area on an electronic tablet. Most pupils in key stage 2 have a good understanding of e-safety. They are able to search competently for information online, and use a range of programs confidently to present their findings. Many older pupils are able to use a database intelligently.

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

Nearly all pupils enjoy the school's life and work. They feel safe, are caring towards each other and treat others with respect. Nearly all pupils have a clear knowledge of online safety arrangements.

Pupils are polite, listen carefully, and discuss and express their opinions maturely with visitors. Nearly all pupils behave well.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily, and they have a good awareness of the effect this has on the body. Most pupils take part in extra-curricular activities both within and outside the school, such as 'a mile a day', sports and technology clubs.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of their leadership roles. Members of the school council, the wellbeing and eco council, and the 'ditectifs dysgu' (learning detectives) are very enthusiastic. As a result, they have a beneficial influence of school life. Pupils work together effectively to raise money for a number of charities. For example, Year 6 pupils organised a coffee morning to raise money for the Macmillan charity. This has a positive effect on their awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Most pupils take pride in their school and their local community. They contribute extensively to a range of events, concerts and social activities, for example folk dancing at Caerphilly castle, services at the local chapel, and informing local shops about how to use the Welsh language in their businesses from day to day. Year 6 pupils are given an opportunity to visit a local chapel each week to socialise with adults with additional learning needs and the area's residents. The purpose of the visits is to have a positive effect on their awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Most pupils work confidently and effectively in pairs, individually and in groups, and appreciate the views of other pupils and people. However, pupils do not always work independently or make decisions about what and how they learn regularly enough.

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is robustly good. Teachers present lively lessons and use effective teaching styles that engage all pupils' interest. They have good subject knowledge and clear learning objectives are presented to pupils, which ensure a purpose to learning. Teachers and learning assistants know their pupils well. There are strong examples of teachers tailoring class activities to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities in mathematics and language lessons. However, in lessons across the curriculum, teachers do not always provide enough challenge for the most able pupils in order for them to achieve to the best of their ability.

The school's staff work together effectively, and the good relationship between adults and pupils has a positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing. Foundation phase teachers provide a productive learning environment and plan learning experiences creatively to satisfy pupils' needs and interests. Teachers ensure that lessons have a good pace, question pupils well and encourage them to use their skills regularly. They are good language models and encourage pupils to use the Welsh language during formal and informal activities. As a result, many older pupils have effective translanguaging skills and develop as confident bilingual learners.

Most teachers provide pupils with useful oral and written feedback. Good use of assessment for learning strategies in most classes develops pupils' ability to evaluate their work purposefully. Teachers' comments usually draw pupils' attention to strengths in their work, in addition to how it can be improved. There are suitable procedures in place in order for pupils to evaluate their own work.

The school provides a varied range of valuable learning experiences that meet most pupils' needs successfully. Learning experiences are enriched by inviting visitors to the school and through visits to different places, such as Henllys castle and Llancaiach Fawr Manor. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills effectively across the areas of learning. Staff have a sound awareness of the principles of the foundation phase, and there is a rich range of activities to stimulate pupils, for example opportunities to visit the national museum in Cardiff to hear the sounds of dinosaurs, and work on the different buildings in the local villages. However, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to work independently in the learning areas.

Plans in key stage 2 identify clearly development and continuity in pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. However, at times, significant use of worksheets limits pupils' ability to respond independently and extend their responses.

Planning to develop the Welsh language and culture is very strong. A robust feature of provision is the valuable opportunities that pupils are given to learn about their local area and Welsh culture. There is also an opportunity for all pupils to take part in eisteddfodau and listen to contemporary Welsh music. This promotes pupils' awareness of their heritage and culture successfully.

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

The school is a friendly and familial community that promotes diversity, anti-racism and fairness successfully. The strong emphasis on providing equal opportunities for

all pupils is an important part of the school's life and work. Staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to shoulder responsibilities for aspects of school life, and to join different clubs. Good examples of this are the digital leaders, 'clwb cŵl' (cool club) and the modern languages club.

The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is thorough and effective. The school provides valuable support for individuals and groups of pupils in line with their needs. Individual education plans for pupils with additional learning needs are purposeful and useful. The school has a successful partnership with other agencies that provide specialist support and guidance for staff. The school has effective arrangements that succeed in supporting pupils' emotional and social needs well, for example through the pupil's voice and wellbeing interventions. This contributes successfully towards creating the school's caring and familial ethos.

The school has purposeful assessment procedures to track pupils' progress, and staff use them to help them to provide learning activities for them. The school has started to develop a new method in order to track pupils' progress and monitor specific groups of pupils in order to ensure a better effect on standards.

There is a valuable and successful working relationship between the school and parents. There are appropriate opportunities for parents to develop their ability to support their children, for example by being given opportunities to attend numeracy and literacy sessions at the school. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily, such as the Trelyn walk and the healthy week activities.

Provision for personal and social development is strong and, as a result, most pupils develop a sound understanding of safety, personal health, mental wellbeing, respect and the importance of considering each other's views. The school provides comprehensive opportunities for pupils to express their views and feelings in a variety of ways around the school, such as the pupil's voice board in each class.

A good range of extra-curricular experiences is provided for pupils of all ages. These include educational off-site visits, such as a visit to St Fagans, welcoming visitors to the school, such as a local artist, cultural activities and sports. There are good opportunities for pupils to perform in the community and on stage in eisteddfodau and concerts. This develops most pupils' self-confidence well and promotes effective co-operation.

The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very successfully. A particular example of this is a monk's visit to the school to work with him on mindfulness sessions and sharing the activity with others by using a computer program. Opportunities to go on residential visits, for example to Cardiff, Glan-llyn and Llangrannog, make a positive contribution towards developing pupils' Welsh language skills. The school provides beneficial opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of being active citizens, for example through the work and support of pupils' leadership groups, such as 'ffrindiau ffyddlon' (faithful friends), the wellbeing and eco council, and the school council.

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

## **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher provides very robust and effective leadership that is based on pupils' good standards and wellbeing. She conveys this vision clearly in order to create a successful caring and inclusive Welsh ethos. Members of the senior management team undertake their curricular responsibilities successfully. However, the leadership roles of members of the senior management team have not yet been developed in full.

Teachers and support staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and fulfil them diligently. Leaders focus the staff's efforts successfully on the school's strategic priorities, for example in relation to developing pupils' wellbeing and raising standards of Welsh. The whole school community is committed to the continuous emphasis of encouraging 'Welshness, effort and respect'.

Leaders follow a monitoring timetable and undertake activities that help them to evaluate the quality of the school's work. These include scrutinising pupils' work, observing lessons and monitoring teachers' plans. As a result, they have a clear picture of how well the school meets its pupils' needs.

The school's latest self-evaluation report is an appropriate document that provides comments on a range of aspects. However, it is not evaluative enough in places and does not identify areas for improvement clearly enough. The school development plan is a working document that identifies the actions to be taken to raise standards. The good arrangements of leaders and governors ensure that they monitor the development plan's main priorities continuously.

Performance management procedures for teachers support the school's improvement activities appropriately and provide opportunities to promote the staff's professional development through a programme of relevant training. The school responds successfully to national and local priorities; for example, it introduces effective strategies to develop the Digital Competence Framework and the Welsh Language Charter. This has a positive effect on pupils' standards.

Leaders and staff work effectively with other schools within the cluster of local schools. For example, work with the secondary school to develop mathematics for more able older pupils in key stage 2 has had a positive effect on pupils' numeracy skills and their ability to apply these skills successfully across the curriculum. In addition, transition arrangements with the secondary school are effective and ensure that pupils transfer confidently to the next stage in their education.

Members of the governing body have thorough knowledge of the school's performance, which enables them to support the school successfully as critical friends. Sub-committees make a good contribution to the school's strategic direction by holding regular activities. For example, when attending learning walks in the classes, talking to pupils helps to give governors a clear overview of the school's work.

The school has good staffing levels. Support staff are an integral part of the team and contribute successfully to pupils' standards, wellbeing and social skills. Leaders use the expertise of individual teachers well in key stage 2 to provide specialist

teaching for pupils in physical education, music and ICT. Teachers make purposeful use of their planning, preparation and assessment time, and the arrangements are managed well.

Leaders allocate the budget appropriately to address the school's priorities for improvement, for example to purchase additional ICT resources and develop the outdoor area. The pupil development grant is used effectively to raise standards of literacy and ensure the wellbeing of specific groups of pupils. This has a positive effect on these pupils' confidence, and their basic skills in literacy and numeracy are developing very successfully. Governors monitor expenditure regularly to ensure that leaders use funding effectively to raise standards and improve provision.

The school has a range of resources of a high standard. The environment is stimulating and displays celebrate pupils' achievements successfully. Teachers have developed the foundation phase's outdoor area very creatively, and it includes interesting equipment that enhances their learning experiences beneficially. The building is well maintained.

## 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.

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