



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

A report on

**Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lôn Las
Walters Road
Llansamlet
Swansea
SA7 9RW**

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by

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

About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lôn Las

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lôn Las is situated in the village of Llansamlet and is maintained by Swansea local authority. There are 482 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 70 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are divided into 17 classes, including one mixed-age class and two nursery classes. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work.

Over a three-year-period, around 7% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is much lower than the national percentage of 18%. Ten per cent of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 22% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is similar to the national percentage of 21%. Very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The school is currently a pioneer school and is working with the Welsh Government and other schools to proceed with developments relating to the curriculum. The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2014 and the school was last inspected in December 2011.

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 school is a caring community that promotes pupils' Welshness and personal development successfully. As a result, nearly all pupils are happy to attend. During their time there, most pupils make sound progress and achieve well. Most behave well and work successfully with their peers, and provide each other with support when needed. They concentrate on their tasks for extended periods and make a valuable contribution to lessons and learning experiences.

Teachers give appropriate consideration to pupils' views when planning interesting themes for them, and ensure that the activities that are provided are consistently good across the classes. Tasks meet most pupils' needs and enable them to make sound progress in their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Staff provide effective support and interventions for pupils with additional learning needs, in addition to those with emotional and social needs.

The headteacher provides clear leadership for the school's work and shares her vision successfully with others. The senior management team makes a valuable contribution to this by analysing data and leading specific aspects of the school's work.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Refine monitoring processes and act more effectively on findings
- R2 Ensure consistently good opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to a higher standard
- R3 Share the best features of teaching effectively across the school

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals, make sound progress as they move through the school and achieve well. Pupils with additional learning needs make effective progress from their starting points.

Most pupils take pride in the Welsh language and use it purposefully when talking to peers and adults. Most pupils' oral skills develop well soon after they start in the nursery class. Across the foundation phase, most use an increasing range of vocabulary successfully in various situations. They listen well to class presentations, and talk and discuss their work enthusiastically. In key stage 2, many pupils speak confidently in Welsh and English. Most listen attentively to each other's views and express their opinions clearly. At the top of the school, most pupils' ability to move seamlessly between the two languages is effective, and they extend their sentences interestingly and maturely during discussions.

Most pupils' reading skills in the foundation phase are developing well. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds and are beginning to build words confidently. By the end of the phase, most read skilfully, correctly and fluently. They show an interest in their books and discuss their content maturely. In key stage 2, most read intelligently in various contexts in both languages. Many vary their tone of voice and use punctuation correctly in order to convey the story effectively. They also develop their higher order reading skills effectively in a variety of contexts. For example, pupils in Year 4 extract relevant facts about birds whilst researching information.

In the foundation phase, most pupils write an increasing range of simple sentences independently, and spell a majority of common words correctly. By Year 2, they write in an appropriate range of contexts for different audiences effectively. Many vary their sentences, punctuate appropriately and begin to use mutations correctly, for example when writing a letter to the First Minister of Wales to complain about litter in Swansea Bay. In key stage 2, most pupils build skilfully on their writing skills in both languages. They adapt the style and structure appropriately for different topics, for example when creating a monologue based on the voyage of the Mimoso to Patagonia. Many pupils use a wide range of adjectives, similes and metaphors to enrich their work in language lessons. However, they do not apply their skills to the same standard consistently when writing independently across the curriculum.

Most pupils' mathematical skills are developing well. They are able to calculate and solve problems mentally with confidence during daily quick-fire sessions. In the foundation phase, most pupils apply their skills effectively in various areas of learning. For example, they use non-standard units to estimate and measure the footprints of characters from stories. Overall, most pupils in key stage 2 use their mathematical skills appropriately in different contexts. For example, they adapt the weight of ingredients correctly in a recipe for bread for different numbers of people. However, pupils do not always use their numeracy skills to the same high level in cross-curricular activities as they do in mathematics lessons.

Across the school, most pupils develop their thinking and physical skills successfully. For example, Year 2 pupils apply these skills successfully when planning and creating a bridge in the outdoor area. Most pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing well. Nearly all pupils in the foundation phase use electronic tablets, recording equipment and programmable toys confidently for different purposes. For example, Year 2 pupils sort the features of leaves and twigs into a Venn diagram by using electronic tablets very effectively. In key stage 2, most pupils use word processing programs, produce multimedia presentations, forms graphs and search on the internet with increasing confidence across the curriculum.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know whom to approach if they have any concerns. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to live healthily and many make good choices in relation to food and physical activity. Most take pride in the wide variety of physical activities that the school provides and commit themselves enthusiastically to extra-curricular activities, such as dance, cross-country running and rugby. This contributes well to developing their physical and social skills. Nearly all pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online, and digital leaders emphasise the importance of e-safety regularly to their peers.

Pupils who are part of the school's various committees develop their responsibilities well. They contribute effectively to all of the school's councils and take pride in the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. For example, the enthusiasm and pride of the 'Crew Siarter Iaith' (Welsh Language Charter Crew) has a very successful effect on the willingness of all pupils at the school to use the Welsh language regularly. The wide range of other councils, such as the eco council, children's rights council and the school council, represent pupils' views effectively and enable them to make purposeful decisions about aspects of school life. For example, the rights council has introduced Right of the Month successfully throughout the school as part of the rights of the child scheme. These pupils are also active in supporting various charities, including the local food bank. This has a positive effect on most pupils' awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world. Nearly all pupils show pride when talking about their school and the wider community. They are very willing to support the local community by performing and taking part in a variety of special occasions.

Most pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around the school. They are kind and caring towards each other and treat adults and visitors with respect and courtesy. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are very willing to discuss their work and successes with adults. They work well with their peers and support each other when necessary. Most pupils show developing co-operation skills in pairs and groups. They concentrate on their tasks for extended periods and make valuable contributions to lessons and learning experiences. Most pupils are developing well as moral and knowledgeable citizens through their increasing awareness of values that are promoted by the school. Their knowledge of global citizenship and other cultures is developing purposefully through the work of the eco council and work within the classroom, for example by learning about the people, religion and culture of India.

Although the school works closely with pupils, parents and the welfare officer to improve pupils' attendance, the school's attendance percentage has been in the lower 50% in comparison with similar schools in three of the last four years.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The good working relationship between pupils and staff is a strong feature of the school's life and work. Staff create a productive learning environment that incorporates the pupil's voice purposefully in the various learning experiences. Teachers present new ideas and themes effectively and vary their teaching methods appropriately, as necessary. Overall, teachers provide pupils with beneficial oral and written comments in order to provide the way forward to improve their work. Staff question pupils probingly and provide suitable opportunities for them to complete work of a high standard and improve it themselves during reflection sessions. However, teachers' expectations are not always ambitious enough to challenge pupils in full.

Pupils' literacy skills are developed soundly across the curriculum. Teachers plan beneficial opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to choose the most appropriate writing style to record their work. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to write more extensively and apply their skills to the same high standard outside their language lessons. The language enrichment scheme has a good effect on most pupils' oral skills. It enables pupils to practise correct language patterns and enrich their Welsh vocabulary. A good example of this is when pupils describe their creative ideas skilfully while working together to build a tractor from different equipment, in order to carry an object safely from one field to another as part of the 'Farm to Fork' theme. Teachers support specific groups of pupils purposefully, for example they promote the reading skills of a group of pupils by holding a reading club on the theme of football.

Teachers plan skilfully to develop pupils' ICT skills through a variety of beneficial learning experiences. This ensures that they build on previous learning successfully in order to develop their skills further as they move through the school. Teachers plan a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. However, tasks do not always challenge them to use these skills to the same high standard that is seen in mathematics lessons.

As part of their pioneer work, teachers develop creative skills in humanities and have shared good practice with other schools. The school is in the process of adapting plans at the bottom of key stage 2 to reflect the principles of the foundation phase. Teachers provide a variety of interesting and rich challenges in the 'havens' and the outdoor learning areas in order for pupils to apply their skills further. For example, pupils use their money skills purposefully as they buy fresh fruit and vegetables from the Farm Shop.

The school provides a rich curriculum about Wales in order to ensure that all pupils are proud of their Welshness. For example, pupils take part in real-life experiences, such as the Twrw Tawe Festival and competing successfully in a wide variety of national activities. Teachers organise a residential visit to north Wales every year as part of the theme 'It's a privilege to be Welsh', which deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding of Welsh history and culture effectively.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Robust systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress ensure that staff identify pupils and specific groups who need additional support at an early stage. They provide effective support for these pupils and monitor the effect of support regularly and purposefully. All pupils with additional learning needs have an individual education plan, which includes suitable and measurable targets. Pupils and parents contribute purposefully to setting and reviewing targets. As a result, most of these pupils make good progress. The school provides interventions that support pupils with emotional and social needs effectively. This ensures that they gain confidence and enables them to play a full part in school life.

The school works effectively with external agencies, who attend the school regularly. Staff make good use of their support in order to improve the progress and wellbeing of pupils and their families successfully. As a result, staff ensure additional resources to support pupils with a range of needs so that they succeed and are ready for the next step in their development.

Leaders and teachers forge robust links with parents in order to develop their ability to support their own children. For example, the school holds valuable parents' evenings that improve parents' understanding of reading strategies, how to improve mental numeracy skills, and current issues such as e-safety. Teachers send pupils' workbooks home every half term so that parents can see and discuss the development of their children's work. 'Bring your parent to school' week is successful in raising parents' awareness of how teachers teach aspects of the curriculum. Parents receive a QR code every year, which enables them to see their children's progress since joining the school, in addition to samples of their work along the way. As a result, parents play a prominent part in their children's education.

Teachers plan teaching thoroughly around the rights of the child. These rights are reinforced often during lessons and in displays around the school. This enables pupils to understand their rights on how to be good, fair and just citizens. The school provides a broad personal and social education scheme that nurtures aspects such as respect, tolerance and equality effectively. The school arranges rich educational visits and visitors which contribute well to pupils' understanding of the importance of nurturing robust social attitudes. This programme includes activities on healthy relationships and substance misuse. This has a positive influence on pupils' ability to work together, respect other people's views and raises their awareness of social dangers.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily among pupils. The school provides a wide range of sports activities and experiences that promote health and fitness well. A variety of arts and academic clubs are also held, which include the photography club, chess club and judo club. As a result, there are opportunities for all pupils to attend, develop their social skills and increase their self-confidence. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school is very active in the local area and the wider community. Pupils develop a strong sense of belonging to their community by visiting and performing for different audiences regularly, such as the local church or in homes for the elderly. The school

organises valuable residential visits for key stage 2 pupils to different parts of Wales and beyond, which nurtures their curiosity and Welshness. The school has good provision to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural attitudes. Pupils are given regular and appropriate opportunities to reflect in collective worship sessions and class assemblies, for example by listening and responding to various religious and moral stories.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides clear leadership for the school's work, which is based on providing a rich curriculum and raising pupils' standards. She shares this vision successfully with staff, pupils, governors and the wider community. Under the headteacher's leadership, the senior management team are developing as confident leaders. They work together effectively as a team to analyse data and lead on specific aspects of the school's work. A good example of this is the way in which they have implemented robust strategies to raise the standards of pupils' spoken Welsh and provide a curriculum that engages pupils' interest. The senior management team meet regularly to monitor progress in order to maintain and raise standards. As a result, staff have a good knowledge of pupils' achievement.

Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of pupils' standards and achievement. They receive comprehensive information from the headteacher about the school's life and work, which reinforces this well. Members of the sub-committees contribute successfully towards setting a strategic direction for the school through beneficial monitoring activities. They have attended classroom sessions alongside parents in order to expand their knowledge of reading and numeracy strategies. Governors conduct learning walks and talk to pupils and staff regularly. All of this develops their understanding of the school's work appropriately and enables them to challenge the school, for example to improve standards of reading.

Overall, the school's self-evaluation processes enable leaders to identify many of the main strengths and areas for improvement. They consider stakeholders' views and gather broad and sensible evidence. Leaders observe lessons and scrutinise pupils' books regularly in order to gather useful first-hand evidence. On the whole, reports that derive from monitoring activities identify strengths and areas for improvement appropriately. However, the focus of monitoring is not always incisive enough. As a result, a few issues, such as the lack of opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to a high level regularly, and the inconsistencies in teaching, are not highlighted clearly enough.

On the whole, leaders use information from the self-evaluation process appropriately in order to set suitable priorities in the development plan. The plan includes an appropriate number of sensible priorities, which focus clearly on improving pupils' standards further. The plan is evaluated regularly by the school's leaders and staff in order to measure progress.

There are effective performance management arrangements in place for teachers and assistants, which are based on the priorities in the development plan. Leaders ensure that staff are given good opportunities to develop professionally. They lead a number of curricular projects and work successfully with a large number of schools in

the cluster and beyond. This co-operation has a positive effect on pupils' standards of oracy, mathematics and ICT.

Leaders manage the budget robustly and ensure that expenditure links well with plans for improvement. The school makes good use of the pupil development grant to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. As a result, most of these pupils achieve as well as their peers.

Copies of the report

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

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

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

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

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