



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

A report on

**Ysgol Gynradd Llangynnwr
Penymorfa Lane
Pensarn
Llangunnor
Carmarthenshire
SA31 2NN**

Date of inspection: September 2017

by

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

About Ysgol Gynradd Llangynnwr

Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Llangynnwr is situated in a rural area close to the town of Carmarthen. It provides education through the medium of Welsh or English for its pupils in two streams. Pupils are taught solely through the medium of Welsh in the nursery and reception classes. Parents choose a language stream for their children from Year 1 onwards. There are 293 pupils between three and eleven years old on roll, including 12 full-time and 15 part-time nursery pupils. They are divided into 11 classes, including four mixed-age classes. There are nine Welsh-medium classes and two English-medium classes.

Approximately 4% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is significantly lower than the national average. A minority of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and a very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified that 24% of its pupils have additional learning needs. Very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in January 2015 and the school was last inspected in June 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

At Ysgol Llangynnwr, pupils' wellbeing is at the heart of the school's work. Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well, are eager to learn and treat others with genuine respect. During their time at the school, most pupils make good progress from their starting points. Teachers provide stimulating activities that develop pupils' skills effectively. One of the school's strengths is the quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs and ensuring pupils' wellbeing. The school benefits from robust leadership, with a strong focus on improving standards and ensuring that all pupils attain high standards.

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 Improve oral Welsh skills in the English stream and pupils' ability in both streams to use the Welsh language when working independently and in informal situations
- R2 Provide enough opportunities for pupils to make choices in relation to their learning and to act more independently, particularly in key stage 2
- R3 Ensure that the actions in the school development plan are incisive enough and that success criteria are measurable to facilitate measuring effect

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the arrangements for additional learning needs education and the effect of intervention programmes on pupils' standards and wellbeing to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many pupils' basic skills correspond to what is expected for their age. Most, including pupils with additional learning needs and the few who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning from their starting points. Many pupils use their thinking skills effectively, for example when solving problems following a visit to Pendine.

Nearly all pupils' early physical skills are developing very robustly. They strengthen their skills by riding bicycles regularly during playtimes and through frequent use of equipment, such as small tongs to pick up words from the ice tub.

Across the school, most pupils listen attentively in lessons and give careful consideration to the views of their peers. They develop their oral skills effectively in English in the English stream, and in both languages in the Welsh stream. They discuss their work confidently and use an increasing range of patterns correctly.

Many pupils' early reading skills are developing effectively. They use their phonological awareness to build unfamiliar words confidently. By Year 2, most pupils discuss their stories enthusiastically and read fluently. In key stage 2, many pupils foster a clear love of reading. By the end of key stage 2, most develop as confident and mature readers. More able pupils compare the styles and writing structure of different authors skilfully. Most pupils gather information from different sources successfully, for example when gathering information about Fair Trade.

At a very early stage, many pupils begin to form letters correctly and write an increasing range of sentences competently, for example when writing about a frog's lifecycle in the reception class. By Year 2, many write confidently and vary their sentences sensibly to create effect in their work. They create information leaflets about volcanoes in Welsh and online safety in English. Across key stage 2, most develop their work interestingly across a wide range of writing forms. They use rhetorical questions skilfully in persuasive texts, for example when writing an argument for and against cutting down trees in the Brazilian rainforest. Nearly all pupils present their work in a polished manner.

Although pupils join the English department with a sound awareness of the Welsh language, most pupils' progress in Welsh is only adequate as they move through the school. By the end of the foundation phase, most use simple sentences suitably when communicating with others. By Year 6, most use simple patterns orally when presenting information about themselves, but they do not use the Welsh language confidently enough in a simple conversation. On the whole, they read fairly confidently and use a suitable range of vocabulary and phrases to write competently. Across the school, in both streams, a minority of pupils do not use the Welsh language when working independently or during informal times.

Most pupils develop a sound awareness of number, shape, measurement and data handling. In Year 2, most measure the outline of their bodies to the nearest centimetre, and more able pupils use centimetres and metres competently. Across

the foundation phase, many use their number skills effectively when solving problems. In key stage 2, most pupils apply their number skills successfully across the curriculum; for example, pupils in Year 4 record the results of an experiment on water temperature correctly on a line graph to show the change in temperature. By Year 6, most solve real life problems skilfully, for example when calculating the cost of lunch for all pupils on their residential trip to Pendine.

Most pupils make purposeful progress in their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In the foundation phase, most handle ICT equipment effectively, for example when recording a performance in the outdoor area. They use art packages skilfully when drawing pictures of skeletons to accompany a story. In key stage 2, most use spreadsheets suitably to record measurements during games lessons and transfer them to a line graph. By Year 6, many use databases appropriately to store information about animals, although their ability to interrogate the database has not yet been developed in full.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils are very well-behaved during lessons, assemblies, when moving around the school and during leisure time. They treat adults and visitors with respect, open doors for them and show pride when talking about their school. Nearly all pupils are caring towards each other and the 'Playground Buddies' look after other pupils during break times and lunchtime. Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know who to approach if they are worried about something. They express their feelings each morning on a computer program and decide with whom they want to share this information. They are confident that the school deals promptly with any concerns they may have. Nearly all pupils believe that the school deals well with any instances of bullying, and pupils have created an effective video to present the school's anti-bullying policy, which is available on its website. Nearly all pupils have a sound awareness of how to stay safe on the internet.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating healthily. They talk about which foods are healthy and the importance of brushing their teeth regularly. They understand the importance of exercise and take pride in the variety of sports clubs that are available during and after school. This promotes their physical fitness successfully.

Nearly all pupils show a positive attitude towards their work and they persevere with their tasks well. They work effectively with their peers in groups and pairs, and respect other people's views. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and develop their life skills and social skills successfully. The 'Dreigiau Digidol' (Digital Dragons) conduct valuable workshops that have a positive effect on improving the digital skills of pupils and staff. The 'Prefects' help to maintain order and pupils' safety as they leave school assemblies and as they come back into the school after playtimes and lunchtime.

Most pupils take pride in the opportunities that they are given to play a part in their community, for example by taking part in church services and contributing to radio programmes.

Attendance rates over the last three years have improved each year. Over the same period, the percentage of pupils who are absent frequently has reduced significantly.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of teaching across the school is good, for the most part. This is based on a close working relationship between staff and pupils, with a strong focus on creating a safe learning environment for all pupils.

Teachers and learning assistants know their pupils well and, in general, tailor classroom activities to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities successfully. Most teachers have high expectations and use a variety of learning strategies effectively. Most teachers ensure that lessons have a lively pace. They ensure that pupils are given valuable opportunities to work in pairs, groups and independently, and they question skilfully to encourage pupils to think successfully. In general, lesson presentations are lively and stimulate pupils to learn effectively; for example, staff dress up as the 'Cogydd Cynnwr' and Dentist characters, to present healthy eating activities in a fun way for pupils in the Foundation Phase.

Over the last two years, the school has improved the use of formative assessment strategies. This ensures valuable opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers against success criteria. In a very few classes, effective opportunities are provided to offer improvements on the work of pupils in other schools through blogging. In general, nearly all teachers provide effective oral feedback in order to move learning forward. Written comments provide pupils with beneficial feedback on how to improve their subsequent work, but there are not always enough opportunities to improve the content of work.

Teachers plan in detail to ensure continuity and progression in subject skills and literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. In the foundation phase, teachers plan thematically and include pupils' ideas appropriately in planning. They ensure an appropriate balance between adult-led activities and purposeful opportunities for pupils to work independently. In the few most effective examples, pupils make decisions about their learning; for example, following a presentation on measurement, a group of pupils decide to build a stage in the outdoor area by measuring the sides in centimetres.

In key stage 2, teachers plan a number of exciting projects that develop pupils' skills successfully; for example, work on gender equality around the world provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. They calculate the ratio of women and men who influence and make important decisions in the community by looking at data on the internet. However, routine planning does not always enable teachers to be flexible enough to respond to pupils' ideas and interests.

The school has valuable arrangements for ensuring that pupils from the English stream and Welsh stream receive the same opportunities and experiences. Staff plan jointly in order to ensure consistency between the departments beneficially. Grouping pupils across the departments for English lessons has a positive effect on pupils' English skills.

The school enriches the curriculum successfully with a wide range of visits relating to the school's work and by inviting visitors to the school. Projects such as working with a local poet ensure valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy, ICT and creative skills effectively.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy, caring and inclusive community which places a great emphasis on pupils' wellbeing. High quality support is given to pupils with emotional, health and social needs and this supports pupils to engage very well with their learning. An exceptional example of support is the use of construction toys to enable pupils to talk about their feelings in small, informal groups. This gives them the necessary skills to prepare them for life outside school.

The school has very useful procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and wellbeing. These procedures enable teachers to identify the needs of individuals and groups of pupils at a very early stage. Use of the data-tracking system ensures that staff target groups of pupils beneficially and provide for them. The wide and comprehensive range of intervention programmes and strategies enable pupils and groups of pupils to make very strong progress in their learning and personal development. A programme to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills has a very positive effect on pupils' skills.

Pupils with additional learning needs have effective individual education plans. Plans are specific and measurable, and pupils and parents contribute purposefully to setting targets. The school works closely with local schools in order to share good practice to ensure high quality support for these pupils.

The school has a rich personal and social education programme that promotes aspects such as equality, diversity and sustainability effectively. The emphasis on developing values is prominent in school life. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school promotes practices to stay healthy successfully. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy eating and drinking practices. They ensure beneficial opportunities for them to undertake exercise sessions in lessons and extra-curricular sessions. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular experiences in order to promote pupils' fitness effectively, including a skiing club and a running club.

Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is effective. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to experiment with a range of art media and to work with a variety of local artists in order to display their work in the local art gallery. Pupils are given a number of beneficial opportunities to perform and sing at school and in the community. The school choir performs regularly in the local church and in the town, and pupils compete regularly in local and national Eisteddfodau.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher has a clear vision and high expectations for the school. He succeeds in sharing this vision effectively with staff, governors, parents and pupils. Since being appointed, he has created a clear strategic direction for the school, which is based on raising pupils' standards and wellbeing. The respect and ethos of very close co-operation between the senior management team and staff are evident. With the keen support of staff and governors, the headteacher has developed a new system that distributes responsibilities effectively. This leads to improvements in

provision and standards, and ensures clear lines of accountability; for example, the high quality provision for pupils with additional learning needs has a positive effect on their standards and wellbeing. The work of strengthening attendance procedures has improved pupils' attendance and reduced the percentage of pupils who are absent regularly.

Leaders use meetings as effective media to discuss performance data and planning, and to monitor progress against the school's priorities. Through skilful use of rigorous performance management procedures, leaders hold staff to account for their performance successfully.

The school responds well to local and national priorities; for example, the school is preparing for the new curriculum by experimenting with setting specific challenges for pupils at the bottom of key stage 2, which are based on the principles of the foundation phase. The school is preparing purposefully to implement the Digital Competence Framework.

The governors are very supportive, meet regularly and fulfil their duties conscientiously. They evaluate their own work beneficially and have established a strategic committee to focus in more detail on data, standards, self-evaluation and developing the school. This has strengthened their understanding of the school's strengths and shortcomings. They operate well as critical friends and challenge the school and hold it to account for its performance.

A culture of continuous self-evaluation is embedded deeply in the school's life. The headteacher has established a rigorous and robust self-evaluation procedure, which develop the staff's understanding of the school's strengths and shortcomings successfully. The self-evaluation document is detailed and based on a wide range of evidence. There is a clear link between the outcomes of the self-evaluation process and the school development plan. The plan, although rather bulky, includes purposeful improvement targets and clear priorities. Overall, it is an effective tool to improve provision and raise standards; for example, work to improve extended writing has had a positive effect on pupils' ability to write purposefully in a wide range of writing forms. However, actions in the development plan are not always clear enough, and success criteria are not always quantitative enough to enable leaders to measure progress wholly effectively.

Leaders ensure valuable professional development opportunities for teachers and support staff. The training that has been provided to develop assessment for learning strategies has led to effective use of these strategies in most classes.

The school is staffed appropriately and makes effective use of individuals' skills to enrich teaching and learning; for example, staff expertise is used skilfully to teach subjects such as art and physical education. They make valuable use of learning resources to enrich the curriculum. Recently, the school has improved the outdoor area, and teachers plan purposeful activities in order to improve pupils' skills when working outdoors.

Leaders manage the budget carefully and ensure that expenditure links well with plans for improvement. The school makes effective use of the Pupil Development Grant to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of vulnerable pupils.

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.

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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