



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol I D Hooson  
Heol Caradoc  
Pentredwr  
Rhos  
Wrexham  
LL14 2DX**

**Date of inspection: February 2019**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol I D Hooson

Ysgol I D Hooson is a designated bilingual primary school. It is situated in the village of Rhosllanerchrugog on the outskirts of the town of Wrexham. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 311 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 36 nursery age pupils. The school has 13 mixed-age classes, including two nursery classes.

Over the last three years, around 10% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is significantly lower than the national percentage (18%). Around 5% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified around 12% of 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 April 2016. The school was last inspected in May 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 and inclusive community where pupils and adults work together effectively. As a result, pupils are happy to attend, behave very well and develop positive attitudes to learning. During their time there, most develop as competent and confident bilingual learners, make sound progress and achieve well.

The school has a very strong Welsh ethos, and provision encourages pupils to make full use of the Welsh language. Pupils show pride towards the language and a clear appreciation of the local area's culture and history. Teachers plan practical, stimulating and rich learning experiences with a prominent emphasis on developing pupils' creative and expressive skills. This is a strong feature of the school and contributes highly effectively towards improving pupils' outcomes and wellbeing.

The headteacher and management team provide sound leadership, which provides a clear strategic direction for the school. Staff are dedicated and enthusiastic, and work together closely as a team. They show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements. Governors have a rigorous understanding of the school and use their knowledge purposefully to challenge the school and hold it to account for standards.

<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 Share the best features of teaching across the school in order to ensure that all pupils are challenged to achieve to the best of their ability
- R2 Strengthen opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to improve their numeracy skills and aspects of their ICT skills across the curriculum

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress as they move through the school, and achieve well.

Although the Welsh language is new to nearly all pupils on entry to the school, most pupils' oral skills develop soundly and very quickly in the nursery and reception class. Across the foundation phase, most use an increasing range of vocabulary successfully in various situations, for example as pupils from Years 1 and 2 discuss their work on the Gruffalo. Most pupils in key stage 2 build well on this firm foundation, show pride in the Welsh language and choose to use the language to socialise during playtime, as well as in their lessons. Most communicate clearly in Welsh and English, and contribute purposefully to class discussions in both languages. At the top of the school, many discuss their work intelligently and maturely, and use extensive and rich vocabulary to create effect, for example when discussing the life of Anne Frank.

Most pupils enjoy reading and make good progress every year. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds correctly and are beginning to recognise words confidently. By Year 2, most read meaningfully and with expression, and discuss the content of their books maturely. In key stage 2, most pupils read intelligently in both languages. They develop their higher order reading skills effectively in various contexts, for example when searching for information about the Chinese New Year.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their early writing skills successfully. They develop sound writing skills by the end of the phase. They write independently, understand different writing styles well and extend their ideas effectively, for example when presenting an information leaflet about recycling. As they move through key stage 2, most pupils write at length in both languages, and use paragraphs and punctuation with increasing accuracy. By Year 6, most adapt their style and structure for different topics skilfully, for example when writing an imaginary story about the life of a child during the Second World War. However, the standard of a few pupils' presentation and handwriting are not neat enough.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their mathematical development. By Year 2, they have a sound grasp of number facts, handle money correctly and develop a good understanding of measurement. They apply their skills successfully, for example through practical experiences, such as building a sand castle for Owain Glyndŵr. Most pupils in key stage 2 build well on this firm foundation. By Year 6, most use a wide range of problem-solving methods confidently, for example when calculating the perimeter to estimate the cost of a fence around a garden. However, they do not always use their numeracy skills to the same level in activities across the curriculum as they do in mathematics lessons.

Most pupils make purposeful use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their work across the curriculum. Many pupils in the foundation phase use electronic tablets confidently to record their work. They control an electronic toy correctly and play adventure games skilfully. They use simple

databases confidently to record the different materials that are recycled by the class. Most pupils in key stage 2 use the internet effectively to search for information, and create multimedia presentations successfully to present their findings, for example on the Tudor period. By Year 6, many use databases confidently to create graphs to show which cities evacuees to Wales came from during the Second World War. However, only a minority of pupils in key stage 2 develop a good understanding of data-handling to enable them to follow specific lines of enquiry across the curriculum.

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

Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their work. They are hardworking and enthusiastic learners who work together in harmony and stay diligently on task for extended periods. Most show good levels of motivation, interest and pride in their work. This contributes successfully to the ethos of effective learning within the school and has a positive effect on many pupils' standards.

In the foundation phase, most pupils show a sound understanding of classroom organisation and move around the various areas confidently and independently. They are always ready to learn, concentrate well and show resilience when facing new challenges. Most pupils in key stage 2 appreciate the opportunities they are given to influence what they would like to learn within the term's theme. They show an increasing ability to plan jointly, for example for the 'awr arbennig' (special hour) and to express an opinion about what they are learning. This engages them and motivates them to learn successfully.

Nearly all pupils enjoy school, are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and feel completely safe there. They know who to approach for advice should anything worry them, and are confident that the school will respond promptly to any concerns they may have. Most pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Nearly all are polite and thoughtful, and treat visitors with respect and care. They are caring towards each other during break times and lunch time, and older pupils are very willing to undertake roles and responsibilities, such as 'mêts grêt' (great mates), by helping to care for the younger pupils and encouraging them to play during break time. This promotes care and responsibility among pupils. Most have a good awareness of the importance of staying safe online.

Most pupils are glad of the opportunities they are given to develop their leadership skills. Through various committees and groups that represent pupils, they contribute appropriately to the school's life and work. For example, the Welsh Language Charter Committee leads successful activities to promote the use of the Welsh language in the classroom and socially. Pupils take pride in the opportunities they are given to support various charities, such as Children in Need and collecting Christmas boxes for children who are less fortunate than themselves. This has a positive effect on their awareness of the needs of others in the community and the wider world.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and exercising regularly. The school council promotes healthy eating by organising a fruit and healthy snack shop every day. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of keeping fit and undertake physical activity energetically and regularly, for example in running and gymnastics clubs.

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

Teachers form a good working relationship with pupils, and motivate and manage pupils' behaviour successfully. There is a positive and supportive learning environment in nearly all classes. This leads to effective co-operation and develops pupils' enthusiasm towards learning. All staff take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' language, which contributes successfully to their oral skills. 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. As a result, pupils develop as competent and confident bilingual learners.

Most teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods, which motivate pupils to learn. They have good, up-to-date subject knowledge and use this skilfully when planning interesting lessons and rich learning experiences. They link their lessons effectively with previous learning, explain new concepts clearly and ensure that sessions have a good pace. They provide tasks that are tailored appropriately for the range of ability within the classes. This contributes successfully towards ensuring that most pupils make progress and achieve well. Where teaching is at its best, imaginative presentations and the pace of lessons are strong features of teaching. Teachers have very high expectations and use open-ended questions very successfully in order to encourage pupils to think for themselves. As a result, pupils have the confidence to try, and undertake tasks enthusiastically and independently. In the few classes in which teaching is less effective, teachers have a tendency to over-direct, which limits pupils' ability to work independently. This also limits the level of challenge, particularly for more able pupils.

Teachers provide pupils with positive feedback and intervene sensitively. This supports pupils at appropriate times during the lesson, for example to encourage them to check their progress against lesson objectives and success criteria. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work. However, opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments in their books are inconsistent.

The principles of the foundation phase have been embedded successfully and teachers include pupils' ideas effectively. They plan an effective balance of activities that are led by staff and opportunities for pupils to work independently in the learning areas. Staff use the areas within the classroom very effectively, for example when creating the little gingerbread man's house and a castle with ancient artefacts for Owain Glyndŵr. They also make full use of the outdoor areas, for example as pupils from Years 1 and 2 find different materials to make a magic potion in the forest area. This strengthens their commitment to their work very effectively. These activities provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills effectively across the areas of learning.

Key stage 2 teachers plan purposefully to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in language and mathematics lessons. They provide comprehensive opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh and English skills across the curriculum, for example by encouraging pupils in Years 5 and 6 to try to solve Ysbadden Bencawr's task to find his golden comb. However, there are no regular opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and ICT skills to a high level across the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to develop their data-handling and modelling skills have not been developed

effectively enough in order for them to apply these skills regularly across the curriculum. The school has given careful consideration to the Digital Competence Framework and is beginning to address the gaps in its current provision.

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

Staff create a happy, welcoming and inclusive ethos at the school, where everyone is respected and valued. This has a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing. They promote the importance of good behaviour, courtesy, respect and commitment effectively. As a result, nearly all pupils behave positively towards each other and most respond conscientiously to all activities. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Collective worship periods ensure valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect, consider the views of others and promote the school's values, such as perseverance.

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. Teachers plan numerous opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of Welsh heritage and culture, for example through interesting themes that are based on the myth of Culhwch and Olwen, and the history of Owain Glyndŵr. The community is of the utmost importance to the school, and teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' knowledge of their local area and its well-known people, particularly the poet I.D. Hooson. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of community activities and local visits. A good example of this is the work of older pupils to create the film, 'Rhos Rhyfedd', about the village. As a result, pupils show pride in their local area.

Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is highly effective, through animation workshops, studying Welsh artists, music lessons, clubs and competing in eisteddfodau. This contributes very successfully towards nurturing their self-confidence, expressive abilities and their ability to work as a team. The school celebrates individuals' personal achievements regularly, and pupils are praised on the 'Wal Wych' (Great Wall), the 'Gôl Amser Aur' (Golden Time Goal) and in morning assemblies. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm, and encourages them to take pride in their work and play a full part in the school and the wider community.

Teachers provide positive opportunities for pupils to join various pupil's voice councils, which have a positive effect on aspects of the school's life and work. For example, the attendance committee has emphasised the importance of good attendance enthusiastically. The wellbeing council has received training on how to deal with any difficulties that may arise. This has prepared a group of pupils to address, discuss and try to solve problems that arise between their peers. This promotes their social skills and life skills successfully. However, there is an element of teachers over-directing the activities of these councils, which limits opportunities for pupils to develop their co-operation and leadership skills in full.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily. This has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of aspects that affect their health and wellbeing. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.



The school has appropriate arrangements for tracking pupils' progress and wellbeing. Teachers use the information that derives from these procedures skilfully to ensure effective support for pupils and specific groups that need additional support. Staff identify pupils' additional learning and personal needs from an early age in order to implement appropriate interventions to enable them to make sound progress in their learning. Teachers provide good quality individual education plans for these pupils. Learning assistants are used effectively across the school to support pupils in their learning and to implement a range of intervention programmes. Staff evaluate pupils' progress regularly, and pupils and parents play a full part in the revision process.

The school provides pupils with valuable pastoral support. It provides interventions that support pupils with emotional needs effectively. This ensures that they are given an opportunity to express their feelings and enables them to become well-rounded members of school life. Staff work effectively with a number of specialist agencies, which ensure valuable support and guidance for pupils and their parents. The school forges productive relationships with parents. Appropriate communication methods ensure that parents are able to raise any issues that concern them about their children's education and wellbeing. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress and targets.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher provides robust and effective leadership, which ensures a clear strategic direction for the school. He has a vision that is based on nurturing respect and encouraging all pupils to succeed in a caring Welsh environment. He succeeds in conveying that vision successfully to staff, pupils, parents and governors.

Under the headteacher's leadership, the senior management team are developing as confident leaders. Staff are dedicated, work together closely as a team and fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously and effectively. They show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements by coming together to discuss regularly and plan jointly. These meetings focus firmly on standards and priorities for improvement. Thorough attention is given to reviewing the effect of previous actions, and decision and next steps are identified very clearly. The school has established cross-school teams to work on the new curriculum, which ensures valuable opportunities for staff to track and monitor pupils' progress, evaluate provision and contribute towards setting targets for improvement. This provides a clear focus for all of the staff's work and contributes well towards ensuring continuous improvement.

The self-evaluation process is at the heart of the school's life and work, and there is a clear focus on pupils' outcomes. Regular monitoring activities are a key part of the school's process to raise standards continuously. Most of the monitoring reports that are prepared by leaders are useful and rigorous. They provide a clear picture of standards and provision. This ensures that they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The process is based on a good range of first-hand evidence of pupils' achievement, which includes lesson observations, scrutinising pupils' work and conducting learning walks. Leaders provide beneficial opportunities to seek and respond to the views of pupils and parents when identifying priorities for improvement. The self-evaluation report identifies the school's strengths clearly and ensures that staff have a sound understanding of the areas that need further attention. There is a clear link between

the findings of the self-evaluation process and the priorities in the school development plan, which focus clearly on improving provision and raising standards.

The governing body is dedicated and supportive of the school. By working with staff, observing lessons and discussing examples of work with pupils, governors play an active part in the school's self-evaluation processes. This, in addition to receiving purposeful reports from the headteacher, leads to a rigorous understanding of the provision's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, governors' strategic role as critical friends is developing successfully and enables them to challenge the school about its performance effectively.

The headteacher ensures valuable opportunities for staff to benefit from professional learning activities that are relevant to achieve the school's priorities. This supports their professional development effectively and has a positive effect on the quality of teaching. A good example of this is the commitment of Year 3 and 4 teachers in adopting aspects of the foundation phase philosophy in order to provide more opportunities for pupils to guide their own learning. Leaders ensure that there are beneficial opportunities for staff to take part in working groups and to visit other schools to observe good practice. This has led to improving pupils' oracy and writing skills. Staff address recent developments in education enthusiastically, for example when preparing for the new curriculum and introducing the digital competence framework.

Leaders manage resources effectively to provide a range of varied and rich learning experiences for pupils. They allocate funding appropriately in order to meet the school's priorities and monitor expenditure carefully. The school uses a range of grants purposefully, including the pupil development grant, to enrich provision through a good number of intervention programmes that contribute towards developing pupils' literacy skills and promoting their wellbeing.

## 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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