



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

**A report on**

**Glanhowy Primary School  
Coach Bach  
Tredegar  
Blaenau Gwent  
NP22 4RW**

**Date of inspection: February 2018**

**by**

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

## About Glanhowy Primary School

Glanhowy Primary School is in Tredegar in the Blaenau Gwent local authority. There are 302 pupils, including 54 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school has a learning resource base for 12 pupils with additional learning needs. The pupils attending the resource base are from outside the school's catchment area and are placed there by the local authority.

The rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 33%, which is well above the national average of 19%. The school identifies 27% of pupils as having additional learning needs, a figure above the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have statements of special educational needs. No pupils come from Welsh speaking homes. There are a very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school's last inspection was in October 2010. The headteacher took up her appointment in September 2014.

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 good progress in developing their skills as they move through the school. They apply themselves well to the stimulating lessons and benefit from the teaching of good quality that they receive. Throughout the school, most pupils with additional needs achieve well. Nearly all pupils in the learning resource base make steady progress, frequently from very low starting-points.

Almost all pupils behave very well and have a positive attitude to their learning. In lessons, nearly all pupils are attentive to their teachers and are eager to do well. Most develop their personal and social skills to a high standard and show respect and concern for others. The headteacher promotes a clear vision and provides strong leadership to an improving school. Governors understand their role and support the school effectively.

Self-evaluation procedures succeed in identifying appropriate strengths and areas for development. The processes around school improvement, such as the delivery of the school development plan, are effective. The school has a good track record in making improvements, for example the significant changes to the learning environment and the remodelling of the outdoor provision in the foundation phase. Teachers make effective use of these spaces to encourage imaginative and creative learning through play.

<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 Improve spelling and standards of handwriting
- R2 Raise standards in use of oral Welsh
- R3 Ensure that pupils understand more clearly what they should achieve during lessons in key stage 2
- R4 Ensure assessment is consistent and accurate when judging higher levels of attainment

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

Many pupils start school with literacy, numeracy, personal and social skills that are below those expected for their age. As they move through the school, most pupils make at least good progress and a few make very good progress. Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress from their starting points.

Throughout the foundation phase, nearly all pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. In the nursery, most develop early confidence in speaking. In reception classes, many retell story books enthusiastically with the aid of puppets. Pupils in the foundation phase listen attentively to adults and respond appropriately to questions. In Year 2, many explain tasks effectively. For example, they describe how to make an Italian flag, what materials they will use and the correct colours. Most pupils are enthusiastic about reading. They use their knowledge of sounds effectively to tackle unfamiliar words. In Year 2, the more able pupils read well and talk about the events and characters in their books. Many pupils write successfully for various purposes, such as writing a letter to cheer up the Grinch at Christmas. They use basic punctuation to organise their work into sentences. However, too many pupils do not develop their handwriting effectively by the end of foundation phase.

By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils speak confidently and clearly. They collaborate well and respect each other's views. For example, Year 6 pupils listen well to each other when working in pairs to discuss, research and make a database about planets in the solar system. Most pupils in key stage 2 enjoy reading. They demonstrate good understanding of what they read in factual or fiction texts. Most pupils learn to write lists of facts and instructions in appropriate ways. They label charts and illustrations in their books appropriately and older pupils record their scientific experiments well. Many use different types of guidance sheets effectively to help plan the content of their writing for different purposes. However, many pupils in key stage 2 do not write legibly or develop joined writing. This limits their ability to write fluently and standards of spelling are weak overall. This reduces the capacity for more able pupils to achieve as well as they could in their written work.

In the resource base, nearly all pupils make steady progress, frequently from very low starting points. They develop writing, numeracy and listening skills well and to the best of their ability. For example, the standard of listening is particularly high during the 'Attention Autism' session for foundation phase pupils where many listen attentively to a story. Pupils in key stage 2 listen well in lessons and respond appropriately and most speak confidently. More able pupils in the resource base read texts at a suitably challenging level and use phonics well to support their reading. In written work, a few use basic punctuation and spell simple words correctly and are beginning to use more extended descriptions. They use these skills appropriately, for example in science to record their work on plants.

Pupils respond well to teachers' use of Welsh when giving instructions, praise and encouragement. This is a particular strength in the foundation phase where a

majority of pupils develop their vocabulary and listening skills well. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils use the past tense in their written work, such as when writing profiles about Welsh sports personalities. However, pupils overall are not confident enough in speaking Welsh within and outside of designated Welsh lessons.

Most pupils develop their mathematical skills well. In the foundation phase, many have a good understanding of basic number facts, order numbers to 100 and count in multiples of 2, 5 or 10 confidently. Many understand the use of different units, such as centimetres and grams. For example, Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of tens and hundreds correctly to weigh chocolates into sets of 100g or 1,000g as part of their work on 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils apply suitable calculation strategies to solve mathematical problems. Many Year 6 pupils estimate percentages of a quantity confidently. They use their number skills effectively in science experiments to record how far people of different sizes can jump. They record their findings in tables and scatter graphs and draw out accurate conclusions from their findings.

Most pupils in the learning resource base make steady progress in learning to count. More able pupils sequence numbers to 20 accurately and identify missing numbers from the sequence. Pupils in key stage 2 continue to develop their number skills appropriately and measure accurately using centimetres.

Most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively. Most store and access their previous work competently on the school's systems. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes use tablet computers well in their planned activities. In Year 1 and 2 classes, most pupils make good progress finding information for their tasks. For example, they use the QR barcodes in books and around the school proficiently. In lessons, Year 2 pupils compose emails effectively. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils use ICT confidently to draft and present their writing. Most research on the internet competently and know how to present their findings effectively using embedded images and sounds. They have a good knowledge of how to use the internet safely and how to avoid dangers when using ICT. Most pupils learn how to use basic graph and database applications appropriately, but their knowledge of spreadsheets is limited.

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

Almost all pupils behave very well in classes and when moving around the school. They treat visitors with respect and maturity. Most are sensitive to the needs of others, including younger pupils and pupils from the learning resource base that they encounter in shared activities and at break times.

The positive attitude and enthusiasm nearly all pupils have for learning is a major strength of the school. In lessons, nearly all pupils are attentive to their teachers and are eager to do well. In key stage 2, most pupils work effectively together. They listen to each other and apply themselves positively to working in pairs or in groups. In the foundation phase, most remain on task and many develop their independence well and make choices as they move from one activity to another.

Nearly all pupils feel secure in school and are confident that adults will listen to their concerns and deal with any problems. Pupils operate the 'playground buddy' system enthusiastically and groups of pupils are ready to assist their classmates on the playground. Nearly all play well together at break times, share spaces fairly and use ball games and other equipment safely and with appropriate concern for other pupils.

In relation to their starting points, most pupils in the learning resource base begin to develop their social awareness and their understanding of fairness and respect for others successfully. Nearly all control their behaviour for most of the time and show respect to staff and others.

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise. They are aware of the importance of physical activity and many play vigorous games at break times. Pupils in Year 6 speak with understanding about why it benefits them to have physical education lessons and to walk or run 'the daily mile'. Many pupils complete this activity as a programmed part of the school day. Pupils support extra-curricular sports activities well. Most pupils of different ages talk knowledgeably about sensible food choices from the school kitchen and know what makes up a healthy lunch box. The majority of pupils have healthy fruit snacks at break times, but a very few bring unhealthy snacks to school.

Pupils throughout the school take on roles of responsibility purposefully. For example, pupils in the foundation phase are keen to serve as 'Helpwr Heddiw' and enjoy wearing their high-visibility jackets in this role and helping staff and other pupils throughout the day. In assembly, pupils in key stage 2 who have been elected as members of 'Cryw Cymraeg', digital leaders or members of the eco committee speak enthusiastically about ways they can help others. Other pupils are aware of how the school council has collected pupils' views and helped influence school decisions, such as the changing of extra-curricular activities or choosing new playground markings.

Most pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. They relate positively to visual displays and competitions to encourage high levels of attendance. As a result, levels of attendance have improved and persistent absenteeism has fallen in the last four years. The school is now in the higher 50% when compared with similar schools.

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Throughout the school, teachers deploy additional practitioners effectively in their classrooms and in outdoor areas. Staff follow agreed procedures consistently for managing pupils' behaviour. This ensures an orderly environment for learning throughout the school and supports the good progress of pupils in classes effectively.

Teachers in the foundation phase have created exciting learning environments indoors and outdoors. They make effective use of these spaces to encourage imaginative and creative learning through play. This enables them to deliver rich experiences and promotes effective foundation phase learning from the nursery through to Year 2. There is a good balance between tasks directed by the teacher

and child-led learning. This supports many pupils to develop their confidence successfully from entry to the school. Pupils have a wide variety of opportunities to choose how they would like to learn and therefore many develop their independent learning skills well.

In the learning resource base, specialist teachers have developed class bases, sensory rooms and surrounding spaces skilfully to provide a very supportive and engaging learning environment. This offers a wide range of resources that supports the specific needs of pupils effectively. Teachers and specially trained additional practitioners provide established routines that ensure a calm, purposeful atmosphere. They plan teaching and learning of high quality. As a result, staff ensure nearly all pupils complete tasks even when pupils require a significant level of support to achieve the learning objective.

In foundation phase and key stage 2, there is a wide range of support groups that focus on developing pupils skills. Teachers and additional practitioners structure and lead these groups well. Systems to identify pupils who might benefit from these interventions are effective and enable nearly all pupils who need additional support to make good progress. The school's programme delivers sound support for pupils to develop their basic skills and also for more able pupils to improve their performance. For example, the accelerated reading programme enhances the performance of pupils of all abilities successfully.

Throughout the school, many teachers regularly use incidental and instructional Welsh in the classroom and facilitate pupil responses in Welsh. However, the promotion of Welsh beyond designated Welsh lessons is limited.

Nearly all teachers plan a variety of stimulating topics and ensure pupils receive a balanced curriculum and opportunities to apply a range of skills. In key stage 2, most teaching moves pupils' learning forward at a good pace and staff ask questions that promote pupils' thinking effectively. Teaching assistants are adept at assisting the class by supporting small group activities. For example, in Year 6, they undertake work on finding the best value for money on supermarket deals using fractions and percentages.

Classroom environments in key stage 2 support learning well with many useful and attractive displays. However, they do not celebrate pupils' own work enough.

Most teachers explain learning objectives in lessons and assist pupils in judging how well they are making progress. They provide pupils with useful feedback in their books and indicate next steps in learning to which pupils respond. However, approaches in lessons are inconsistent in key stage 2 classes and pupils are sometimes unclear about exactly what they need to do to succeed. The school has suitable procedures in place to standardise judgements to ensure the assessment of pupils' learning is accurate, but teachers do not always apply agreed criteria carefully enough when judging standards at higher levels.

The school provides valuable opportunities for children to visit places of interest, particularly in Wales, to support pupils' learning in a range of learning areas. For example, the school visits Newport Wetlands to promote scientific learning and St Fagans museum to enhance pupils' learning about history.

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

The school provides a safe, caring environment for pupils. The provision for pupils who need additional support is strong. There are effective procedures to track and monitor the progress of pupils who receive additional support. The additional needs co-ordinators have a clear strategic approach. Staff develop useful individual plans for pupils and identified pupils in all classes receive the support they require to reach their full potential. The school's additional practitioners receive appropriate training and work effectively with teachers to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and to support their emotional needs.

Within mainstream classes, there are effective procedures for recording and monitoring the progress of individual pupils. Senior leaders operate a cycle of regular meetings throughout the year with class teachers. These ensure that teachers target the right pupils accurately and give them the assistance they require to make progress.

Staff offer parents a suitable range of opportunities to find out about the work their children are doing in school. Regular consultations provide good opportunities for parents to learn how to support their children's wellbeing and learning. Teachers and the headteacher are visible and accessible to parents each day and parents are confident that they can raise issues with staff and receive a prompt response. End-of-year reports to parents provide useful information about the next steps that pupils need to take to improve in different subjects or areas of learning.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Pupils of all ages have an appropriate awareness of how to be safe online.

The school has effective arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking. Water bottles are accessible to all pupils in the classrooms and a fruit shop is available to pupils at break times. The curriculum provides at least two physical education sessions a week. The school also promotes the 'the daily mile' effectively. Teachers provide a suitable range of extra curricular sports throughout the year in which many pupils participate.

The school develops pupils' personal and social skills well. Collaborative working between pupils is central to classroom activities. Pupils develop their spirituality by writing their own prayers and through learning about differences in world religions. In opportunities provided through activities such as the 'playground buddies' scheme, pupils learn tolerance and to respect the needs of others. The digital leaders readily assist younger pupils. In regular assemblies and in their study of history, pupils consider moral issues. For example in their writing they consider how people were treated in Nazi Germany.

Teachers promote pupils' cultural development well through a range of music, dance, and creative experiences. For example, weekly sessions include dancing the samba and playing Taiko drums. Each year pupils have the opportunity to perform an end of year show in partnership with others in the local theatre.

The school has in place suitable strategies to promote good attendance. These are beginning to have a positive impact.

## **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher provides strong leadership and has a clear vision for the school which she shares with all staff effectively. This creates a positive and supportive school ethos. The headteacher sets high expectations, challenges her staff appropriately, where required, and develops their expertise successfully. Management structures are clear and staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Senior leaders support the headteacher well and nearly all staff carry out their duties with commitment and enthusiasm.

The governing body supports the school strongly and also provides good levels of challenge to senior leaders. Governors understand key performance information, take an active part in the school's self-evaluation processes and discuss and query improvement plans well. They have been active in organising their own training and in learning about school initiatives. For example, they have explored how the school is implementing the national digital competency framework. Governors have a good awareness of the schools' strategic priorities. They understand their role and discharge their statutory duties well.

The school development plans and self-evaluation processes have a direct impact on the life and work of the school. Leaders and other staff engage in monitoring activities that correctly identify areas for development. These include scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. They make plans that are costed and structured well to provide effective outcomes. Analysis of pupil information over time informs this process and allows the school to target improvements that have led to improved pupil performance. For example the school has raised standards in reading through the introduction of its 'Accelerated Reading' programme. The school has also made significant improvements to the learning environment, such as the remodelling of the outdoor foundation phase provision. This has assisted the development of good practice.

Performance management systems within the school are effective. All teachers and support staff have relevant targets linked closely to national and school priorities as well as the needs of the individual. Nearly all staff appreciate their performance management as an aid to their development. For example, initiatives for developing the role of all subject leaders have enabled them to take stronger leadership roles in whole-school planning.

Senior leaders encourage a high level of teamwork. All staff collaborate enthusiastically to achieve positive outcomes for pupils. They share aspects of professional practice well with other schools. For example, after a visit to a comprehensive school, staff learnt different approaches to team working. As a result they reorganised their own systems to improve understanding between staff working in different phases in the school

The school uses its pupil development grant well to identify a large number of activities that support specific improvement in the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils eligible for free school meals. The headteacher, in conjunction with the school finance clerk, monitors finances rigorously. The school currently has an appropriate level of surplus for which there are clear priorities. Spending decisions relate closely to priorities in the school development plan.

## 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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