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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on
Ysgol Craig y Don
Clarence Road
Craig y Don
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 1TR**

Date of inspection: January 2011

by

Gareth Wyn Roberts

for

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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

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Context

This primary community school, controlled by Conwy County Council, is situated in the Craig y Don area of the North Wales coastal resort of Llandudno. The school currently has 441 pupils aged 4-11 years, and a full time equivalent of 27 nursery children, on roll.

Nearly all the pupils come from English speaking homes. Fewer than two per cent of pupils are fluent in Welsh. Eight per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority or mixed race groups and six per cent are learning English as an additional language (EAL). The school serves an area which includes financially advantaged and financially disadvantaged areas. Thirty four point four per cent of the children at Ysgol Craig y Don live in areas which are amongst the 20% most deprived areas in Wales. Twenty-three per cent of pupils are eligible to claim free school meals (FSM). The school has six 'looked after' children.

The school states that its intake has a wide range of ability. Upon entry to the school, the number of pupils who have been identified as having language learning needs is about twice the county average. Twenty two per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN) or additional learning needs (ALN). Two per cent of pupils have a statement of SEN. Thirteen per cent are classified as belonging to the 'school action plus' category.

Including the head teacher, there are 16 full time and three part-time teachers. There are also 17 full time and two part-time support staff. The school has 16 classes.

Since the last inspection, held in February 2005, one month after the current head teacher was appointed, the number of pupils and children at the school increased by about 40. At present, a higher percentage of pupils belongs to ethnic minority groups or are learning EAL. The percentage of SEN pupils has increased, although the percentage of pupils on statements of SEN has decreased. The number of classes, full-time and part time teachers, and the number of full-time support staff has also increased. The school now has part-time support staff. The percentage of pupils eligible to obtain FSM has continued to increase over the last few years.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Craig Y Don is £2985 which compares with a maximum of £9816 and a minimum of £2909 for primary schools in Conwy. The school has the 59th highest budget per pupil out of the 61 primary schools in Conwy.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

This is a good school because:

- it has a welcoming ethos that ensures that every learner feels safe and happy;
- standards achieved by pupils are good;
- the quality of care, support and guidance is excellent;
- the quality of teaching is good;
- the school has very strong partnerships, which impact well on provision.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because of the:

- quality of the leadership of the head teacher;
- high commitment to supporting learners' achievement and well being;
- the commitment to continuous self-evaluation, strategic planning and self-improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve further the staff and governors of Ysgol Craig y Don need to:

- R1. improve standards in aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) and further develop thinking skills throughout the school;*
- R2. ensure that the excellent teaching practices seen in some classrooms are shared throughout the school; *
- R3. ensure a stronger link between the work done in classes and that of pupils withdrawn for extra SEN support;
- R4. continue discussions with the local authority (LA) to address the problem of overcrowding*.

*These recommendations feature in the school's development plan or self-evaluation review.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The school's performance over the past three years compares well with similar schools, the LA and Wales. In 2010, the percentage of key stage (KS)1 pupils gaining the core subject indicator (CSI¹) was above the LA and Wales average and placed the school at the top end of the second quartile in comparison with schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to FSM. Performance in mathematics and science is good and outcomes in English are even better. The percentage of pupils achieving level 3 in the individual core subjects remains similar to the LA and Wales average.

¹ CSI: attaining the expected level for the key stage in a combination of either Welsh (First language) or English, mathematics and science.

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At KS2, the percentage of pupils gaining the CSI in the past three years has been consistently above the LA and Wales average and in the upper quartile of similar schools. Performance in English and mathematics is good and better than the performance in science. In 2010, the percentage of pupils gaining level 5 or better in the individual core subjects fell below the LA and Wales average.

Girls outperform boys in assessments at both key stages. In 2010, the difference was more significant at KS1 than at KS2. This difference is not evident in the standards of achievement observed in class.

Over the past three years, the performance of pupils entitled to FSM has improved in comparison with non-FSM pupils. In 2010, FSM pupils' performance was significantly better than the LA, Wales and family averages.

The percentage of the more able and talented pupils achieving level 3+ at KS1 and level 5+ at KS2 in the individual core subjects is equal to or below the LA and Wales average. Nevertheless, the achievement of the more able and talented pupils of both sexes in Y6 in writing and aspects of mathematics is outstanding. The few 'looked after' pupils make the expected progress in relation to their ability. EAL pupils make good progress.

Almost all pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and subject skills. The more able and talented pupils make particularly good progress in writing and mathematics by the end of KS2. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

Most pupils' read aloud fluently and expressively. Their ability to use a dictionary and their research skills are good. Pupils write well; a minority do so particularly well. The presentation of their work, their spelling and punctuation are good. Pupils' numeracy skills are good. In ICT, their ability to present information is good, though their ability to handle data is not so well developed. Pupils' thinking skills are adequate.

Most pupils make good progress in learning Welsh as a second language. By the end of KS2, their understanding of the Welsh they hear is particularly good. With encouragement, most speak well. Pupils up to Y4 read and write well; the standards achieved by older pupils in reading and writing are adequate.

Wellbeing: Excellent

All pupils are very proud of their school. They enjoy school and believe that the staff listen to their views and act upon their suggestions.

All pupils feel very safe in school. Behaviour is excellent and pupils have a genuine care for one another. If a problem occurs, the pupils know where to go for help and know that appropriate actions will be taken.

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All pupils understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They know what choices they have to make to eat healthily and they take part in the wide range of sporting activities that are available to them.

All pupils are very motivated and have an excellent attitude to learning; they are offered a wide range of excellent opportunities. Almost all pupils in the Foundation Phase, and many pupils in KS2, make choices about what they want to learn. All pupils make significant contributions to discussions. They communicate ideas very clearly and make numerous references to previous learning. This is an outstanding feature.

Pupils have a strong sense of community loyalty and many are involved in a good number of projects in the community.

The School Council has a positive impact on the school community. Pupils see this as a valuable asset which they use to make changes in the school.

Attendance (93.9%) has improved consistently over the last three years and is now around the national and LA average.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Almost all teachers provide a good range of stimulating learning experiences to satisfy the needs of pupils. Pupils are well prepared to become responsible members of their community.

Almost all lessons are well-planned using a range of interesting activities and resources. Teachers' individual lesson plans emphasise the development of the key skills, in particular literacy and numeracy. The school has responded well to the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the requirements of Curriculum 2008.

The provision for pupils with EAL is good. The provision for pupils with SEN, when they are withdrawn from classes, varies in quality, but is generally at least adequate.

Effective use is made of the locality to provide rich learning experiences that enable pupils to gain good knowledge and understanding of the local environment and history. Good attention is paid to Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and to the teaching of Welsh Second Language, particularly up to Y4.

Pupils' awareness of global citizenship is excellent. The school, alongside other partners in the community and beyond, has very strong links with schools in Africa.

The work undertaken is used by external agencies to exemplify outstanding practice. This has a very beneficial effect on pupil's attitudes, including combating racism.

All teachers promote pupils' awareness of sustainable development. The school has received the silver award of the Eco-schools Initiative. The school successfully promotes initiatives such as recycling, energy saving and healthy eating. The school's award-winning outside area increases learning opportunities and enhances the children's enthusiasm for learning.

Teaching: Good

The quality of the teaching is very good in about a quarter of lessons and good is almost all the remainder. Where teaching is most effective, staff motivate, challenge, engage and allow pupils a significant degree of independence. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Staff set clear learning objectives and lessons have good pace and a clear structure. Teachers use a wide range of resources to enhance learning. In the very few lessons where teaching is adequate, many of the above good features are present but the teaching does not adequately meet the need of pupils of different abilities and pupils are not allowed sufficient independence in their learning.

Support staff are very clear about their responsibilities. Relationships between the teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent. All the above make a significant contribution to improving standards.

The school has clear and efficient systems to assess pupils' progress in both the Foundation Phase and KS2. Standardised tests and teacher assessments are used to set challenging and realistic individual targets. Reports to parents are detailed and conform to the requirements. However, a few parents feel that they are impersonal and the team agrees with this view.

Teachers share the lessons' learning objectives with the pupils and in most classes provide success criteria which are discussed when a unit of work is completed. In the best practice, these criteria are established by the pupils themselves and they evaluate how well they have achieved them. Pupils' written work is marked regularly but only in a minority of instances do they contain written comments that help pupils improve their learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Provision for health and well-being is excellent. This is developed through a very good range of initiatives including aspects of the curriculum, out of school activities and residential visits. This is a very caring learning community where the staff and the pupils display mutual respect.

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Pupils' spiritual development is good; all statutory requirements are fully met. The pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.

The process for identifying pupils with SEN is good. In a minority of SEN groups, the link between the work done by pupils in class and when they are withdrawn is not strong enough. Support for pupils who have suffered a bereavement is catered for very well through the 'Seasons for Growth' group and individual sessions with 'Cruise' counsellors. Effective use is made of specialist services to extend, support and guide pupils with ALN.

Safeguarding procedures and a detailed, appropriate policy ensure that all statutory requirements are met fully.

The school has very good methods for identifying more able and talented pupils. These pupils take good advantage of many opportunities to extend and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills' development outside the classroom environment and sometimes in cooperation with other local schools.

Learning environment: Good

The school ethos is outstanding. The school provides a safe, secure and healthy environment where pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential both academically and socially.

The school is an inclusive community where pupils have equal access to a broad range of activities which develop their pride, confidence, understanding and empathy. These include strong community and international links.

There are clear policies and procedures for dealing with all aspects of pupils' health and well being. Pupils have helped formulate the school rules, which are well understood and respected.

The number of pupils on roll is currently above the official capacity for the school and classrooms are often too small to accommodate the number of learners. Break and lunch times have to be staggered to prevent overcrowding in the hall and on school yards.

The school makes effective use of innovative, award winning, environmental projects which have been developed within the school grounds with community help.

Good use is made of displays and resources to support the teaching and learning. The school makes regular use of county and community facilities to enrich its curriculum.

The building is well maintained but does not meet current expectations. The library is inadequate.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
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Good

Leadership: Good

The head teacher is an effective leader who ensures good standards, and in the case of more able and talented pupils, some excellent standards. He has developed a very strong sense of teamwork. All members of staff work in close collaboration to ensure high standards. Job descriptions clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of staff, including curriculum co-ordinators and those with Teaching and Learning Responsibilities. Good attention is given to performance management and the outcomes inform the School Development Plan [SDP] and staff training needs. The arrangements for the professional development and training for all members of staff provide good opportunities for them to acquire new skills and to reflect on good practice. Good attention is paid to meeting local and national priorities.

Governors know the school particularly well. They are well-informed about their responsibilities and work closely with the head teacher to set an appropriate strategic direction for the school's development. They work well as critical friends and challenge decisions.

Members of the governing body visit the school to discuss developments with the subject co-ordinators and to observe lessons. This ensures that they receive first-hand evidence of pupils' achievement.

Pupils' opinions and their involvement in school matters have a good influence on aspects of the life and work of the school.

Improving quality: Good

The self-evaluation arrangements provide a good range of evidence. The role and contribution of all staff to the process has recently become more evident. Pupils' and parents' opinions help to determine strengths and areas for improvement and they are beginning to have an impact on pupils' learning, for example, by pupils having more say in what is taught.

Good use is made of data to track pupils' progress and to identify individuals or groups of learners who require further support.

The school has a detailed two year overview of the areas that it has identified for improvement. This is discussed regularly with members of staff. The SDP concentrates on achieving high standards and identifies the main priorities for improvement. It also provides guidance on cost, the timetable for implementation and responsibilities of staff in responding to every priority.

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Collaboration with nearby schools has helped improve the teaching and learning. Many teachers have visited other schools to observe effective practice. A school based professional learning community (PLC) was recently established to study methods of increasing pupil confidence when speaking Welsh with one another. In addition, another PLC studying assessment has had a positive impact on standards.

Partnership working: Excellent

The school has fostered a very wide range of useful strategic partnerships which contribute significantly to improving the quality of provision for pupils. There is a strong partnership with parents and as a result the staff have gained their trust and support. There are also very close links with the local community, which has a positive impact on the quality of education. The school is well supported by the LA. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is promoted in an outstanding manner through active international links and the study of other countries.

Joint moderation and standardisation with cluster schools at the end of KS2 assessments is bringing rigour to the process. The school works effectively with the local secondary schools to prepare older pupils well for the next stage of their education. Joint planning and sharing of resources with several local schools is a strength.

Resource management: Good

The school's financial management is good. The budget is monitored regularly and the surplus over the past three years has been within three or four per cent.

The school has a good range of relevant learning resources which are used effectively to improve teaching and learning, and to raise standards.

The school employs an appropriate number of teachers. Trainers and support staff contribute significantly to securing high standards.

Arrangements for performance management are effective. These have had a positive influence on developing new skills and sharing good practice.

The small number of recommendations in the most recent auditor's report have been addressed.

The school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Eighty four parental questionnaires were completed, representing about a quarter of the total number of parents. Overall, they express positive views about the school. Nearly all parents are satisfied with the school and all say their children like being there. All say that their children are making good progress and that the school expects their children to work hard and to do their best. They all say that their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise. Nearly all parents feel that their children are safe at school and that the teaching is good. Almost all feel that staff treat their children fairly and with respect. Many believe that the homework given builds well on what their child learns in school. Almost all say that the school is well run and find it approachable if they have any questions or concerns. Most feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress.

A few parents are unsure of the school procedures for dealing with complaints. A few are also unsure if their child is well prepared for moving on to the next stage of learning.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Questionnaires were completed by approximately a quarter of the KS2 pupils, who were selected at random. All pupils feel safe in school. Almost all feel they are doing well. Almost all feel that there are enough resources to enable them to learn well. All say that they have many opportunities to get regular exercise. All say that teaching is good and believe that homework helps them to understand and improve their work. Most pupils feel that the school deals well with bullying and almost all say that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. Although almost all say that children behave well at playtime and at lunchtime a few believe that bad behaviour in class stops them from getting on with their work.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Gareth Wyn Roberts	Reporting Inspector
John Roberts	Lay Inspector
Phil Mostert	Team Inspector
Gwynne Jones	Team Inspector
Alison Matthias	Peer Inspector
Marc Hughes	School Nominee

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Copies of the report

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11