



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Ysgol Twm o'r Nant
Rhyl Road
Denbigh
LL16 3DP**

Date of inspection: February 2011

by

**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

Ysgol Twm o'r Nant is a designated Welsh-medium school which shares a campus with two other schools in the town of Denbigh. Currently, there are 228 pupils of compulsory school age in the school and 32 pupils aged 3-4 years. This number is less than when the school was last inspected in 2005 but the number of pupils in the lower section of the school is more than in the upper school. The pupils are taught by 10 full-time teachers and 4 part-time teachers in 11 classes. Most of the pupils will transfer to Ysgol Uwchradd Glan Clwyd at the end of their period in the school.

The local authority's Welsh-medium language and speech unit is located in the school. These pupils have been partly integrated into all aspects of the life of the school.

Seven per cent (7%) of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is significantly lower than the county and national percentages. This strongly suggests that very few pupils come from homes that are economically disadvantaged. Welsh is the first language of the home for 57% of pupils. Two children are of ethnic origin.

Twenty per cent of pupils have additional learning needs (ALN) support. Four pupils have a statement, 15 pupils have language support and 9 pupils have numeracy support. No temporary or permanent exclusions were recorded in the year prior to the inspection or in the history of the school. A number of staff changes have taken place since the previous inspection in 2005, including the appointment of a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. Just over half the teachers and a number of assistants, particularly in the Foundation Phase, have been appointed since then.

In 2010-2011, the individual school budget for Ysgol Twm o'r Nant is £3,806 per pupil which compares with a maximum of £18,610 and a minimum of £2,626 for primary schools in Denbighshire. The school has the 32nd highest budget per pupil of the 53 primary schools in Denbighshire.

Summary

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

Current performance

This school is good because:

- the percentage of pupils that achieve the core subject indicator (CSI) at the end of key stage 2 (KS2) is consistently higher than the results for the family of schools to which the school belongs and above the average for the county and Wales;
- the percentage of pupils that reach level 5 in all subjects at the end of KS2 has been higher than the family of schools for the past four years;
- pupils' level of attendance is consistently high; and
- of the success in nurturing pupils who are developing into becoming independent, bilingual and responsible learners.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- of the very good strategic leadership given by the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher and the Governors;
- of the clear and practical management processes that are implemented consistently throughout the school;
- the knows itself well as the self-evaluation process is firmly embedded; and
- of the very effective collaboration within the school and with partners.

Recommendations

The inspectors have made the following recommendations for improvement:

- R1 continue with the strategies to improve boys' attainment;
- R2 include qualitative targets in the School Development Plan in order that the senior management team is able to monitor improvement more effectively;
- R3 develop further the role of the governing body as a critical friend and enable it to monitor improvement more effectively; and
- R4 share best practice in teaching throughout the school in order to ensure consistency.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how the school is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Over the past two years, the results of the initial assessments when children begin in the school show that their skills are below those that are expected. By the end of key stage 1 (KS1), they show good progress in their skills. When the pupils leave the school at the end of year 6, most of them show very good progress in their skills.

The achievement in pupils' learning and progress in lessons is generally good and commensurate with their age. Most pupils are able to recall previous learning and succeed in building on it appropriately. In general, pupils work together well and respond appropriately to the tasks that are set and to the questions asked by the teachers.

Throughout the school, almost all the pupils listen well and speak confidently in various situations. Pupils' comprehension skills and their discussion and thinking skills are good in both languages in key stage two.

In 2010, 96% of KS1 pupils successfully achieved the Core Subject Indicator (CSI), namely to reach the expected level in Welsh, mathematics and science. This percentage was higher than the results for the family of schools to which the school belongs, and higher than the average for the county and Wales. The results have been higher for three out of the past four years. However, when compared with similar schools throughout Wales in terms of free school meals, the CSI results place the school in the lower 50% in terms of performance for three of the past four years. The percentage of pupils that reach level 3, namely the higher than expected level, in mathematics and science, is higher than the family of schools but lower in Welsh for three of the past four years.

In 2010, 100% of key stage 2 (KS2) pupils successfully achieved the Core Subject Indicator (CSI), namely to reach the expected level in Welsh or English, mathematics and science. This percentage was higher than the results for the family of schools to which the school belongs, and higher than the average for the county and Wales. The results have been higher for three out of the past four years. When compared with similar schools throughout Wales in terms of free school meals, the CSI results place the school in the highest 25% in terms of performance for three of the past four years. The percentage of pupils that reach level 5, namely the higher than expected level, in all subjects, has been higher than the family of schools for the past four years.

There is a definite difference between boys' and girls' attainment in the school in both key stages. The data for KS1 in 2010 shows that boys' attainment is lower than that of girls in every aspect of language. The difference between the genders in mathematics and science is amongst the worst within the family of schools. In KS2, girls' attainment is better than that of boys in Welsh and English, particularly in writing. Boys' attainment is higher than that of girls in mathematics and science.

There is no evidence or trend that pupils who are entitled to free school meals are underachieving.

In general, pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) make good progress whilst at the school. The pupils in the Language and Speech Unit make very good progress and benefit significantly from being integrated consistently into the main stream.

By the time the pupils reach the end of KS2, the standards of Welsh are good and pupils' bilingual skills and their translingual ability are very effective. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is pivotal to all the hustle and bustle of work and the ethos of the school, and pupils' awareness of Welsh culture is good.

Wellbeing: Good

In Ysgol Twm o'r Nant, the children are very aware of the requirements and expectations of healthy eating and fostering healthy personal habits. A particular feature is the variety of physical education and fitness activities that pupils obviously enjoy. School teams and some talented individuals are successful at county and national levels.

Most pupils are very happy in the school and almost all feel safe there. Some of the school's strengths are pupils' courtesy, co-operation and behaviour. Every child's personal, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils' attendance rates are consistently high and higher than the figures for the county and Wales.

The school plays a prominent role in the life and activities of the local community. They benefit greatly from the close and beneficial links with a number of organisations, agencies and individuals in order to reinforce their social and life skills.

Through the school council, the use of questionnaires and suggestions box, children express their opinions and contribute to making decisions regularly. They are extremely proud of the adventure park in which they took a central role in its establishment.

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

The learning experiences are planned in detail throughout the school and ensure valuable and comprehensive activities which meet pupils' needs well. This is an obvious strength. The experiences that are provided by the teachers engender pupils' interest and encourage them to learn. They ensure that pupils are part of the planning process which means that pupils become more responsible for leading their own learning.

The provision places good emphasis on meeting the needs of particular groups of pupils, including pupils with additional learning needs. For example, effective

activities and support are provided for some pupils in order to encourage their basic skills stimulate their basic skills and to refine their language.

A prominent place is given in the planning to developing communication, number, ICT and thinking skills. As a result, pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills through cross-curricular studies with a strong emphasis on developing literacy.

The provision for developing the Welsh language and the Welsh dimension in various contexts is rich and enables pupils to make good progress.

Pupils' social development is promoted effectively and purposeful opportunities are provided for them to nurture the awareness of their role as global citizens. Pupils receive helpful opportunities to act in a sustainable manner, for example by conducting campaigns on the advantages of renewable energy, saving energy and recycling. This extends their knowledge of green issues well.

A multitude of beneficial extra-curricular activities are provided that enrich pupils' experiences outside school and reinforce their subject and social skills.

Teaching: Good

Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use a wide range of teaching methods and purposeful resources to support the learning. In the good and better lessons, teachers use visual triggers skilfully to hold and maintain pupils' interest. Effective opportunities are ensured for developing the main learning skills. Teachers make a concerted effort to model correct language patterns and feed the spoken language. In the best lessons at the upper end of Key Stage 2, very good advantage is taken of opportunities for pupils to develop translingual skills. The work of the support staff when explaining an activity at the front of the class and supporting groups that rotate is very good. In the less effective lessons, the success criteria are not wholly clear and the initial introductions are a little lengthy.

The quality of assessment, reporting and recording of pupils' achievement is good. Parents receive comprehensive end of year reports which meet the statutory requirements. They refer to pupils' skills and the next stages in their development. The reports that are provided for the parents of pupils under seven years of age are excellent. They are personal, clear and extremely detailed in terms of noting the children's development within areas and the steps for improvement.

Several assessment for learning strategies have been incorporated effectively in lessons throughout the school and they are an integral part of whole-school planning. The arrangements for standardisation at the end of both key stages and the arrangements for moderating at the end of key stage 2 are thorough and effective.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is an organised and inclusive community. The personal and social education arrangements and activities, such as Wellbeing Day, contribute effectively to the children's general wellbeing. The school is part of the Healthy Schools initiative and promotes healthy eating and developing healthy ways of living well.

The school received the Active Marc in recognition of the high quality of the provision for physical education and keeping fit. The staff's commitment to providing a number of extra-curricular activities is a strong feature and pupils benefit greatly from the provision.

The provider has an appropriate policy and procedures on safeguarding.

Throughout the school, learning experiences provide stimulating opportunities to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. As a result, the active role that pupils play in Welsh cultural activities and community activities is very extensive.

The school has a close and beneficial relationship with a number of external agencies who are an effective support in meeting pupils' needs. For example, good use is made of the professional support of the local authority's behaviour management department.

Good support and guidance is provided for pupils with additional learning needs which comply with the code of practice. The provision for pupils in the language and speech unit is very good and the pupils are included in a number of whole-school activities.

The school identifies the needs of different pupils at an early stage through regular observation; joint discussions amongst staff; discussions with parents; and by conducting formal and informal assessments. The ALN co-ordinator tracks the results of standard tests and chooses the most suitable support programmes for the pupils. The class teachers are aware of the needs of individuals, including those of the more able pupils, within their classes and, in general, they plan appropriately for them.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a close, caring and happy community. The staff consider and appreciate the varied needs of pupils well and ensure equal opportunities for every pupil to take advantage of the full range of the educational provision. They nurture positive attitudes amongst pupils towards equality and diversity.

The building is well maintained and there is a stimulating learning environment for the pupils. The classrooms provide a purposeful learning space. Throughout the school there are colourful displays that promote and enrich pupils' learning. The school hall is small for the number of pupils but staff ensure that this does not have an adverse effect on the work or standards of the school.

Very effective use is made of a range of good quality resources to support learning and teaching. There are rich facilities for contributing to the external experiences of children in the Foundation Phase and in the computer room.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Good

Leadership: Good

The strategic leadership of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher is very good. The senior management team, which was established at the beginning of this academic year, fulfils its duties very successfully and has begun fulfilling its role well, that of challenging in order to improve quality. It has developed a shared vision and all members of staff are co-operating and working together very well for the pupils' benefit.

The day-to-day organisation and management systems are excellent. The Headteacher ensures that there are clear and practical processes in place which are implemented consistently throughout the school by every member of staff. An obvious example of this is the effective manner in which the school ensures accountability in terms of child protection procedures.

The governing body fulfils its strategic role effectively. Members visit classes and receive reports about their strengths and areas for improvement. The governing body also receives data analyses from the Headteacher about pupils' performance. Its role of challenging the data and understanding its context as a critical friend has not been developed fully as yet.

The school implements a vast number of local and national priorities for the pupils' benefit successfully, for example promoting the wellbeing of staff, fair trade, developing planning to give good attention to pupils' key skills and fitness and to develop professional learning communities. The wellbeing committee, which is responsible for organising events that promote the wellbeing of staff, is very successful and the activities have led to helping to create a united workforce that is committed to providing the best for the pupils.

Improving quality: Good

The process of evaluating the standards of learners, the quality of teaching and the use of resources is robust. This provides direct information that contributes effectively to the school's self-evaluation process. The self-evaluation report is of good quality and gives clear direction in order to identify priorities in the school development plan.

The school development plan notes what strategies are in place for raising standards as well as detailing the resources and the monitoring methods. The plans include a timetable which sets out what is being monitored and when, including policy reviews and subject monitoring. The plan is structured effectively. However, it does not note clearly the success criteria in terms of quantitative targets and, as a result, it is not possible to ensure effective accountability for the actions. In addition, it is not clear from where the financial resources will come to fund the implementation.

The school works well as a learning community. In the best practice, they share professional skills through observing good practice in each other's classes and

support and mentor as required. Effective professional practice networks with other schools and partners are developing very well.

Partnership working: Excellent

The school has a number of strategic partners that contribute very well to the quality of the provision. The partnership with parents and the community is excellent. The school provides a very good range of information for parents. For example, parents receive half yearly reports on their children's progress. This is a very effective tool to strengthen the partnership between the home and school and involves parents in the process of maintaining standards. To build on this, a successful session was organised that explained how the school is developing pupils' writing. In addition, a booklet is produced at the end of the summer term that shares and celebrates the year's activities.

The Headteacher provides guidance and support to a number of the area's schools on matters relating to planning, performance management, data management and child protection procedures. The local authority makes extensive use of the expertise of the senior management team and staff to share good practice throughout the county and to lead Professional Learning Communities. The quality of their contributions is excellent.

The school has very effective links with the area's schools. It has played a prominent role in promoting improvements in the provision and in terms of drawing up and sharing plans and strategies with Denbighshire's Welsh-medium schools. These links have had a very good effect on the quality of the provision in the school.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its resources well and expenditure is monitored regularly and appropriately. There is a good range of resources for learning and teaching and there are sufficient teachers and assistants to meet pupils' needs.

Effective use of staff specialisms has a good influence on the range of experiences provided for pupils. Teachers work together well with the classroom assistants who fulfil their role effectively.

Funding is used appropriately for meeting the priorities identified in the school development plan. Teachers make effective use of their time for planning, preparation and assessment. When considering the significant progress made since the previous inspection and the good outcomes for almost every one of the learners, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

The questionnaire was completed by 101 Key Stage 2 learners and they were unanimous that:

- the school taught them how to stay healthy;
- they know what to do and who to talk to if they find the work difficult; and
- they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Almost all:

- feel safe in the school;
- know who to talk to if they are concerned or worried about something;
- believe that there are many opportunities for regular physical exercise in the school; and
- note that teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress.

A small number believe that:

- the school does not deal well with bullying;
- the homework does not help them to understand and improve their work in the school; and
- not all the children behave well during playtime and lunch time.

A few believe that:

- other children do not behave well and therefore distract them from working; and they do not do well in the school.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Forty one responses to the questionnaire were received from parents and they were unanimous that:

- their children receive support to settle in well when they begin in the school; and
- they feel at ease in terms of asking question of the school, making suggestions or identifying a problem.

Almost all:

- believe that the school is well-run and are generally satisfied with the school;
- note that their child enjoys being in school and feels safe there;
- believe that the homework that is set builds well on what is taught in the school;

- note that their child is encouraged to be healthy and to do physical exercise regularly; and
- are of the opinion that there is a good variety of activities, including trips and visits.

Most believe that:

- the teaching is good and their children are making good progress in the school;
- staff expect the children to work hard, to do their best and that they treat every child fairly and with respect; and
- the school helps their child to become more mature and to shoulder responsibility.

A few believe that:

- they do not receive regular information about their child's progress;
- pupils do not behave well in the school;
- they do not understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints;
- they do not know whether or not their child is receiving appropriate additional support in relation to any specific individual need; nor
- if their child is well-prepared for moving on to the next school.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Maldwyn Pryse	Reporting Inspector
Clive Phillips	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Emma Rofe	Peer Inspector
Geraint Davies	School Nominee

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