



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 Y Friog
Friog
Fairbourne
Gwynedd
LL38 2RQ**

Date of inspection: October 2013

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 Gynradd Gymunedol Y Friog is situated in the village of Friog at the mouth of the river Mawddach. The tourism industry has attracted several people to live in the area and now a very small percentage of the population are native to the village. Twenty-four per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals and this is higher than the national and local averages. English is the main language of all pupils and very few speak Welsh to first language standard.

There are 28 pupils on roll and one child is of nursery age. A few pupils have been identified as having additional educational needs, including a very few who have a statement. No pupils at the school receive support to learn English as an additional language, nor are there any pupils who are looked after by the local authority.

In addition to the headteacher, who is in charge of a class for four days a week, there are two other part-time teachers. The headteacher was appointed as headteacher in charge in September 2011. The school was last inspected in November 2007.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Y Friog in 2013-2014 is £5,882. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Gwynedd is £10,616 and the minimum is £2,936. Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol y Friog is in 18th place of the 103 primary schools in Gwynedd, in terms of the school budget per pupil.

Summary

The school's current performance	Unsatisfactory
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The school's current performance is unsatisfactory because:

- most pupils do not achieve high enough standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT);
- the most able pupils do not make appropriate progress as they move through the school;
- the school does not have effective arrangements for assessing pupils' progress;
- marking does not do enough to show pupils what to do to improve the standard of their work; and
- arrangements for planning the development of pupils' skills are not effective enough.

However:

- the school is a happy and caring community and has a welcoming ethos;
- pupils' standards of behaviour are good; and
- pupils' health and wellbeing are promoted effectively.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- the headteacher's and staff's vision for improving pupils' wellbeing is effective;
- the headteacher has set important aspects for improvement, and staff are committed to ensuring continuous improvements;
- the self-evaluation report is comprehensive, and celebrates some of the school's strengths and identifies correctly some of the issues to be developed; and
- there is stability in the school's leadership.

However:

- recent arrangements have not had enough time to affect aspects of school life fully;
- the governing body's role as a critical friend has not been developed fully;
- the school has not responded fully to the recommendations of the last inspection; and
- leaders and governors have not ensured appropriate progress in the standards of literacy and numeracy achieved by pupils.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
- R2 Raise standards in ICT
- R3 Improve the quality of teaching and ensure that teachers challenge all pupils, especially the most able pupils
- R4 Strengthen systems for assessment and assessment for learning
- R5 Strengthen the school's leadership and strategic management
- R6 Ensure that the school's self-evaluation process is more evaluative and that monitoring focuses more specifically on raising standards.
- R7 Strengthen the governing body's role as a critical friend

What happens next?

In line with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school needs significant improvement. The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress about 12 months after the publication of this report.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Unsatisfactory

Standards: Unsatisfactory

In lessons, pupils' standards of achievement are adequate, but their work over time in their books does not reflect this.

In the Foundation Phase and key stage 2, most pupils have suitable oracy skills. However, in lessons, there is not enough progress in pupils' ability to contribute at more length in Welsh and English. On the whole, they are good listeners, but a minority of them do not have enough confidence to use Welsh when working on group tasks.

In the Foundation Phase, many pupils read their own work and their reading books to a standard that is appropriate to their age and ability. However, a minority of pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase do not have enough opportunities to read Welsh materials that give them enough of a challenge.

Pupils' ability to write independently is beginning to develop appropriately. However, by the end of the Foundation Phase, the majority do not write a sequence of sentences for various purposes across the curriculum, showing an appropriate grasp of basic punctuation. Pupils of higher ability do not make enough progress in their ability to write at length for a wider range of purposes because of a lack of opportunities.

In key stage 2, many pupils can read purposeful materials fairly meaningfully in English and Welsh. They speak eagerly about books and authors that they like or dislike. However, their ability to discuss characters and themes and to find reference books and use them independently to collect information to support their learning in different subjects is limited.

The majority of key stage 2 pupils do not make appropriate progress in their ability to write at length in their own words because of a lack of opportunities. There is not enough progress in their ability to write freely for a range of purposes in contexts across the curriculum, as well as in their ability to write creative, imaginative pieces.

There is little evidence that pupils are developing the technique of drafting, proofreading and improving their work as a result. Most pupils in Year 6, including more able pupils, do not spell words correctly in either language. The quality of pupils' presentation of work and standard of handwriting in key stage 2 are inconsistent.

Most pupils' numeracy skills are not developing suitably as they move through the school. The majority of key stage 2 pupils are hesitant when doing simple mental calculations and they are not developing problem-solving skills effectively. Most pupils do not use their numeracy skills adequately in subjects other than mathematics.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils use ICT skilfully for word-processing, but there is no appropriate progression in the work of key stage 2 pupils. Pupils do not make enough progress in their use of ICT skills across the curriculum.

Pupils who have additional learning needs make suitable progress.

There is no data report on pupils in the Foundation Phase or key stage 2. This is because the number of pupils who were assessed between 2012 and 2013 was too small to report upon without identifying individual pupils. Trends over a period of two years in pupils' achievement in the Foundation Phase indicator vary in comparison with average performance levels of the family of schools.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel very safe and happy at the school and know to whom to turn for support and advice. All pupils have an appropriate awareness of the need to keep fit and eat healthily. Many pupils take advantage of after-school fitness, sports and club activities and this has a good effect on their physical health.

Many pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They co-operate effectively together in their lessons and activities. As a result, nearly all pupils' personal, social and cultural development is good. However, their skills to improve their own learning are only just beginning to develop and only a minority have the confidence to assess their own work.

All pupils benefit from links with organisations and individuals in the community in order to reinforce their knowledge of the local area, and foster social skills and life skills of a good standard.

Members of the school council co-operate effectively when making decisions and represent pupils' opinion thoughtfully. The school council contributes very purposefully to decision-making purposes within the school.

The school's attendance percentage has varied over recent years. The percentage for 2011-2012 placed the school among the upper 50% of similar schools and the school has been in the top 25% of similar schools in the past year. Punctuality is good.

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

Planning in the Foundation Phase is appropriate and gains pupils' interest suitably. The school provides a wide range of experiences. These include visits and activities away from the site, which contribute effectively to provision and to pupils' experiences.

Planning for developing key skills is developing appropriately. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum and

overuse of work sheets is hindering their progress. Numeracy and ICT skills are not always reinforced adequately across the curriculum.

Provision for the Welsh language is developing suitably. Teachers use Welsh regularly in most lessons, but planning does not always allow pupils to build systematically on knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the school.

Provision for the Welsh dimension is developing suitably but the school does not always promote pupils' understanding of Welsh history and geography effectively. Competing in the Urdd Eisteddfod enables pupils to improve their use of Welsh outside the classroom.

Provision for sustainable development and global citizenship is developing well.

Teaching: Adequate

Nearly all teachers and support staff use Welsh and English suitably in their lessons. Teachers use appropriate strategies to encourage pupils' good behaviour and they praise them effectively to improve their confidence.

In most lessons, there is a good relationship between teachers and pupils. They plan lessons and arrange their classrooms effectively, and make good use of support staff. They share learning objectives with pupils and there are high expectations in terms of behaviour and learning. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not plan their lessons well enough, and there is a lack of challenge for pupils, especially more able pupils.

The school has assessment procedures but teachers do not make effective use of analysing assessment findings, including National Curriculum assessments, in order to plan appropriately for individuals. A tracking procedure is being developed in order to track pupils' progress through the school. However, it has not been embedded adequately to have a positive effect on standards.

The quality of marking varies. Teachers do not mark pupils' work regularly and they do not indicate clearly what pupils need to do to improve. Older pupils have individual targets to improve their work. However, there is not a sufficient emphasis by teachers on targets and they do not have a positive effect on standards. The school is making increasing use of assessment for learning strategies. However, to date, they are not being implemented consistently enough across the school.

Reports for parents are clear and meet statutory requirements.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a friendly and caring community and all staff promote high values. The pupil's voice is very important at the school. Provision for moral, social, cultural and spiritual development is good. The school's staff have a good relationship with pupils, and pupils show them respect and trust them. The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

There is a suitable relationship between the school and specialist agencies and all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and they are not a cause for concern.

The process for identifying and supporting pupils' additional needs is good. The school addresses the provision of suitable additional support very early for those pupils who need support. All pupils on the additional needs register have a suitable individual education plan, which is reviewed on a termly basis with parents. The school ensures that individual needs are met in full.

Learning environment: Good

Ysgol Y Friog offers a happy and homely atmosphere to its pupils. It is a caring school in which pupils and staff are supported and respected. There is an inclusive environment and atmosphere, which gives everyone an opportunity to contribute to school life, whatever their social background and ability.

There is a suitable supply of learning resources of an appropriate quality in order to meet the needs of the curriculum, but the best use is not made of them in every lesson. There have been recent investments in the field of ICT.

The school listens to the pupils' voices when prioritising expenditure in order to improve the learning environments, the condition of the building and the outdoor area, and there have been recent developments in these areas. Not all of the school site is accessible to those with disabilities. The toilets are clean and suitable and the school building and grounds are maintained satisfactorily.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
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Leadership: Adequate

The school has been through an unstable period over the last six years. However, the headteacher and staff have created a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel happy and safe and the headteacher's and staff's vision of improving pupils' wellbeing is effective.

The headteacher has introduced an appropriate range of policies and strategies, which are beginning to move the school forward. However, these strategies have not yet had time to have an effect on raising pupils' standards.

Although the school has a suitable management structure, in general, members of the team do not focus adequately on their strategic role across the school. As a result, there is not enough emphasis on improving pupils' standards and outcomes.

On the whole, governors understand their roles and responsibilities and they are supportive of the school. They visit the school fairly regularly for various purposes. However, the governing body does not challenge the school enough to drive

improvement in standards and they do not hold the school to account robustly enough.

Leaders and managers have developed some national initiatives successfully, for example in the Foundation Phase. Recently, teachers have developed a co-ordinated method of delivering the curriculum in key stage 2 which considers pupils' key skills and thinking skills.

Improving quality: Adequate

Leaders have identified important aspects of the school's performance where improvement is needed. They have ensured good progress in the pupils' standards of wellbeing, although there has been only limited progress in ensuring improvement in standards of literacy and numeracy.

The self-evaluation report is a document that contains detailed information about a wide range of aspects of the school's life and work. Data analyses identify clearly the trends in performance in comparison with national comparators and the performance of similar schools.

Subject co-ordinators have examined samples of pupils' work across the school and have shared the findings in staff meetings and, as a result, the school is developing its understanding of standards across the various classes. However, reports that derive from this work are not always probing enough in terms of identifying aspects to be improved and the monitoring process itself does not focus consistently on raising standards.

The school has not made enough progress against the recommendations of the previous inspection. This is especially in relation to raising standards, provision for skills, assessment procedures and self-evaluation.

The school has begun to establish networks of professional practice and useful partnerships are beginning to develop with some local primary schools, for example to promote pupils' reading skills.

Partnership working: Adequate

The school has positive links with parents and carers. Open afternoons are held every term for parents, staff and pupils in order for them to share information and opinions about the school's developments. The school also fosters good links with local businesses and the community, and pupils benefit from opportunities to discuss the school's most recent developments.

There are suitable links with a variety of agencies to promote wellbeing and meet pupils' specific needs. The school has co-operated suitably with some schools in the cluster on moderating pupils' work jointly in Welsh and English. However, the school has not fostered effective links with other schools in order to develop the work of the school further. There is an appropriate partnership with local secondary schools and transition arrangements are suitable for ensuring smooth transfer to the next stage of their education.

Resource management: Unsatisfactory

The school has enough staff who have suitable qualifications to undertake their work. Teaching staff and support staff co-operate effectively as a team. Teachers make appropriate use of their time to plan and prepare lessons.

Appropriate performance management arrangements are in place for all staff. However, regular opportunities are not provided for staff to attend appropriate training courses, for example to develop their role as subject co-ordinators and to develop standards of literacy and numeracy. The effect of training on pupils' standards is inconsistent.

The school has a wide range of resources, but best use is not always made of them to promote learning.

Leaders manage the school's financial resources appropriately and ensure that they are linked to the development plan. The budget is monitored suitably by the finance officer, governors and the local authority.

Considering pupils' standards of achievement, value for money is unsatisfactory.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

There is no data report on either Foundation Phase or key stage 2 pupils. This is because the number of pupils who were assessed between 2012 and 2013 was too small to report upon without identifying individual pupils. Trends over a period of two years in pupils' achievement in the Foundation Phase indicator vary in comparison with average performance levels of the family of schools.

Pupils who have additional learning needs make suitable progress, but the most able pupils do not make appropriate progress.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Primary Survey (All pupils)

Designating the benchmark – this is a total of all responses to date since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	
I feel safe in my school.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ysgol.
		98%	2%	
The school deals well with any bullying.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae'r ysgol yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
		92%	8%	
I know who to talk to if I am worried or upset.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod pwy i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw I'n poeni neu'n gofidio.
		97%	3%	
The school teaches me how to keep healthy	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae'r ysgol yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
		98%	2%	
There are lots of chances at school for me to get regular exercise.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae llawer o gyfleoedd yn yr ysgol i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		96%	4%	
I am doing well at school	12	12 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		96%	4%	
The teachers and other adults in the school help me to learn and make progress.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae'r athrawon a'r oedolion eraill yn yr ysgol yn fy helpu i ddysgu a gwneud cynnydd.
		99%	1%	
I know what to do and who to ask if I find my work hard.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod beth I'w wneud a gyda phwy i siarad os ydw I'n gweld fy ngwaith yn anodd.
		98%	2%	
My homework helps me to understand and improve my work in school.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae fy ngwaith cartref yn helpu i mi ddeall a gwella fy ngwaith yn yr ysgol.
		91%	9%	
I have enough books, equipment, and computers to do my work.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
		95%	5%	
Other children behave well and I can get my work done.	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae plant eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
		78%	22%	
Nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time	12	12 100%	0 0%	Mae bron pob un o'r plant yn ymddwyn yn dda amser chwarae ac amser cinio.
		84%	16%	

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fewer than 10 responses were received, No data will be shown

Appendix 3

The inspection team

David Gareth Evans	Reporting Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Alwyn Ward	Peer Inspector
Sarah Anne Elliot	Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.