



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gynradd Penysarn  
Penysarn  
Anglesey  
LL69 9AZ**

**Date of inspection: October 2017**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gynradd Penysarn

Ysgol Gynradd Penysarn is situated approximately two miles from Amlwch on the Isle of Anglesey. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 98 pupils between three and eleven years old on roll, including eight part-time nursery age children. They are divided into four mixed-age classes.

Approximately 13% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage (19%). Approximately half the pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes, and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 22% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, but very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in January 2017. He was not at the school during the inspection. The school was last inspected in January 2012.

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

During their time at the school, most pupils make sound progress and achieve well. Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their work and concentrate well in lessons. On the whole, teachers provide interesting learning activities, which motivate pupils to enjoy learning. The Welsh language is at the heart of the school's life and work, and there is a clear emphasis on ensuring that pupils have a good awareness of the local area's history and culture. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching and weaknesses in the quality of planning in key stage 2. The headteacher has shared a clear and purposeful vision for developing the school with staff, pupils, governors and parents. He has implemented a number of robust strategies, but there are shortcomings in aspects of the school's leadership that are in need of improvement.

<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>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Strengthen the role of the management team in order to monitor more effectively and address the weaknesses in teaching and provision
- R2 Ensure that the challenge of learning activities enables pupils of all abilities in key stage 2 to make full progress
- R3 Improve the quality of planning in key stage 2 in order to ensure more opportunities for pupils to reinforce their extended writing skills and numeracy skills in other subjects
- R4 Improve pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills, particularly their data-handling and modelling skills

## **What happens next**

The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection. Estyn will review the school's progress.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, most pupils have literacy and numeracy skills that are similar to what is expected for their age, except in Welsh, which is a new language to approximately half the pupils. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress and achieve well. However, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

Considering their linguistic background, many pupils' oral skills in the foundation phase are developing well. By Year 2, they communicate clearly and confidently in Welsh, and use a varied vocabulary that is appropriate for their age, for example when discussing a visit to Llynnon Mill. Most pupils in key stage 2 communicate clearly in both languages and are keen to offer answers and comments, and express an opinion when talking about their work. At the top of the school, most achieve a good standard of bilingualism and change freely from one language to the other, for example when gathering information about the local area on the internet.

Pupils' reading skills are developing well across the school. By Year 2, most read confidently and build unfamiliar words successfully. More able pupils read with expression and express mature opinions about stories and characters. Most pupils in key stage 2 read correctly and confidently in Welsh and English. They express opinions about books and describe the main characters and the sequence of events within stories meaningfully. By Year 6, they apply their reading skills effectively to support their work in subjects across the curriculum, for example when gathering information about the history of Ysgol Llanelian.

Across the school, most pupils make good progress in their writing skills. By the end of the foundation phase, many write independently, by punctuating correctly and using adjectives and similes effectively to enrich their work. They apply their writing skills effectively, for example when writing a story about Parri'r Pobydd (Parri the Baker). In key stage 2, most pupils make sound progress in their ability to write in a variety of forms in Welsh and English. By the end of the stage, they show a good awareness of punctuation, paragraphing and the basics of language, and use rich and extensive words to create effect, for example when writing a portrayal of the author Roald Dahl. However, only a few write at length across the curriculum.

Most pupils in both key stages develop their number skills soundly to a standard that is appropriate for their age. By the end of the foundation phase, they show a sound grasp of number facts and use this information skilfully, for example to collect and record data about animals on a local farm. Most pupils in key stage 2 have a sound understanding of number strategies. By Year 6, most use a wide range of methods skilfully to calculate mentally and on paper. They make good use of data, and a majority produce appropriate graphs independently when measuring temperature over a period of time. However, they do not transfer their number skills regularly enough to other areas across the curriculum.

A majority of pupils develop their ICT skills appropriately in areas of learning and across the curriculum. Pupils across the school use ICT packages to produce

suitable presentations of their work. For example, pupils in the foundation phase use word processing programs suitably, such as when combining pictures and text to create a booklet. Pupils in key stage 2 use suitable presentation packages in order to create presentations of their work of the effect of the Second World War on people's lives. Most use the internet safely and effectively when searching for information about Anglesey. However, very few develop a good understanding of how to handle data or create spreadsheets to model real-life situations.

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

Nearly all pupils enjoy the school's life and work. Most understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and they have a good awareness of the effect it has on the body. Pupils feel completely safe at school and are happy to discuss problems with members of staff, and are confident that they listen to them. Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet.

Most pupils are well-behaved and are polite and welcoming towards visitors. Pupils are very caring towards each other and take their responsibilities as playground game leaders seriously. Most pupils have good social and life skills. They show positive attitudes towards their work, concentrate well in lessons and work diligently for extended periods of time. However, pupils' skills in improving and leading their own learning are only just beginning to develop.

The pupil's voice is important at the school and is given a prominent place through various initiatives, for example as the school council organises fundraising activities for a number of charities. This has a positive effect on their understanding of other people's needs. Pupils contribute extensively to the community and participate enthusiastically in local social events, for example by contributing to a harvest thanksgiving service.

Over a four-year period, the attendance percentage has increased gradually and the number of frequent absences has decreased significantly. This has placed the school among the top 25% of similar schools over the last two years.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement**

In general, the school provides a rich variety of learning experiences that engage most pupils' interest and curiosity successfully. The Welsh language is at the heart of the school's life and work, and is nurtured successfully. All staff take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' language, which contributes successfully to their oral skills. Teachers provide a rich range of valuable experiences in order to promote pupils' awareness of local history and legends, and of the work of local artists such as Kyffin Williams. A range of varied visits is provided to places of interest within the area, for example Llynnon Mill and Parys Mountain. This engages pupils' interest and enthusiasm towards the Welsh language and develops their awareness and understanding of their heritage and Welsh culture very effectively.

Foundation phase teachers plan stimulating activities jointly to promote learning both inside and outside the classroom. As a result, pupils develop as independent and confident learners. On the whole, key stage 2 teachers provide interesting learning activities, which motivate pupils to enjoy learning. However, these teachers do not

have a clear enough overview of what is learnt throughout the key stage. As a result, activities do not always build on pupils' skills effectively or provide enough challenge to respond to the needs of more able pupils.

The quality of teaching is adequate and needs improvement. Teachers foster and maintain a good working relationship between themselves and pupils, and create a supportive learning environment in lessons. Assistants contribute effectively to the quality of teaching and provide good support in line with pupils' needs in order for them to complete their tasks successfully. Where teaching is most effective, in around half the classes, teachers' presentations engage pupils' interest well. Teachers question skilfully, which enables pupils to elaborate and explain their answers sensibly. Teachers prepare stimulating tasks that respond to all pupils' needs. Where teaching is less effective, particularly in key stage 2, teachers do not have high enough expectations as learning activities do not challenge all pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. These lessons do not have a suitable pace.

Teachers across the school provide robust activities to develop pupils' language and number skills in Welsh, English and mathematics lessons. Foundation phase teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills effectively across the areas of learning. However, key stage 2 teachers do not provide opportunities for pupils to reinforce and develop their extended writing and numeracy skills effectively enough in other subjects. Planning to develop all of the pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum is not comprehensive enough.

Teachers provide pupils with valuable feedback during lessons on how to improve their work. However, best practice in assessment for learning is not implemented consistently enough across the school. Opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to reflect on their own work and that of their peers are inconsistent.

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

The school is a homely, safe and happy community. Emphasis is placed on recognising and respecting individuals' diversity and all pupils have equal rights. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Collective worship sessions support children's spiritual and moral development effectively, and they are given appropriate opportunities to reflect on relevant issues. The contribution of a member of the governing body through Open the Book activities strengthens provision successfully. This means that pupils develop a sound understanding of values such as honesty, fairness and respect towards others. This is highlighted clearly in the way in which most pupils treat each other.

The school promotes pupils' health and wellbeing successfully and has appropriate arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily. Teachers promote the advantages of a healthy lifestyle and promote pupils' physical health effectively across the curriculum, for example as pupils in the foundation phase visit a farm and a local supermarket. This, in addition to key stage 2 pupils' work in the vegetable garden, expands their knowledge of the journey of food from farm to fork. Teachers promote pupils' understanding of the importance of exercise effectively and provide a variety of activities to increase their health and fitness levels.

The school has suitable assessment procedures to track pupils' progress on their journey through the school. Teachers make good use of this information to provide support to pupils with additional needs, as necessary. The school provides good individual support to pupils on social and personal issues.

The school provides effectively for pupils with additional learning needs. Staff identify pupils' needs at an early stage and use information from observations and tests effectively to provide good support to individuals and assistance within the classroom. As a result, most pupils make good progress in line with their targets. Teachers provide suitable individual education plans for individuals. However, individual targets are not always specific enough to identify the steps towards making the most effective progress in their learning.

There are valuable working relationships between the school and parents, which provide them with appropriate opportunities to develop their ability to support their children; for example, parents have been given an opportunity to undertake scientific activities at the school with their children. As a result, they have a better understanding of what pupils achieve during these lessons.

Provision to develop pupils' artistic and creative skills is effective. There are successful opportunities for pupils to experiment with a variety of media when studying the work of famous Welsh artists. Through music lessons, opportunities to perform, and competing in the school Eisteddfod, most pupils are given valuable opportunities to take part in the creative arts.

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

### **Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement**

The headteacher has shared a clear and purposeful vision for developing the school with staff, pupils, governors and parents. The vision is based on creating a sound, pastoral ethos that promotes pupils' high standards, wellbeing and happiness. Although the school has been through a period of instability in terms of staffing during the last year, staff work together closely to create a homely, inclusive ethos, and provide varied and stimulating learning opportunities and experiences for pupils. Dedicated assistants provide effective support, which has a significant influence on the standard of pupils' work and experiences, for example by raising standards of reading and working in the outdoor area.

The headteacher has implemented a number of robust strategies, including restructuring the classes. This has already led to ensuring better consistency in the planning system to ensure improvements in provision and standards in the foundation phase. It is too early to see the effect of this on the standards of pupils' work in key stage 2. The team's responsibilities have not been established firmly enough, and this limits the headteacher's ability to share leadership responsibilities and to develop the school further.

The school has established comprehensive arrangements for self-evaluation, which use a range of suitable evidence, including analysing pupils' performance data, scrutinising their work and observing lessons. Leaders listen to the voice and views



of parents through relevant questionnaires. The self-evaluation report is an honest and detailed document that identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement concisely and accurately. This shows that leaders know the school well.

Priorities in the school improvement plan are based directly on the outcomes of self-evaluation arrangements and focus relevantly on raising standards. However, during the last year, monitoring and quality improvement arrangements have not been implemented rigorously enough to address the aspects for improvement. As a result, progress against the priorities in the previous improvement plan is satisfactory.

The governing body's detailed knowledge and sound understanding ensure that it plays a prominent part in the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and strategic planning processes. By working together effectively, observing lessons and scrutinising books, governors have an increasing awareness of standards of learning and the quality of teaching. They use this information successfully in order to challenge the school and develop their role well as critical friends.

Appropriate performance management arrangements contribute to improvements in teaching and learning. A robust feature of the school's leadership is the valuable opportunities that are provided for teachers to develop professionally. An effective climate of positive co-operation with other schools to provide training and share good practice has a significant effect on standards. An example of this is planning skills and developing sound principles in the foundation phase.

Expenditure is linked appropriately with the priorities in the improvement plan, and funding is monitored carefully in order to ensure that it is used effectively. The school uses the pupil development grant appropriately to raise the standards of work of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Recent investment has ensured that the school has a good range of good quality resources, and leaders manage them purposefully in order to ensure full access to all aspects of the curriculum. This is evident in the frequent use that is made of the outdoor area in the foundation phase and the new ICT equipment, which help to raise standards.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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**This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).**

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