



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gynradd Santes Gwenfaen  
Rhoscolyn  
Holyhead  
LL65 2DX**

**Date of inspection: January 2018**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gynradd Santes Gwenfaen

Ysgol Santes Gwenfaen on Holy Island serves the villages of Rhoscolyn and Trearddur Bay, in addition to the surrounding area. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 116 pupils between three and eleven years old on roll, including 15 nursery age pupils. They are divided into four mixed-age classes.

The average proportion of pupils who have been eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 11%. This is lower than the national percentage of 19%. Around 38% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 22% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is similar to the national percentage of 21%. Very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in April 2017, and the school was last inspected in May 2011.

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

Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, achieve well and make sound progress by Year 6. Nearly all pupils' behaviour is excellent and they are very polite when greeting each other, staff and visitors. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They concentrate and persevere well.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good and there is an effective working relationship between adults and pupils, which fosters a purposeful learning environment. The school provides a range of valuable and interesting learning experiences, and pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing well.

The headteacher's robust leadership sets a clear strategic direction for the school, which is based on raising standards and ensuring pupils' wellbeing. Staff work together very successfully in order to ensure a caring ethos. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use their knowledge purposefully to challenge the school and hold it to account for its performance.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve attendance

R2 Ensure better opportunities for the youngest pupils in the foundation phase to develop as independent learners

R3 Develop the outdoor area for the foundation phase to be a natural extension of the classroom

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, most pupils' basic skills at least correspond to what is expected for their age, and Welsh is a new language for around 60% of pupils. However, the oral skills of pupils who come from non-Welsh-speaking homes develop well from an early age. As they move through the school, nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress and achieve well by Year 6. They recall previous learning well, and use and apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully in a variety of situations.

Most pupils' oral skills in the foundation phase are developing well. They listen attentively and use an increasing range of appropriate vocabulary when talking to each other and adults. By the end of the phase, many use similes and adjectives skilfully, for example when discussing jungle animals. They convey personal and factual information in a conversation.

Most pupils in key stage 2 communicate clearly and are keen to offer answers or suggestions when talking about their work. When seeking to persuade about the importance of eating healthily, they discuss meaningfully while holding a debate. Before leaving the school, nearly all pupils attain a good standard of bilingualism and change freely from one language to the other. Older pupils discuss the advantages of learning Welsh and being proud of being bilingual.

Nearly all pupils in the foundation phase make good progress in developing their reading skills and use various strategies to decipher unfamiliar words. By Year 2, many read confidently and fluently, show an interest in what they read and discuss the content of their books knowledgeably. By the end of key stage 2, many read with accuracy and fluency in Welsh and English. They use their skills appropriately when gathering information in their investigative work, for example when producing a portrayal of Oliver Twist and describing the disaster of the ship, Royal Charter. Most older pupils' higher order reading skills are developing successfully. They predict, explain, question and summarise information very effectively.

In the foundation phase, most pupils write an increasing range of simple sentences, spell correctly and punctuate purposefully. By the end of the phase, most make good progress in their proficiency to use varied vocabulary and language, for example when writing an interesting extended piece about the character Wally. Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 write intelligently for different purposes in Welsh and English, and show a sound awareness of different forms of writing. By the top of the school, most choose interesting vocabulary and spell, punctuate and paragraph correctly. Their horror stories use adjectives, similes and idioms effectively. Presentation of work and handwriting are good across the school.

Pupils' numeracy skills are sound. They recall number facts quickly. By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils are able to use this knowledge confidently to solve real-life problems, such as the cost of electricity in the home. They deal with measurements successfully when comparing pupils' height with their age, and use mathematical vocabulary correctly when discussing their work. Most gather, analyse

and present information well in the form of a bar graph, for example when identifying pupils' favourite sports. In key stage 2, most pupils gather information in a variety of ways and present their findings correctly in the form of graphs, for example to identify the heart rate after running or jumping. They use their skills skilfully to discover how many miles the Royal Charter sailed on average each day on its voyage from Melbourne to Liverpool. Older pupils solve numerical problems effectively when working out the cost of laying carpet on the stairs of a house.

Many pupils use ICT confidently and independently for different purposes. In the foundation phase, for example, they use software purposefully to create a fact file about wild animals after gathering relevant information on the internet. They are able to handle data effectively by creating block graphs to show the favourite bread of pupils in the class, and to create a repeating pattern to design Christmas wrapping paper. Many are able to use QR codes intelligently to solve number problems and to show creative activities.

In key stage 2, nearly all pupils use Hwb confidently to complete their homework. They use software skilfully to present work on the Romans and when producing a short video on aspects of life in the Victorian era. They prepare interesting PowerPoint presentations, for example to present information about the effect of technology on the environment, by selecting specific information as a basis for a debate. Pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of e-safety.

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

Most pupils across the school have positive attitudes towards learning. They concentrate and persevere well for extended periods. During their lessons, they listen well to each other and wait patiently to contribute. They are willing to try, and many turn mistakes into learning targets successfully. Most have a sound understanding of what they need to do to improve their work and contribute positively towards supporting and improving each other's learning. This ensures that they succeed in their tasks. Most discuss their work confidently and show an obvious interest in their activities. This develops their social and life skills very effectively. However, the independent learning skills of the youngest pupils in the foundation phase have not been developed sufficiently.

Pupils contribute well to a number of charities that are important to them, and strong links with a school in Nairobi have a positive effect on their awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Nearly all pupils' behaviour inside the classroom and around the school is excellent. They are very caring towards each other, and treat adults and visitors with a high level of respect. A particular feature is the fact that many older pupils care for younger pupils kindly and tenderly, and take their responsibilities seriously. This contributes to the school's inclusive nature and caring ethos. Nearly all pupils feel safe and free from physical and verbal abuse at the school. Nearly all pupils take advantage of the opportunity to express concern, say thank you and suggest ideas in the 'Dwi Isho Deud' (I Want to Say) box, which is part of the school council's responsibility.

Most pupils understand how to stay healthy and express this clearly when discussing their eating and drinking habits. By taking part in a comprehensive physical education programme and extra-curricular activities such as athletics and running a mile a day around the track, they have a good understanding of the importance of keeping fit.

The pupil's voice is a core part of school life, and the cross-section of members who are elected to different groups, such as the eco group, the school council and the ambassadors at the beginning of the academic year, fulfil their work skilfully. Ambassadors organise an interesting programme of different sports for pupils to undertake during break time. The Criw Cymraeg show pride in the way in which they promote the importance of speaking Welsh by sending colourful posters to parents, for example to advertise family holidays to Glanllyn residential centre.

Many pupils' knowledge of aspects of sustainability is developing successfully. They have a good awareness of how to reduce waste and the effect of waste on the environment. Following a visit to a local recycling centre, they have a sound understanding of what happens to waste once it leaves the school.

Despite the school's efforts, pupils' attendance rates have fallen over the last three years, and are among the lower 50% of similar schools.

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. There is an effective working relationship between adults and pupils, which fosters a purposeful learning environment. This enables them to provide suitable support for individuals and specific groups. Teachers and assistants work well together and behaviour is managed very effectively. Staff use good language models that promote pupils' communication skills. This leads to robust standards of bilingualism by the time pupils leave the school.

In the best practice, lesson presentations are lively and activities flow well. Teachers explain new ideas in a meaningful and relevant way, and extend learning through hands-on experiences, such as visiting a local recycling centre. Teachers ask probing questions in order to expand pupils' understanding and encourage them to use their thinking skills throughout the lesson.

Teachers make skilful use of a range of assessment strategies. They provide useful oral feedback during lessons. There are good examples of purposeful marking, and teachers' comments respond to individual targets and often refer to improving pupils' skills. Pupils are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to improve their work by responding to teachers' comments and reviewing their own work and the work of others. This ensures that pupils, at a very early stage, understand how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve.

The school provides a range of valuable and interesting learning experiences that are a prompt for theme work. Teachers ensure that pupils are given regular opportunities to reinforce their skills in a wide range of subjects. As a result, pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developing well. In the best examples, teachers plan very effectively to ensure that pupils make decisions about their learning and

develop a wide range of skills. For example, pupils contribute ideas about what they would like to learn at the beginning of each theme. However, there is a tendency for activities for the youngest pupils in the foundation phase to be over-reliant on instructions from adults, which hinders opportunities for them to develop as independent learners. The outdoor area for the foundation phase has not been developed fully to be a natural extension of the classroom.

The school promotes the Welsh language successfully and encourages pupils to use it as a medium of communication continuously. The Welsh dimension, including promoting knowledge of Welsh culture and history, permeates throughout the school's life and work. Experiences are enriched further by visits from a famous actress and footballer, who promoted the importance of the Welsh language in their fields. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to compete in eisteddfodau and study the local environment and Welsh history.

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

The school promotes the importance of good behaviour, courtesy, respect and dedication very successfully. As a result, pupils behave excellently, treat each other and visitors with respect, and respond conscientiously to their activities. The school has established a good system for caring for the younger pupils around the school by giving older pupils responsibility for organising play activities for them during break time. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe at school, and respond eagerly and enthusiastically to the various opportunities they are given.

The school has successful procedures for tracking pupils' progress and wellbeing. These contribute effectively towards planning activities that respond to all pupils' needs. For example, teachers set extended challenges for more able pupils and provide appropriate interventions for pupils who need additional support.

All pupils with additional learning needs have a specific individual education plan, which identifies their strengths and areas for improvement. Classroom teachers consider the content of these plans carefully when planning lessons. Staff monitor the progress of pupils who receive additional support carefully and adapt provision for them appropriately.

The school has strong and useful partnerships with parents, the community, other schools and external agencies. Very effective use is made of local volunteers; for example, the contributions of a musical expert improve the singing skills of members of the choir successfully. The relationship between the school and parents is robust. The school operates an open door policy and communicates effectively with them to ensure that they are aware of the school's activities. The parents' association raises money to help the school to buy resources, such as technological equipment and reading books, and this contributes well towards extending learning experiences and pupils' standards.

The school has robust procedures to promote eating and drinking healthily and has responded positively to the school council's suggestions, for example by establishing a mile running track to promote pupils' fitness. As a result, most pupils understand and appreciate the effect of these activities on their health.



Visits by a police officer teach pupils well about the dangers of substance misuse, in addition to the dangers of using the internet. As a result, nearly all pupils know how to stay safe online. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development effectively, and visits to the local community enrich this further. For example, opportunities to compete in Urdd activities and the Christmas show increase pupils' social skills and their eagerness and enthusiasm to perform publicly.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher provides very robust and effective leadership, and ensures a clear strategic direction for the school and a culture that promotes continuous improvement. She has distributed responsibilities effectively and set high expectations and a purposeful vision, which are shared successfully with the school community. Staff work well together in order to ensure a caring ethos and a high level of pupil wellbeing. They are dedicated and enthusiastic, and work together closely as a team. They meet regularly to discuss, plan and track pupils' progress. This has a positive effect on the broad and valuable experiences that are provided.

The governing body is supportive and dedicated, and all members have specific responsibilities. They have begun to visit classes and scrutinise pupils' work and, as a result, their understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development is improving. This enables them to challenge the school and hold it to account for its performance effectively. The headteacher and governors manage the budget effectively, and expenditure links well with the school's plans for improvement. The school uses the pupil development grant prudently to improve the reading skills of the very few pupils who are eligible for free school meals.

The school has thorough systems for managing teachers' performance, with objectives that link suitably with the school's priorities. Processes have an appropriate effect on teaching and learning, for example in the consistent way in which assessment for learning strategies are used. The headteacher ensures suitable opportunities for the professional development of teachers and support staff. For example, training that was provided to improve methods of tracking pupils' progress has led to an improvement in Welsh reading skills across the school. Purposeful co-operation with other schools has also improved provision in the foundation phase classes and planning for science, music and mathematics in key stage 2. Key stage 2 teachers now include more practical activities for pupils.

A culture of continuous self-evaluation, which focuses well on pupils' outcomes, is rooted firmly in the school's day-to-day life. There are robust systems for reviewing progress, identifying areas for improvement and taking effective steps to implement them. Staff analyse data and outcomes carefully. They also consider internal assessment arrangements, scrutinise books and schemes of work, and observe lessons regularly. All staff play an active part in the process of monitoring, evaluation and planning for improvement. However, monitoring reports do not give a robust enough judgement on pupils' outcomes. The way in which the school includes pupils' views is an exceptional feature of the school's work, and there is a strong emphasis on ensuring that parents play an active role in the process of making comments and suggesting improvements. For example, following a consultation with parents, the way in which the school provides information about their children's achievement and progress was reviewed and changed.

The school development plan derives directly from evidence from the self-evaluation process, and provides logical details on the main priorities. It is a concise and clear document with a suitable number of relevant priorities on which to take action over a period of three years. Actions allocate responsibilities, including responsibility for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness, clearly. The school's ability to plan and ensure improvement is successful, for example as can be seen in the number of more able pupils who achieve the higher levels in English, mathematics and science in key stage 2.

## Copies of the report

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

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

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

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

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