



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

A report on

**Ysgol Henry Richard
Tregaron
Ceredigion
SY25 6HG**

Date of inspection: February 2018

by

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

About Ysgol Henry Richard

Ysgol Henry Richard is a bilingual 3-16 school that operates across three campuses. The school was established in September 2014 and is a result of a merger between Llanddewi Brefi and Tregaron primary schools and Ysgol Uwchradd Tregaron. Following a period as acting headteacher, the current headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2017. He is supported by an acting deputy headteacher and three assistant headteachers.

The school is expected to be located on one site by September 2018. Pupils from other primary schools in the catchment area transfer to the secondary sector in Year 7, mainly from Rhoshelyg and Pontrhydfendigaid primary schools. There are 302 pupils on roll, namely 131 in the primary department and 171 in the secondary department.

Nearly all pupils are of white ethnicity. Fifty-seven per cent (57%) come from Welsh-speaking homes and 88% of pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh. English is an additional language for a very few pupils.

Seven point two per cent (7.2%) of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is lower than the national average of 17% for secondary schools and 19% for primary schools. No pupils live in the 20% most deprived areas. Fifty-two per cent (52%) of pupils are on the additional learning needs (ALN) register, including 8% of pupils who are on School Action Plus. No pupils are statemented.

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

The headteacher is beginning to realise his vision for an all-age school that is the focal point of its community. The core of this vision is to develop an ethos of close co-operation in order to provide rich educational experiences for pupils.

The school is a close-knit, inclusive and Welsh community. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy the wide range of learning experiences and extra-curricular activities that are provided. Most teachers foster a strong and positive working relationship with pupils. As a result, nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well and treat their peers and others with respect and care. A majority of teachers plan their lessons in detail and provide appropriate opportunities, on the whole, for pupils to develop their subject skills.

Overall, a majority of pupils make appropriate progress as they move through the school. In key stage 4, however, pupils' achievement does not compare favourably with the performance of pupils in other similar schools over the last three years.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

Recommendations

- R1 Improve standards, particularly in key stage 4
- R2 Improve provision in order to ensure progression in pupils' skills development, particularly numeracy
- R3 Improve teaching so that all pupils' needs are met, in terms of ability and language
- R4 Improve the quality of assessment so that pupils improve their work when responding to specific feedback from teachers
- R5 Refine and sharpen self-evaluation and improvement planning processes across the school

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: Adequate and needs improvement

Overall, a majority of pupils make appropriate progress as they move through the school. However, in key stage 4, pupils' achievement does not compare favourably with the performance of pupils in other similar schools over the last three years.

In a few lessons, nearly all pupils make particularly good progress. They recall previous knowledge confidently and apply their skills very effectively to their new learning. For example, pupils consider push and pull factors successfully when discussing reasons for migrating from Mexico to the United States in a geography lesson. However, pupils do not make enough progress in a minority of lessons. In these lessons, expectations are not high enough and teachers do not provide enough challenge for pupils.

Many pupils develop effective oracy skills from an early age. Nearly all pupils listen attentively to teachers and their peers, and develop their subject knowledge and understanding successfully as a result. Many pupils discuss their work enthusiastically. For example, the youngest pupils are persuasive when explaining why they do not like the snow and wintry weather because it is too cold to go out to play. As they move through the school, many pupils develop as eloquent and fluent bilingual speakers, for example when sharing their findings about the characteristics of the characters in the novel, 'Of Mice and Men', and when analysing the effect on filming techniques in the film, 'Y Mynydd Grug'. A majority of pupils have a sound grasp of natural Welsh syntax, including a strong element of dialect. However, a minority of pupils have a limited Welsh vocabulary when analysing and discussing more complex issues in key stage 3 and key stage 4.

During their time at the school, many pupils develop strong reading skills. They read aloud confidently and with understanding from an early age, and give the text appropriate expression. A majority of pupils make effective progress in developing reading strategies to analyse and appreciate a varied range of texts. For example, pupils in key stage 2 differentiate between fact and opinion when discussing the school uniform, and pupils in key stage 3 compare contrasting texts on the advantages and disadvantages of recycling.

Many pupils develop competent writing skills across the school. They spell and punctuate correctly, on the whole. Their syntax is usually correct and they set out their work coherently. A majority show pride in their work and present their work neatly and methodically in their books. They write in a wide range of forms for different audiences in both languages, for example in key stage 2 when writing a biography of Walt Disney in English, and an imaginary letter from on board the ship Atlantic Queen in Welsh. A few pupils of higher ability develop as independent and confident writers and experiment with language registers and devices, such as varying the length of sentences in order to create effect. However, overall, pupils do not write extensively enough across the curriculum to the same standard as in their language lessons.

A majority of pupils use the four number rules competently to add, subtract, divide and multiply numbers within specific contexts, for example when exchanging money in a foreign country. They also produce graphs successfully to display information in lessons outside mathematics. However, overall, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills confidently enough across the curriculum in less structured situations.

Many pupils apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills skilfully across the curriculum. They use ICT to communicate, gather information from the internet and handle data effectively. For example, most pupils in key stage 2 create a successful database that includes information about the United States. Many pupils use ICT for creative purposes in textiles lessons. In key stages 3 and 4, they produce work of a very high quality by creating pictures on the themes of American Indians and transferring them to fabric.

Performance in the level 2 indicator, including Welsh and English and mathematics, is significantly lower than the average performance in similar schools over the last three years.

In two of the last three years, performance in the capped points score is lower than that of similar schools. The proportion of pupils who gain five GCSEs grade A*-C or equivalent has decreased over the last three years and is significantly lower than in similar schools.

Boys' performance has declined significantly over the last three years in most indicators, in comparison with boys in similar schools. Over time, boys and girls perform lower than their peers in similar schools in the indicator that includes five GCSEs grade A*-C including Welsh or English and mathematics. At the end of Year 11, all pupils remain in education, training or employment.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

The school is a supportive and inclusive learning community. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy the wide range of learning experiences and extra-curricular activities that are provided. They identify with the school's caring and supportive ethos. They feel safe at school and know whom to approach if they have any concerns. They feel that the school deals well with any rare cases of bullying and misbehaviour. Most pupils show pride in their school and develop as confident learners.

Pupils have high expectations of themselves. Nearly all behave very well. They are polite and courteous towards each other, staff and visitors. Most pupils have extremely mature social skills. They interact particularly well with others and treat their peers and adults alike with warmth and humour.

Nearly all pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and taking part in physical activities. This is reinforced effectively in a wide range of activities, for example in regular physical education sessions and when competing in friendly games against other schools. Around half the pupils in key stages 3 and 4 take part in extra-curricular team sports that are organised by the school each week. Sports ambassadors fulfil their duties effectively in encouraging pupils to take part in physical activities, for example the table tennis club in the school hall each lunchtime.

Most pupils have a firm understanding of the importance of staying safe on the internet, and this is reinforced successfully in presentations by members of the digital council.

Most pupils have a positive attitude towards their own learning. They show motivation in their work and apply themselves diligently to their tasks. This has a positive effect on many pupils' standards of achievement.

Pupils play an active role in the school's work and decision making. A notable example of this is the way in which pupils chose the name and uniform of the new school. The Welsh identity committee is beginning to have a positive effect on promoting social use of the Welsh language, for example by establishing the school radio station, Radio Rocio Richard. The school council is enthusiastic and understands that it represents the views of other pupils within the school community. As a result, the council has succeeded in creating a code of conduct for the school, which has a positive effect on nearly all pupils' standards of wellbeing and behaviour. When given the opportunity, pupils are beginning to make suitable decisions in relation to their learning. However, to date, pupils' role in guiding their own learning and developing as independent learners has been limited.

Many pupils develop as tolerant and responsible citizens. They organise a number of charitable and humanitarian activities that raise significant amounts of money each year. For example, the school holds an annual walk in aid of Cancer Research Wales, which has forged a close and beneficial link between the school and the charity.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

The quality of teaching at the school is adequate and needs improvement.

Most teachers foster a strong and positive working relationship with pupils. As a result, pupils behave very well in nearly all lessons. In a majority of lessons, support staff make a valuable contribution by providing effective help and support for pupils with additional learning needs.

Most teachers are strong language models in Welsh and English, and a majority teach skilfully in both languages. These teachers use the Welsh language as the main medium of teaching by translating key vocabulary and phrases into English, where necessary, without disrupting the flow of the lesson. However, a minority of teachers are not as skilful when teaching bilingually. This hinders pupils' ability to deal with more challenging topics in Welsh.

Many teachers have sound subject knowledge and engage many pupils' interest through a wide range of follow-up activities. The majority plan their lessons in detail and provide appropriate opportunities, on the whole, for pupils to develop their subject skills. The Welsh department, for example, plans resourcefully by preparing a challenge that asks pupils to discover, through a series of clues, the famous Welsh personalities who are coming to the classroom for a meal.

Overall, teachers do not plan purposefully enough or tailor activities skilfully enough to meet the needs of pupils across the range of ability. Over-use of worksheets limits pupils' independence and creativity. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not allow enough time for pupils to discuss their ideas and present them to the whole class.

A majority of teachers question their pupils skilfully and motivate them to present extended oral answers. They circle the classroom effectively during lessons in order to provide pupils with valuable verbal advice. In a few cases, teachers pause at key moments in order to check pupils' understanding purposefully. However, overall, teachers do not provide pupils with sound written feedback. A minority of teachers' comments are too superficial and complimentary, and they do not give pupils enough advice or regular opportunities to improve their work.

The school provides a wide range of valuable learning experiences across all key stages. There are creative and flexible arrangements in place and pupils benefit from a wide range of learning pathways that meet their interests and abilities. The school works effectively with external providers, nearby schools and local colleges in order to meet nearly all pupils' vocational needs, for example by offering an accredited course in blacksmithing. Opportunities for pupils to follow these courses, and to work on farms and in a local hair salon, support the school's strong focus on employability and strengthen community links.

Provision in the foundation phase provides a suitable balance between activities that are led by teachers and those led by pupils. However, the experiences that are provided do not always ensure that all of the principles of the foundation phase are implemented. For example, teachers do not plan purposefully enough to develop pupils' skills in the outdoor area. Activities in the areas do not always provide enough challenge for pupils as they work independently.

The school provides a comprehensive offer of successful activities outside the classroom. For example, educational visits, such as the textiles and art trips to Bath and Portmeirion, provide valuable practical ideas for pupils. The agriculture curriculum is enriched very effectively through visits to a number of further education colleges.

Overall, the school plans appropriately to develop pupils' skills. Beneficial opportunities are ensured to develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. The focus on oracy and reading has had a positive effect on nurturing eloquent speakers and confident readers in both languages. However, opportunities to strengthen pupils' extended writing skills are limited. The school's ICT provision is developing soundly. However, provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills across the school is inconsistent, and there are very few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge.

The school has a clear vision in terms of nurturing bilingual pupils who take pride in their Welsh heritage and are aware of modern Welsh culture. It has very effective arrangements for pupils who join the foundation phase and key stage 2 with very little previous competence in the Welsh language. It provides valuable opportunities for them to develop their skills in the Welsh language, and provides a sound linguistic foundation for them to participate fully in their bilingual education and take advantage of the experiences that are provided. At the end of key stage 4, most pupils sit the Welsh first language GCSE.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a close-knit, inclusive and Welsh community, and provision for care, support and guidance is at the heart of all of its work. As a result, nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well and treat their peers and others with respect and care.

The school knows its pupils very well and provides effectively for the emotional and social needs of vulnerable pupils. For example, the use that is made of the Encil and the Hafan makes a valuable contribution towards developing these pupils' life skills and promotes positive behaviour. This provision also ensures that pupils have full access to the curriculum.

The school works effectively with a range of agencies in order to ensure pupils' wellbeing and safety, for example to support their behavioural and linguistic needs. Parents and carers are included as part of a beneficial arrangement that reinforces relationships with these agencies.

The school has a beneficial relationship with parents, which is based on regular and clear communication practices. For example, social media is used effectively to celebrate pupils' successes and to support the process of establishing an all-age school by creating one parent-teacher association. The school provides suitable termly reports for parents. These reports provide a clear picture of pupils' commitment to their work. However, they do not refer incisively enough to pupils' standards and attainment.

The school has robust processes to identify pupils with additional learning needs and to ensure purposeful support for them. These pupils have useful individual education plans, which include suitable strategies to meet their needs. Pupils and teachers set targets jointly, and progress is reviewed regularly with parents. However, a minority of teachers do not use the individual education plans purposefully enough to provide the correct level of challenge in lessons.

The school has appropriate systems to track pupils' progress against their targets. Teachers use this information suitably in order to identify pupils who need additional support in order to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The school has not been incisive enough in evaluating the effect and suitability of all interventions, and they have not led to improving pupils' numeracy skills or raising the achievement of pupils in key stage 4.

The school organises a comprehensive programme of personal and social education that makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school places an obvious emphasis on promoting shared values, and pupils benefit greatly from purposeful opportunities to receive guidance on issues such as e-safety, cultural tolerance and sexual orientation.

The school succeeds in ensuring that most pupils have a sound understanding of the effect of choices on their lifestyles and health. Physical health is promoted regularly through a range of appealing extra-curricular activities. For example, a very high proportion of pupils take part in team sports that are organised by the school. There are appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to join different clubs, such as the ukulele club, and to take part in cultural activities. This has led to success for the school in musical and creative competitions, and in local and national eisteddfodau.

The school prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education or for the world of work. For example, opportunities for pupils to be given work experience on farms and in a local hair salon are a strength, and they ensure engagement with the local community.

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 begun to realise his vision for creating an all-age school that is the cornerstone of its community. The core of this vision is to develop an ethos of close co-operation in order to provide rich educational experiences for pupils. This vision is shared successfully with all of the school's stakeholders. The prominent presence of members of the senior leadership team on each campus promotes the vision of operating as a team to ensure the school's success as an all-age school.

On the whole, staff roles and responsibilities are defined clearly and staff fulfil their roles conscientiously. The school is in the process of re-structuring responsibilities in order to ensure that lines of accountability are clearer as the three current campuses relocate to one site.

Within a relatively short period, leaders have established a wide range of useful procedures that provide an up-to-date and accurate picture of many strengths and areas for improvement. Regular meetings focus suitably on improving elements of provision and pupils' standards, for example in developing a stimulating curriculum in key stage 2. However, there is not enough focus in meetings on evaluating the quality and effect of provision on improving standards across the school.

Leaders have created a calendar of useful self-evaluation activities and quality assurance processes. These include data analyses, lesson observations and book scrutiny, and beneficial opportunities for pupils, staff and parents to voice their opinions. These are implemented consistently and all of the school's stakeholders are involved in the process. However, there is not enough emphasis in lesson observations and book scrutiny on judging pupils' standards, skills and progress in order to improve their performance. They also do not focus enough on judging the quality of teaching.

There is a suitable link between the outcomes of monitoring procedures and the self-evaluation report. The report is an initial foundation for leaders to be able to identify good practice and areas for improvement. However, the report does not summarise all of the available information effectively enough. For example, the report does not consider how the school's current performance compares with that of similar schools in enough detail. It also does not evaluate the reasons for the low outcomes in key stage 4 over the last three years.

There is a suitable link between the areas for improvement in the self-evaluation report and the priorities in the school improvement plan. Leaders have chosen the main development issues wisely and implemented sensible steps to address most of them. However, there are too many priorities and they are not specific enough to lead to improving important aspects quickly enough. Overall, the plan includes appropriate success criteria. However, actions are not always specific or incisive enough to enable staff to understand the whole-school strategy. There are no suitable milestones by which to measure progress against the main priorities.

Leaders give due attention to developing local and national priorities. On the whole, they plan purposefully to develop the Welsh language to ensure that pupils leave the school fully bilingual.

Leaders have established a culture in which there is a clear emphasis on continuous professional development. Leaders have ensured that there are rich opportunities for all staff to expand and refine their professional knowledge through a programme of training activities. These opportunities allow staff to make cross-sector observations in order to deepen their understanding of the methodology of the different learning stages. Many members of staff share good practice and their professional knowledge successfully by running workshops within the school on various themes, including aspects of developing the digital competence framework. A rich programme of training has been organised to support managers to fulfil their duties efficiently.

Loyal and dedicated governors have played a key role in merging the schools to establish the all-age school. By receiving relevant information from the headteacher about performance data, and through regular visits, they are developing a sound understanding of the quality of provision and its effect on standards. Their role in holding the school to account for its performance is developing appropriately.

Leaders monitor the school's funding effectively and plan future expenditure shrewdly. Valuable use is made of the pupil development grant to improve pupils' skills through purposeful intervention programmes. The use of the grant to try to improve the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is beginning to have a positive effect on their attendance.

Copies of the report

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

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

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	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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Publication date: 02/05/2018