



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

A report on

**Ysgol Glancegin
Maesgeirchen
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 1ST**

Date of inspection: March 2020

by

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

About Ysgol Glancegin

Ysgol Gynradd Glancegin is situated on the Maesgeirchen estate in the city of Bangor, in Gwynedd local authority. All pupils come from the school's natural catchment area. There are 249 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 40 nursery age pupils who attend on a part-time basis. Welsh is the main language and medium of the school.

Over a three-year period, the average percentage of pupils who have been eligible for free school meals is around 36%. This is significantly higher than the national average of 18%. The school has identified around 33% of its pupils as having special educational needs. Again, this is significantly higher than the national figure of 21%. Many pupils come from English-speaking homes and only around 17% speak Welsh at home.

The school was last inspected by Estyn in February 2013, and the current headteacher was appointed in January 2016.

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 school is a caring community that incorporates the principles of its motto, 'Nurture, inspire, thrive', successfully. The headteacher and staff have high expectations of pupils, particularly in promoting their positive attitudes to learning. As a result, most pupils make good progress from their starting points during their time at the school. However, pupils do not develop their Welsh oracy, reading or writing skills successfully enough to become confident bilingual learners.

Across the school, teachers provide lessons that engage pupils' interest successfully. They use a range of different resources skilfully to prepare interesting activities for pupils in the classrooms and the outdoor areas.

The headteacher and his management team, which has been revised recently, have a positive effect on the school's work. They have created an effective professional learning community that encourages staff to reflect on their performance conscientiously and act positively on their findings. The school's performance is monitored through a wide range of self-evaluation activities. In the best cases, the school identifies its strengths and addresses areas for improvement successfully.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' standards of oracy, reading and writing in Welsh
- R2 Ensure that key stage 2 pupils are given regular opportunities to develop their thinking skills through scientific investigations
- R3 Develop middle leaders' leadership skills further
- R4 Address the health and safety issue that was raised during the inspection

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

In the school's first classes, most pupils' skills are below the level expected for their age. However, by the end of their time at the school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make beneficial progress and achieve well from their starting points.

In the foundation phase, most pupils have good listening skills and many respond intelligently, either verbally or through gestures. While many speak clearly and coherently, by the end of Year 2, only a minority respond to questions confidently and enthusiastically. Key stage 2 pupils build suitably on their Welsh oral skills and, by the end of Year 6, many talk appropriately, for example about what they know about the Blitz. However, English words are littered throughout their oral responses, and a majority of pupils' extended vocabulary is limited. They do not develop correct syntax successfully enough to develop as confident bilingual learners. Many pupils do not choose to use the Welsh language regularly enough to communicate naturally in the classroom or in informal situations. In key stage 2, most pupils speak very maturely and express an opinion confidently in English.

In the foundation phase, many pupils enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, and a majority make appropriate progress in their Welsh reading skills. They have a suitable understanding of sounds and use their phonic knowledge appropriately when trying to interpret unfamiliar words. A majority read and understand factual information about planets and answer questions on this meaningfully. However, only a few are sound readers who succeed in changing their tone of voice skilfully in line with the requirements of the text. In key stage 2, many read fluently in English and with appropriate accuracy in Welsh. On the whole, they discuss the content of books confidently and, at the top of the school, most use an online thesaurus confidently in English to find 'wow' words to enrich their writing. However, only a minority of pupils discuss the content of books in depth and respond to them at length in Welsh.

Many pupils across the school make good progress in their writing skills from their low starting points. Pupils' pride in their neat presentation is a strength across the school, particularly in key stage 2. At the beginning of the foundation phase, many form letters and capital letters clearly and consistently in terms of their size. By the end of the phase, many produce work that is organised well, for example when writing instructions on how to move a teddy along a particular path. After walking around Maesgeirchen, many identify ways to improve the local environment in an effective poster. However, only a minority of pupils use suitable syntax and rich vocabulary. In key stage 2, many write interestingly and accurately in a range of different genres in English, and develop their writing skills appropriately in Welsh. Many pupils have a sound understanding of the necessary elements in a personal letter, in terms of setting the letter out correctly and building beneficially on information when writing a letter in Welsh about their experiences during the summer holidays. However, spelling errors, unsure syntax and English words are littered throughout a majority of pupils' Welsh work. At the bottom of key stage 2, many pupils use adjectives effectively when writing an interesting piece about an elderly person. By the end of key stage 2, many write soundly in English by using lively

adjectives and alliteration effectively when writing a script to accompany a film to attract visitors to Snowdonia. However, a minority of pupils do not use their extended writing skills frequently enough across the curriculum in either language.

In the foundation phase, most pupils use their numeracy skills successfully. They collect and record data effectively, for example when creating a tally chart and producing a bar graph to show what types of transportation go past the school. They estimate the weight of cereal sensibly and use scales correctly to check their responses. Most recall previous learning well when explaining the relationship between different number sentences, placing numbers up to 10 in order, and counting forwards and backwards in twos and tens.

Many pupils in key stage 2 develop their number strategies soundly. They use written strategies and number facts confidently to solve problems, for example when planning a visit to Llanddwyn Island, considering the distance and cost. Most use four-digit map co-ordinates successfully to identify different landmarks in Snowdonia National Park. Many use mathematical symbols correctly, for example when comparing the height of mountains in Wales.

Pupils show increasing confidence in using and applying their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. By Year 2, nearly all pupils in the foundation phase use electronic tablets effectively. They use a graphics package confidently to create a picture of a rocket. Most develop a range of skills successfully to present information in various forms, for example when controlling a mechanical toy successfully on a map to move from the house to the bus station.

In key stage 2, most pupils use their ICT skills well across the curriculum when using a database to record the results of a scientific experiment on timing spinners moving. They create multimedia presentations successfully to present their work, for example to create a video about the experience of being an evacuee leaving home.

Across the school, nearly all pupils make good progress in their creative skills. For example, they consider colour, line and tone carefully when emulating the work of famous artists from Wales and abroad. Many pupils' skills in reading music and playing in a band alongside many other pupils are developing soundly and are one of the school's strengths. They delight in playing to an audience at the school, on a large stage at a local arts centre and in schools in Cardiff.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

There are very good working relationships between the school's pupils and staff, which is based on mutual respect. This is a strong feature across the school. Nearly all pupils enjoy the school's life and work, and feel safe within its caring, inclusive and supportive ethos. They know exactly whom to approach for advice or support if they are worried about anything.

Nearly all pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons, assemblies, when moving around the school and during break times and lunchtimes. They are very polite towards each other, staff and visitors, open doors for them and speak to them about their school with pride. Most pupils are very caring towards each other and treat others with respect in lessons, in the dining hall and on the playground. Most pupils

have a sound understanding of the school's principles and values. They consider the needs of others well, for example through their contribution to the local neighbourhood and their regular visits to Plas Hedd day centre.

Nearly all pupils take advantage effectively of the beneficial opportunities that are provided for them to express their views about important aspects of the school's work, and to contribute to their own wellbeing and that of their peers. For example, pupils worked together effectively to create the school's behaviour actions. They contribute purposefully to school life through a variety of children's committees, such as the 'Dŵds Digidol' (Digital Dudes), the school council, the eco committee, the health and wellbeing committee and the Welsh development crew. After noticing a parking problem outside the school, for example, members of the school council sought ideas from pupils and staff on how to improve it and created posters to promote safe parking. Pupils show an increasing ability to express an opinion about what they learn. By providing ideas about what they would like to learn within themes, most pupils are motivated successfully and committed to their own learning.

In lessons, most pupils show motivation in their work, apply themselves to tasks immediately and are ready to learn. Most pupils' attitudes towards their own learning are sound. They respond positively to mindfulness sessions at the beginning of lessons. As a result, nearly all pupils gain confidence and develop increasing resilience to persevere with their tasks. Most pupils work confidently and effectively in various ways, for example in discussion pairs, small groups and whole classes. Although most pupils are keen to learn, over the last three years, average attendance has not always compared favourably with similar schools.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and how to keep fit. They have a good awareness of the effect this has on the body. This is reinforced successfully through curricular and extra-curricular physical activities, for example the football club, a residential visit to Plas Menai, and walking along the Llanberis path up Snowdon.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

All staff treat pupils with respect and care, and create a supportive environment for them. Teachers know the pupils and their needs well, and create a productive working relationship that promotes learning effectively. They manage pupils' behaviour skilfully and plan lessons that engage their interest successfully. As a result, classrooms and outdoor areas are hard-working spaces. Assistants support learning effectively during lessons and in intervention groups.

Teachers introduce clear objectives at the beginning of lessons, and ensure that activities challenge learners suitably, on the whole, and encourage them to choose tasks that challenge and stretch them. They question pupils effectively in order to discover their level of understanding or move their learning to the next level. Staff give pupils valuable oral feedback during sessions and provide them with support, where appropriate. In the best practice, teachers ensure that they provide regular opportunities for pupils to assess their peers' work against specific success criteria. This contributes well to pupils' ownership of their own learning and their enthusiasm towards learning. Overall, teachers set suitable personal targets for pupils. They have adopted a definite procedure for giving written feedback to pupils. However,

they have not yet developed these techniques to their full potential and, as a result, pupils do not always refine their work skilfully enough.

All staff model the Welsh language effectively by using polished language regularly. This immerses pupils in the language from an early age and, as a result, most have an increasing understanding of it. However, not all members of staff have high enough expectations at all times in terms of insisting that pupils speak Welsh regularly and correctly.

The principles of the foundation phase have been established successfully at the school. Joint planning and implementing planning in the classroom ensure that the requirements of the foundation phase are delivered in full. Planning ensures a good balance between independent activities and those that are led by an adult. Pupils have regular access to the outdoor areas and benefit greatly from interesting activities, both inside and outside the classroom. A good example of this is the activity that was planned after finding a mess, and following a trail through the classrooms and the outdoor area to search for clues about who made the mess, namely an alien visitor from another planet. As a result of regular rich experiences such as this, many pupils in the foundation phase develop to become confident independent learners.

In key stage 2, teachers also plan jointly over a two-year period and provide interesting learning activities that engage many pupils' interest effectively. A good example of this is the beneficial planning to ignite the curiosity of pupils in the upper part of the school by placing a time button on the classroom wall to take pupils back to 1941. By doing so, arrangements were made for pupils to receive a letter from Winston Churchill to give pupils information about the effect of the war on the local area. Following this, an engaging task was planned to motivate and challenge pupils, based on solving a mathematical code to find the areas and warn them. However, planning does not always ensure that the curriculum is broad enough. For example, there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills through scientific investigations.

Teachers provide high quality opportunities to develop pupils' creativity. They ensure continuity and progression in their skills development across the school, and specifically in their ability to observe other people's artwork in detail before using the same techniques in their own work. Extremely valuable opportunities are provided for many pupils to learn to read music, play instruments together in a band and perform on local stages and further afield.

On the whole, teachers plan carefully to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the areas of learning. In the foundation phase, they use the forest area effectively to develop pupils' creative, imaginative and physical skills. In key stage 2, there are purposeful opportunities for pupils to reinforce their numeracy and literacy skills through rich tasks. For example, by cracking a code by multiplying or dividing decimals, or by multiplying whole numbers with decimals to find hidden letters, pupils identify the next areas that will be bombed in north Wales. Activities such as this ensure that pupils are engaged fully in their learning. However, they are not always as effective as they could be at developing pupils' Welsh oral, reading and writing skills.

Teachers provide contemporary activities and experiences that reflect the nature and context of the school and its community successfully. A range of visits are provided to places of interest within the area and further afield, for example when visiting Dinas Emrys to see the location of the legend of the red dragon, and places of interest in Cardiff. These activities develop pupils' awareness and understanding of their community and Welsh culture very well.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a very happy and caring community that fosters pupils' personal, social and cultural skills and wellbeing highly successfully. Staff create a warm working environment that focuses on developing the whole child, and nurture pupils' confidence and self-respect very well.

The school has effective and thorough procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. This system is used skilfully to identify pupils who need additional support. As a result, staff identify pupils' special educational needs and personal needs at an early stage. These pupils have detailed individual education plans and targets that are specific and measurable. Provision for them has been mapped in detail, and rich learning support programmes have a positive effect on their standards and wellbeing. As a result, nearly all make sound progress from their starting points. A very good example of this is the arrangements that the school makes to support pupils with emotional needs in the nurture room, 'Yr Aelwyd'. The school works very closely with a variety of agencies in order to provide valuable support for pupils and their parents, and staff provide suitable and purposeful support, which ensures that all pupils are given the best start in life.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to shoulder responsibilities by encouraging them to undertake their roles within various committees. These experiences develop pupils' understanding of the importance of contributing to society and help them to develop successfully to become responsible citizens. A good example of this is the work of members of the eco committee to reduce the use of plastic straws significantly.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of community activities and local visits, such as services at Eglwys y Groes. As a result, pupils develop a strong sense of belonging to their community.

The school has robust procedures to promote eating and drinking healthily. There are also beneficial opportunities for them to take part in exercise activities. A good example of this is the use that is made of the local football pitch and athletics track, which develops pupils' physical skills effectively.

The school provides suitable opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and social skills. It places a clear emphasis on promoting values such as tolerance, kindness, friendship and perseverance. By studying the effect of different religions and cultures across the world, pupils are given a valuable opportunity to develop their understanding of the wider world and gain respect for people from different cultures and backgrounds. A good example of this is the co-operation with a poet on activities in relation to Jamaican traditions and culture.

Parents are kept well-informed about the school's activities and events. They also receive information about their child's progress during parents meetings and end-of-year progress reports. They are also given regular opportunities to contribute ideas on the content of the termly themes. As a result of parents' views, the school has recently placed a particular focus on the local area.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are appropriate, on the whole, and meet requirements. However, during the inspection, a health and safety issue in relation to the site came to the attention of the inspection team. This was discussed with the headteacher and a representative of the governing body and the local authority.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher has a clear vision that is based on supporting pupils' wellbeing and enriching their learning experiences. He has a robust influence on maintaining and raising pupils' standards of achievement. All staff feel that they have ownership of this vision, and contribute effectively towards creating a caring and happy community for pupils. The headteacher is supported effectively by a senior management team that has been re-structured recently. Members of the senior management team have high expectations of pupils, particularly in terms of their behaviour and how they should interact with others.

All staff understand their roles well and work together effectively. They work effectively as a team and hold beneficial professional discussions during meetings. This includes reflecting on their own performance and that of their peers by observing video clips of their teaching. This has led to creating an open and supportive teaching community in which staff develop together effectively. For example, successful practices in assessment for learning are disseminated throughout the school. The school has robust performance management process with clear links to priorities for improvement, in addition to valuable opportunities for staff to take advantage of opportunities to work towards the next step in their careers.

Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities successfully. Members of the different sub-committees understand their roles and contribute productively to the work of the full body. With clear guidance from the headteacher, they develop their role as critical friends by conducting self-evaluation activities, such as learning walks and scrutinising pupils' work. As a result, they have an increasing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Leaders at all levels conduct a wide range of self-evaluation activities regularly. Where this is at its best, procedures identify strengths accurately and highlight areas for improvement clearly. However, not all middle leaders' analytical skills have developed sufficiently, as yet, to enable them to identify and address effectively or promptly enough some specific areas for development that are within their control. However, on the whole, the outcomes of the self-evaluation process have identified areas for development accurately, and they link very closely to the priorities in the current development plan. The school responds successfully to a majority of its priorities for improvement by implementing effective plans to improve particular aspects of them. For example, having identified the need, leaders have now ensured

that there are more good opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum.

Leaders manage the school's budget carefully. They maintain an appropriate level of staffing, and give clear consideration to current priorities when earmarking expenditure. They use grants effectively, including the pupil deprivation grant. For example, they have established a successful nurture intervention and enrich the curriculum with musical instrument sessions. The school has a good supply of resources, such as information technology equipment. The school grounds provide valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in forest school sessions, which promote their knowledge and understanding of the world effectively.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

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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