



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

A report on

Ysgol Goronwy Owen

**Benllech
Anglesey
LL74 8SG**

Date of inspection: March 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Goronwy Owen

Name of provider	Ysgol Goronwy Owen
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	148
Pupils of statutory school age	130
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	18
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	8.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	5.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	20.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2013
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/10/2019
Start date of inspection	06/03/2023

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Ysgol Goronwy Owen is part of the Gwêl y Glannau Federation with Ysgol Gymuned Moelfre. The headteacher provides strong leadership and promotes teamwork across the sites highly successfully. The headteacher has a clear vision based on ensuring high levels of well-being and high standards, with an emphasis on ensuring consistency in the experiences of pupils in the individual schools. Staff work very closely in teaching teams across the federation to plan beneficial and stimulating learning experiences. As a result, teaching is consistently good in nearly all classes.

Teachers provide lessons that motivate pupils and encourage them to develop as independent learners effectively. They are supported by assistants who promote learning skilfully. They provide care and guidance of a high standard for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and emotional needs.

Most pupils make sound progress from their starting points. They develop literacy skills successfully and, by the end of their time at the school, most pupils communicate naturally in Welsh. They write purposefully in different genres. However, the over-use of rigid frameworks means that they do not always apply their writing skills fully in work across the curriculum. Most pupils use numeracy skills confidently, for example when calculating by using written methods. However, they do not apply their numeracy skills in work across the curriculum as frequently. Across the schools, pupils develop strong digital skills.

Leaders know the schools in the federation well. As a result of clear processes and an ethos of honest self-evaluation, they have sound knowledge of the main strengths and areas for development.

Recommendations

- R1 Reduce the use of ready-made frameworks to enable pupils to develop their writing skills further in tasks across the curriculum
- R2 Provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum
- R3 Comply fully with the statutory guidelines for healthy eating in schools

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

On entry to the school, most pupils' skills are around the level that is expected for their age, except in Welsh where their skills are lower than expected as only a few pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Most, including pupils with ALN and those who are eligible for free school meals, make sound progress during their time at the school. They recall previous learning confidently and persevere maturely with their activities.

Most pupils in the nursery class play happily with their friends. They develop sound social skills and respond maturely to the staff's high expectations. They listen when discussing how many blocks will be needed to build a tower as tall as themselves and sing familiar songs enthusiastically. They develop strong physical skills through activities such as riding bicycles in the outdoor area. They demonstrate effective fine motor skills when hanging Mrs Wishi Washi's clothes on the line and hold different colouring implements carefully to make marks.

Most pupils of all ages listen maturely during their learning activities. They work together in pairs and small groups and discuss and suggest ideas in relation to their work. Across the school, most pupils speak Welsh naturally and express themselves clearly. For example, they explain how to use the 'three before me' method when completing their challenges. However, a few less confident pupils have a tendency to use English at times.

The reading skills of many of the school's youngest pupils are developing appropriately. They demonstrate suitable reading strategies and build words with increasing confidence. They discuss their texts maturely and show a genuine curiosity towards reading and see the humour in the text. More able pupils in Year 2 adapt their tone of voice by emphasising parts of stories that are placed in quotation marks.

Many Year 4 pupils read methodically and smoothly with an appropriate level of accuracy in both languages. They discuss different texts and their preference for different fictional and factual genres. They use a range of self-correction methods and show a good understanding of the text. Many pupils at the top of the school read maturely and confidently. They discuss their fondness for different books and explain who their favourite Welsh and English authors are. They compare two texts based on Snowdon and refer to their different attributes. However, there is a tendency for a minority to be less skilled in reading extended texts in Welsh.

Many foundation learning pupils develop as independent writers quickly. For example, Year 1 pupils write about safety rules and show an increasingly sound grasp of elementary spelling and punctuation. Many Year 2 pupils write a personal piece about the nurse who cares for them when they are ill.

When they are given an opportunity to do so in language lessons, most of the school's oldest pupils create extended written pieces in a variety of genres. For example, they write from the perspective of a person suffering from the illness during the Black Death by creating a diary. The work has been created highly skilfully and shows exceptional sensitivity. However, they do not always apply their writing skills in

work across the curriculum to the best of their ability due to the over-use of writing frameworks.

Most pupils develop a sound understanding of mathematical concepts, such as number, shape and data. They recall previous learning to solve problems successfully. For example, they interpret information on mathematics mats independently and use written methods to calculate correctly. In the few strongest cases, they apply their numeracy skills in work across the curriculum at a suitable level, for example as Year 2 pupils gather information about their friends' favourite fruit in a tally chart and create graphs to display the information. However, overall, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills purposefully enough in their work across the curriculum over time.

Across the school, most pupils have strong skills in using digital equipment for different purposes. Foundation learning pupils use QR codes to find instructions as they select the level of challenge that is most suitable for them during their tasks. Many pupils across the school use tablet computers to record their work to share with the rest of the class. Many pupils in the older classes use digital equipment skilfully when considering their own work and that of their peers and evaluate to what extent they have responded to the success criteria for the task. For example, they use different colours and highlight the text in specific colours when ensuring that they have punctuated correctly, and include adjectives to enrich the text.

Most pupils' creative skills are developing appropriately. For example, many pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 create effective pictures of the sea as a result of the theme work on Welsh myths. Many of the oldest pupils create three-dimensional shapes of Snowdon as part of their theme work on *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau*. Classes of pupils are given rich opportunities to develop their musical skills through a series of ukulele workshops where they learn an awareness of rhythm while playing together.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Most pupils are happy at the school. They behave politely and treat others with respect. They feel safe and value the high standard of care they receive from all members of staff. They believe that adults listen to them, whether that is to alleviate any concerns or to guide them through uncertain aspects of their tasks.

Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning. As a result, they concentrate well on their work. However, a very few pupils lose focus during their activities and need to be re-directed to their tasks. One of the strong features of the school is the way in which pupils are willing to support each other when solving problems within their activities, particularly through the 'three before me' method. This fosters their independence effectively and provides beneficial opportunities for them to work together to discuss aspects of their learning amongst themselves. As a result, a supportive and constructive environment permeates the school and this leads to a strong sense of functioning as a harmonious family.

The different leadership groups, including the digital wizards, contribute significantly to the child's voice within the school's activities. For example, they create a video for parents to promote activities for Children in Need. The school ambassadors work diligently to improve aspects of the school's provision, which includes encouraging pupils to use sports equipment during break times. These opportunities are effective in developing pupils' leadership and co-operation skills as they make shared

decisions. Members of the school council, which operates as one body with membership from both schools, also contribute beneficially to the process of ensuring consistency and co-operation across the federation.

Many pupils support community activities, for example by fundraising for national charities. They enjoy competing in the local Marianglas eisteddfod by producing art and craft work skilfully. These experiences are effective in deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding of their community and how to be conscientious citizens.

Pupils respond positively to the opportunities they are given to contribute to what they would like to learn within their themes. They discuss their work confidently with staff and peers. They respond appropriately to oral feedback within lessons and, as a result, they have a sound understanding of what they need to improve within their work.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay healthy, including how to stay safe online. For example, they create informative posters informing about the importance of a balanced diet as part of the termly theme 'O'r Pridd i'r Plât' ('From Farm to Fork'). Pupils enjoy growing vegetables in the school garden before giving the produce to the cook for meals. As a result, pupils are given the valuable experience of knowing how to develop self-sufficiency skills. They participate energetically in physical education lessons and running sessions on the school grounds, with some joining sports clubs in the area.

Pupils are attending school more regularly this year in comparison with last year, when the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative effect nationally on attendance in schools.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers have good working relationships with pupils. They treat all pupils equally and with appropriate respect, which creates a caring ethos in the classrooms and creates an effective learning environment. The standard of teaching is consistently good in nearly all classes. Teachers provide a range of appropriate activities to respond to pupils' needs. They have high expectations of all pupils; for example, they expect pupils to show positive attitudes to learning. They encourage pupils to work effectively individually, in pairs and in small groups. In a few cases, classroom management is not robust enough and, as a result, a very few pupils become disruptive and do not concentrate well enough on their tasks.

Teachers use a range of probing questioning methods that are effective in recalling previous learning and guiding the direction of learning purposefully. This effective questioning is used to assess pupils' understanding skilfully. Teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning and that of their peers. They provide appropriate feedback orally, in writing and digitally, which provides pupils with beneficial guidance on what they are doing well and what needs to be improved.

Teachers ensure that the learning areas are interesting and stimulating. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales appropriately. Teachers include pupils' views meaningfully when planning themes that engage the interest of nearly all pupils' effectively. For example,

teachers plan valuable opportunities to develop pupils' creative skills by creating toys from the Victorian era. In the school's upper years, pupils benefit from creating models of micro-organisms out of clay.

On the whole, teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, they plan purposefully to develop pupils' Welsh speaking and listening skills over time. They provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills in a range of different genres in language lessons. However, the use of writing frameworks hinders opportunities for pupils to write freely in work across the curriculum.

Teachers plan series of beneficial lessons to develop pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts thoroughly. They are given opportunities to apply these skills by using mats that set suitable mathematical challenges. They provide a few opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum; however, on the whole, these activities do not develop pupils' numeracy skills cohesively enough over time. Teachers plan appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills in different contexts. For example, the school's older pupils create a website about Snowdon and import maps, images and text.

Teachers use the school's areas appropriately to enrich provision. For example, pupils across the school are given regular opportunities to work together and solve problems in the outdoor areas as part of their weekly challenges. This includes developing the school garden by planting vegetables.

Staff plan a variety of educational trips to broaden pupils' understanding of what they learn. For example, as part of their work on developing their knowledge and understanding of their *cynefin*, pupils go on a nature trip to Cwm Idwal. Teachers plan beneficial opportunities for visitors to come to the school to share their expertise with pupils. For example, a local artist supports pupils to make Christmas decorations by using the batik style.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a homely and inclusive community that promotes the well-being of pupils and staff highly effectively. The supportive and friendly working relationship between staff and pupils is an excellent feature. This is reflected in the good behaviour and courtesy of pupils and most pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Teachers and assistants ensure that pupils with educational or emotional needs receive high quality support. This ensures that nearly all pupils succeed in engaging well with their learning and enjoy the school's life and work.

The school has robust procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and well-being. Staff identify pupils' needs at an early stage and provide them with appropriate and highly effective support. Under the guidance of the teachers and the additional learning needs co-ordinator, assistants support pupils successfully. They use a range of intervention strategies successfully to improve pupils' well-being and develop their social skills. They provide a range of appropriate programmes that develop pupils' literacy skills skilfully. Practical sessions provide rich opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their understanding of Welsh vocabulary and syntactical patterns. A notable example of this is the gardening sessions, where pupils are given rich opportunities to visit the local shop to buy produce to make fat balls to feed the birds. The check-in sessions at the beginning of the school day and

the appropriate use of the Ystafell Enfys are effective in ensuring that pupils are given time to discuss any concerns they may have before starting their educational tasks. Staff have a productive working relationship with the parents of pupils with additional needs. They include parents in the process of reviewing their children's progress before setting further attainment targets for them.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to identify with the local community and the wider world. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to take part in community activities, for example organising community events, including holding a bingo afternoon for the residents of the village. The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the importance of being conscientious and sensitive citizens. For example, they collect goods for citizens suffering from the impact of the war in Ukraine and attend school assemblies that promote equality.

Through stimulating themes and educational visits, the school develops pupils' understanding of Welsh identity, heritage and culture well. For example, staff plan valuable opportunities for pupils to visit historic places, including Beaumaris and Penrhyn castles and teach them about traditional Welsh legends, such as Cantre'r Gwaelod. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to go on residential trips to the Urdd centres, which are effective in developing their spoken Welsh skills in informal contexts.

The school's committees provide regular opportunities for pupils to make important decisions, including running the track as part of the school's daily fitness activity and working with Keep Wales Tidy to improve the school's outdoor areas. The school provides valuable opportunities for older pupils to develop their understanding of business enterprise, for example by knitting hats and making earrings to sell in a tea and coffee afternoon for the community.

Leaders plan purposeful experiences for pupils at both schools to take part in competitions and performances under the banner of the Gwêl y Glannau Federation. A good example of this is that pupils from both schools come together to create one choir and a recitation group to compete in the Urdd Eisteddfod. The federation's pupils are also given valuable opportunities to compete jointly in sports tournaments and walk side by side during the St David's Day parade.

The senior management team ensures that a robust culture of safeguarding permeates the school. The school site is a secure space. All members of staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding processes and receive appropriate training on an annual basis. Leaders respond robustly to any cases by working effectively with other agencies, where appropriate. The school's procedures for monitoring attendance and pupils who arrive late are robust. Leaders contact parents promptly to discuss any concerns and use the local authority's attendance and welfare officer, when necessary.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a clear vision based on providing a high standard of education for all pupils, with rich and regular experiences across the federation's schools. With the support of the assistant headteachers of both schools, the headteacher creates and maintains a climate of strong co-operation. All staff work as one team across the federation, which includes working together in teaching teams to plan jointly. As a

result, pupils receive strong support in terms of their well-being, in addition to beneficial and consistent learning experiences. Leaders promote a culture of safeguarding successfully. They place a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' health and well-being and, as a result, the school has a caring climate.

The schools have thorough self-evaluation processes based on analysing first-hand evidence, such as scrutiny of books and learning walks. During the lockdown periods, the school continued with valuable monitoring processes, such as observing live online learning sessions. This means that leaders have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders seek stakeholders' views through questionnaires and adapt provision, where appropriate. For example, a decision was made to reintroduce face-to-face parents' evenings after the COVID-19 pandemic following feedback from parents.

Leaders plan purposefully to address areas for improvement across the federation. They identify definite actions and ensure that all staff are aware of what needs to be done to realise the actions for improvement. Over time, they have shown the ability to lead on improvements to provision, which has a positive effect on pupils. For example, they have introduced a relationships and sexuality education plan that contributes towards improving pupils' understanding of healthy relationships. When setting priorities for the school, leaders give due attention to national priorities. For example, the school provides learning experiences that are based on the principles of the Curriculum for Wales.

The school has robust performance management processes for all staff. They set targets that combine the school's current priorities and the aspirations of staff. As a result, all staff have a sound understanding of what is expected of them. Leaders organise beneficial professional development opportunities for staff. For example, staff have developed their ability to support pupils' emotional needs following recent training. Leaders encourage staff to consider the next steps in their careers and facilitate opportunities for them to attend suitable training. For example, members of staff have benefitted from attending middle management sessions and assuming additional responsibilities to develop leadership skills.

The governing body works appropriately as a critical friend. Historically, it has contributed fully to the school's self-evaluation processes, including becoming familiar with aspects of provision during learning walks. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, members are beginning to resume more practical duties. They ensure that the food and drink provided by the school comply with legislation. However, leaders do not ensure that the school complies with the statutory guidelines on healthy eating in full, for example by allowing pupils to drink squash in the classroom.

Leaders manage the school's budget appropriately. They make suitable decisions about expenditure for the benefit of the pupils. For example, they use part of the pupil development grant to provide beneficial play therapy sessions to support pupils' well-being.

Leaders set robust expectations in terms of promoting the Welsh language. They have high expectations, which include creating a culture of speaking Welsh in lessons and extra-curricular clubs. They organise beneficial sessions for parents to learn about the advantages of bilingualism. Leaders forge and maintain useful partnerships with parents. Beneficial briefing sessions are provided for new parents when their children start in the nursery and Reception classes. For example, they

receive information about the school's approaches to introducing early reading skills and numeracy skills.

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/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, 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
- 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' well-being, 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 (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

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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