



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

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tirdeunaw

**Heol Gwyrosydd
Penlan
SA5 7BX**

Date of inspection: November 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tirdeunaw

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tirdeunaw
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	382
Pupils of statutory school age	276
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	67
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>	24.9%
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>	39.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	10.1%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	13/11/2023

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 Gynradd Gymraeg Tirdeunaw is a happy, caring and inclusive community. The well-being of pupils and staff is given a high priority by leaders and, as a result, there are strong relationships of respect between staff and pupils. The values of 'friendship', 'responsibility', 'kindness', 'courtesy' and 'Welshness' are an integral part of the school's learning environment. Pupils have a sound understanding of these values, which contributes effectively to their good behaviour.

The school provides a rich curriculum that reflects the local area's history and culture. There is a strong emphasis on raising pupils' aspirations and inspiring them to become ambitious learners by providing a variety of stimulating learning experiences, for example by holding careers weeks and inviting different visitors to the school.

Teachers' planning to develop pupils' skills is effective. As a result, most pupils make sound progress in their literacy, numeracy and digital skills from their starting points. Staff plan a range of purposeful activities which ensure that pupils have interesting experiences that engage their interest. However, provision does not provide regular opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about what to learn and how to present their work. On the whole, staff plan suitable opportunities for pupils to learn in the outdoor areas. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop their independent learning skills or their creative ability in the areas inside and outside the classroom.

A notable aspect of the school's work is the headteacher's effective and robust leadership. She sets high expectations for all members of the school and plans various opportunities to support staff's professional development. Leaders have created a shared vision that demonstrates pride in the school's local community.

Governors are supportive of all the school's activities and commit themselves appropriately to supporting and challenging leaders. However, there are not enough formal opportunities for governors to be included in activities to support the school's self-evaluation processes.

Recommendations

- R1 Develop opportunities for the youngest pupils to foster and develop their independent learning skills and creative ability both inside and outside the classroom
- R2 Expand opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about what to learn and how to present their work
- R3 Strengthen the role of governors to enable them to operate more effectively as critical friends

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, many pupils' literacy, numeracy and social skills are equal to, or lower than, what is expected for their stage of development, particularly in Welsh. During their time at the school, most make sound progress in a wide range of skills. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who speak Welsh or English as an additional language make good progress against their personal targets.

Pupils' language and literacy skills develop soundly. From an early age, many of the youngest pupils' Welsh communication skills develop suitably. Across the school, with encouragement from adults, many develop their skills to communicate with increasing confidence in Welsh. The youngest pupils use specific vocabulary skilfully, for example in problem-solving activities successfully. Many of the oldest pupils communicate confidently in Welsh and English. Across the school, most pupils listen obediently to the contributions of their peers and instructions from adults, and respect the contributions of others consistently.

Many pupils' reading skills develop effectively as they move through the school. The youngest pupils begin to use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words and discover the meaning of text. By Year 6, many read clearly and with good expression in both languages. They show a suitable understanding of the content of different text and express an opinion and gather information about a particular area meaningfully from more than one source.

The early writing skills of many of the youngest pupils develop successfully, for example by experimenting and making marks with various resources. By Year 2, many write in Welsh successfully in different genres, for example when writing a short story about 'Y Môr' ('The Sea') by using effective adjectives to describe interesting characters. Many older pupils write at length in an effective variety of genres with a good measure of accuracy. They vary the beginning of sentences successfully by using an increasing variety of punctuation, and become increasingly aware of the audience when writing in interesting genres. For example, Year 6 pupils write inspiring speeches to motivate the Welsh rugby team.

Many of the youngest pupils develop a useful range of mathematical skills and enjoy applying them in numeracy challenges, for example by completing counting games and matching activities enthusiastically. By Year 2, many use the four number rules confidently, for example by adding and subtracting two-digit numbers. They develop their measuring skills effectively, for example when measuring liquids by using the correct scale confidently. By Year 6, many pupils use a good range of mental calculation methods skilfully and persevere well when solving problems. Across the

school, most pupils apply their number skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils round their results successfully to the nearest 10 and 100 when comparing the distance that goods travel to reach Wales. Most older pupils develop their data-handling skills effectively, for example when comparing and analysing accident data in the local coalmines.

Most pupils' digital skills develop soundly. From an early age, for example, pupils in the Reception class gather and present information about insects successfully in the form of a pictogram. Most pupils in Year 2 apply their skills successfully, for example when creating an animation of Barti Ddu and adding a voiceover effectively. By Year 6, most pupils develop digital skills fairly confidently by using formulae skilfully to create a spreadsheet while comparing the climate in Wales and the Arctic.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards physical activity. They enjoy physical education sessions and apply themselves purposefully to develop their skills. Across the school, a majority of pupils benefit from valuable opportunities to develop their creative skills, for example by applying their skills in beneficial activities as part of a heritage project with the school's oldest pupils.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

The school has a friendly and familial ethos. Pupils greet each other, staff and visitors politely and respectfully. Most feel safe and enjoy coming to school regularly. They are happy to discuss any concerns with members of staff and know that they are listened to. Pupils are glad of the various opportunities they are given and their achievements at the school.

Most pupils develop their physical skills and make healthy choices regularly. They respond positively to opportunities to take part in a range of physical activities during lessons, break times and lunchtimes and through after-school clubs and activities. Pupils across the school also understand the importance of keeping healthy, for example by developing their cooking skills in sessions with a well-known chef. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online, for example through their work during online safety week and by receiving advice from the local police officer.

Nearly all pupils behave well both inside and outside the classroom. They treat their peers with care, which adds to the school's familial atmosphere. Many pupils develop to become ambitious and skilful learners who are willing to learn in a good variety of learning experiences. They show beneficial confidence and resilience, for example when persevering with activities that challenge them to achieve well.

Through their awareness of the values that are promoted by the school, most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of moral and creative citizenship. They have a sound awareness of their rights, for example the right to be protected from being hurt or treated poorly as they take part in assemblies during 'anti-bullying week'.

Most pupils are proud that their voice is valued and respected, for example when expressing an opinion through the councils, the '*bocs becs*' worry box and the 'inspiration week'. By doing so, pupils have a variety of valuable experiences to spark

their imagination and foster their enthusiasm for the coming term's activities. They are confident that leaders take their views and ideas seriously, for example when developing the garden in the outdoor area.

Nearly all pupils benefit from the regular opportunities that are provided to help them to learn throughout their lives. For example, they develop their gardening and cooking skills masterfully in real-life experiences. Teachers also promote various careers and provide sessions to support pupils to learn about the world of work highly successfully in partnership with local employers and parents. The careers week enables pupils to learn about their roles and skills well and supports their aspirations for the future.

Most pupils undertake their tasks conscientiously and concentrate well for specific periods. The '*wyt ti mewn penbleth*' method ensures that many pupils continue with their learning or search for new solutions or answers when they face difficulties. Many pupils apply themselves enthusiastically to their tasks and challenge activities, which encourage them to work independently and, on the whole, they persevere to complete their work consistently. However, pupils do not choose independently how to record and present their work regularly enough during their learning activities.

Many pupils discuss their previous work and learning confidently; for example, the oldest pupils focus on developing their knowledge of grammar when writing a radio script. Many pupils read over their work and respond effectively to feedback and understand the next step in their learning. They respond regularly to their targets and value and respect the contributions of others when improving their work.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff engage successfully with the whole-school community and beyond to create a vision for its curriculum, namely '*annog annibyniaeth, bachu brwdfrydedd a chynnig cyfleoedd*' ('encouraging independence, capturing enthusiasm and providing opportunities'). Teachers develop a broad curriculum that provides valuable experiences for pupils to learn about their local area. For example, teachers plan a theme based on the history of the area's coal industry to enrich pupils' learning experiences.

The fundamental principles that are at the heart of the curriculum have been incorporated skilfully as 'flashes' for each class. Teachers expand learning opportunities well by using visits to the local area, visitors to the school and working with external agencies to enrich teaching and learning. For example, staff work with a well-known gardener to develop the school garden to plant and harvest vegetables. This ensures that pupils are given an opportunity to experience rich activities as they move through the school.

Staff plan purposefully to develop pupils' skills. They set high expectations and motivate pupils to develop their skills progressively. Overall, learning activities to support pupils to apply all of their skills across the curriculum are effective. For example, within their theme work, teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills. In Year 6, for example, pupils apply their digital skills purposefully to use formulae and convert scales while estimating the temperature confidently. However, teachers do not plan activities effectively enough that support

pupils to make independent choices about what to learn and how to present their work.

Provision to develop pupils' oral Welsh skills is very good. From an early age, pupils are immersed skilfully in the language in a supportive environment. Teachers and support staff are strong linguistic role models and activities build effectively on pupils' Welsh language skills. The curriculum promotes the heritage and culture of Swansea and Wales successfully, for example by studying the influence of Roman roads around the school. This promotes pupils' pride in Wales and a strong sense of belonging.

Teachers present activities in a purposeful and stimulating manner and ensure that they introduce vocabulary through a purposeful repetitive method to support pupils' linguistic development. They question pupils skilfully by using a variety of questions to deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge of different areas of the curriculum.

Across the school, the learning environment is attractive and encourages pupils to concentrate and persevere with their work. Teachers promote the '*Wyt ti mewn penbleth?*' mural to support pupils to overcome problems in their work. On the whole, staff plan suitable opportunities for pupils to learn in the areas outside the classroom. In the best practice, the youngest pupils use the various outdoor areas regularly to enrich their skills successfully. However, teachers do not provide enough regular opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop their independent learning skills or their creative abilities both inside and outside the classroom.

Teachers provide effective feedback both orally and in writing to support pupils to progress with their learning. They provide valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect and evaluate their own learning and that of their peers. This is highly effective in supporting pupils to make progress in their learning. For example, the older pupils produce and choose their own success criteria to help them to achieve well and evaluate their progress in relevant activities.

Care, support and guidance

The school is an inclusive and homely community. Staff promote the importance of good behaviour, courtesy and respect successfully, which creates a caring sense and ethos towards all pupils. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils across the school, which contribute effectively to their happiness and well-being. This is reflected in the positive attitudes of nearly all pupils towards school life. Staff know the pupils, their families and the local community very well. Leaders and staff have developed effective arrangements to ensure that pupils and their families receive the encouragement and support they need to thrive at school. All staff are committed to ensuring that pupils' values and emotional well-being are key to their work.

There is effective provision to support pupils with ALN. The additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) fulfils her role well and supports teachers thoroughly to create provision for pupils who receive additional support. The ALNCo has thorough procedures for identifying pupils' educational and well-being needs. The school has a comprehensive range of provision that is used effectively when planning support. The ALNCo works effectively with a variety of external agencies to receive specialist

guidance and advice to support pupils. The school has been diligent in addressing the requirements of ALN reform and has prepared well for further implementation.

The school has successful procedures for tracking and monitoring the progress of ALN pupils from their starting points. Staff identify pupils who need additional support in a timely manner and support them to make effective progress. They provide specific support programmes to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and emotional well-being. As a result, most pupils who receive well-being or additional learning support make good progress.

Pupils are given an increasing range of opportunities to develop leadership skills and take part in whole-school decisions effectively, for example by being members of the school councils. This enriches their experiences and prepares them well to take responsibility for their decisions and consider the views of others.

Pupils' spiritual and moral attitudes are promoted regularly by staff through collective worship assemblies that provide purposeful opportunities to support them to learn about issues relating to various beliefs and their own values. Regular assemblies are held and opportunities are provided for pupils to participate actively in them. Children's rights are a regular part of assemblies and class activities. Teachers ensure purposeful opportunities for pupils to reflect purposefully on current affairs and different religions and cultures in class activities.

One of the school's strengths is the way in which staff promote and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and Welsh culture. Pupils take advantage of highly beneficial opportunities to celebrate their Welshness and feel that they belong to the local community by engaging effectively with the creative arts, for example by working with a local artist. Staff help pupils to understand issues relating to values, equality, diversity and inclusion purposefully. This permeates all aspects of pupils' life and work effectively. There is a prominent inclusive culture within the school with a strong emphasis on respect.

The school has appropriate systems for monitoring pupils' punctuality and attendance. It works effectively with welfare agencies to promote good attendance. Staff promote a culture of safeguarding effectively and the arrangements are not a cause for concern. The procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns regarding pupils is robust and staff work with external agencies, where appropriate.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's effective and robust leadership sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school. She has a clear vision that is based on preparing pupils to be independent, enthusiastic learners who take advantage of every opportunity they are given within a safe environment. She is supported skilfully by the deputy headteacher and middle leaders to share this vision effectively among staff, pupils, governors and parents. The headteacher ensures that staff's well-being is at the heart of its day-to-day work. As a result, a caring, hardworking and Welsh ethos permeates the school. The motto, '*O'r fesen derwen a dŷf*' ('From the acorn an oak tree grows'), is embedded successfully in the school's work and inclusive ethos, where most pupils, including those who are affected by poverty, make sound progress from their starting points.

An ethos of productive teamwork among teachers and assistants is a notable aspect of the school. As a result, all staff work together diligently to provide stimulating and engaging learning experiences that meet pupils' needs. All staff are aware of their responsibilities and staff sessions are held regularly to implement and achieve the agreed priorities. All teachers are responsible for an area of the Curriculum for Wales or a specific aspect of the school's work and the school addresses most national and local priorities robustly. All staff demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviours consistently and set a good example for pupils.

Across the school, there is a strong emphasis on developing the Welsh language and culture among pupils. For example, the school has won the top prize in a national heritage competition when undertaking a project to deepen pupils' knowledge of their local area. As a result, pupils are confident when conversing in Welsh, strengthen their sense of belonging to the wider community and take pride in their identity.

Leaders have a sound understanding of the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. They use a range of purposeful activities to evaluate standards and teaching, including learning walks and scrutiny of pupils' books. The headteacher monitors the budget carefully, alongside the governors, to ensure that decisions about expenditure align with the school's priorities for improvement. They use the pupil development grant wisely to provide specific interventions across the school. For example, the school plans valuable nurture sessions to develop pupils' social skills and emotional well-being in the 'Ystafell Enfys' and 'Cwtsh Clyd'.

Governors are supportive of the school's work and know the school and the community it serves very well. Governors understand the school's improvement priorities and the reasons behind them and demonstrate a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They support leaders when discussing and responding to the school's improvement activities appropriately, for example by inviting pupils to the local library to try to ignite their interest and enjoyment of reading. As a result, there is an increase in the number of pupils who use the library regularly during their leisure time. However, leaders do not plan formal enough opportunities for governors to be included in activities to support the school's self-evaluation processes.

Leaders have created an effective culture of safeguarding, where pupils and staff feel safe and valued. The governing body ensures that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking; for example, there are water fountains available and a dedicated kitchen to enrich provision and pupils' experiences when they cook healthy meals.

Leaders create a positive culture and ethos to promote and support staff's professional learning. All members of staff are given regular opportunities to attend courses and training that link directly to their individual needs and the school's strategic priorities. They share ideas and best practice with each other purposefully and this contributes firmly to the school's ethos as a learning organisation. The headteacher has high expectations for the staff's performance and her own. All members of staff have improvement targets which link closely to the improvement plan and their professional development priorities. As a result, this ensures a collaborative approach and raises staff's aspirations to consider the next steps in their careers.

Leaders have established a productive relationship with parents. They provide occasional opportunities for parents to visit the school and engage with their child's learning. For example, as part of '*Yr Awr Anturus*' learning sessions, which develop the older pupils' entrepreneurial skills, parents are given an opportunity to work with their child and buy their products during the open morning.

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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