

A report on

**Ysgol Gymraeg Glanrafon
Lôn Bryn Coch
Mold
Flintshire
CH7 1PS**

Date of inspection: 18 - 20 January 2011

by

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for

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

| Judgement | What the judgement means |
|-----------------------|---|
| Excellent | Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice |
| Good | Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement |
| Adequate | Strengths outweigh areas for improvement |
| Unsatisfactory | Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths |

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

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Context

Ysgol Gymraeg Glanrafon is a designated Welsh medium primary school. It is situated in the town of Mold and serves the town itself as well as an extensive area within its catchment. Overall, the area is considered to be a prosperous one and the background of a good number of the pupils is also prosperous. Approximately seven per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is well below the local and national percentages. There are no pupils who are looked after by the local authority (LA).

Currently, there are 246 full-time pupils between 4 and 11 years old attending the school, as well as 43 part time three year old children. A small number of pupils come from an ethnic background and there are no pupils who learn English as an additional language. The school is organized into twelve mixed age classes. Approximately 20 percent of pupils come from Welsh- speaking homes.

A total of 66 (22 per cent) of pupils have been identified with having additional learning needs (ALN) which is slightly above than the local and national percentages. These include the four per cent with a statutory statement of ALN. A resource centre for pupils with severe learning needs from Welsh medium school across the LA, is located at the school. It is attended by seven full-time and two part time pupils.

In 2010-2011, the individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Gymraeg Glanrafon is £3725 which compares with a maximum of £7635 and a minimum of £2660 for primary schools in Flintshire. The school has the 28th highest budget per pupil out of the 74 primary schools in Flintshire,

Since the last inspection in the spring term 2005, there has been a substantial increase in pupil numbers.

Summary

| | |
|---|-------------|
| The school's current performance | Good |
| The school's prospects for improvement | Good |

Current performance

The school is good because:

- many pupils achieve good standards;
- teaching is consistently good with some excellent teaching ;
- all pupils receive interesting and stimulating learning experiences ; and that
- the standard of strategic leadership is good.

Prospects for improvement

The overall prospects for improvement are good because:

- raising standards of achievement and improving educational provision are given high priority;
- mainstream pupils' achievements at the end of key stages (KS) 1 and 2 compare well with local and national benchmarks;
- pupils with ALN make very good progress; and that
- there are thorough and effective arrangements for self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

*R1 Provide more opportunities for pupils to make decisions regarding their learning.

*R2 Improve provision for developing pupils' understanding of global citizenship.

**Priorities in the current School Action Plan (SAP)*

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan showing how it will address the recommendations

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Seven year old pupils' results at the end of key stage 1 (KS1) over the last three years are good in Welsh and science and adequate in mathematics. They show continuous improvement in Welsh and science over that period whilst mathematics results fluctuate from one year to the next. The percentages which achieve the core subject indicator (CSI), which is the expected level in each of the three core subjects, has improved markedly during the last three years.

Pupils' results at the end of KS1 in 2010 in Welsh and science are slightly higher than local and national benchmarks and also better than the results of schools in similar circumstances. Mathematics results are slightly lower than these benchmarks. The percentage which achieves above the expected level in mathematics and science is higher than local and national percentages whilst Welsh is slightly lower. KS1 results are in the third quartile for Welsh and science and in the fourth quartile in mathematics when compared with other schools with a similar percentage entitled to receive free school meals.

Eleven year old pupils' performance at the end of key stage 2 (KS2) during two of the last three years is in the third quartile in Welsh and in the fourth quartile in English, mathematics and science. However, when the resource units' pupils performance is excluded from the cohort, the school's performance is consistently higher than local and national percentages.

In 2010, the percentage of KS2 pupils, including the resource unit pupils, which achieve Level 4 or above in Welsh, English, mathematics and science is slightly higher than local and national benchmarks but lower than the results of schools from similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils which achieve above the expected level in English, mathematics and science are better than the local and national percentages and also higher than the majority of similar schools. The percentage which achieves the CSI is in the third quartile in Welsh and in the fourth quartile in the three other subjects.

There is no significant difference in 2010 between the percentage of girls and boys which achieved the expected levels in the core subjects. However, a higher percentage of girls achieve above the expected levels in Welsh in both key stages and also in English in KS2.

Nearly all pupils, including the ones entitled to free school meals and the less able, make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and key stages 1 and 2. Exceptional progress is made by many pupils in the resource unit.

Most pupils make good progress in their learning skills. The good standards achieved in communication, numeracy, information technology communications (ICT) and thinking skills enable pupils to make consistent progress across all areas of the

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curriculum. The progress made by the majority of Welsh learners in their Welsh oracy, reading and writing skills is very good. Pupils of all ages have an extensive knowledge of the language and culture of Wales.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils state that they enjoy coming to school. Attendance rates are generally good and slightly above the national rates and the rates of similar schools. Nearly all pupils feel safe in the school environment and free from any physical or verbal abuse. Pupils of all ages have a firm understanding of how to become healthy and they appreciate that healthy food and regular physical activity has a positive influence on their welfare and development. Standards of behaviour in all classes are very good with pupils displaying respect and care towards each other. They are very hard-working and enthusiastic learners who work together harmoniously and keep focused upon tasks for extended periods. A good number readily recall previous learning and face new challenges confidently, but their ability to make decision about their own learning is not developed sufficiently. Nearly all have a strong sense of commitment to the school and staff and as they mature, are willing to undertake additional responsibilities. The school council fulfils its work effectively and the social and life skills of most pupils are good.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Key Question 2: How good is provision? | Good |
|---|-------------|

Learning experiences: Good

The rich range of learning experiences that are provided satisfy pupils, employers and community needs successfully. Most class activities reinforce learning in a number of interesting contexts which are relevant to the pupils' age and ability. The curriculum builds systematically upon pupils' knowledge, understanding and personal skills as they progress through the school. Pupils of all ages in the school gain the necessary communication, numeracy and ICT skills consistently well across the curriculum. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is given a central place in the schools' programme of work and creative use is made of the local area and its people to provide stimulating learning experiences and activities.

The curriculum together with the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are provided, aids the pupils to develop a number of key personal and social skills. The school operates in a sustainable manner but the opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of global citizenship are limited.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is consistently good and includes a few examples of excellent teaching. Teaching in all classes kindles pupils' interest and ensures their full participation in the tasks set. Teachers have good and up to date subject knowledge and high expectations. They plan lessons which have clear objectives and outcomes and use a wide range of teaching strategies. Through appropriate intervention and skilful questioning, they extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and develop their learning skills well. Detailed feedback to pupils enables them to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. There are comprehensive arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress and suitable arrangements for moderating teachers' assessments. All members of staff make effective use of assessment information together with assessment for learning strategies, for guiding future planning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are effective policies and arrangements for ensuring the health and emotional and physical wellbeing of pupils and to encourage their involvement with the school and the wider community. These arrangements contribute significantly to the development and well-being of pupils and support their learning well. Learning experiences together with the daily acts of collective worship, promote pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. The school collaborates closely with a number of key services to lessen the risk of harm to pupils. The support is clearly targeted for individuals and groups of pupils that are deemed at risk and has led to substantial progress in the personal and educational development of a number of pupils. There is an effective induction programme tailored well to satisfying the needs of all children, when they start in the nursery class. The school has an appropriate policy and it has safeguarding procedures.

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The provision for integrating and supporting pupils with ALN in classes and in the resource unit are excellent.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a happy and inclusive community, where pupils have equal access to all areas of provision in the school. Clear emphasis is placed on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity and creating an ethos which fosters care and tolerance. There is an extensive supply of relevant and good quality resources which is appropriately matched with the whole range of age and ability. The school takes full advantage of the resources which are available in the community to add to the pupils' learning experiences. The quality of the building is good but the lack of space hinders the school's efforts to respond flexibly to the significant increase that has occurred in pupil numbers.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management? | Good |
|--|-------------|

Leadership: Good

The school is well led by the head teacher and the governing body. They succeed effectively in co-ordinating the efforts of pupils, staff and parents and giving the school's work a sense of purpose. The staff's roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and each individual is supported and regularly challenged by the head teacher and the management team (MT). Leaders and governors use a wide range of relevant information about performance to address under performance and to set objectives and targets which are strategic priorities. The governors are very knowledgeable of the school's strengths and needs and fulfil their role as critical friend in a thorough and positive manner. They address any concerns and complaints without delay. Policies and initiatives, including those that satisfy local and national priorities, are regularly implemented.

Improving quality: Good

Comprehensive self-evaluation procedures give a true reflection to leaders of the strengths and developmental needs of the school. Regular use is made of a wide range of monitoring and evaluation activities including performance data, when planning for improvement. Pupils and parents have regular opportunities to express their opinion on aspects of the school and leaders respond appropriately to the issues raised. Self-evaluation has contributed significantly towards improving standards and provision. The school is an effective professional learning community which enables staff to develop and share their professional knowledge. There are effective networks of professional practice with the cluster of Welsh medium schools in the local authority and with other partners.

Partnership working: Good

Effective transition links between the local Welsh medium nursery and the school ensure that children settled down quickly into the life of the school. The comprehensive transition plans with the Welsh-medium secondary school enables the older pupils to be well prepared for the next stage in their education. Partnership activities with the parents, the community and other schools widen the choices for pupils and offer clear advantages to their standards and wellbeing. The effective practices of co-operation that have been established in the school enable staff to concentrate well on planning and preparing resources together and to ensure continuous improvement. These productive partnerships contribute significantly towards quality assurance and extend the range of activities available for pupils

Resource management: Good

Staff and resources are managed and used effectively to support and improve learning. The school uses teaching staff and support staff well by taking full advantage of their time and expertise to deal with all aspects of the curriculum. The effect of resources on teaching and learning is reviewed regularly and future needs are planned for carefully. There are systematic and accurate budgetary

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arrangements in place and expenditure decisions are linked well with priorities for learning and pupil wellbeing. Overall, the pupil outcomes are good. There are no unsatisfactory standards or inadequate aspects of the provision. The school offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

A minority of parents completed the questionnaire with most of them expressing a positive view about the school. Nearly all were satisfied with the overall education and stated that their children were making good progress, were happy and felt safe in the school. Nearly all feel that the school is well run and that there is a good variety of activities for their children. Some feel that they do not receive regular information about their child's progress.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Many learners completed the questionnaire. Everyone feels safe in school and knows with whom to talk if they have any concerns. Most say that homework helps them improve their work and that other children behave well at playtimes and during lunchtime. Nearly all are of the opinion that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that there are many opportunities for them to have regular physical exercise.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Mr Wil Williams | Reporting Inspector |
| Mrs Hazel Hughes | Team Inspector |
| Mr Dylan Jones | Lay Inspector |
| Ms Meirwen Watts | Peer Inspector |
| Ms Llinos M Jones | School Nominee |

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Year | R | Y1 | Y2 | Y3 | Y4 | Y5 | Y6 |
| Ages | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 |

Secondary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Year | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 |
| Ages | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 |

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Key stage 1 | Year 1 and Year 2 |
| Key stage 2 | Year 3 to Year 6 |
| Key stage 3 | Year 7 to Year 9 |
| Key stage 4 | Year 10 and Year 11 |