



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Ysgol Gymuned y Ffridd
Gwalchmai
Holyhead
Anglesey
LL65 4SG**

Date of inspection: January 2012

by

**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.

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:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English)

© Crown Copyright 2012: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Context

Ysgol y Ffridd is a naturally bilingual community school under the care of Anglesey local authority. It is situated in the centre of the rural village of Gwalchmai. The school serves the village and the surrounding area. According to a number of indicators, the area is disadvantaged.

There are 79 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age on roll and there are three classes for pupils of statutory school age, along with a nursery class. Pupils are admitted to the school part-time in the September following their third birthday.

Many pupils arrive at the school with achievement that is lower than expected. Thirty-two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly higher than the county and national averages. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils have additional learning needs, and around 5% have a statement of special educational needs. Ninety-seven per cent of pupils are from a white ethnic background. Three pupils are learning English as an additional language and five pupils are in the care of the local authority.

Approximately 82% of pupils come from Welsh speaking homes, but 92% are now able to speak Welsh fluently. All pupils follow a first language Welsh course. Welsh is used as the teaching medium until Year 2, after which Welsh and English are used as teaching media.

The school was inspected during the Spring term of 2006. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

The individual school budget per pupil in 2011-2012 for Ysgol Gymuned y Ffridd is £3,723. The maximum per pupil for primary schools in Anglesey is £6,563 and the minimum is £2,636. Ysgol Gymuned y Ffridd is the 21st out of the 50 primary schools in Anglesey in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

Ysgol y Ffridd's current performance is good because:

- end of key stage outcomes and standards in the classroom are generally good;
- the care for pupils and the arrangements for their wellbeing are good;
- most of the teaching is good; and
- the headteacher and school governors provide firm leadership.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher and school governors have high expectations in terms of taking the school forward;
- the staff and governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement;
- all members of staff are ready to accept the challenge of raising standards; and
- staff identify learners' needs and backgrounds well and respond to them appropriately.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

R1 raise reading standards in key stage 2;

R2 ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and assessment for learning throughout the school; and

R3 extend the number of learning communities in order to promote best practice and ensure that the evaluation of them is sharp enough to raise standards.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The school's results between 2008 and 2011 are generally good in both key stages when compared with the assessment results of similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. In addition, the results compare very favourably with the end of key stage outcomes of schools in the same 'family'.

The percentage of pupils who achieve a level higher than the expected level is often higher than the family average.

Boys perform as well as girls. There is not much difference to be seen between their achievement in the classroom and their end of key stage outcomes. Pupils who receive free school meals do not perform quite as well as pupils who pay for their meals. Most pupils who have additional learning needs achieve well.

Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress in subject standards and almost every skill. Oracy standards are good in both Welsh and English. Writing standards are good throughout the school. Pupils write at length and interestingly in a range of different registers in a good number of subjects. Although there are minor errors in both English and Welsh, the content is interesting and the handwriting is good.

Reading standards in the Foundation Phase are good. In Welsh, the children read aloud meaningfully, interpret the text and explain it well. Reading standards in key stage 2 are adequate. Although the most able pupils are able to read with expression in both languages, the majority have difficulty reading and explaining unfamiliar text.

Standards in Welsh (first language) are generally good. Welsh is the natural language of oral communication for almost all pupils. The good standards reflect the area's bilingual nature and the school's strong Welsh ethos.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel very safe and happy at the school and know to whom to go for support and advice. All pupils are extremely polite, work together effectively and behave extremely well. As a result, almost every child's personal, social and cultural development is good.

All children have an appropriate awareness of the need to keep fit and eat healthily. Many pupils take advantage of fitness activities, sports and after-school clubs.

Almost all pupils are aware of their personal targets and take action in order to improve standards of work.

All pupils benefit from contact with organisations and individuals in the community in order to consolidate their knowledge of the local area, and nurture social skills and life skills of a good standard.

The children's and pupils' attendance levels are good and compare very favourably with the attendance levels of similar schools. Punctuality is also good.

The School Council contributes very purposefully to decision-making processes within the school. Council members create their own development plan, by identifying their priorities as a council, and they are very aware of matters relating to the environment.

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

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a wide and balanced range of experiences, which respond well to pupils' needs. Planning gives due attention to developing skills. As a result, pupils are given a number of purposeful experiences that have a positive effect on standards. The provision for developing thinking and problem-solving skills is a strength and promotes pupils' independence, to a large degree.

The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is one of the school's strengths. As well as experiences during routine lessons, the provision is enriched by local visits and visitors to the school. All of this engages and develops pupils' interest and understanding of their heritage. Welsh language provision is also a strength throughout the school.

The provision for global citizenship is given appropriate attention at the school and the links with Ysgol yr Hendre in Patagonia promote pupils' understanding of this area effectively. The provision for sustainability is enriched well through projects relating to 'Green Schools' and 'Healthy Schools'.

Teaching: Good

The standard of teaching is good in most lessons and is adequate in the rest. Teachers and other adults have proficient subject knowledge and, almost invariably, they have high expectations in terms of standards and behaviour. Assistants who support specific groups of pupils or individuals contribute well to learning. Individual lessons are planned carefully.

Where the teaching is good, pupils of different ages and abilities are catered for carefully and effectively. Where it is adequate, this is not as obvious. Where the teaching is good, teachers use effective assessment methods during lessons to promote learning. Children and pupils are given good oral feedback on their work and good opportunities to assess their own work. These features are not obvious where the quality of teaching is adequate. The standard of comments on pupils' work is inconsistent. In the best examples, pupils are given a fair evaluation of their work along with tips on how to improve it. However, in a number of cases, marking is not detailed enough to improve learning.

Detailed records are kept of portfolios of individual pupils' work, along with standardised and moderated portfolios in the core subjects. These give a good idea of progress on a school level along with individual progress.

Parents and carers receive good and clear information about their children's achievements, wellbeing and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has good and suitable arrangements for offering care, support and guidance to pupils. The system for promoting their health and wellbeing is good, with a wide range of activities which promote positive attitudes towards healthy living.

The school makes good use of external agencies to support relevant aspects and to support pupils in developing their self-confidence and self-image through the 'Pyramid' scheme.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

The school's provision for additional learning needs is good. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage. The school has a flexible procedure which facilitates the provision and ensures that children's and pupils' needs are met. Children and pupils receive good support by making effective use of staff and a relevant range of suitable resources. The progress of these children and pupils is discussed frequently and their individual targets are reviewed regularly.

Staff use effective strategies to ensure suitable provision for pupils with individual educational needs. As a result, these pupils make appropriate progress.

The provider has an appropriate policy and has safeguarding procedures.

Learning environment: Good

Pupils of all ages, backgrounds and abilities make good progress in a homely family environment. Successes are celebrated appropriately. The school ensures good opportunities to express opinions and respect towards different points of view. Pupils are extremely courteous towards each other and adults. The school works closely and effectively with specialist external agencies as required. Equal opportunities are part of every aspect of school life. There is no discrimination of any kind based on sex, ethnic origin or physical disability. Relevant up-to-date policies set clear guidelines for the school's work.

Good use is made of the school building and its extensive grounds. There are appropriate resources for teaching all curriculum subjects. There are colourful, relevant and stimulating displays in each classroom. The building and yard are kept clean and tidy. The community makes extensive use of the school's facilities outside of school hours. The school and the local authority are aware of the problems caused by the school's entrance, although they have not yet managed to resolve this situation.

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

Good

Leadership: Good

The headteacher and the governing body offer firm leadership and they have high expectations. The school's strategic plans have a positive effect on standards, wellbeing and provision throughout the school.

Staff know the school well and ensure that the vision for the future is implemented effectively in line with the school development plan and the strategic direction that is set for it.

The governing body is aware of its responsibilities and has developed its role to monitor performance. It challenges the school effectively as an evaluative friend.

All staff implement agreed principles in terms of pupils' education and wellbeing; the school takes advantage of staff expertise to lead and develop subjects. Subject responsibilities are allocated and each member of staff has a clear and current job description.

The annual performance management procedure allows teachers and assistants to measure their progress against the previous evaluation and to identify their further needs. Weekly staff meetings focus appropriately on self-evaluation outcomes and school improvement issues. This contributes well towards raising standards and identifying individual pupils' needs.

The school's management and curricular plans give due consideration to national and local priorities and include them clearly and relevantly; the school has appropriate strategies for realising these.

Improving quality: Good

The self-evaluation report is a useful document, and clearly identifies the areas that are strengths and those that need further development.

The school has firm self-evaluation arrangements, which include visiting classrooms, checking work and interpreting data. This ensures that direct evidence is collected and used effectively to evaluate standards and provision across the school.

There are close links between the areas for improvement, as identified in the self-evaluation report, and the school development plan, and guidance is offered on how to realise them.

Staff contribute effectively towards the self-evaluation process and they have specific responsibilities for aspects of the report. The school considers the contributions of governors, parents and pupils in order to form a composite opinion that contributes towards identifying priorities for planning and ensuring improvement.

Staff attend training courses and this has a positive impact of the Foundation Phase provision and on oral and written standards in both languages.

The school has created a professional learning community in order to try to improve oral standards. The school has not yet evaluated the success and impact of this work, although there is informal evidence that standards are improving. At present, the school does not do enough to promote best practice among its own staff and with other schools.

Partnership working: Good

Partnerships with parents, the community and other local schools are strong and contribute effectively towards realising the school's aims and promoting subject standards. The school plays a prominent role in the local community. Pupils visit different places in the village and the local area each term. All of this makes a positive contribution towards enriching their learning experiences and their awareness of their locality.

There is a very close link with the cylch meithrin and the cylch Ti a Fi which are held on the school grounds. This facilitates the arrangements for admitting children to the school itself. Similarly, the transition arrangements for pupils moving to the local secondary school prepare older pupils well for the next stage in their education. The link with the secondary school ensures progression in terms of subject standards and arrangements that promote the pupils' fitness and wellbeing.

The school works effectively with other primary schools in the area along with the local secondary school to standardise assessments at the end of key stage 2 in the core subjects.

There are robust links with authority officers and the local advisory company. As a result, the school is supported and challenged to raise standards effectively.

Resource management: Good

Staffing and resources, including financial resources, are managed and used effectively to support and improve learning. The school deploys teaching staff and assistants well and they have the knowledge and expertise to deal with all aspects of the curriculum. The school plans its use and purchase of resources carefully. Occasionally, it takes good advantage of resources and human and material resources outside the school. The school's expenditure decisions link well with the priorities in its development plan and its current needs. The school provides good value for money as its outcomes, in terms of standards and wellbeing, and its provision, are good.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

As the number of pupils in each school year is relatively small, care must be taken when interpreting the outcomes of assessments at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. In addition, the number of pupils varies from one year to another and the balance between boys and girls is uneven.

The outcomes at the end of key stage 1 for 2009 were not as good as those in 2008, 2010 and 2011. Similarly, the outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2008 were not as good as those in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

However, the school's outcomes between 2008 and 2011 are generally good in both key stages when compared with the assessment results of similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.

In 2008, 2010 and 2011, the assessment outcomes at the end of key stage 1 put the school either among the top quarter or the top half of similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The school was among the top quarter of schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who achieve the core subject indicator in key stage 1 (namely those who achieved level 2 or better in Welsh, mathematics and science combined) in 2008, 2010 and 2011.

Similarly, assessment outcomes at the end of key stage 2 between 2009 and 2011 put the school in the top quarter of similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who achieve the core subject indicator in key stage 2 (namely those who achieved level 4 or better in either Welsh or English, mathematics and science combined). The assessment results in Welsh, English and mathematics also put the school in the top quarter of similar schools during the same period. Outcomes in mathematics were as good as those of the top quarter of similar schools in 2009 and 2011 and the top half of similar schools in 2010.

The school's outcomes at the end of both key stages compare very favourably with the end of key stage outcomes of schools in the same 'family'.

Although key stage 1 outcomes were not as good as the average outcomes of the family in 2009, the school's outcomes for 2008, 2010 and 2011 were higher than the family average in Welsh, mathematics, science and the core subject indicator.

Although the key stage 2 outcomes for science and the core subject indicator were not as good as the average family results in 2008, the outcomes for Welsh, English and mathematics were higher than the family averages for that year. Between 2009 and 2011, outcomes for all indicators were higher than the family average.

The outcomes of teacher assessments for individual skills in both key stages in 2010 and 2011 suggest that pupils achieve better than the average for schools in the same family in oracy, reading and writing in Welsh in key stage 1 and in Welsh and English in key stage 2. Outcomes for the combination of reading, writing (Welsh and English) and mathematics in key stage 2 are also higher than the family average.

The percentage of pupils who achieve higher than the expected level (level 3 in key stage 1 and level 5 in key stage 2) is often higher than the family average. This is the case for Welsh and mathematics in key stage 1 between 2008 and 2011 and for science between 2008 and 2010. Although only one pupil achieved level 5 – and did so in one of the core subjects, namely mathematics – at the end of key stage 2 in 2011, the percentage of pupils in this school who attained level 5 in Welsh, English, mathematics and science in 2009 and 2010 was significantly higher than the family average.

In general, boys achieve as well as girls, and their achievement is often better than the average achievement of boys in schools within the same family.

Pupils who receive free school meals do not achieve quite as well as pupils who pay for their meals.

Attendance levels are good and compare very favourably with the attendance percentages of similar schools.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent and carer questionnaires

Twenty-nine responses were received to the parent and carer questionnaire. Each response agreed with 14 of the 19 statements in it. All parents were satisfied with the school, in general, and believe that it is well run. They were all of the opinion that their children enjoy school and make good progress there. They believed that staff treat each child fairly, that their children are encouraged to keep healthy and that they are safe at school. Almost every parent believed that the children behave well, that they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaint and that the school provides a good variety of activities, including trips. Many believed that the homework is beneficial and were satisfied with the way that the school prepares their children to move to secondary school.

Responses to learner questionnaires

The questionnaire was completed by 41 children. All children felt safe at the school, believed that there are many opportunities for them to take part in regular exercise, and said that the school teaches them how to keep healthy. All of them believed that the teachers and other adults at the school help them to learn and make progress. Almost every child believed that the school deals with any bullying well and that they are doing well at the school. Almost every pupil also believed that homework helps them to understand and improve their school work, and knew whom to turn to if they found the work difficult. Almost every pupil was of the opinion that the school has enough books, equipment and computers to enable them to do their work. Many pupils believed that other children behave well during lunch and break times; many believed that other children behave well in the classroom and that they could complete their work as a result of this. However, a few were unsure with whom they should speak if they were worried or upset.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Gareth Wyn Roberts	Reporting Inspector
Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
Richard John Roberts	Lay Inspector
Emyr Lyn John	Peer Inspector
Henry David Jones (Headteacher)	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FPYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.