



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 Gymunedol Bro Siôn Cwilt
Synod Inn
Llandysul
SA44 6JZ**

Date of inspection: June 2011

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.

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Context

Ysgol Gymunedol Bro Siôn Cwilt is situated near the village of Synod Inn, between Aberaeron and Cardigan and is maintained by Ceredigion Local Authority. This bilingual school was opened in January 2010 in response to the closure of three schools, namely Ysgol Gwenlli, Ysgol Llanllwchaearn and Ysgol y Castell, Caerwedros. The new headteacher was appointed to the post in May 2009.

There are 149 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age on the school register, including 29 nursery children (19 part-time). The pupils are admitted to the school during the term that follows their third birthday. The number of pupils has increased considerably since the school opened.

Twenty five per cent of the pupils are from homes where Welsh is the first language and the remainder come from homes where English is the main language of communication. Welsh is the main medium of communication and learning in the school. A variety of social backgrounds are represented and a full range of ability is reflected. About 7% of the pupils are entitled to receive free school meals and this figure is lower than the county and national averages. Twenty eight per cent of pupils are designated as having special educational needs and one pupil has a statement.

The individual school budget in 2010-2011 per pupil for Ysgol Gymunedol Bro Siôn Cwilt is £3,184, compared with a maximum of £24,095 and a minimum of £2,741 for primary school pupils in Ceredigion. The school has the 53rd highest budget per pupil of the 63 primary schools in Ceredigion.

This inspection is the first inspection that the school has received since it was newly opened.

Summary

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

Current performance

This school is good because

- in the short period since the school was opened, most of the pupils are making good progress in learning and achieving good standards in the key skills across the curriculum;
- of the school's success in developing bilingualism from an early age;
- it offers a wide range of experiences that strengthen and stimulate learning;
- the majority of the teaching is good across the school; and
- there is a Welsh, caring ethos that ensures that nearly all pupils enjoy learning and feel safe.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because :

- the Headteacher knows the school very well and has a clear vision that has been shared and agreed with the staff and the governors about developing the school for the future;
- of leaders and managers' success in planning strategically and creating very effective systems for moving the school forward and raising standards within a short time; and
- that the school the school has identified through its self-evaluation and the school development plan specific aspects to be developed for the future that are already being implemented.

Recommendations

In order to improve, it is necessary:

R1 to improve boys' achievement;

R2 to improve pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage;

R3 to improve the quality of teaching in the areas where the teaching is less than good;

R4 make the quality of planning consistent for pupils who have additional learning needs;

R5 satisfy statutory requirements for the governors' annual report to the parents.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The results of the children's foundation assessments on entry to the school, show that most of them have a good level of ability in the basic skills. Nearly all the pupils make good progress through the Foundation Phase and excellent progress in the early years in each of the learning areas.

It is necessary to treat one year of teachers' assessments carefully because the school has only been open since January 2010.

In general in 2010, a high percentage of the pupils did very well at the expected level, namely level 2 at seven years old in mathematics and science. Their results were higher than the average of other pupils in schools in Wales, the local authority and the family of schools. This places the school among the highest 25% of similar schools in terms of the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The pupils' good performance in mathematics and science is mainly responsible for this. The pupils' results are not as good in Welsh. The percentage that reaches the expected level at seven years old in reading and writing is lower than the average for similar schools, the local authority's schools and schools in Wales.

The pupils' performance at 11 years old at the end of key stage 2 is not as good. The percentage that reaches the expected level 4 in both languages for 2010 is considerably lower than the average of similar schools, the local authority's schools and schools in Wales. Results for mathematics and science are a little better than the average for Welsh schools and the authority's schools but is a little lower than the family of similar schools. In terms of results in both languages, this places the school within the lowest 25% of similar schools in relation to the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The school is among the 50% lowest in science and the 50% highest in mathematics.

The percentage that achieves beyond the expected level in key stage 1 in Welsh and science in Welsh and science in 2010 is lower than the authority, the family and Wales. The percentage is also lower in key stage 2 in mathematics and English but considerably higher in science.

The current work in the pupils' books and other relevant evidence shows good progress and better standards since the tests in Summer 2010.

Most of the pupils listen intently during the lessons. Nearly all communicate confidently and are keen to contribute to discussions and to respond to the teachers' questioning effectively.

The pupils' reading levels have improved in both languages and are now appropriate to their age and ability. Most of the pupils throughout the school read a wide range of materials with fluency across the curriculum. The development of writing across the

school is generally good with the majority of the pupils producing extended pieces. However, a mixture of language appears in the Welsh language work of a minority of the pupils at times.

The pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals and the pupils who have special educational needs are making the expected progress in line with their age and ability. There are significant differences between the results of girls and boys in 2010, with girls performing better at the end of both key stages in every subject.

Pupils who have Welsh as a second language deal with the Welsh language confidently very quickly after starting at school and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is core to the work and ethos of the school.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all the pupils have a good awareness of the need to eat healthily and to exercise the body regularly, with a large number taking advantage of the keep fit clubs at the end of the day.

The learners' average level of attendance since the new school opened is approximately 94%, which is better than the county and national percentage. Nearly all the pupils state that they are happy in school and feel safe there. The behaviour of nearly all the pupils is good and they show respect to their peers and adults within the school. In addition, prefects help others to play together and offer support to peers as necessary.

Nearly all the pupils can work independently in the lessons. They take an active part in the process of choosing and planning themes for the term. They also make decisions on how to do their work and present their findings. Most of the pupils across the school display a good level of motivation and perseverance in their work. They keep to tasks well for extended periods and make effective use of their time. Many of them are developing in their understanding of the targets to work towards and of the success criteria that are set for different tasks.

The influence of the learners' voice on school life is increasingly developing through the operation of the school council. Key decisions have been made, such as ensuring variety for the school lunch menus. Members of the school council have attended one governors meeting to date in order to discuss their ideas and aspirations.

Pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural development is developing effectively. They work well together, offering support to one another.

The pupils have a good awareness of sustainability and they understand some of the environmental advantages that arise from the construction of the new school. By developing numerous international partnerships, most of the pupils become increasingly aware of issues relating to global citizenship

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| Key Question 2: How good is provision? |
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| Good |
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Learning experiences: Excellent

The school provides a wide and very rich range of learning experiences which are appropriate, successful and stimulating and that engage the pupils. The educational activities and extra-curricular opportunities enrich the pupils' experiences very effectively.

The thorough mapping within the planning is a medium for ensuring very effective development in the skills across the curriculum. This, along with the wider planning, ensures the development of thinking skills and assessment for learning at its best. This is an excellent element and is one of the school's main strengths and it is used by the county as a way forward for other schools.

There is also excellence in the way that the school develops the pupils' Welshness in a natural and inclusive way that fosters respect for their area and its traditions. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig has been integrated successfully into every aspect of the curriculum. Valuable opportunities are provided for the pupils to play a prominent and successful part in social and cultural events locally, in the county and nationally. There was success in winning commendation on the stage of the Urdd National Eisteddfod this year in folk dancing.

The school successfully promotes the pupils' awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. The best possible advantage is taken of the sustainable nature of the building and the site in order to promote pupils' understanding of best practices for safeguarding the earth. As a result, the school has succeeded in winning the Eco Schools silver accreditation in a short period of time and the children are very aware of the value of recycling and protecting the environment. The pupils are involved with schemes such as Fair Trade, recycling, saving energy and eating healthily. The school is developing effective international partnerships across Europe and beyond.

Teaching: Good

The teaching across the school is generally good but there is variation between classes. Among the excellent and good elements that were seen in the early years and at the top of the school, was the school's comprehensive planning procedure which is used very effectively to ensure learning at its best. The teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies and present lessons in a lively and enthusiastic manner. The teachers question appropriately and probingly in order to move the learning forward.

Where the teaching is at its best, opportunities are provided for the pupils to lead and direct the teaching and this leads to teaching that succeeds in building on the learners' motivation and enthusiasm. The objectives and success criteria are shared with the pupils regularly. This successfully fosters the pupils' ability to become independent learners.

Where the teaching is not as good, the pace of the lesson is not fast enough nor the activities sufficiently challenging and differentiated for the pupils. The best use is not being made of the school's planning procedure and of using the latest teaching methods that have been adopted by the school.

Classroom management is consistent through the school and the teachers create a friendly and caring ethos. The classroom assistants are highly effective in their support of the pupils across the school.

One of the school's obvious strengths is the use made in the majority of classes of assessment for learning. The teachers give consistent feedback to the pupils, verbally and in writing. Where the assessment was seen at its best, the marking and the comments are detailed but this is not consistent throughout the school. Good assessment for learning strategies have been integrated into the lessons and are developing as a part of the school's ethos. All the pupils have their personal targets to work towards.

Effective and comprehensive progress tracking systems are implemented by using a range of standard tests in order to measure progress and set appropriate targets. Pupils' work is moderated internally across the school and with other schools in the cluster, including the comprehensive schools in the catchment area.

The annual reports for parents are detailed and give a comprehensive picture of the pupils' attainment and progress while outlining the way forward.

Care, support and guidance: Good

This is a very caring school that promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The 'Cyfeillion Cŵl' system reinforces the ethos of respect, responsibility and care which is a strong element of the life of the school. A club has been formed as part of the school's planning to boost confidence among shy and unsure pupils.

The school takes advantage of every opportunity to offer pastoral support of a high standard to the pupils. Appropriate use is made of specialist services such as the part of the school nurse in the "Tyfu Fyny" (Growing Up) sessions and to support pupils' emotional and personal health across the school. There are specific plans at individual class level for developing personal and social education.

The provider has an appropriate policy and it has procedures for safeguarding. The staff receive specific training every year as part of these arrangements. The school's caring ethos ensures that the pupils understand their right to be safe. They know how to respond if there are any cases of bullying or injustice.

The school identifies the additional learning needs of different pupils through constant observation, discussion with parents and undertaking formal and informal assessments. On the whole, the teachers track pupils' progress, and plan specific work in response to the pupils' needs. The implementation of these procedures is inconsistent across the school. The individual work programmes do not always sufficiently influence planning ahead.

Learning environment: Good

The school ethos is homely and friendly. The pupils are courteous and show respect for one another and respect and celebrate diversity. The school promotes an inclusive community and ensures equal opportunities for all pupils. Very good use is made of the building internally and externally in order to create a stimulating and appealing learning space. The pupils are taught to respect and look after their environment.

The building is of excellent quality. Every part of the building is kept clean and tidy. Pupils' work is displayed skilfully in stimulating and colourful displays on the walls of the building. Considerable community use is made of the building. In general, there are good resources for teaching every aspect of the curriculum.

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

Leadership: Good

The headteacher gives excellent guidance to the school and the very good support of the deputy headteacher as part of the senior management team is a very important influence on the success of the school. They have established effective management procedures and processes and high expectations among teachers and pupils that are beginning to have a positive influence on pupils' standards across the school. The school is given a clear strategic direction in response to national and local initiatives such as, for example, the Foundation Phase, where the quality of learning and teaching is of a high standard in the early years classes.

The governing body is very supportive of the school, especially in securing an appropriate budget and financial procedures in establishing the school. It receives information about the school's performance from the headteacher and has begun to visit classes as part of its role in monitoring standards. The members have a good awareness of the school's current performance and they challenge and question the school's performance conscientiously.

The governors' statutory annual report to the parents does not completely comply with the requirements as there is no reference to targets for the next three years.

Improving quality: Good

There are good procedures for improving quality. The teachers and the governors have been part of the self-appraisal process, and the self-evaluation report is of good quality.

A wide range of data on pupils' achievement, reports on monitoring subjects, reports by the authority and parents' and pupils' questionnaires, are used to produce the report. The planning for presenting and evaluating the skills across the curriculum are also very good.

The self-evaluation report is used to identify priorities and to contribute to producing a school development plan. The school development plan encompasses all the school's activities and is a comprehensive document of high quality.

Staff meetings are effective for planning ahead to raise standards. A number of staff have visited schools in European countries and this has had a positive effect on the provision for global citizenship. The system for managing staff performance is in place and is a good foundation for improving individuals within the school's context.

Since January 2010 a number of visitors from the education world have visited the school to see the new building and to see good practice in terms of learning, teaching and resources.

Partnership working: Good

Teachers work together well within a supportive professional community with local and national partners, to promote pupils' oral work in Welsh. A number of the teachers have been prominent in sharing their expertise with other schools within the county and nationally, for example with local and national partners, to promote pupils' oral work in Welsh. The school works together well on a key stage 2 and key stage 3 scheme to moderate standards with the schools in the cluster and the comprehensive school, and there are good links with external agencies.

There are strong links with parents. Information is shared regularly about the school's activities and parents are invited to "information sharing" evenings in order to expand their understanding of their children's education. This is an example of good practice.

There is a strong partnership with the local organisations and the school is developing well to be a focus for community activity. The close links that exist with the local community have a positive influence on the quality of the education.

Resource management: Good

There is an appropriate number of teachers in the school with suitable qualifications for their posts. Effective support is given to the teachers by classroom assistants who also support the pupils well with their work.

There is a very good range of new resources in the school and they are managed well. The quality of the building is excellent and very relevant to education in the twenty first century. Money is allocated appropriately for the school's priorities within the school development plan. As the pupils have recently been showing good progress and reaching generally good standards in a short time since joining the new school, and the school is making effective use of resources, the school offers good value for money on the whole.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty five responses were received. Within every one of the questionnaires received from the parents, they state that they are generally satisfied with the school, that their children like the school, are happy there and feel safe. They also believe that the pupils' behaviour is good.

All the parents are of the opinion that the teachers work effectively and encourage the children to work hard. They are happy with the progress that the pupils make and with the variety of activities offered to them. They also believe that the teaching is good and that the school is well run.

Almost all are happy with the information they receive about the pupils' progress.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Sixty nine key stage 2 learners completed the questionnaire and the team spoke to the pupils during the inspection. All the learners state that they are happy and feel safe in the school.

Nearly all are of the opinion that the teachers teach them effectively about the importance of knowing how to be healthy and about the need to exercise the body regularly.

Only about 60% of pupils responded through the questionnaire that behaviour in the school is good and that misbehaviour does not affect their ability to work. This is not the finding of the inspection team from observing classes and as a result of questioning learners face to face.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Glyn Roberts | Reporting Inspector |
| Gareth Wyn Jones | Team Inspector |
| Richard Hughes | Lay Inspector |
| Ann Fox | Peer Inspector |
| Helen Hopkins | School Nominee |

Copies of the report

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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 |