



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 GGD Cwmllynfell
Heol y Bryn
Cwmllynfell
Swansea
SA9 2FJ**

Date of inspection: September 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.

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Context

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Draddodiadol Cwmllynfell is a bilingual community school in the charge of Neath Port Talbot local authority. It is situated on the outskirts of the village. The school serves the village and the surrounding area. Since January 2012, it also admits the pupils of Ysgol Rhiwfawr, which closed at the end of 2011. This means that it serves a wider area than the original catchment area and that the number of children and pupils has risen significantly from 75 in September 2011 to 110 in September 2012.

As a result of the changes above, there has been a significant drop in the percentage of pupils who receive free school meals. The current percentage is 7.9%, which is significantly lower than the county and national averages. In 2011, 15.5% of pupils were entitled to free school meals, a percentage that is more similar to the county and national averages. According to the school, the area it serves is neither privileged nor disadvantaged.

There are 110 pupils aged between three and 11 on roll, including 16 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are admitted to the school on a part-time basis on the day following their third birthday. There are three classes for pupils of statutory school age, along with one nursery and reception class.

Pupils arrive at the school with similar achievements to those expected in comparison with the county's Welsh-medium schools.

Eleven per cent of pupils have additional learning needs but none has a statement of special educational needs. This percentage is considerably lower than the national percentage. Ninety-two per cent of pupils are from a white ethnic background and 8% are of mixed heritage. No pupils are learning English as an additional language and the local authority is not looking after any pupil.

Sixty-seven per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken and a further 23% speak Welsh to an equivalent standard. All pupils are following a first language Welsh course. Welsh is used as the medium of teaching until Year 2. In key stage 2, Welsh and English are used as teaching media. Mathematics and science are taught through the medium of English in key stage 2.

The school was inspected last during the Autumn term of 2006. The current headteacher was appointed to her post in September 2010. She was also the headteacher at Ysgol Rhiwfawr and was in charge of two schools for a time.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Cwmllynfell in 2012-2013 is £3,866. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Neath Port Talbot is £7,410 and the minimum is £2,806. Ysgol Cwmllynfell is in 21st position of the 68 primary schools in Neath Port Talbot in terms of the school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- standards in classes are good;
- care for pupils and arrangements for their wellbeing are good;
- teaching is good; and
- the school's headteacher and governors give firm leadership.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school's headteacher and governors have high expectations in terms of moving the school forward;
- staff and governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and aspects that need improvement;
- all staff are prepared to respond to the challenge of raising standards; and
- staff know pupils' needs and backgrounds well and respond to them appropriately.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that higher ability pupils achieve well by the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.
- R2 Improve attendance.
- R3 Ensure that comments on pupils' work and reports to parents are expressed in a way that is comprehensible to those who read them.
- R4 Ensure that individual education plan targets for pupils who have additional learning needs are specific and measurable.
- R5 Formalise the school's management procedures in terms of keeping records and indicating decisions.

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

Pupils of all ages and abilities are making good progress in skills. Standards of oracy are a strength in Welsh and English. Welsh is the natural language of oral communication of almost all pupils at the school. Nearly all pupils use the Welsh idioms and rich vocabulary of the area. Standards of writing are good across the school. Pupils write at length and interestingly in a range of different registers in a good number of subjects. Although there are small errors in Welsh and English, the content is interesting and handwriting is good.

Standards of reading are a strength. In Welsh in the Foundation Phase and in Welsh and English in key stage 2, pupils show enjoyment when reading books. They read aloud meaningfully, interpreting the text and explaining it well. They have good vocabulary. They are familiar with different types of writing and they can explain their characteristics in detail.

Pupils throughout the school and across the ability range are making good progress in individual lessons and over a period of time. Nearly all recall facts quickly and accurately. Pupils co-operate well as members of a group and as individuals. Nearly all become able to understand subject concepts and to adapt them well in activities that combine a number of different skills. Pupils use information and communication technology effectively in order to research group or individual tasks. Nearly all pupils apply numeric skills appropriately to their tasks. Nearly all pupils learn how to become independent and confident learners.

Although there is variation from year to year because of numbers of pupils, at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 the school's outcomes are often similar to outcomes of schools who belong to the same family.

In 2012, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 were fairly similar to the family's average across subjects. They were lower than the family's average in English, a little lower in mathematics and science and a little higher in Welsh. The general pattern was the same in 2011 but in 2010 outcomes were significantly higher than the family's averages in all of the indicators.

When the school's outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are compared with those of schools that are in the same band for free school meals, differences in performance over time become more obvious. The outcomes for 2012 were not as good as those for 2011 and the outcomes for 2010 exceeded those for 2011 and 2012.

In 2012, the school's outcomes for the Foundation Phase placed it among the top quarter of schools that have similar levels of free school meals for all indicators, apart from mathematics, where it was among the top half of similar schools.

Boys' results compare favourably with those of girls. The most able pupils do not always reach their potential in assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase and at the end of key stage 2, although the difference in achievement is not apparent during lessons. Pupils who have additional learning needs achieve well.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school. Most of them have positive attitudes towards improving their own health. Most pupils have a good understanding of the effects of physical exercise and eating healthily on their health. All pupils know to whom to turn if they are in pain or are anxious.

Although pupils' attendance has been better for a number of years than the percentage for the authority and for Wales, it has remained lower than the attendance average for similar schools. Pupils' behaviour is an obvious strength. Nearly all pupils are courteous and welcoming towards visitors. All pupils show care and concern for their peers and show pride in their school.

All pupils have a voice, which allows them to contribute to decisions at school. The school council and the eco committee present pupils' viewpoints effectively to the school's managers. All pupils take good advantage of frequent opportunities to assess work and set personal targets. Nearly all pupils show mature social skills when working with others and solving problems. Pupils take a significant part in environmental, social, cultural and charitable activities in the local community. This allows them to use the skills that they learn at school in a practical way and strengthens their awareness of the needs and characteristics of their community.

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

The school provides good experiences for all its pupils and responds appropriately to the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and religious education. The school ensures interesting and rich experiences that challenge pupils and capture their interest. The curriculum meets the particular needs of groups and specific individuals and offers suitable personal programmes.

Provision for skills has been planned in detail. Appropriate homework is set regularly. Its main characteristic is a large element of independent work by pupils, often of their own choice as a follow-up to work in class. The curriculum is enriched by contributions from speakers and visitors from the local community.

Provision for the Welsh language has been developed effectively throughout the school. The school also gives specific attention to developing the Welsh dimension, and this strengthens pupils' awareness of their area and of their Welshness.

The provision that enables pupils to learn about sustainability is a strength. Arrangements to develop pupils' understanding of the role that they and others have in society and in the wider world are also effective.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good in all lessons. Teachers and other adults have good subject knowledge and their expectations are high in terms of standards and behaviour. In addition, they use a wide range of learning and teaching methods. Individual lessons and series of lessons are planned carefully. Assistants who support specific groups of pupils or individuals contribute well to learning. Almost without exception, staff provide carefully and effectively for pupils of different ages and abilities. Teaching develops pupils' skills well.

Teachers use effective assessment methods during lessons in order to promote learning. Pupils receive good oral feedback on their work and good opportunities to assess their own work.

Teachers make useful written comments regularly on the work of pupils throughout the school, but, frequently, the phraseology of the comments is more suitable for adults than for the pupils themselves. Pupils receive a fair evaluation of their work, along with useful advice on how to improve it.

Detailed records are kept on the work of individual pupils along with portfolios that have been standardised and moderated in the core subjects. These give a clear picture of progress on a school level and the progress of individuals.

Parents and carers receive detailed information on their children's achievements, wellbeing and development. At times, the use of technical educational terms in the comments makes it difficult for parents to understand them.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has suitable arrangements for ensuring the development of pupils' health and wellbeing, including their safety on the site. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitude to boosting their own health and aspects of keeping fit.

The school provides carefully for promoting social education, including moral, cultural and spiritual aspects. Staff know pupils' needs and backgrounds well and know how to respond to them appropriately.

There are good arrangements for identifying pupils' successes and achievements across a number of areas and activities that strengthen this provision.

Good links with external agencies contribute effectively towards offering specialist guidance and expand the school's knowledge of pupils' needs and backgrounds.

Arrangements for safeguarding children meet statutory requirements and they are not a cause for concern. The school has good policies and arrangements for eliminating any oppressive behaviour or bullying.

Teachers provide work that has been adapted well for pupils who have additional learning needs. Pupils receive appropriate support to complete their tasks. Pupils' individual educational plans set improvement targets but they are not always specific and measurable enough.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a happy, welcoming and homely community. There is an inclusive ethos that respects the contribution of staff and pupils and this is one of the school's strengths. Pupils show a desire to help and support one another and the school offers an equal opportunity for everyone to be part of its community. There are specific, clear policies and procedures that promote equality and social diversity, and these are known to staff, governors and parents.

The school uses the site appropriately for playing and learning and takes good advantage of recent beneficial developments to the buildings and the site. There are appropriate staff and resources for delivering various aspects of the curriculum. The colourful, attractive atmosphere assists in stimulating learning and celebrating and promoting pupils' successes. The whole building and site are kept clean and tidy.

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

The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the governing body have a clear vision that leads to a robust strategy and high expectations for maintaining standards and ensuring improvement. The whole staff share the vision, and contribute well to developing the school further.

Staff roles and responsibilities have been defined clearly, and all staff are committed to their roles. Staff know the school well and ensure that provision for the future is planned in line with the priorities of the school development plan. However, a number of the school's procedures and arrangements in terms of keeping records and noting decisions in detail are informal.

Performance management processes set realistic targets that are linked to the school's priorities. Staff meetings focus appropriately on self-evaluative aspects, by focusing on school improvement issues. This all contributes effectively to raising standards and to identifying pupils' needs.

The governing body is aware of its responsibilities and challenges the school effectively as a critical friend. The members have direct information on standards and learning experiences. The governing body has a good understanding of the importance of interpreting data in order to identify progress. As a result, the governors show a good understanding of the school's performance in comparison with that of other schools in the family and nationally. The governors also ensure that the school responds to statutory requirements.

The school gives appropriate consideration to national and local priorities, including bilingualism, developing literacy and other skills, equal opportunities, sustainability and pupils' wellbeing.

Improving quality: Good

The school has an effective monitoring programme and self-evaluation process that ensure that leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas to be developed further.

Staff's work is monitored carefully and there is a formal system for ensuring agreement on personal targets to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The school makes appropriate use of questionnaires for pupils, parents and governors.

The school makes effective use of data to monitor pupils' performance and set specific targets for improvement. Core subject leaders analyse data effectively in order to compare the school's performance with that of other schools and monitor attainment patterns.

The priorities of the school development plan derive directly from self-evaluation. They include measurable targets and offer clear steps for ensuring definite improvements.

Effective co-operation with other schools has allowed staff to observe examples of good practice. This has led to strengthening the methodology of teaching language.

Partnership working: Good

The partnership with parents is effective and ensures that nearly all parents support the school's principles and values. The school gained the respect of parents of new pupils who came from Ysgol Rhiwfawr in January 2012.

There is an effective link with other schools in the cluster, which has allowed the widening of staff expertise and the sharing of resources. Good transition arrangements with a local cylch meithrin allow smooth transfer to the school. Similarly, there are appropriate arrangements with the two secondary schools in order to promote effective pastoral care. There are curricular links in a good range of subjects. The strong partnership with a large number of institutions that train teachers and assistants assists in developing staff awareness of contemporary learning and teaching methodology.

The school has established important partnerships with sporting, social and charitable movements in the area. This strengthens pupils' awareness of their locality and allows them to adapt their knowledge and skills.

Resource management: Good

Staffing and resources, including financial resources, are managed and used effectively to support and improve learning. The school uses teaching staff and assistants appropriately and they have the knowledge and expertise to cover all aspects of the curriculum. All members of staff receive training and professional development according to their personal needs and the school's requirements. This contributes well to improving standards.

The school plans its use and purchase of resources carefully. If needed, it takes good advantage of resources and human and material resources outside the school. The school's expenditure decisions link well with the priorities of its development plan and current needs.

The school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Pupils arrive at the school with similar achievements to what is expected in comparison with Welsh-medium schools in the county.

Care is needed when interpreting outcomes of assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 because the number of pupils is usually comparatively small. In addition, the number of pupils in a school year, including the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals and those who have to pay for their meals, varies. The balance between numbers of boys and girls is also uneven from year to year.

The school's outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are frequently similar to the outcomes at the end of a key stage for schools who belong to the same family, especially when considering the statistical value of each pupil. There is some unevenness, however, from year to year and from subject to subject.

In 2012, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 were fairly similar to the family's average across the subjects. They were lower than the family's average in English, a little lower in mathematics and science and a little higher in Welsh. The general pattern was the same in 2011 but in 2010 outcomes were significantly higher than the family's averages in all of the indicators.

Achievement in Welsh oracy, reading and writing has been higher than the family's average between 2010 and 2012. Although achievement in English oracy, reading and writing was considerably higher than the family's average in 2010 and achievement in writing was a little higher in 2011 and 2012, achievement in English oracy and reading was a little lower than the family's average in 2011 and 2012.

When the school's outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are compared with those of some schools in the same free school meals band, differences in performance over time become more apparent. Outcomes for 2012 were not as good as those of 2011 and outcomes for 2010 exceeded those of 2011 and 2012. In 2012, the school's outcomes placed it among the bottom half of similar schools in English and Welsh and in the bottom quarter of the same group of schools for science and mathematics. In 2011, the school's performance placed it in the top half of similar schools for all indicators apart from science, in which it was among the bottom half of schools. In 2010, the school's outcomes placed the school among the top quarter of similar schools for all indicators.

In 2012, the school's outcomes for the Foundation Phase were among the top quarter of schools that have similar levels of free school meals for all indicators, apart from mathematics, in which it was among the top half of similar schools.

During the period 2009-2012, there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at the end of the Foundation Phase and the end of key stage 2. During the same period, although there were some exceptions, specifically

in outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2012, the most able pupils have not always achieved a higher level than the expected level or outcome. This is true of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Response to parent and carer questionnaires

Fourteen responses were received to the parent or carer questionnaires. All the parents who responded agreed that:

- their children had support to settle in well when they started at the school;
- teaching is good;
- staff expect children to work hard and do their best;
- their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular physical exercise; and that
- their children are safe at school.

Most parents who responded agreed that:

- their children like school;
- children behave well at school;
- their children receive appropriate additional support;
- the school helps their children to become more mature and to shoulder responsibility; and that they
- are satisfied with the school in general.

Many parents believed that they:

- feel comfortable about asking the school a question;
- understand the school's system for dealing with complaints; and
- have regular information on their child's progress.

A minority of parents believed that there was not a good enough variety of activities, including trips and visits to the school, and that homework did not build well on what the child is learning at school.

A few parents felt that the school does not treat all children fairly and with respect, and that their children were not making good progress at school.

Because of the small number of responses to the questionnaire, it is difficult to compare levels of parents' satisfaction with national figures. Usually, opinion is fairly similar and compares favourably with the national picture. However, the percentage that says that there is not enough variety of activities is significantly higher than the national percentage.

Response to learner questionnaires

Fifty-five children completed the questionnaire. All children know to whom they should speak if they are worried or anxious and they know what to do and to whom to speak if they find the work difficult.

Nearly all children say that the school:

- is a safe place for them;
- deals well with any bullying;
- teaches them how to stay healthy;
- provides many opportunities to take regular physical exercise.

Nearly all children also said that:

- teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress;
- they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work; and that
- they believe that they are doing well at school.

Most children believed that their homework helps them to understand and improve their work at school.

A few children believed that other children do not behave well and that they cannot do their work because of this.

The responses above are fairly similar to the average for primary schools in Wales. However, a minority of children at this school say that other children do not behave well during play time and lunch time. The percentage that says this is significantly higher than the national average.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Gareth Wyn Roberts	Reporting Inspector
Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Melfyn Hopkins	Peer Inspector
Lynne Brier	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. If it is available, the data report can be seen on our website alongside this report.

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.