



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

A report on

**Ysgol Bro Siôn Cwilt
Synod Inn
Llandysul
Ceredigion
SA44 6JZ**

Date of inspection: October 2017

by

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

About Ysgol Bro Siôn Cwilt

Ysgol Bro Siôn Cwilt is situated near the village of Synod Inn in Llandysul, in Ceredigion local authority. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work, and English is introduced in key stage 2.

There are 117 pupils between three and eleven years old on roll, including 13 full-time nursery pupils and 13 pupils who attend on a part-time basis. Approximately 30% of pupils speak Welsh at home and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Approximately 8% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage. The school has identified 30% of its pupils as having additional learning needs.

Following a period as the acting headteacher, the headteacher was appointed to the post permanently in April 2017, and the school was last inspected in June 2011.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

There is a very caring and happy environment at Ysgol Bro Siôn Cwilt. Pupils are well-behaved and have positive attitudes towards learning. One of the school's strengths is the pupils' courtesy and respect towards their peers and adults. Teachers provide suitable activities and resources that meet most pupils' needs. As a result, during their time at the school, most make good progress. The headteacher has a clear vision that is based on ensuring success for all pupils and promoting their Welshness. Respect and an ethos of close co-operation are evident between all members of staff.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate challenge to achieve to the best of their ability, particularly those who are more able

R2 Provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length

What happens next

The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, a majority of pupils' basic skills in language and mathematical development are lower than expected. During their time at the school, most, including those with additional learning needs, make good progress. However, more able pupils do not always achieve to the best of their ability.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their ability to communicate orally in Welsh, and they use an appropriate range of vocabulary when conversing with adults. Most use the Welsh language confidently in their formal activities and at other times during the day. In key stage 2, most pupils listen attentively during lessons and contribute purposefully in both languages in groups and class discussions. The oral skills of pupils from non-Welsh-speaking homes develop at a very early stage.

Most pupils in the foundation phase make good progress in their reading skills. They build words carefully and read fluently and meaningfully in Welsh. In key stage 2, most pupils are confident readers in both languages. They read with clear expression and respond effectively to punctuation. Many older pupils handle factual books well to help them to find information; for example, some have a great interest in space, and they read a range of books to support their studies in this area.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their early writing skills continuously. Most older pupils in the foundation phase write an increasing range of simple sentences, and spell a majority of common words correctly and punctuate purposefully. Most pupils in key stage 2 write clearly and interestingly in both languages, and paragraph and punctuate correctly. Many use an increasing range of vocabulary successfully to enrich their writing. However, at times, the large number of worksheets that are used in both stages limit pupils' extended writing skills. Most pupils make successful use of their literacy skills in various areas. For example, Year 4 pupils write effective pieces about the 1940s and older pupils produce interesting written pieces on the history of Laura Ashley.

Most pupils' mathematical skills in the foundation phase and key stage 2 are developing well. By the end of the foundation phase, many have a sound grasp of number facts. They develop a sound understanding of the characteristics of shapes and use standard units correctly when measuring. Many pupils use mathematical vocabulary confidently when discussing their work, and most solve numeracy problems successfully in other areas across the curriculum. In key stage 2, most pupils' understanding of mathematical features, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division procedures, is sound. They gather, analyse and present information effectively in the form of bar charts. Many pupils transfer their mathematical skills successfully to other subjects; for example, they record and compare the temperature in cities such as London and New York.

Most pupils make purposeful use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their work across the curriculum. By the end of the foundation phase, most use word processing programs successfully to present information, and

they control a toy confidently as it follows a specific path. In key stage 2, most pupils' ICT skills are sound. They use the internet successfully, for example to search for information about the life of Twm Siôn Cati. Many pupils use a database intelligently when discovering how many players in the Welsh rugby team are over 30 years old. Most older pupils are able to use spreadsheets effectively to discover the profit of the school's business enterprise. Across the school, most have a broad and sound understanding of how to stay safe on the internet.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils understand how to live and eat healthily. They take advantage of regular opportunities to take part in physical activities during break time, for example Dragon Sports and the running club. The healthy school group has effective plans, such as promoting the practice of drinking enough water, to ensure that most children make healthy choices when eating and drinking. Opportunities to go on residential trips, for example to Pentre Bach and Llangrannog, make a positive contribution to their social skills and fitness.

Pupils are well-behaved in lessons and during break time. A prominent feature of the school's life is the courtesy and respect that pupils show towards their peers and adults. Most work together effectively, and the school's older pupils care successfully for younger pupils on the playground. Pupils are confident that the school responds promptly to any concerns that they have.

Across the school, pupils take regular advantage of opportunities to express an opinion. For example, in the foundation phase, classes hold meetings for pupils to express an opinion on the activities that they would like to undertake in the continuous learning areas. Pupils also create questionnaires confidently to seek their peers' opinions about the procedures the school use to give them feedback on their work. This enriches their understanding of the importance of taking responsibility for improving their own work. Many pupils shoulder responsibilities on a variety of committees. For example, members of the school council, the eco council and the rights of the child committee contribute beneficially to school life and ensure that their peers receive information about important issues that affect them.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They develop as enthusiastic learners and respond well to the caring and inclusive ethos that is an integral part of the school's life. From an early age, they develop a sound understanding of what they need to do to improve their work, for example by discussing success criteria after creating, performing and recording a rap aloud in the foundation phase.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare, organise and structure their lessons effectively. Teachers link their lessons clearly with previous learning and use a range of strategies skilfully. They explain new concepts successfully and ensure that learning sessions have a good pace. Teachers use probing questioning methods to encourage pupils to give extended answers. They provide suitable activities and resources that meet most pupils' interests and abilities well. All staff take advantage of opportunities to enrich pupils' language, which contributes successfully to enriching their oracy skills.

The wonderful relationship between teachers, support staff and pupils encourages respect and courtesy, and leads to the supportive ethos and industrious atmosphere that is so prominent in the classrooms. However, at times, teachers do not provide enough challenge for a minority of pupils to achieve to the best of their ability, particularly those who are more able.

During the last two years, the school has strengthened the use of assessment for learning strategies. This includes providing valuable opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers against success criteria. Teachers give pupils constructive and regular oral and written feedback on their work. By doing so, they provide them with clear guidance in order for them to understand how well they are achieving and what they need to do in order to improve. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to choose appropriate targets for improving their work.

The school provides a varied range of effective learning experiences that meet most pupils' needs successfully. Provision meets the requirements of the foundation phase, the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. Teachers plan stimulating activities jointly through interest themes. They provide enough opportunities for pupils to make decisions in relation to their work. Across the school, pupils are given good opportunities to vote and choose themes for the term; for example, the older pupils have chosen 'fashions' as their theme for this term.

The school responds soundly to the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy, thinking and ICT skills across the curriculum. However, at times, significant use of worksheets limits a few pupils' extended writing skills.

Provision to develop the Welsh element is promoted effectively. A prominent place is given to enabling pupils to learn about local and national culture, for example by competing in the Urdd Eisteddfod and local Eisteddfodau, and by listening to visitors to the school sharing their experiences about interesting issues. The school enriches the curriculum successfully by offering a wide variety of visits to pupils that relate to the term's work; for example, they are given annual opportunities to visit Llangrannog and the Urdd Centre in Cardiff, in addition to other places that relate to the term's theme. The school provides purposefully to develop pupils' creative skills by providing beneficial opportunities for them to learn about artists and musicians from Wales. Provision for art, in particular, leads to creative work of a high standard.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring and happy community. Staff provide successful support and assistance to pupils and encourage them to take pride in their work and to contribute significantly to the various activities that take place at school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Staff know the pupils and their families well, and they have a sound and effective relationship with them. Staff share information about the school's activities with parents regularly through newsletters and the website. Parents appreciate this regular communication, which enables them to understand better how to support their children, for example with their homework. The school seeks parents' views regularly through questionnaires and beneficial meetings.

Pupils are given a number of opportunities to shoulder responsibilities by being members of different councils or groups. This broadens their understanding of the importance of being active citizens and contributing regularly within their community.

The school has effective procedures to encourage pupils to eat and drink healthily, and staff promote pupils' understanding of the importance of exercise successfully. This is enriched by offering different experiences, such as football, rugby and netball.

The school has procedures and policies that ensure that provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff arrange valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect in assemblies on important issues, such as 'Values'. This gives pupils suitable opportunities to consider the differences and similarities between themselves and their peers. The school reinforces this message effectively by placing a specific emphasis on Children's Rights. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of religious, moral and cultural aspects.

The school has an effective system for tracking and assessing pupils' progress and wellbeing. Teachers use a range of test results confidently to plan and provide support for individuals and specific groups of pupils. As a result, provision for pupils with additional learning needs is successful. Teachers identify pupils' educational, emotional and social needs at an early stage and provide them with appropriate support. They have clear and measurable targets, and individual education plans are reviewed regularly. Support staff are very aware of specific pupils' improvement targets and support them well to achieve them.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher has a clear vision for developing the school, which is based on ensuring success for all pupils and promoting their Welshness. The headteacher provides strong leadership and works successfully with staff, governors, pupils and parents to achieve this vision.

All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and have clear and up-to-date job descriptions. Regular staff meetings discuss pupils' standards and wellbeing and focus well on responding to priorities for improvement.

Procedures for managing staff performance are sound. Objectives are appropriate and link clearly with the school's development priorities, in addition to the staff's individual professional requirements.

The school responds successfully to national and local priorities. For example, it is introducing effective strategies to develop the Digital Competence Framework and the Welsh Language Charter. This has a positive effect on pupils' standards, particularly their ICT skills and their oracy, reading and writing skills in Welsh.

Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school's life and work and fulfil their duties conscientiously. They visit the school regularly and, through these visits and their part in the self-evaluation procedure, they know the school's strengths and areas for development.

The school has effective self-evaluation procedures that give good consideration to a range of first-hand evidence. This includes seeking parents' views, interpreting the

school's data, monitoring lessons and scrutinising pupils' books. As a result, the self-evaluation report identifies the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. The school has a suitable annual timetable for monitoring, which ensures that all elements are given attention over time and that all stakeholders contribute to the self-evaluation procedure.

The link between the outcomes of the self-evaluation report and the priorities in the school development plan is clear. The plan includes a purposeful focus on improving pupils' outcomes and includes clear success criteria and responsibilities. The leaders' and governors' effective arrangements ensure that they monitor the development plan's main priorities continuously. However, leaders have not given enough attention to planning to improve the standards of more able pupils.

Leaders ensure valuable opportunities for the professional development of teachers and support staff. The use of 'Cyfeillion Cwricwlaidd' (Curricular Buddies) across the school improves staff expertise in areas such as music, physical education and additional learning needs successfully. This has a positive effect on pupils' standards in these areas.

The school is staffed appropriately and good use is made of individuals' expertise to enrich teaching and learning. Support staff provide teachers with robust support and make a valuable contribution to pupils' standards of attainment and wellbeing. Teachers make purposeful use of their planning, preparation and assessment time, and the arrangements are managed well. The headteacher and governors monitor expenditure beneficially. The school makes good use of the Pupil Development Grant to improve further provision to develop the literacy skills and wellbeing of those who are eligible for free school meals.

The school has a range of resources of appropriate quality. The environment is stimulating and displays celebrate pupils' achievements successfully. Teachers have developed the foundation phase's outdoor area purposefully, and it includes interesting equipment that enhances pupils' experiences beneficially. The building is well-maintained.

Copies of the report

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

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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

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