



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Carwe  
Carway  
Kidwelly  
Carmarthenshire  
SA17 4HE**

**Date of inspection: March 2018**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Carwe

Ysgol Gynradd Carwe is situated in the village of Carway, near Kidwelly in Carmarthenshire. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 50 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 11 part-time nursery age children. The school is part of a federation with Ysgol Gynradd Ponthenri and Ysgol Gynradd Gwynfryn.

Over a three-year-period, around 38% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is significantly higher than the national percentage of 19%. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 25% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is slightly higher than the national percentage of 21%. Very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in February 1999 and the school was last inspected in June 2010. The federation with Ysgol Gwynfryn and Ysgol Ponthenri was established in February 2012.

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

Ysgol Gynradd Carwe is an inclusive, happy community where everyone cares for each other. Under the energetic and careful leadership of the headteacher and leadership team, staff plan a rich range of learning experiences for all pupils. Teachers and assistants work closely with staff at the federation's schools in order to share expertise.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points and develop as increasingly independent and confident learners. They have a positive attitude towards their learning and participate fully in learning experiences. The school works closely with external agencies in order to promote pupils' wellbeing and emotional development very effectively. The school promotes pupils' community awareness well.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve the standard of oral Welsh of the very few less confident pupils
- R2 Ensure that numeracy activities respond fully to the needs of pupils of all abilities
- R3 Ensure that quality improvement procedures are more effective in improving pupils' outcomes and strengthening provision

## **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, many pupils' language and number skills are lower than the expected level. However, most make good progress from their starting points. Latecomers to the Welsh language who join the school during key stage 2 make good progress in a relatively short time, and develop oral fluency quickly as a result of support from the school and the language centre.

In the foundation phase, most pupils listen well and talk confidently and maturely during their tasks. They express an opinion eloquently, for example when discussing a piece of music that they create with different percussion instruments in the continuous provision. Most pupils' oral skills in key stage 2 are developing well in English and Welsh, in line with their age and ability. They express themselves confidently and use a range of vocabulary to enrich their conversation. They are able to express an opinion clearly, for example when discussing the life and work of Dr Martin Luther King in the United States in the sixties. However, there are a very few pupils who do not express themselves as confidently, and linguistic errors hinder their ability to communicate effectively at times.

Many pupils in the foundation phase read with increasing confidence. The youngest pupils come to recognise letters at an early stage and develop sound phonic strategies, which enable them to interpret phrases and words. Many pupils very much enjoy reading and discuss books maturely. Many are able to read instructions competently, for example when working on challenges and in the outdoor area. Most pupils in key stage 2 read fluently and confidently, in line with their age and ability, in both languages. They express an opinion about the text maturely.

Most pupils' writing in the foundation phase is developing well. They create coherent and creative pieces, for example when writing the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, or when writing instructions for cooking popcorn. Most spell and punctuate soundly. Many pupils in key stage 2 create imaginative pieces in Welsh and English, for example when writing a mature biography of the politician David Lloyd George, and the imaginative English piece 'The woman from the wonderful waterfall', which is based on the legend of 'Llyn y Fan Fach'. Many are able to use adjectives and similes to enrich their work effectively.

Across the foundation phase, pupils' numeracy skills are developing well. From the outset, most nursery and reception pupils show sound number skills. Most pupils in Year 2 have a sound grasp of number facts up to one hundred. They are able to explain the properties of different shapes, and many are able to interpret a simple database and draw conclusions maturely. Most pupils in key stage 2 use their number skills confidently. By the top of the school, most understand and use percentages in the context of money confidently and correctly. Many are able to create a simple formula as part of their work on triangular numbers. However, pupils do not always apply their numeracy skills to the same standard in other contexts across the curriculum.

Most pupils across the school use a good range of ICT hardware and software confidently and with increasing independence. Many choose the most suitable equipment and software in order to complete tasks effectively. Most use specific programs competently to reinforce knowledge of the facts of the four rules and to learn multiplication tables. Many pupils in key stage 2 make creative presentations and discuss their content confidently. They create artistic animations and original presentations by using a green screen in order to advertise Ysgol Carwe to prospective parents.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Standards of wellbeing across the school are good, and nearly all pupils have a very mature and positive attitude towards learning. Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and appreciate the robust support from teachers and assistants.

Pupil councils play a valuable role in the school's life and work. They take their work seriously and shoulder their responsibilities maturely. Pupils who are members of councils work effectively with pupils in the federation's other schools, and this adds to their understanding of the importance of making decisions that have an effect on pupils' school experience. A notable example of this is the way in which the federation's council has created useful behaviour, equal opportunities and anti-bullying policies. As a result, nearly all pupils feel free of any harassment and know what to do if anything is worrying them. This has a very positive effect on pupils' wellbeing.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and how to stay safe online. Most participate actively in a variety of sports activities, and many pupils' participation in these activities add effectively to their wellbeing, confidence and self-image. For example, through the work of the sports ambassadors and the organisers of the fruit shop, pupils encourage their peers to make healthy snack choices at break time and lead energetic games on the playground.

Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well during lessons and in informal situations around the school. Pupils are polite and treat each other, staff and visitors with respect. Nearly all pupils listen to others' views maturely, and wait patiently for their turn, for example when discussing their visit to Carew Castle and the botanical gardens. Most pupils work independently during their activities, without relying too much on adults. They have a positive attitude towards their learning. Most persevere with their tasks and enjoy challenges. This is a strength throughout the school and contributes significantly towards increasing pupils' confidence in their ability to succeed. Pupils support charitable activities regularly to raise money for a number of different organisations. This has a positive effect on most pupils' awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Nearly all pupils concentrate well in lessons and apply themselves immediately to their learning. They are enthusiastic and work diligently for extended periods when completing their tasks. Most pupils support each other's learning highly effectively in lessons and develop to become enthusiastic and independent learners.

Over the last four years, the school's attendance percentage has improved. Persistent absences have decreased significantly over this period. The walking bus arrangements have had a very positive influence on pupils' attendance and punctuality.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

The standard of teaching across the school is good. The strong and supportive working relationship between pupils and adults is a strength. Teachers and assistants know the pupils very well and challenge them to achieve to the best of their ability, while also providing them with extremely effective support. Teachers encourage pupils to use their Welsh in lessons and informally. As a result, many pupils use their Welsh language naturally in formal and informal situations.

Teachers question effectively in order to encourage pupils to think for themselves and take an element of responsibility for their learning. At the beginning of themes, teachers discuss and agree on the next paths for pupils, in order to encourage each pupil to participate fully. Nearly all pupils play an active part in their learning. Across the school, teachers share lesson objectives purposefully and pupils use success criteria effectively when evaluating success in their tasks.

In the foundation phase, teachers plan a range of stimulating and challenging activities that develop pupils' independence successfully. As a result, most pupils gain significant independence from a young age, and persevere with their tasks. Teachers organise learning experiences skilfully in order to develop skills and independence. As a result, most pupils use the areas skilfully and maturely when developing different skills, and work together successfully.

In key stage 2, most lessons provide extended and interesting opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. Short presentations and practical activities maintain pupils' enthusiasm well. As a result, most pupils persevere maturely with their tasks.

Teachers and assistants provide pupils of all ages and abilities with regular and useful feedback. As a result, most pupils have a sound grasp of what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers' written feedback is concise and of a good standard, and pupils are given regular opportunities to reflect on their work, individually and in pairs, and to provide feedback to their peers.

Teachers plan a wide and interesting range of learning experiences for pupils across the school. Different successful interventions are provided to support groups of pupils with their learning, for example to promote and support reading. As a result, most pupils make good progress. Teachers make regular detailed use of schemes of work in order to ensure a full range of activities that meet the needs of the national curriculum, the principles of the foundation phase and religious education.

The school has purposeful plans to ensure that teachers use the literacy and numeracy framework and ICT plans to develop pupils' skills successfully across the curriculum. There are rich opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in a wide range of contexts, for example when writing a letter to the local council to express concern about the problem with dog fouling in the village of Carway. There are beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in real-life

contexts, for example when using a thermometer to compare changes in temperature on a cold winter's day. However, numeracy activities do not always provide the same degree of challenge as in mathematics lessons in order to respond fully to the needs of pupils of all abilities.

Planning across the federation is a strength. Teachers share expertise in order to ensure that there is consistency in provision across the three schools. As a result, pupils receive a full and effective range of experiences, and their progress is monitored closely.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

There is a robust partnership between the school and parents. Staff promote an open and co-operative culture that succeeds in ensuring commitment and support from the whole school community. Teachers hold useful training evenings for parents, which focus on discussing the learning methods that are used at the school. This helps parents to understand how to encourage and support their children with their learning.

The school has effective electronic systems to track pupils' progress. Staff use assessment information very effectively in order to identify pupils who need additional support and provide intervention, where necessary. Assistants work effectively under the guidance of teachers and the additional learning needs co-ordinator in order to implement a wide range of intervention programmes of a high standard. This has a positive effect on most pupils' progress. All pupils with additional learning needs have a purposeful individual education plan, which includes quantitative targets and suitable actions. These plans are reviewed carefully by teachers and discussed regularly with parents and carers.

The school makes skilful use of the expertise of a range of external agencies in order to support pupils' progress and wellbeing. In co-operation with a range of agencies, the school has effective arrangements that support pupils' emotional and social needs very successfully. This contributes effectively towards creating the school's caring and familial ethos.

There is a prominent emphasis on promoting agreed values across the federation. This has a very positive influence on behaviour. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities in order to develop pupils' awareness and appreciation of the history, culture and traditions of the local area and wider Wales. An effective example of this is the study of the history of the development of the town of Llanelli. The school gives rigorous attention to respecting different cultures, promoting aspects of diversity and developing fairness, tolerance and equal opportunities. Pupils raise money regularly for charities such as the Red Cross and Macmillan. Displays around the school support teaching successfully. Staff use them effectively to support values and enrich pupils' learning experiences.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.



## **Leadership and management: Good**

Leaders have created an ethos of co-operation across the three schools in the federation successfully. As a result, all staff are aware that they are the federation's staff, not the staff of a particular school. One of the innovative features of this system is that staff are able to teach at short notice at any of the schools in the federation without disrupting the pupils' education. This is an exceptional strength. The federation's staffing structure enables teachers and assistants to develop a sound understanding of all work of the three schools. The federation's leaders and staff share and develop a strategic vision and clear aims purposefully with the federation's whole community.

The headteacher and assistant headteachers have strong leadership skills. They have high expectations, and they support and guide others effectively to raise standards and promote pupils' wellbeing. Robust leadership across the federation has succeeded in creating an ethos of successful co-operation among the three schools' staff. This includes effective co-operation when planning, assessing and standardising jointly as one body of staff. The Hwb digital network is used purposefully in order to share documents across the federation. However, leaders do not have a clear enough overview of how effectively curricular plans are implemented in the three schools.

Governors have a sound understanding of the performance of the schools in the federation. They are responsible for specific aspects of the schools' priorities. By working with the school's leaders, observing lessons and scrutinising books, they play an active part in the school's self-evaluation processes. They use information effectively to make decisions and to set a clear strategic direction for the school's work. An example of this is the way in which governors have challenged the school about provision and have made difficult decisions in order to maintain standards. However, they have not been challenging enough in ensuring that pupils attain the higher levels over a period of time. The governing body monitors the budget carefully. An example of this is the way in which it has challenged the school about the effect of the pupil development grant on pupils' attendance, punctuality and developing their life skills.

The school's self-evaluation processes are effective and based firmly on broad evidence, such as scrutinising pupils' work, observing lessons and seeking the views of pupils and parents. On the whole, reports following monitoring and scrutinising books identify strengths clearly. However, they do not always identify consistently the next steps for improvement. The self-evaluation report provides a comprehensive, honest and balanced picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is a clear link between self-evaluation findings and the priorities in the school development plan. However, improvement activities do not always have enough of an effect on pupils' outcomes. An example of this is the fact that improving the performance of more able and talented pupils has appeared in the development plan for a number of years.

All of the federation's staff work together very effectively and there are valuable opportunities for them to share experiences and good practice within the school. This has helped to reduce teachers' workload and enriched experiences for pupils. A specific example of this is the rich and creative experiences that pupils are given in the foundation phase.

Leaders use resources creatively to enrich the curriculum and raise pupils' standards. They link expenditure appropriately with the priorities in the school development plan and monitor funding carefully to ensure value for money. The school uses a wide range of grants purposefully, including the pupil development grant, to raise pupils' standards and develop their wellbeing. As a result, nearly all pupils make appropriate progress.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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

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

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