



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

A report on

**Ysgol Foel Gron
Mynytho
Pwllheli
Gwynedd
LL53 7RN**

Date of inspection: October 2015

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 Foel Gron is in the village of Mynytho, Gwynedd, and is under the Voluntary Control of the Church in Wales. It serves the village and the nearby area.

The school provides for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years. Welsh is the everyday language at the school and the main medium of teaching and learning. English is taught formally in key stage 2. About 71% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. A very few pupils are from an ethnic minority background.

Children are admitted to the nursery class, on a full-time basis in the September following their fourth birthday. During the inspection, there were 41 children on roll. They are taught by two full-time teachers.

About 23% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a little higher than the national average.

Twenty seven per cent of pupils are on the school's additional learning needs register, which is a little higher than the averages for Wales. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed in April 2014. The school was last inspected in June 2012.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Foel Gron in 2015-2016 is £4,782. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Gwynedd is £12,116 and the minimum is £2,981. Ysgol Foel Gron is in 24th position of the 98 primary schools in Gwynedd 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:

- Most pupils make sound progress in their lessons and during their time at the school
- Nearly all pupils are confidently bilingual by the end of key stage 2
- Standards of behaviour are very high and all pupils across the school are polite and courteous
- Teachers plan a variety of interesting learning experiences that encourage pupils to work hard
- The school is a happy, caring and inclusive community in which pupils feel safe

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- The headteacher has established a clear vision and values for the school
- All members of staff co-operate effectively as a team
- Members of the governing body provide appropriate support for the life and work of the school
- The school development plan focuses well on priorities that are likely to have the greatest effect on raising pupils' standards
- The school works successfully with a range of partners, who have a positive effect on standards and wellbeing

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to provide opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of other pupils
- R2 Ensure a wider range of opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to develop their writing skills in English across the curriculum
- R3 Develop further the role of governors in order to challenge and hold the school to account about its performance

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Pupils' results from basic assessments on entry to the school show that achievement varies naturally according to ability, as Welsh is a new language for about a third of the pupils. However, the oral skills of pupils who come from non-Welsh speaking homes develop very quickly. Nearly all of them participate fully in class activities, and build well on their previous learning experiences. By the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils have made good progress in all areas of learning.

The oral skills of most pupils in the Foundation Phase are developing successfully and, by Year 2, they speak increasingly correctly and confidently. They follow simple instructions well and respond to questions effectively. In key stage 2, most of them present information enthusiastically and respond confidently when discussing their work on 'The Iron Man'. They pronounce and intone comprehensibly and use a variety of purposeful phrases and sentence patterns accurately. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils are confidently bilingual.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils read familiar pieces clearly and with some expression. They show a good understanding of an increasing range of key words, phrases and facts. They become increasingly confident when responding to texts by referring to significant details. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read a wide range of texts in Welsh and English fluently. They respond meaningfully to the content and develop into good independent readers. By the end of key stage 2, more able pupils are beginning to use their higher reading skills successfully.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase make sound progress in developing their writing skills. They are able to form a variety of sentences, they have an increasing understanding of vocabulary, and use familiar sentence patterns in a lively way. By the end of the Foundation Phase, most use capital letters and full stops correctly and consistently and usually spell simple words correctly. In key stage 2, most pupils make good progress in their writing skills in Welsh and English. They have an increasing grasp of correctness and punctuation, and most of them order their work effectively. Most pupils are able to write for various purposes successfully across the curriculum. However, pupils do not develop their writing skills in English effectively across the curriculum. Most pupils' handwriting is clear, although the work is not always tidy.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase show good progress in number skills. They develop investigative skills skilfully to discover the value of an item in a shop and to measure water capacity to see how much has evaporated over time. Many collect data to discover pupils' favourite toy and present the information in the form of a graph and a simple chart accurately. They solve problems well when conducting an experiment to measure the length of small cars, and when measuring the distance they travel, and present their findings in an orderly way in a bar graph, and interpret the results intelligently.

Most pupils in key stage 2 show a sound understanding of numeracy terms and apply their skills well when discovering the size of the crowds in three football matches. They have a thorough understanding of fractions, percentages and decimals. They use questionnaires effectively to collect information about the population of various cities and produce clear graphs to convey their findings. They develop their numeracy skills well in other subjects, especially science and geography, for example when comparing the temperature of various cities across the world.

Pupils who have additional learning needs make good progress in line with their age and ability.

Over recent years, there has been a comparatively small number of pupils (ten or fewer) in year groups at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. This can have a considerable effect on the school's benchmarked performance in comparison with that of similar schools and in comparison with national averages. In addition, numbers are too small to make a meaningful comparison between pupils who are eligible for free school meals and other pupils.

At the end of the Foundation Phase, mostly over a period of three years, the school's performance at the expected outcome (outcome 5) in comparison to similar schools has placed the school in the top 25% in language. The school's performance in mathematics has placed it consistently in the top 25%. Over the same period, performance at the higher outcome in language skills has placed the school consistently in the top 25% but has varied in mathematics, moving the school between the top 25% and the bottom 25%.

At the end of key stage 2, over a period of four years, the school's performance at the expected level (level 4) and at the higher level (level 5) in comparison with similar schools has varied, moving it between the top 25% and the bottom 25% in Welsh, English, mathematics and science.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know to whom to turn for help and advice. They have a sound understanding of the importance of eating healthily and keeping fit.

Standards of behaviour are very high and all pupils across the school are polite and courteous. They show respect and care towards their peers, and work very happily and consistently together.

Across the school, nearly all pupils' levels of interest, enthusiasm and commitment are good. The way in which pupils in the Foundation Phase make choices about their learning is a strong feature and pupils in key stage 2 contribute intelligently to what they learn. However, many pupils' ability in terms of how to improve their work has not developed fully.

The school council and the eco council ensure good opportunities for pupils to express their views and take part in a variety of activities. They have been established firmly and members accept responsibilities conscientiously and

contribute effectively to school life. For example, the school council has played a key part in the school's decision to establish a garden, which now grows vegetables successfully.

Most pupils develop their social skills effectively and are proud of their efforts to raise money in aid of charities such as Children in Need. They take pride in the opportunity to serve and entertain residents in the village by taking part in services and concerts.

Attendance levels are good and have placed the school consistently in the top 25% over the last four years in comparison with similar schools. Most pupils arrive at school punctually.

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

The school plans a variety of interesting learning experiences that meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. Class themes are chosen carefully to ensure good opportunities for pupils to learn about their community, the Llŷn peninsula and the wider world.

Schemes of work pay appropriate attention to the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in English across the curriculum in key stage 2 are inconsistent.

The school promotes the Welsh language very successfully and encourages pupils to use it as a medium of communication continuously. The way in which the school responds to the Language Charter is an obvious strength. Promotion of pupils' knowledge of their local area and the history and culture of Wales is prominent and central to all the school's work. A good example of this is the visits to historically important places and the work on the Welsh people that emigrated to Patagonia. As a result, pupils show pride in their Welshness and their heritage.

The school enriches pupils' learning experiences successfully by organising visits and inviting visitors to the school. Extra-curricular activities, such as visiting the Glanllyn residential centre, contribute well to pupils' experiences.

The curriculum provides suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about sustainable development and global citizenship. The eco committee is successful in raising pupils' awareness of the importance of recycling and saving energy.

Teaching: Good

Teachers have sound knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the National Curriculum. They plan interesting and exciting activities that encourage pupils to work hard in groups and independently. Teachers question probingly in order to expand pupils' understanding and encourage them to use their thinking skills throughout the lesson.

Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods and resources very thoughtfully to support learning. They share learning objectives clearly and discuss success criteria with pupils regularly in lessons. There is a positive working relationship between adults and pupils in all classrooms and all adults promote correct Welsh consistently.

Teachers provide useful oral feedback during lessons. They mark pupils' work regularly, but constructive comments on how to improve work are inconsistent. Good procedures are in place to provide opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and the work of others. However, they have not yet had the full effect on pupils' skills to make this effective enough.

The school has thorough procedures to track pupils' progress, including beneficial use of standardised tests and teachers' assessments. Teachers understand pupils' needs well and use the information to set specific targets and provide appropriate tasks so that they are able to move on to the next stage in their learning.

There are suitable arrangements for reporting to parents on their children's progress and achievement and they meet statutory requirements fully.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy, caring and inclusive community in which pupils feel safe. Provision for developing pupils' understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and how to be safe is effective. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development successfully by providing regular services of collective worship and through curricular activities. Visitors are invited regularly to lead the worship and there are opportunities to reflect on topical subjects, such as caring for the environment and considering less fortunate children and people. This is reflected in the respect that they show for each other and for adults.

Provision for pupils who have additional learning needs is effective. Teachers identify pupils' needs at an early stage and ensure valuable support. The intervention programme has been developed well and ensures that these pupils make appropriate progress in their learning. Individual education plans are of good quality and plans are reviewed regularly in consultation with parents.

The close co-operation that exists between the school and specialist services, such as language therapists, ensures good quality support and guidance for pupils and parents.

Learning environment: Good

There is an obvious emphasis on ensuring equal opportunities and full access to the curriculum for all pupils. Respect for racial diversity and equality is promoted successfully through various work, including studying foreign countries.

There is a varied range of good quality equipment and resources at the school and skilful use is made of them. The outdoor learning areas have been developed in a creative way in order to make full use of the space that is available and to improve pupils' learning and play opportunities. The school makes beneficial use of the nearby community field for a variety of sports.

Attractive displays of pupils' work and successes in classrooms and around the school create an interesting learning environment, for example on the 'Iron Man' theme, which engenders pupils' pride in their work. This supports learning well and adds to the school's homely and welcoming ethos.

The standard of cleanliness is high and the building and grounds are maintained well. The school site is safe for pupils.

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

The headteacher has established a clear vision and values for the school and she shares these successfully with staff, parents, pupils and governors.

She provides robust and effective leadership. She is supported well by all members of staff in ensuring that all aspects of school life have a positive influence on pupils' standards and wellbeing. They work effectively as a team. The school is a well-organised community and there are clear structures and policies in place that are implemented consistently and effectively.

Staff meetings are held regularly and pay due attention to improving pupils' attainment and ensure that staff are aware of their roles in achieving the school's priorities. All members of staff have job descriptions that link well to their individual responsibilities.

Members of the governing body provide appropriate support to the life and work of the school. They understand the school's performance data appropriately and know how it compares with the performance data of similar schools. They are beginning to hold the school to account about its performance more effectively, but this practice has not been embedded fully to date.

The school responds positively to a number of local and national priorities.

The expectations of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework have been established successfully and the recommendations of the Language Charter receive excellent attention in the life and work of the school.

Improving quality: Good

Leaders have clear procedures for monitoring the school's performance. Data analysis is an integral part of the process and a wide range of evidence is collected effectively, including classroom observations, scrutinising pupils' work, and talking to learners. These procedures have helped leaders and staff to produce a useful self-evaluation report that identifies clearly the strengths and areas that need to be developed.

The views of staff, parents and pupils support the evaluation process appropriately. Good attention is paid to the pupil's voice through circle time sessions, the school council, the 'bwrw bol' box and questionnaires. Parents' comments and views are considered seriously through regular questionnaires.

The school development plan focuses well on priorities that are likely to have the greatest effect on raising pupils' standards. A good example of this is the attention that is paid to improving mental arithmetic across the school and higher reading skills in key stage 2. The plan refers effectively to the steps to be taken, with measurable targets, sensible timing, necessary funding and the individuals who have the responsibility for fulfilling them.

Partnership working: Good

The school works successfully with a range of partners that have a positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing and extend learning experiences effectively.

The school has a strong relationship with parents and informs them well of the school's procedures, for example through using text messages and social networks. The school has arranged useful workshops for non-Welsh speaking parents, so that they are able to support pupils at home. The parents appreciated this very much.

The open and welcoming ethos succeeds in developing strong partnerships with the community, for example by visiting the local chapel and church for various seasonal activities. The school makes regular use of the support of individuals from the community to contribute to pupils' experiences and support their activities, for example helping in the gardening club and organising visits to the local lifeboat station.

Valuable arrangements with a number of local nursery groups ensure that pupils settle in quickly at the school. The school co-operates appropriately with the local secondary school and there are effective arrangements to ensure pupils' wellbeing when they transfer.

There are beneficial links with the cluster of local primary schools on a range of initiatives, including standardising and moderating pupils' assessments. This ensures the validity of levels at the end of key stage 2.

Resource management: Good

The school has an appropriate number of teachers and support staff who have suitable qualifications to teach the curriculum. Good use is made of their expertise and the contribution of support staff is extremely effective in encouraging and contributing to the school's Welshness and responding to pupils' additional learning needs.

The school's performance management processes lead effectively to staff development in appropriate areas that are based on the school's priorities for improvement, along with the staff's specific priorities for improvement. The school operates effectively in professional learning networks and co-operates closely with other schools to share good practice, such as developing strategies to improve pupils' confidence.

The school responds fully to the statutory requirements for teachers' workload and teachers use their non-contact time appropriately for planning, preparation and assessment.

There is a good range of resources at the school and they are managed well in order to ensure full access for pupils to all aspects of the curriculum. This is very prominent in the use that is made of the outdoor area, the hall and the community sports field.

Expenditure is managed carefully by the headteacher and the governing body in order to achieve the school's priorities. Effective use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals has led to raising standards of language.

Considering the good outcomes, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1: Commentary on performance data

There are many very small cohorts in many of the years of performance data for this school. In such a case, we do not include a performance data table.

6613010 - YSGOL FOEL GRON

Number of pupils on roll	30
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	23.1
FSM band	3 (16%<FSM<=24%)

Key stage 2

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of pupils in Year 6 cohort	6	*	6	*
Achieving the core subject indicator (CSI) (%)	83.3	*	83.3	*
Benchmark quartile	2	*	3	*
English				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	*	6	*
Achieving level 4+ (%)	83.3	*	83.3	*
Benchmark quartile	3	*	3	*
Achieving level 5+ (%)	16.7	*	33.3	*
Benchmark quartile	4	*	2	*
Welsh first language				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	*	6	*
Achieving level 4+ (%)	83.3	*	83.3	*
Benchmark quartile	2	*	3	*
Achieving level 5+ (%)	16.7	*	33.3	*
Benchmark quartile	3	*	2	*
Mathematics				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	*	6	*
Achieving level 4+ (%)	83.3	*	100.0	*
Benchmark quartile	3	*	1	*
Achieving level 5+ (%)	50.0	*	16.7	*
Benchmark quartile	1	*	4	*
Science				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	*	6	*
Achieving level 4+ (%)	83.3	*	100.0	*
Benchmark quartile	3	*	1	*
Achieving level 5+ (%)	16.7	*	16.7	*
Benchmark quartile	4	*	4	*

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.

<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/index.html?lang=eng>

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark – this is a total of all responses to date since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	
I feel safe in my school.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ysgol.
		98%	2%	
The school deals well with any bullying.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae'r ysgol yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
		92%	8%	
I know who to talk to if I am worried or upset.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod pwy i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw I'n poeni neu'n gofidio.
		97%	3%	
The school teaches me how to keep healthy	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae'r ysgol yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
		97%	3%	
There are lots of chances at school for me to get regular exercise.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae llawer o gyfleoedd yn yr ysgol i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		96%	4%	
I am doing well at school	13	13 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		96%	4%	
The teachers and other adults in the school help me to learn and make progress.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae'r athrawon a'r oedolion eraill yn yr ysgol yn fy helpu i ddsygu a gwneud cynnydd.
		99%	1%	
I know what to do and who to ask if I find my work hard.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod beth I'w wneud a gyda phwy i siarad os ydw I'n gweld fy ngwaith yn anodd.
		98%	2%	
My homework helps me to understand and improve my work in school.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae fy ngwaith cartref yn helpu i mi ddeall a gwella fy ngwaith yn yr ysgol.
		91%	9%	
I have enough books, equipment, and computers to do my work.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
		95%	5%	
Other children behave well and I can get my work done.	13	13 100%	0 0%	Mae plant eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
		77%	23%	
Nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time	13	11 85%	2 15%	Mae bron pob un o'r plant yn ymddwyn yn dda amser chwarae ac amser cinio.
		84%	16%	

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fewer than 10 responses were received. No data is shown.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mervyn Jones	Reporting Inspector
Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
Meleri Cray	Lay Inspector
Brian Davies	Peer Inspector
Judith Owen	Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.