



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

A report on

**Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch
Lawrenny Avenue
Leckwith
Cardiff
CF11 8BR**

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by

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

About Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch

Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch is situated in the Leckwith area of Cardiff. It provides education for pupils from a wide and varied area, which includes Grangetown, Riverside and parts of Canton, Butetown, Pontcanna and Victoria Park. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 467 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 49 part-time nursery age pupils. Pupils are divided into 18 single-age classes.

About 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage of 19%. Around 40% of pupils speak Welsh at home, and around 20% are from ethnic minority backgrounds. No pupils receive support for English as an additional language. The school has identified 20% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is slightly lower than the national percentage of 21%. Very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2016, and the deputy in April 2015. The school was last inspected in May 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

The staff create a happy, caring and inclusive ethos at the school, where everyone is respected and appreciated. The school places obvious value on pupils' varied backgrounds and cultures. The quality of teaching is good, on the whole, and nurtures a supportive and industrious learning environment. Pupils behave very well and are keen to learn.

Teachers plan practical, stimulating and rich learning experiences that provide for pupils' needs effectively. As a result, most pupils make sound progress, achieve well and use their skills to a high standard by the end of key stage 2.

The school has benefitted from robust leadership that ensures a clear strategic direction for the school's work. Leaders are extremely effective in setting and promoting a vision that focuses on fostering working relationships and aiming for excellence. Leaders receive strong support from staff, who all believe in the school's vision and work towards achieving it.

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 Improve pupils' oral Welsh skills
- R2 Provide regular opportunities to challenge more able pupils effectively
- R3 Ensure more opportunities for pupils to make choices in relation to their learning and to work more independently

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, most pupils' basic skills correspond with what is expected for their age, except in Welsh, where the language is new to a majority of pupils. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress in their learning and achieve well.

Most pupils listen well to adults and other pupils. Pupils' oral skills develop quickly in the foundation phase, for example as pupils in the reception class discuss a story about penguins. By Year 2, they talk confidently in Welsh about their work and experiences, for example when discussing their trip to Cardiff castle. Many pupils in key stage 2 communicate clearly in English and Welsh. At the top of the school, most discuss their work intelligently and maturely, and use extensive vocabulary in English, for example when discussing how a picture can convey the feelings of well-known characters. However, although many communicate clearly in Welsh, a few pupils' oral skills have not developed as well as in English. A lack of vocabulary and awkward syntax hinder a few pupils' confidence to communicate confidently when discussing their work.

Many pupils enjoy reading and make good progress each year. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds correctly and, by the end of the phase, most read correctly and build unfamiliar words successfully. More able pupils read with expression and discuss the content of their books and characters confidently. Most pupils in key stage 2 make sound progress in their reading in Welsh and English. They use their skills capably to gather information from different texts, including the internet, for example when learning about hurricanes. By Year 6, many skim for information skilfully, for example when learning about contemporary authors.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their early writing skills successfully. Many develop sound writing skills by the end of the phase. They write independently, understand different writing styles well and extend their ideas effectively, for example when writing an imaginary story in the form of the legend of Cantre'r Gwaelod. Most pupils in key stage 2 build on their writing skills successfully in both languages, and paragraph and punctuate correctly. However, at times, pupils' presentation of work and handwriting are not always neat. By Year 6, many write at length and show a sound awareness of the features of a wide range of writing forms, for example when writing a letter to say thank you for their trip to the museum to learn about life during the Tudor period, or when writing an argument for or against keeping animals in a zoo.

Most pupils have sound numeracy skills. In the foundation phase, most make good progress in their mathematical development. By Year 2, they handle money correctly and develop a good understanding of measurement, time and data. Most solve numeracy problems successfully across the areas of learning, for example when collecting information to produce a simple bar graph to show where pupils in the class live. In key stage 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of number strategies and, by Year 6, they use a wide range of mental maths methods confidently. They apply them successfully in a wide variety of activities across the

curriculum, for example when presenting the results of an investigation into how far a paper aeroplane flies. They collect, analyse and present information effectively in different forms, for example when comparing the number of Welsh speakers in the Vale of Glamorgan over time.

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, for example when writing a letter to Barti Ddu or creating a road safety poster. They use a simple database confidently to record the favourite food of members of the class. Most pupils in key stage 2 build well on this firm foundation. They create multimedia presentations successfully in order to present their work, for example on different attractions in Cardiff. They use the internet successfully to search for information and use a database intelligently, for example when comparing the price of school meals and snacks in local supermarkets.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils enjoy school, feel safe there and are valued. They are polite towards each other, staff and visitors, and show pride in their school, community and language. Nearly all are very caring towards each other and treat others with respect in lessons, the dining hall and on the school playground. Positive interaction and strong levels of co-operation between pupils of all ages, while working and playing, are strong features of the school. A good example of this is the mature way in which older pupils, who are members of the 'Cryw Clên', care for others during break times and lunchtime. Nearly all pupils move quietly and calmly around the school. Standards of behaviour are consistently high.

Most pupils' attitudes towards their learning are sound. They show motivation in their work and apply themselves diligently to their tasks. This contributes successfully to the ethos of effective learning within the school and has a positive effect on standards. Pupils support each other effectively by discussing, evaluating and offering constructive ideas. As a result, many develop to become ambitious, confident learners. However, at times, pupils do not work independently enough or make decisions about what they learn regularly enough.

Across the school, many pupils shoulder responsibilities, such as digital leaders and members of the school council and eco council, willingly. Members understand that they represent the views of other pupils within the school community and give other pupils feedback on their discussions and decisions regularly. They take part enthusiastically in a variety of events, such as monitoring the use of electricity and water, and recycling and collecting rubbish. They contribute extensively when raising money for charities and contribute towards local food banks. This has a positive effect on their understanding of the needs of others, in addition to developing a sense of pride in their community. These experiences prepare them well to become good citizens.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and exercising regularly. Many improve their fitness by taking part in a wide range of extra-curricular sports activities. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of staying safe on the internet.

Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly. The gap between the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and their peers has narrowed consistently over a period of four years.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of teaching across the school is good and derives from a successful working relationship between pupils, teachers and assistants. This leads to a supportive and industrious learning environment.

Nearly all members of staff are sound language models and encourage pupils to use the Welsh language during formal and informal activities. As a result, many older pupils have sound translanguaging skills and develop as competent and confident bilingual learners. Teachers ensure that pupils learn about Welsh culture and heritage, for example through visits to Cardiff Castle and St Fagan's Museum, and also by studying how Cardiff has developed over a period of time. This promotes pupils' awareness of their habitat and the area's multicultural background successfully.

Teachers across the school plan practical, stimulating and rich learning experiences, which ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils of different abilities effectively, on the whole. The school gives good consideration to the principles of the foundation phase, and ensures appropriate opportunities for all pupils to undertake active learning. Staff make effective use of the school's resources, including the outdoor areas, in order to develop pupils' skills successfully. Across the school, planning is systematic and helps teachers to plan interesting tasks that build well on pupils' previous learning. Teachers plan learning experiences carefully to extend pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. As a result, most pupils transfer and apply these skills confidently, for example as Year 5 pupils plan a day out for the teacher's family. Overall, there is a good balance between experiences that are led by adults and opportunities for pupils to work independently. However, at times in some classes, adults have a tendency to over-direct activities, and this limits opportunities for pupils to work independently and make choices about their learning.

Most teachers make effective use of a variety of teaching methods, which ensure that pupils apply themselves fully to their work. They have a sound understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and they provide tasks and challenges that engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm. They link their lessons effectively with previous learning, explain new concepts clearly and ensure that sessions have a good pace. In the few classes where teaching is at its best, teachers have very high expectations, and use open-ended questions very successfully in order to encourage pupils to think independently. In the very few examples where teaching is less effective, teachers do not always challenge pupils effectively enough. As a result, a few more able pupils do not develop to the best of their ability.

Teachers provide pupils with sound oral and written feedback in order for them to make improvements and develop their work further. Staff intervene sensitively to support pupils at appropriate times during the lesson, for example to encourage them to check their progress against lesson objectives and success criteria. As a result, by the end of key stage 2, most pupils understand how well they are doing and know how to improve their work.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Staff create a happy, caring and inclusive ethos within the school, in which everyone is respected and valued. The learning environment encourages pupils to take pride in their work and contribute effectively to school life. The school places obvious value on pupils' varied backgrounds and cultures. As a result, everyone values the way in which the various cultures enrich their lives. By inviting visitors from the local community, making artwork and celebrating multicultural festivals, the school provides valuable experiences for pupils, which extend their understanding of Cardiff and the wider world successfully. The school welcomes local religious leaders and holds services for pupils and their families, for example to celebrate the Chinese New Year. As a result, respecting multiculturalism, promoting aspects of diversity, anti-racism, and developing fairness and equal opportunities are a natural part of the school's work.

Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is effective. Visitors are used extensively to expand pupils' cultural experiences, for example artists, composers and poets. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to perform, take part in concerts and compete in eisteddfodau. This contributes successfully to increasing many pupils' self-confidence, in addition to their awareness of Welsh heritage. The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to join leadership groups that have a positive effect on aspects of the school's life and work. For example, the Welsh language officers, 'Dreigiau Doeth' (Wise Dragons), promote use of the Welsh language enthusiastically in the school's daily life as part of the work on the Welsh language charter. As a result, most pupils show pride towards the language and use it to socialise during playtime and in their lessons.

The school has established productive relationships with parents. It has recently strengthened the quality of communication by using a social media site in order to provide regular information to parents about what their children do at school. The school conducts useful information evenings on the learning methods that are used, for example an evening to promote pupils' understanding of the restorative approaches the school operates to promote their children's life and co-operation skills. Parents value this development and, as a result, they are more aware of what they can do at home to support learning.

The school has thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress. Teachers use this information skilfully in order to identify pupils who need additional support. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is effective. Procedures are thorough, and enable staff to identify pupils' needs at an early stage and provide purposeful support. Individual education plans are detailed, include clear targets and are implemented effectively by teachers and assistants, which ensures that nearly all pupils make sound progress against their targets. Parents receive good information about their children's progress and are included fully in the process of creating and evaluating plans.

The school has purposeful strategies to support pupils' emotional and social needs. The school works well with a number of external services and agencies, for example the local authority's wellbeing hub. These procedures have a positive effect on the standards, attainment and wellbeing of specific pupils. This contributes successfully to the caring and inclusive ethos that exists within the school. This is highlighted clearly in the way in which pupils treat each other.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily among pupils. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about eating healthily and ensure beneficial opportunities for them to take part in physical exercise sessions. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular experiences in order to promote pupils' fitness effectively. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide robust leadership and a strategic direction for the school's work. They are extremely effective in setting and promoting the school's vision, which focuses on respect, improving wellbeing and fostering working relationships within one large family, and aiming for excellence by improving pupils' standards. The strategic leadership team leads by example and models behaviours and expectations effectively. They have high expectations of everyone and themselves. They lead different departments within the school robustly, which fosters effective teamwork. Leaders receive strong support from staff, who all believe in the school's vision and work enthusiastically towards achieving it.

The school's self-evaluation processes are effective and are based soundly on broad evidence. Leaders have thorough knowledge of standards of learning and teaching, and they evaluate the school's performance in detail. They analyse data rigorously, and observe lessons and review pupils' work regularly. All members of staff have a beneficial role in these activities. For example, teachers work effectively within learning triads, which provide an opportunity for them to observe lessons and look at pupils' work together in order to evaluate their progress. This ensures accountability among staff for the quality of the school's provision. Leaders listen carefully to the views of parents and pupils. An example of this is the way in which the school has improved the quality of communication at the request of parents.

The school uses information from self-evaluation activities effectively to identify a manageable number of appropriate priorities that will have the greatest effect on pupils' standards. Leaders work closely with governors and staff to realise these plans and monitor progress in line with priorities for improvement. This ensures that planning for improvement is effective and leads to better outcomes for pupils. A good example of this is the recent improvement in pupils' Welsh writing skills. Leaders ensure valuable opportunities for staff professional development. These link directly with the school's priorities and individual teachers' needs. Specific training, and close co-operation with nearby schools, for example in developing 'Restorative Approaches', have had a positive effect on pupils' social skills. This is highlighted clearly in the way in which pupils treat each other.

The governing body is effective and fulfils its functions well. Leaders keep governors well informed about the school's performance through detailed updates, regular presentations from staff and pupils, and taking part in learning walks. This enables governors to hold the school to account for standards effectively. A good example of this was challenging standards of science. As a result, teachers have enriched provision by ensuring more opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills. This has led to improving pupils' levels. The headteacher and governors manage the budget and monitor the effect of expenditure thoroughly. They anticipate financial challenges and plan skilfully in order to avoid potential risks in the future.

The school makes good use of the pupil development grant, for example to improve the attendance levels of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.

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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