



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

A report on

**Ysgol Gymuned Y Fali
Valley
Anglesey
LL65 3EU**

Date of inspection: October 2017

by

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

About Ysgol Gymuned y Fali

Ysgol Gymuned y Fali is situated on the outskirts of the village, approximately two miles from Holyhead in Anglesey. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 94 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 13 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.

Over the last three years, approximately 14% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is slightly lower than the national percentage. Many pupils speak Welsh at home. The school has identified 31% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is higher than the national percentage of 21%, but very few have a statement of special educational needs. Very few pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in May 2011 and the school was last inspected in May 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

A caring and inclusive ethos can be seen in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils are polite and very caring towards each other. They treat their peers, staff and visitors with respect. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their own learning. This contributes successfully to the ethos of effective learning within the school.

Nearly all pupils' information and communication technology skills are a strength across the school. They are independent learners who apply and use their skills to a very high standard by the end of key stage 2.

Teachers provide a wide range of rich and stimulating learning experiences successfully, which develop individuals to be confident and creative learners. The headteacher and management team provide clear strategic leadership for the school's work. They have a robust vision that is based on ensuring a range of stimulating learning experiences for pupils in a happy and supportive environment.

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 Raise standards of writing in Welsh
- R2 Ensure more opportunities for pupils to play an active part in the school's strategy and decisions
- R3 Make more effective use of the pupil progress-tracking system
- R4 Ensure that the school addresses the safeguarding issues in relation to the site

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 have basic skills that are appropriate for their age. During their time at the school, most make sound progress from their starting points. They build on previous learning effectively and apply their thinking and problem-solving skills regularly across the areas of learning.

During their time at the school, most pupils attain a good standard of bilingualism and change freely from one language to the other. By Year 6, most pupils' translanguaging skills are of a high standard.

In the foundation phase, many pupils have good Welsh language skills. They listen attentively and discuss their work confidently by using suitable syntax and vocabulary that is appropriate for their age and ability. Most pupils enjoy reading and make sound progress in their skills. A few more able pupils discuss the content of stories in detail and refer to specific events in the text. By the end of Year 2, many pupils write sensibly and independently. They use adjectives and similes naturally in their work, for example when writing a portrayal of a pirate.

Many pupils in key stage 2 communicate clearly in both languages. At the top of the school, most pupils discuss their work intelligently with maturity and by using extensive English vocabulary. Notable examples of this are their lively presentations to attract visitors on holiday to Egypt as part of the class' theme work. However, a very few pupils' oral Welsh skills have not developed as well. Lack of vocabulary and awkward syntax impede a very few pupils' confidence to communicate confidently in informal situations. Many read appropriately in both languages and show a good awareness of audience. They gather relevant information from different texts successfully, for example when tracing the life and work of the Tudors. Across key stage 2, many write confidently in an increasing range of forms in both languages. A majority of pupils' written English work at the top of the school is robustly good. They use their skills successfully across the range of curricular subjects. An example of this is their evaluation of scientific and design and technology work based on the theme of bridges. However, a few pupils' standards of writing have not been developed robustly enough in Welsh.

Most pupils' numeracy skills are sound across the school. In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their mathematical development. They handle money correctly and develop a good understanding of measurement, time and data. Most pupils gather information from a range of sources effectively and present it in the form of various graphs. In key stage 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of number strategies and, by Year 6, they apply their numeracy skills to a high standard in a wide variety of activities across the curriculum, for example while devising an enterprise activity. In this activity, many apply their numeracy skills to a very high standard as they calculate the cost and profit made from their activity confidently.

Nearly all pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are a strength across the school. They are independent learners who apply and use their

skills to a very high standard by the end of key stage 2. In the foundation phase, many pupils develop their independent skills, for example when logging in and using a range of programs that enrich learning effectively. In key stage 2, nearly all pupils make mature choices about which equipment to use to complete specific tasks. At the top of the school, nearly all pupils apply their ICT skills skilfully across the curriculum. They make independent use of various apps and create multimedia presentations of a very high standard. A notable example of this is the multimedia work to compose and record a song in partnership with a school in Japan.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of drinking water, eating healthily and taking part in physical activities. This is reinforced effectively through an appropriate range of physical activities, for example swimming, orienteering and competing in friendly games with schools in the catchment area. This contributes positively towards developing their fitness and social skills.

Nearly all pupils enjoy school and feel safe there. Most pupils are well-behaved. They are polite towards each other, staff and visitors. Most pupils are very caring towards each other and treat others with respect in lessons, in the dining hall and on the school playground. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of staying safe on the internet, and this is reinforced very successfully in multimedia presentations.

Pupils across the school are confident when expressing an opinion about what they learn. The school council is enthusiastic and understands that it represents the views of other pupils within the school community. However, its role in the school's work and decisions is limited.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their own learning. They show motivation in their work and apply themselves diligently to their tasks. This contributes successfully towards the ethos of effective learning within the school, and has a positive effect on many pupils' standards. Pupils support each other extremely effectively by discussing, evaluating and offering constructive comments. As a result, most develop to become skilful, confident and independent learners from an early age. At the top of the school, most pupils have a sound understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work. They have a mature awareness of their attainment and the next steps in their learning. This is a notable aspect at the top of the school.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The standard of teaching across the school is good. Teachers make very effective use of a range of learning methods, which ensure that nearly all pupils apply themselves fully in their lessons. Teachers provide a wide range of rich learning experiences that engage pupils' interest successfully and develop them as confident and creative individuals. Teachers use open-ended questions successfully in order to encourage pupils to think independently. They set clear objectives and include pupils in the process of setting and agreeing on success criteria. As a result, many pupils play an increasing role in their learning.

Teachers provide very sound oral and written feedback to pupils in order for them to make improvements and develop their work further. In classes where teaching is of a very high standard, teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills independently in a wide range of real-life contexts across the curriculum, for example when solving problems relating to planning bridges in Years 5 and 6, and when considering the job requirements of a pirate in Years 1 and 2.

Teachers across the school plan practical, stimulating and very rich learning experiences. Teachers ensure that the curriculum caters to the needs of pupils of different abilities effectively. They plan activities for pupils of different abilities thoroughly and ensure an appropriate level of challenge. As a result, pupils' bilingualism skills are developing soundly.

The principles of the foundation phase are embedded in full. Teachers make effective and flexible use of the school's resources, including the outdoor areas, in order to develop pupils' skills successfully.

The literacy, numeracy and digital competence frameworks have been incorporated fully in the school's schemes of work. Teachers create detailed plans that ensure that skills are developed effectively across the curriculum. Provision for ICT is extremely effective across the school. Teachers have incorporated the expectations of the digital competence framework skilfully. However, the school does not promote regular use of the Welsh language in formal and informal situations in full. As a result, a few pupils' oral and written skills have not been developed to the best of their ability.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has purposeful strategies to support pupils' emotional and social needs. The school works well with a number of external services and agencies. These procedures are effective and have a positive effect on pupils' standards, attainment and wellbeing. This contributes successfully to the caring and inclusive ethos within the school.

The school has robust processes to identify pupils' needs. All pupils with additional learning needs have an appropriate learning plan, which are evaluated regularly. Plans are implemented effectively by teachers and assistants in lessons, which ensures that pupils make sound progress against their targets.

The school has appropriate systems for tracking pupils' progress, which measure their attainment against their targets effectively. Teachers use information from this process successfully in order to identify pupils who need additional support in literacy and numeracy. However, they do not always track the progress of specific groups of pupils incisively enough in order to ensure that intervention has the best effect. Teachers make suitable use of assessment outcomes across the core subjects and areas of learning in order to plan the next steps in weekly plans. This ensures that skills are developed soundly. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a great cause for concern; however, minor concerns regarding the site require urgent attention.

Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to influence elements of the school's work, for example to offer ideas at the beginning of themes across the school. However,

opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school's strategic decisions are less developed.

Respecting multiculturalism, promoting aspects of diversity, anti-racism and developing fairness and equal opportunities are a natural part of the school's work. There is a clear emphasis on promoting the school's agreed values, and this has a positive influence on pupils' behaviour.

Leadership and management: Good

The leadership of the headteacher and the management team provides clear strategic leadership for the school's work. They have a robust vision that is based on ensuring a range of rich learning experiences for pupils in a happy and supportive environment. The management team and all of the school's staff realise this vision successfully by implementing these values continuously.

The governing body makes a key contribution to the school's development. Governors receive up-to-date information from the headteacher through comprehensive reports. This ensures that they have rigorous knowledge of the school's performance over time and prompt them to discuss pupils' progress and challenge the school about its performance. They scrutinise pupils' work, observe lessons and receive information about progress against the school's current priorities. However, the governing body has not developed its role as a critical friend in full, particularly in evaluating and ensuring improvement.

The school's self-evaluation processes are effective and are based firmly on broad evidence. Leaders have rigorous knowledge of the standards of learning and teaching, and they evaluate the school's performance in detail. By scrutinising plans, pupils' work and observing lessons, they form a fair and accurate judgement about the school's current standards and identify aspects that need to be developed further. An example of this is the way in which the school has enriched ICT provision across the school, which has had a positive effect on pupils' standards.

Performance management arrangements for staff are sound and link directly with the school's priorities and individual teachers' needs. Leaders ensure rich opportunities for staff to take part in, and lead, working groups and professional learning communities, both locally and further afield. This has a positive effect, for example, on most pupils' standards of mathematics. There is a close and valuable relationship with the schools in the catchment area, for example in standardising pupils' work. This ensures consistency in the school's assessments.

Leaders manage the school's budget effectively. Decisions on expenditure correspond clearly with the school's strategic priorities. Leaders make effective use of the staff's strengths in order to disseminate good practice and promote pupils' progress and wellbeing. The use of the pupil development grant is monitored well in order to ensure purposeful provision for pupils.

The school has a very good range of resources and they are used very effectively to promote pupils' learning experiences. The building is of a good standard, and the indoor and outdoor learning areas are used skilfully to enrich learning experiences.

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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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