



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

A report on

**Ysgol Bryn Tabor
Heol Maelor
Coedpoeth
Wrexham
LL11 3NB**

Date of inspection: June 2019

by

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

About Ysgol Bryn Tabor

Ysgol Gynradd Bryn Tabor is situated in the village of Coedpoeth, which is a few miles from the town of Wrexham in Wrexham local authority. There are 274 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 36 part-time nursery age pupils.

Over a three-year-period, slightly less than 12% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage of 19%. Around 5% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 20% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is similar to the national percentage of 21%.

The current headteacher was appointed to the post in 2007 and the school was last inspected in January 2013.

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 experienced headteacher provides strong, effective leadership of a very high and purposeful standard. He has high expectations and a determined vision for developing the school, which is shared robustly with all pupils, staff and governors in a very happy, supportive and homely environment.

During their time at the school, most pupils make sound progress and achieve well. Nearly all pupils enjoy the school's life and work, and feel safe within the caring, inclusive and supportive ethos. They show a very high level of care and respect towards each other and others. The child's voice is at the heart of the school's vision. This is an excellent feature.

Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well, take turns completely naturally and consider each other's feelings continuously. Nearly all pupils are extremely polite and very willing to talk to each other and adults, and explain their work maturely and intelligently.

There is a very effective working relationship between adults and pupils, which fosters a successful learning environment. The school's planning principles are thorough and focus on developing pupils' awareness of their heritage. Teachers who work together within the different learning units plan together very successfully.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all pupils use the Welsh language consistently as a means of communicating within the classrooms and around the school
- R2 Ensure that provision to develop pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills in key stage 2 builds systematically on their existing skills
- R3 Improve the quality of handwriting and presentation of work of pupils in key stage 2

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the pupil's voice, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Only a few pupils are able to speak Welsh on entry to the school. However, during their time at the school, most acquire effective Welsh communication skills and make good progress. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve soundly against their personal targets.

Many pupils develop their oracy skills effectively. They speak Welsh confidently and explain their work sensibly, and give valid reasons for choosing specific materials when building a pirate ship in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils in key stage 2 have mature oracy skills in both languages. For example, they discuss the reasons for and against introducing homework intelligently and describe relics from the legend of Cantre'r Gwaelod in detail. Although most are able to converse fluently in Welsh when sharing their ideas in a number of contexts, many pupils have a tendency to use English when talking inside and outside lessons. Nearly all pupils listen attentively to adults and their peers, which contributes well to their understanding of new concepts. For example, many in the foundation phase listen sensibly to instructions on how to experiment with objects that sink or float in water. Most pupils in key stage 2 show respect when listening to the views of others and speak maturely with each other. For example, they express an opinion confidently about different musical compositions.

Many pupils develop early reading skills soundly at the bottom of the foundation phase, and build unfamiliar words correctly by using useful phonic strategies. As they move through the phase, many read various texts with increasing intelligence in Welsh. They discuss the content of their books sensibly, such as explaining the events in the story of Goldilocks. Many pupils in key stage 2 read meaningfully and pronounce clearly in both languages. They differentiate well between fictional and factual books and identify the characters' qualities correctly. As a result, they practise their higher order reading skills to extend their knowledge and understanding from different sources effectively. A good example of this is the research that they completed into disasters around the world, including volcanoes and the sinking of the Titanic, before presenting it confidently to their peers.

By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils make good progress in their writing skills. When developing their early writing skills, most pupils in the reception class form letters correctly and apply their skills confidently in the role-play areas. By Year 2, many use imperative verbs correctly when describing the rules of a football match and use adjectives effectively when describing a character from the story of the Gruffalo imaginatively. In key stage 2, many write coherently in both languages and present ideas and information of their choosing effectively. For example, many use skilful similes to enrich their language when analysing a poem about the Welsh soldier, Owain Lawgoch. Pupils apply their literacy skills soundly in various areas. For example, they create a police report in English about a break-in at the home of the three bears. By the end of key stage 2, most use rich adjectives and adverbs when writing a newspaper article about the 'goal of the day'. However, the handwriting and presentation of work of around half of the pupils in key stage 2 are untidy.

Across the school, most pupils make sound progress in developing their numeracy skills. In the foundation phase, they develop confidence when counting and identify numbers from an early age. By Year 2, they handle money correctly and develop a sound understanding of measurement and time. They use data to create simple graphs and interpret them confidently, for example when comparing the height of different dinosaurs. Most pupils build successfully on their previous learning, both inside and outside the classroom. Most pupils in key stage 2 have a sound and increasingly accurate understanding of how to use data, and they present it confidently in various forms. By the end of the stage, most pupils apply their skills successfully in various areas across the curriculum, particularly when completing scientific projects. A good example of this is how they research the effect of different wing surfaces on the time it takes a helicopter to fall from a specific height.

Most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills successfully for different purposes. In the foundation phase, for example, nearly all pupils use a range of programs confidently, which enrich their learning very effectively. They control a programmable toy to follow a particular route on a 'Treasure Island' as part of their theme work, and their coding skills are developing excellently. By the end of key stage 2, they apply their ICT skills to a good standard across the curriculum, for example when presenting information about disasters that they have researched, such as the story of the Titanic. However, their database skills and work on spreadsheets have not been developed to the same extent. Pupils across the school have a sound understanding of the importance of e-safety.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Nearly all pupils are happy and safe at the school. They feel that the headteacher and staff take exceptionally good care of them and that they are given valuable opportunities to undertake a wide range of rich and interesting activities. They take pride in the strong voice that they are given in what they learn. They have a direct influence on the titles and content of themes, in addition to choosing the level of challenge in their daily tasks. For example, pupils in the foundation phase present ideas about areas in the classroom to correspond with the theme of the vet. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have chosen 'Castles' as a theme and tasks such as planning a menu or a party invitation linked to the legend of 'Cantre'r Gwaelod'. As a result, nearly all pupils apply themselves very well to tasks. Acting on the pupil's voice is one of the school's main virtues.

Nearly all pupils know whom to approach when they need advice or support, and they feel comfortable doing so. Nearly all behave extremely well, take turns completely naturally and consider each other's feelings continuously. Nearly all pupils are extremely polite and very willing to talk to each other and adults, and explain their work maturely and intelligently.

Most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to presentations and instructions at the beginning of sessions and move freely between their tasks. Nearly all pupils are curious and work extremely conscientiously on tasks, and choose a level of challenge that is appropriate for them very maturely. They concentrate for extended periods and persevere excellently to complete their tasks within specific periods. When facing new challenges, they use any relevant knowledge they have to support them in different contexts, including working with

'partneriaid parablu' (talk partners) and researching independently and maturely on the internet. They are confident learners who are happy to attempt tasks without the fear of doing things incorrectly. Most are aware of their targets for improvement and consider them when completing their daily tasks. For example, pupils in key stage 2 explain specific areas for development in their creative writing skills.

Most pupils understand how to make healthy choices in relation to eating and drinking, their physical activity and emotional wellbeing, including how to keep themselves safe online. They appreciate the extensive opportunities they are given to take part in a range of physical activities during the day, in addition to extra-curricular clubs, such as the football club, which are open to all. This has been reinforced successfully as pupils choose the fitness equipment that is used outside. The outdoor areas and various resources are used effectively, which has a very positive effect on pupils' health and wellbeing. Pupils take pride in the rich opportunities they are given to lead, express an opinion and represent their peers on different councils and committees. These include the school council, eco council, 'dewiniaid digidol' (digital wizards) and 'dreigiau doeth' (wise dragons). The various councillors are very proud that leaders act positively on their ideas to improve provision, which include expanding the supply of play resources that are available to pupils on the playground during break time. The digital wizards play a key part in raising their peers' awareness of the importance of online safety and the different apps that are available to support their class work. The wizards have also held training for parents on digital developments at the school. Members of this group have also raised money to purchase a variety of new technological equipment of their choice by selling hot chocolate at the school. Recently, the 'dreigiau doeth' have started to support the Welsh language charter to raise their peers' awareness of the advantages of speaking Welsh regularly.

Pupils' leadership skills and ability to work independently on enterprise projects are developing highly effectively. It is now an annual tradition for the school's older pupils to organise and hold a casino night to raise money to purchase resources of their choice for the school. They are responsible for collecting the prizes and for all of the arrangements. Significant amounts of money have been raised over the last two years, which have been used to purchase electronic tablets and electric keyboards.

Most pupils are developing very effectively as ethical citizens. They are aware of fairness, equality and tolerance and raise significant amounts of money for various charities every year.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

There is a very effective working relationship between all adults and pupils at the school. It is based on respect and trust, which fosters a successful learning environment. Teachers and assistants manage pupils' behaviour very effectively and treat all pupils fairly and with respect. Assistants also support pupils who need educational and behavioural support highly effectively across the school. Displays throughout the school are very stimulating and combine celebrating pupils' work and support to help them with their learning independently. A good example of this is the walls that promote the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales in Year 6 and

the principles of a growth mindset for individual pupils in all classes. Most adults are robust language models.

Assessment for learning strategies have been embedded well in the school. Most teachers use a wide variety of interesting teaching methods in order to hold pupils' interest and encourage them to develop further and make consistent progress. They also vary their questioning methods skilfully to discover what pupils understand and progress their learning successfully. All teachers share aims and success criteria clearly with pupils, which ensures that they understand what they need to do in order to succeed. Most teachers give pupils constructive and purposeful feedback, which also helps them to succeed in various tasks.

The school's planning principles are effective. Teachers who work together within the different learning units plan together very successfully. Plans are based on pupils' ideas and include detailed references to the literacy and numeracy framework, the skills to be developed and rich tasks. They include a clear reference to the specific needs of groups of pupils, in addition to various levels of challenge for them to choose from within tasks. Curricular plans are produced with a particular emphasis on the culture of the local area. Good examples include the 'Castles' theme, which is an opportunity for pupils to study the geography of north Wales and the history of the Tudor era in the school's locality. Activities are exciting and encompass all areas of learning. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to choose in which of the role-play areas they would like to work, and present them with specific challenges. This promotes pupils' positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning and has a positive effect on nearly all pupils' behaviour. These rich experiences encourage pupils to become ambitious, enterprising and creative individuals. The school has started to plan to introduce the requirements of the digital competence framework. They plan a range of interesting ICT activities for pupils within their plans, and provide them with opportunities to use their skills in various contexts. These have been planned effectively in the foundation phase, but are not structured enough in key stage 2 to ensure the continuity and progression necessary in all aspects of this area.

The principles of the foundation phase have been embedded very successfully at the school. The pupil's voice, in addition to opportunities for them to choose their activities, is a great strength across the school. Pupils in all classes use the outdoor areas very effectively, where teachers provide valuable experiences for them such as the forest school and other creative challenges regularly. They provide a very wide range of stimulating and rich activities for pupils. These enrich their experiences in the context of the local area, interesting visits to local castles, museums and train journeys. 'Scenario' initiatives in all classes have a positive effect on nearly all pupils' achievement. A good example of this includes an incisive prompt, whereby an important person is missing and in danger at the top of Snowdon, and pupils are given an excellent opportunity to make decisions and use their thinking, communication and problem-solving skills in a realistic scenario.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school is an extremely familial, friendly and caring community that promotes the importance of excellent behaviour, courtesy and commitment very successfully. It provides effectively to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development by

organising rich opportunities for them to reflect in collective worship sessions and circle time, and placing a great emphasis on traditions and other interesting issues that are associated with the local area. It promotes attitudes, values and the principles of life very robustly by encouraging pupils to work together as one community and be responsible citizens who are willing to help others. For example, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to consider, choose and raise money for charities. As a result, pupils improve their understanding of the other people's needs.

The numerous creative opportunities that pupils are given to visit centres in the local area, in addition to performing and competing in eisteddfodau, are a strong feature. This reinforces pupils' awareness of their Welsh heritage very successfully. This develops pupils' expressive and social skills effectively. The caring attention that staff give to respecting the pupil's voice makes an excellent contribution to the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and make important decisions. This is an excellent feature that promotes agreed values and personal perseverance through the school's strategies to promote wellbeing. This is highlighted clearly in the way in which pupils treat each other and contribute extensively to planning learning experiences, which includes choosing themes, presenting ideas for areas in the classrooms and outdoors activities, and suggesting options for educational visits. The school celebrates pupils' successes very effectively through colourful and attractive displays that are prominent around the school, and in weekly assemblies. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is thorough and very effective. The school identifies their needs at an early stage and provides them with valuable support very successfully. It works closely with a variety of external agencies in order to provide valuable support for pupils with additional learning needs. As a result, nearly all pupils with additional learning needs make strong progress over time.

The school has robust, clear and accessible procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. Teachers use the information that derives from these procedures intelligently to plan improvement steps for all pupils. As a result, pupils receive support of a very effective quality, which helps them to engage very well with their learning. All of this contributes particularly successfully towards creating the school's extremely caring and familial ethos.

There is a valuable and successful working relationship between the school and parents. The school informs parents regularly about activities and events. A number of events are held to ensure parents' involvement in their children's education, for example to familiarise themselves with wellbeing interventions. The school listens to parents' views and responds supportively to their ideas. This is supported successfully by the parent teacher association as they raise money to purchase resources, such as technological equipment, which enables them to develop this aspect.

The school has effective arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. The curriculum, physical education lessons and extra-curricular activities ensure that most pupils understand the advantages of regular exercise. This has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of issues that relate to their health and wellbeing.

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

Leadership and management: Excellent

The experienced headteacher provides strong, effective and purposeful leadership. He has high expectations and a determined vision for developing the school, which is shared robustly with all pupils, staff and governors in a very happy, supportive and homely environment. These derive from clear educational values and ambitious aspirations for all pupils. The headteacher works successfully with members of the senior management team, staff, governors, pupils and parents to implement this vision successfully.

The headteacher is a highly conscientious leader who is supported excellently by members of the senior management team, which includes the deputy headteacher, the leader of the foundation phase and the literacy and numeracy leader. This arrangement succeeds in developing them as confident leaders who implement improvements to raise all pupils' educational standards and wellbeing. Staff are dedicated, work together closely as a team and fulfil their responsibilities highly conscientiously and very effectively. They show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements by coming together to discuss regularly and plan jointly. Their meetings focus firmly on standards and priorities for improvement. This provides a clear focus for the work of all staff and contributes well towards ensuring continuous improvement. It also helps successfully to reduce teachers' workloads.

Leaders plan thoroughly to meet local and national priorities. Staff address recent developments in education enthusiastically, for example in preparing for the new curriculum for Wales and introducing the digital competence framework. Staff's commitment to listening to the pupil's voice and introducing strategies that promote independent learning contributes exceptionally towards ensuring that pupils show high levels of motivation and interest in their work. The focus on implementing the Welsh language charter promotes the Welsh language and Welshness, which develops pupils' pride in their identity and heritage.

An excellent feature of leadership is the wealth of opportunities that enable staff at all levels to develop professionally, which include valuable opportunities to observe good practice at the school and in other organisations. Performance management procedures promote staff's professional learning successfully and have a positive effect on standards. The school embraces school-to-school work and undertakes this effectively with a range of organisations. A beneficial example is the good quality achievements that derive from providing a stimulating prompt for pupils in their work on the Tudors. Members of staff also lead on areas of good practice throughout the region, for example by sharing good practice in aspects of ICT.

Members of the governing body are enthusiastic and very supportive of the school's work. The headteacher informs them rigorously about developments and pupils' progress. They have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They meet regularly and provide support to the school's leaders by agreeing on strategic decisions. By taking part in learning walks, many governors have begun to collect first-hand evidence of aspects of the school's work, for example evaluating the contribution of the child's voice to learning. This helps them to hold the school to account for its performance effectively.

Continuous self-evaluation arrangements are at the heart of the school's life and work. This strong culture, which focuses firmly on pupils' outcomes and the effect of provision, teaching and care, has been embedded very effectively. The school has a clear timetable for monitoring its activities, and uses a beneficial range of first-hand evidence with a particular focus on pupils' attainment. As a result, staff have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is a clear link between the findings of the self-evaluation process and the priorities in the school improvement plan, which focuses thoroughly on improving provision and raising standards. One of the strengths of the process is the arrangements for priorities to be monitored by all of the school's staff, which enables them to evaluate the school's performance effectively.

The school has a wide range of high quality resources. The headteacher and governors use the school's budget effectively to enrich the curriculum, improve provision and raise pupils' standards in all areas. They link expenditure imaginatively with the priorities in the improvement plan and monitor funding carefully to ensure its best possible use. They use the pupil development grant prudently to raise the standards of those who are eligible for free school meals. This work has a robust effect on the quality of provision, standards of wellbeing and pupils' attitudes towards their work. The school is proactive in ensuring income from additional grants, sometimes on behalf of other local schools, which succeed in providing additional interventions for small groups of pupils by playing a leading role in this work.

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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