



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Carreg Emlyn  
Clocaenog  
Ruthin  
LL15 2AY**

**Date of inspection: June 2019**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Carreg Emlyn

Ysgol Carreg Emlyn is situated in the village of Clocaenog, in Denbighshire local authority. There are 79 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including six part-time pupils in the nursery class. The school has four mixed-age classes. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work.

Over a three-year-period, around 3% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals, which is much lower than the national percentage of 18%. Around 69% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified 14% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is lower than the national percentage of 21%.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2014 and this is the school's first inspection. The school operated as one school on two sites, in Clocaenog and Cyffylliog, from September 2014. It moved into a newly-built building at the beginning of June 2019.

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

During their time at the school, most pupils develop effective communication and reading skills, and achieve well. When they are given purposeful opportunities to write at length, many pupils make sound progress across the curriculum, considering their starting points.

Many pupils acquire sound mathematical concepts and successful information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They also understand that keeping fit and eating and drinking healthily contribute extensively to their wellbeing.

Teachers and assistants care diligently for pupils in a sensitive and conscientious manner. As a result, pupils feel safe and take pride in their school, and feel that the school is an important part of their community. They are caring towards each other and treat their peers and adults with great respect.

The headteacher's leadership is based on appropriate management procedures. She works closely with teachers and assistants, and has established suitable procedures in the new building in a very short period of time. Governors are supportive and leaders target areas for development satisfactorily through suitable self-evaluation procedures and development plans.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve leadership procedures, including the governors, to address the important areas for improvement
- R2 Ensure consistency in teaching, including the progress-tracking procedure and the use of assessment information to plan effectively
- R3 Challenge all pupils to improve their presentation, their extended writing skills and their numeracy across the curriculum

## **What happens next**

The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection. Estyn will review the school's progress.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many pupils' Welsh communication skills are in line with, or above, the standard that is expected for their age. During their time at the school, most gain sound Welsh communication skills and make good progress. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve effectively against their personal targets.

Most pupils achieve successfully in developing their speaking and listening skills. They speak Welsh confidently and understand that listening attentively makes an important contribution to their learning. As a result, most talk eloquently about their work, wait politely for their turn and appreciate the contributions of others. For example, in the foundation phase, most describe their efforts to build a gondola well, and the reason they are sending goods in shoeboxes to foreign countries. Most pupils' English oracy skills in key stage 2 are mature, particularly when they tell the story of Apollo 11 landing on the moon.

Most pupils develop sound reading skills and build unfamiliar words correctly by adopting useful phonic strategies. In the foundation phase, most read a range of texts clearly. They discuss the content of their books sensibly, such as recognising that 'ciao' is the word to greet and say goodbye in Italian. Most pupils in key stage 2 read meaningfully and pronounce correctly in both languages. They differentiate well between fictional and factual books and research conscientiously on the internet, such as comparing the life of a child during the Tudor period and today. As a result, they practise their higher order reading skills to find information from different sources successfully.

When they are given the most effective opportunities across the school, many write appropriately for different purposes in a range of contexts. In the foundation phase, many write interesting pieces, such as instructions for washing hands and a thank you letter following a visit to a local farm. In key stage 2, when pupils are given appropriate extended opportunities, many write successfully in both languages for a wide range of purposes. For example, they write poems on the effect of deforestation on the animals in our world, and trace the history of Owain Glyndŵr purposefully. However, pupils' extended writing and the presentation of their work do not reflect their abilities well enough. As a result, they do not achieve highly enough to correspond with their ability.

In the foundation phase, many pupils understand mathematical concepts well. They follow instructions to expand their knowledge effectively during lessons. For example, they extract information well from block graphs that reflect their favourite fruit. They also reverse their number operations confidently by dividing and multiplying pieces of pizza, and use scales intelligently to measure the volume of different bottles.

Many pupils in key stage 2 understand number concepts well and use them confidently. They use data with increasing accuracy and present it in various forms to complete mathematical tasks successfully. For example, they estimate the degree of angles when designing a bungalow and convert the units of Fahrenheit and

Celsius by using conversion graphs. They also experiment confidently with probability by tossing coins. However, only a minority of pupils apply their numeracy skills purposefully to solve problems independently across the curriculum. They are often too dependent on guidance from an adult to complete the task.

Most pupils in the foundation phase use ICT equipment successfully. They use educational programs well to animate a journey through space and voice the words of Grace Darling about her adventures at sea. Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 show sound ICT skills, apply them well and select the most suitable methods to present their work. For example, they create useful databases to input information about how far they can throw a ball. They interrogate and organise information confidently after collecting questionnaires to fill a zoo with unusual animals. Nearly all pupils use safe passwords purposefully to log in to learning websites to complete their work in the classroom and at home.

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

Nearly all pupils show pride in their school and feel safe within its inclusive and familial environment. As a result, they are very willing to discuss any concerns with staff and are confident that they listen to them.

Nearly all pupils' behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, is consistently good. Nearly all are extremely polite, confident and respond positively when meeting adults. They speak maturely and express an opinion clearly and skilfully when discussing the story of Moses and the Red Sea, and the effect of plastic on the environment. Nearly all pupils work sensibly individually, in pairs and in groups. Nearly all have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to teachers' instructions and concentrate well on their work during lessons. However, the desire of the majority of pupils to present their work in a polished manner is satisfactory. It does not reflect enough respect towards their daily output in the classroom.

Pupils contribute purposefully to the school's day-to-day life. Super ambassadors promote the principles of children's rights and ensure that pupils' views and ideas are given due attention and are valued. In addition, the 'criw clên' take care of their peers on the playground, which reinforces the familial ethos effectively.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and eating and drinking healthily. They take part in regular physical activities during their lessons and in extra-curricular activities. This promotes their understanding of the importance of taking care of their bodies successfully. They understand the dangers that can arise in their day-to-day lives and know what steps to take to protect themselves, if necessary. For example, nearly all pupils understand the importance of online safety, in line with their age, and outline the dangers that may arise as a result of irresponsible use of the internet.

Most pupils are tolerant and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of other pupils. Most are knowledgeable about countries that are developing economically and those that are disadvantaged due to war, famine or drought. Most also show a sound awareness of the life and work of people from other countries, such as Kenya and Uganda. As a result, most show effective empathy towards others and develop purposefully as global citizens.

Most pupils understand the importance of contributing to the lives of others. They raise money for local and national charities. For example, recently, they have raised funds to ensure clean, sanitised water in foreign, disadvantaged countries. As a result, pupils understand the importance of their contributions towards creating a caring society.

Nearly all pupils make a very beneficial contribution to school life, such as contributing their ideas towards choosing their school uniform and planning the outdoor areas. They are beginning to guide their own learning by choosing challenges that relate to the term's themes. However, their contributions towards guiding the curriculum and making choices about what they learn are only in their early stages.

Pupils take advantage of the good opportunities that the school provides for them to take responsibility. For example, the work of the 'criw y ddraig' (dragon crew) contributes effectively towards ensuring pupils' good standards of oracy. Nearly all pupils are conscientious and take their responsibilities seriously. As a result, they have a sound understanding of their leadership roles within the school.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement**

The polite relationship between adults and pupils encourages respect and courtesy and leads to a diligent environment in all classes. Presentations in most lessons are clear, and teachers share appropriate learning objectives with pupils. Teachers provide a good range of valuable learning experiences for pupils, which engage their interest successfully, for example by organising visits to the local farm and Liverpool museum. Pupils' learning experiences are supported further through a wide variety of activities, such as celebrating World Book Day, shows by a theatre company and a visit by a nurse from the local veterinary surgery. As a result, nearly all pupils apply themselves to their learning very enthusiastically.

The school's schemes of work are based on interesting themes, and pupils are given appropriate opportunities to contribute to their learning by discussing their ideas at the beginning of theme work. However, teachers' teaching plans do not always focus enough on ensuring that pupils develop their skills constructively. Teachers also do not insist on seeing improvements in the presentation of pupils' work, which is too low for their ability.

Provision provides opportunities for pupils to practice their oracy skills successfully. Nearly all members of staff model language of a high standard skilfully. They set high expectations and encourage pupils effectively to use correct syntax, mutations and enrich their vocabulary regularly. As a result, most pupils communicate naturally in Welsh in formal and informal situations. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' reading and mathematical skills, and most make sound progress. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their extended writing skills or their numeracy skills across all areas of the curriculum regularly enough. As a result, pupils' progress is not as good in these areas.

Most teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop as confident and ambitious learners. At times, teachers over-direct pupils' learning, which hinders

their ability to develop as independent learners. Support staff are deployed well across the school. They support the learning of individuals and specific groups of pupils highly successfully. As a result, most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress from their starting points.

Within a short period of time since moving into the new building, staff have succeeded in creating a colourful and stimulating environment for pupils. Very good use is made of the indoor and outdoor learning areas to enrich pupils' learning experiences highly successfully. For example, pupils develop their literacy skills in the role-play areas and improve their physical skills in the outdoor sports area, 'Cwrt Caenog'.

Most teachers use a variety of different teaching methods, which ensure that most pupils concentrate on their work and persevere well during lessons. Many teachers' skilful questioning expands pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. Teachers provide pupils with constructive feedback in order for them to understand how to improve their work. They use information from assessments to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. However, assessments are not always reliable enough. As a result, follow-up tasks are not always challenging enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they could.

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

The school is a welcoming and inclusive community. Staff know the pupils very well and provide them with robust support and assistance. There is an emphasis on ensuring all pupils' wellbeing within a familial and caring environment. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe, treat others with respect and courtesy, and behave well consistently.

The school's arrangements for tracking pupils' progress are efficient. Staff use this information to plan subsequent lessons for pupils' appropriately. However, teachers' assessments are not always reliable enough. As a result, provision does not always meet all pupils' requirements to challenge them to the best of their ability.

The school's provision for the few pupils with additional learning needs is effective. Individual education plans are detailed and include measureable improvement targets to develop pupils' reading and numeracy skills. Pupils and parents are given purposeful opportunities to contribute to evaluating progress and setting targets for improvement. Intervention programmes and support within the classes are sound and support specific pupils' learning successfully. As a result, nearly all make good progress from their starting points.

The school has a good relationship with parents. The school communicates effectively with them and operates an open-door policy successfully. As a result, parents are aware of the school's activities and events. They appreciate the opportunities that are provided for them in order for them to understand how to support their children. Successful examples include language and play, reading and online safety workshops.



Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is excellent. The school provides an extensive number of opportunities for pupils to perform in concerts and succeed in local and national eisteddfodau. Staff organise interesting visits, including an opportunity for pupils to attend a textiles workshop in a local craft centre. They promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of Welsh history and culture very successfully. For example, they provide opportunities for pupils to emulate the work of Welsh artists, such as Aneurin Jones, and learn about the history of Ruthin gaol. As a result, most pupils develop to become confident and social learners who take pride in their Welshness.

The school has robust procedures to promote eating and drinking healthily. Through a number of activities, such as swimming lessons and extra-curricular sports clubs, pupils have good knowledge of the importance of keeping fit.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to shoulder responsibilities by undertaking roles on various committees. These experiences develop pupils' understanding of the importance of contributing to society, and develop them robustly to become responsible citizens. The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully by providing appropriate opportunities for them to reflect on values in daily assemblies.

Activities ensure that pupils understand the importance of staying safe online thoroughly and effectively. As a result, nearly all pupils, from a young age, understand the importance of using the internet safely. In classes, staff ensure beneficial opportunities for pupils to choose activities that are of interest to them within the termly themes. As a result, pupils are beginning to have more of an influence on what they would like to learn.

The school promotes the values of sustainability effectively, for example by growing vegetables in the gardening club and activities that raise pupils' awareness of the importance of forest conservation and fair trade.

### **Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement**

Since moving into the new building very recently, the headteacher has established appropriate management procedures in a short period. She encourages a familial atmosphere, which is based on robust care and support. The headteacher promotes a highly caring, safe and inclusive ethos, which ensures wellbeing and good standards among pupils. The headteacher leads staff successfully to address national issues, such as promoting the Welsh language and operating as a sustainable healthy school. As a result, teachers support the school's philosophy and management operations, which are based on the clear purpose of 'enjoying learning and succeeding together'.

Overall, the school's self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. There is a suitable link between the findings of the self-evaluation procedures and the priorities in the development plan. Leaders measure their progress over time against priorities appropriately to identify aspects that are successful or in need of further attention. However, although the school has a specific monitoring timetable, which succeeds in improving pupils' wellbeing in the main, procedures do not lead to ensuring consistency in the quality of provision across the school. Leaders do not monitor

subsequent recommendations from scrutiny reports rigorously enough. For example, they do not succeed in improving important aspects of planning and assessment, and feedback to teachers is not consistent enough to improve their teaching practices further.

The senior management team meets regularly to discuss the school's day-to-day management procedures. However, their role as strategic leaders has not been developed in full. As a result, they do not have a positive effect on improving important aspects of provision in order to improve pupils' standards further, such as monitoring the effect of planning and teaching thoroughly enough.

By receiving termly reports from the headteacher, governors have appropriate knowledge of the school's performance. Their role makes a suitable contribution to self-evaluation procedures and they monitor the development plan satisfactorily. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively, such as validating risk assessments to ensure pupils' health and safety. They ensure that the school is staffed appropriately, which includes assistants to support pupils in the classroom through successful interventions. However, governors do not challenge the school purposefully as critical friends or hold it to account for its performance robustly enough.

The headteacher schedules planning, preparation and assessment time well to promote pupils' musical and artistic skills. There are also purposeful procedures to manage the performance of teachers and assistants. They link sensibly with the school's priorities and address staff's personal development needs appropriately. For example, at the moment, they are focussing on preparing for the new curriculum for Wales and pupils' ICT skills. The headteacher organises valuable opportunities for teachers to work with local schools to improve provision for pupils. A successful example of this is the very good use that is made of the outdoor learning areas. This contributes well to improving pupils' standards and improving pupils' understanding and skills in the foundation phase and key stage 2.

Although the school only recently became established in its new building, the headteacher and governors ensure that resources are used effectively. This supports pupils' achievement successfully. The headteacher and governors ensure that the budget and additional grants to develop provision and improve standards are used well. Expenditure links purposefully with the priorities in the development plan, and rigorous monitoring of funding ensures a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. Successful examples of this include funding learning experiences, such as residential visits to educational centres and valuable activities away from the school grounds.

## Copies of the report

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

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

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

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

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