



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

A report on

**Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gellionnen
Gellionnen Road
Clydach
SA6 5HE**

Date of inspection: July 2019

by

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

About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gellionnen

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gellionnen is situated in the village of Clydach and is maintained by Swansea local authority. There are 278 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 33 nursery children in the morning and 17 pre-school children in the afternoon. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work.

Over a three-year-period, around 11% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is slightly lower than the national percentage of 18%. Thirty per cent (30%) of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. The school has identified 18% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is slightly lower than the national percentage of 21%.

The headteacher has led the school as the acting headteacher since June 2018. A new headteacher has been appointed recently and will begin in the post in September 2019. The school was last inspected in June 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

Ysgol Gellionnen is a caring, inclusive and welcoming school in which there is a clear emphasis on ensuring the wellbeing and raising the standards of all pupils in a safe environment. Most pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning are exceptionally good. Nearly all make good progress in their learning from their starting points.

The acting headteacher has led the school skilfully through a challenging period. Through a clear vision and the commitment of staff and the whole school community, she has ensured the best for all pupils. Close co-operation between staff ensures that pupils are happy, confident and achieve well.

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

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that teachers act effectively enough in order to make the improvements necessary in the foundation phase, including sharing good practice

R2 Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work

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' skills are lower than expected for their age. Nearly all make good progress in their learning from their starting points, including those with additional learning needs.

Most pupils show pride in the Welsh language and use it purposefully and correctly when talking to their peers and adults in the classroom and in informal situations. Across the foundation phase, most pupils acquire an increasing range of vocabulary successfully in various situations. They develop as confident speakers by Year 2 who enjoy sharing their experiences and opinions. Nearly all pupils develop their listening skills effectively. From an early age, they listen well and talk and discuss their work enthusiastically. In key stage 2, many pupils speak accurately in Welsh and English, and make a useful contribution to discussions with peers and express their views clearly. They listen attentively to each other's views and respond to discussions sensibly and effectively.

Most pupils' reading skills are developing well in the foundation phase. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds successfully and a majority succeed in building words confidently. By the end of the phase, most read accurately and fluently. They discuss their books maturely. In key stage 2, most read intelligently in various contexts in both languages. Many vary their tone of voice and use punctuation correctly. They also develop their higher order reading skills effectively in a variety of contexts. For example, Year 6 pupils explain the feelings of characters in a story, although they are not stated clearly.

In the foundation phase, most pupils write an increasing range of simple sentences independently, and spell most common words correctly. By Year 2, many write to a high standard in an appropriate range of contexts for different audiences. Many punctuate appropriately, vary their sentences and are beginning to use mutations correctly, for example when writing a story about a frightened unicorn. However, pupils do not usually apply their writing skills to the same standard when working independently or without adult supervision.

In key stage 2, most pupils build on their writing skills skilfully in both languages. They adapt their style and structure appropriately to different topics, for example when writing a report or creating a pamphlet that includes a number of interesting facts about China. However, the quality of a majority of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work across the school is untidy.

Most pupils in the foundation phase have a good understanding of mathematical concepts. Many pupils in the Reception class develop their understanding of mathematical language by measuring the length of different animals by using non-standard units. By Year 2, many use their knowledge of number to find the length of different paper chains in centimetres and metres. Most pupils in the foundation phase create graphs effectively. By the end of the phase, they interpret data sensibly, for example when discussing the class's favourite flavour of ice cream. However, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills consistently or to the same level

when they are not working closely with adults. In key stage 2, most pupils make good progress in their mathematical skills and build on their previous learning successfully. Most pupils in Year 4 tell the time correctly and use a 24 hour clock, and use this information to solve problems successfully.

Across the foundation phase, most pupils develop a valuable range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills very successfully and consistently. For example, pupils develop early control skills when steering a programmable toy purposefully. Many develop linguistic skills in beneficial ways by using apps to practise forming letters. In key stage 2, pupils build appropriately on their previous ICT skills. Many develop early programming skills well by designing a computer game. Across the school, most pupils' use of ICT to develop creative skills is a clear strength, as pupils from the nursery to Year 6 produce videos and animations to support and enrich their class work. A notable example of this is the animation work of Year 2 pupils on the story of Jonah and the whale.

The ability of the youngest pupils in the foundation phase and pupils in key stage 2 to apply their skills across the curriculum is developing well. However, the ability of the oldest pupils in the foundation phase to use their skills effectively in areas outside the classroom has not been developed sufficiently.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Most pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. They interact maturely with each other in the classrooms, during break time and around the school. Pupils are very welcoming and friendly towards adults and visitors, and show pride by speaking confidently about their school. Most pupils are caring towards each other and the 'Bydis Buarth' (Playground Buddies) care very well for others during break time and lunchtime. Most pupils enjoy the school's life and work, and feel safe within its caring, inclusive and supportive ethos. They are happy at the school and are confident that staff will solve any disputes through effective restorative strategies.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate well and persevere for extended periods. They are very willing to discuss their work, successes and the next steps in their learning with adults. They work effectively with each other, either in groups, pairs or by supporting each other, where necessary. Across the school, most pupils have a sound understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Most pupils have a very good awareness of how to stay safe online. They discuss the importance of not sharing passwords, the dangers of revealing personal information and the importance of logging out every time when they have finished with the computers. Most are aware of the importance of making healthy choices. They are aware of the importance of eating the correct fruit and drinking water. For example, they are aware of the harmful level of sugar in raisins and, as a result, the school council has decided to sell alternative fruit, such as melon and pineapple, in the fruit shop. They understand the importance of physical exercise and take pride in the variety of opportunities they are given to keep fit. They speak enthusiastically about regular physical activities that promote most pupils' physical fitness successfully, for example through rugby sessions, swimming lessons and physical education lessons, in addition to the sports clubs that are available. Most pupils take

pride in the opportunities they are given to play a part in their community, for example by entertaining the elderly and community groups in a local hall, and by asking traders about their use of the Welsh language.

Members of the school council and eco council are enthusiastic, and their ideas have a prominent place in school life. They organise fundraising activities for a number of charities. This has a positive effect on most pupils' awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world. Most pupils express their ideas about their education and their own learning suitably, for example by providing ideas at the beginning of every theme. In key stage 2, pupils have begun to plan purposeful challenges for the following week. As a result, they have greater ownership of their own learning. Most pupils are developing well as moral and knowledgeable citizens through their increasing awareness of values that are promoted by the school. For example, they discuss children's rights knowledgeably and show tolerance of their differences.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

All of the school's staff support each other well and work together effectively. An example of this is the co-ordinating and planning that key stage 2 staff undertake in order to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' experiences. Nearly all teachers have high expectations of pupils' standards, and assistants identify their pupils' needs well. There is an effective working relationship between them, which creates a calm and respectful learning environment. As a result, most pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning. The school's staff use strategies to encourage good behaviour consistently and sensitively across the school and, as a result, most pupils behave exceptionally well. Most teachers use effective teaching styles, which engage nearly all pupils' interest. They ensure that all pupils understand learning objectives clearly and share them regularly to ensure that learning has a purpose. On the whole, teachers provide exciting lessons and activities to ensure that all pupils are given a suitable opportunity to work in pairs, groups and independently. Most staff take advantage of regular opportunities to challenge pupils when questioning them skilfully and encouraging them to think and discuss effectively with their peers. As a result, most pupils apply themselves to their learning and make good progress during their time at the school.

Most staff provide pupils with valuable oral feedback during activities in order to support and challenge them. They encourage and support them well. Most teachers provide simple but effective written feedback. This gives pupils useful guidance on what is good in their work and what needs to be improved. As a result, pupils of all ages speak knowledgeably about what is good in their work and the progress that they have made.

A particular strength across the school is the regular opportunities to develop pupils' creative skills, particularly by creating animations and videos by using a green screen. This is planned carefully to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' experiences throughout the school. Nursery children are beginning to receive stimulating experiences by creating a video to thank Father Christmas for their presents, and Year 2 create a video on how to make ice cream by developing clear oral communication skills. In key stage 2, these skills are developed further in Year 3 by providing opportunities to create interesting videos about the local area, and Year

6 plan, script and present a film in order to discourage pupils from throwing plastic away due to the effect on the ocean.

The principles of the foundation phase have been established successfully in many classes, particularly in the nursery and reception classes. Overall, many foundation phase teachers show a good awareness of the principles of this phase and motivate pupils to discover and learn independently from the outset. On the whole, they plan a balance of activities that are led by staff and interesting opportunities for pupils to work independently in the learning areas. However, this is not consistent across the phase, and the learning areas and outdoor provision are not always established firmly enough. In a minority of classes in which practice is not at its best, activities in these areas are not always purposeful or challenging enough. As a result, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not applied well enough across the areas of learning in order to meet individuals' needs.

In key stage 2, the school provides interesting learning activities, which engage most pupils' interest effectively and meet the requirements of the national curriculum successfully. Purposeful joint planning ensures that the breadth of the curriculum and the range of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are delivered in an interesting manner. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to develop their thinking skills through scientific investigations, for example why do penguins 'huddle', or creating a computer game. Adventurous activities are provided effectively in order to expand pupils' learning experiences. A good example of this is the 'body boarding' experiences in the residential adventure centre.

Teachers provide up-to-date activities and experiences that reflect the nature and context of the school and its community very successfully. A range of visits is provided to places of interest in the local area and beyond, for example to the museum in Swansea when studying the First World War. These activities develop pupils' awareness and understanding of their community and Welsh culture well, in addition to pupils' pride in the local area.

Care, support and guidance: Good

A prominent strength is the emphasis that all members of staff place on developing all pupils' values and wellbeing. This is at the heart of the school's caring ethos. As a result, pupils feel safe within the school's happy community. Leaders and staff have introduced restorative strategies and this is having a positive effect on the school's ethos. By doing so, pupils use these strategies maturely in order to solve disputes. These opportunities promote principles such as fairness, honesty and justice effectively and naturally. Most pupils have a good awareness of their rights. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school has effective systems to track the progress and wellbeing of groups of pupils, and staff use this information successfully in order to allocate specific provision. Teachers and assistants identify pupils' needs at an early stage and take appropriate steps to meet their needs effectively. They provide purposeful individual education plans for pupils with additional learning needs, and parents and pupils are included regularly in the process of producing and reviewing them. Staff support pupils with emotional and social needs skilfully and provide them with very purposeful

support programmes. As a result, the school ensures that most pupils with additional needs make good progress against their personal targets. The school supports pupils' personal and social development successfully. It operates a strategy to increase confidence and resilience, which helps pupils to have a positive attitude towards their learning.

The school develops the pupil's voice effectively through a number of school councils. These provide various opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, make decisions and develop a wide range of skills. A good example of this is the successful no-energy day that was organised by the eco council in order to draw pupils' attention to the importance of sustainability. The school has effective arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. Pupils are given beneficial opportunities to attend various residential courses, which include the various Urdd centres and the local authority's adventure activity centre. These experiences have a positive effect on most pupils' self-confidence and social skills.

The school fosters a valuable relationship with parents by providing useful information about their children's performance and wellbeing regularly. The parent teacher association is very active in supporting the school to raise money, for example to provide resources to nurture pupils' physical and digital skills. The school provides purposefully to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural attitudes. It makes good use of the local community to order to enrich pupils' experiences. For example, they have visited Banksy's famous mural in Taibach, performed in concerts in the community, competed in eisteddfodau and invited members of the community to the school regularly. They provide good opportunities to nurture tolerance and equality effectively, and there is a beneficial relationship with a police officer, which supports this work effectively. Teachers ensure that collective worship assemblies are valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider the needs of others in a spiritual environment. This is enriched further by inviting members of local chapels to lead the assemblies.

Leadership and management: Good

The acting headteacher shows robust resilience in leading the school. She succeeds in ensuring parents' trust, staff's co-operation and, most importantly, ensuring an effective and strong focus on ensuring pupils' wellbeing and standards. She succeeds in doing so as she has a clear vision and a robust commitment to ensuring the best for every child and providing stimulating and sustaining support. As a result, the school is a happy and safe community where most pupils make sound progress.

Members of the senior management team understand their roles and responsibilities clearly, and most act on this effectively. A specific example is the way in which they take responsibility for driving forward all of the school's priorities for improvement. This purposeful co-operation provides a sense of responsibility and pride in their work. It also encourages everyone to contribute fully towards creating change that is beneficial to pupils. As a result, for example, standards of writing in Welsh are sound, and the most able pupils at the end of key stage 2 show notable progress in their ability to produce work of a high standard. In the rare examples where leaders do not act effectively enough, they do not set a purposeful enough direction, for example when ensuring that the principles of the foundation phase are implemented consistently.

There is a purposeful programme to monitor, evaluate and review the school's work. Leaders monitor provision and identify whether their practice needs to be strengthened or refined across the school. On the whole, their work provides a very accurate picture of the school's strengths and many of the issues that are in need of attention. Where this is not completely accurate, they have not identified the need to ensure consistency in provision in the foundation phase in order to ensure that the phase's ethos permeates all classes.

As a result of the culture of regular self-evaluation and reflection, leaders identify relevant activities for the development plan, and there is regular and beneficial monitoring in order to measure progress. They introduce national priorities, such as revising the curriculum, by being proactive and are using this period to experiment in terms of planning for it.

The school's staffing levels meet requirements and the school has robust procedures to manage teachers' performance. Leaders ensure that beneficial professional learning and development activities are a basis for improvements within the school. They make effective use of staff expertise within the school, for example to introduce improvements to provision for a range of pupils' additional needs, such as mental health. Teachers visit other schools in order to learn from good practice and evaluate which ideas are most likely to be successful for pupils. Where appropriate, leaders make valuable use of training within the cluster of local schools to train staff in new initiatives and support their continuous professional development. As a result, the foundation phase has introduced a stimulating new gadget to introduce toy control skills across the phase successfully.

The governing body has thorough knowledge of the school, and members have made a key contribution to supporting and guiding the school through a vulnerable period. They provide a clear strategic direction for the school's work jointly, and provide the senior management team with timely challenge and support. Their rigour in monitoring progress against the school's improvement targets is a strength. They expect all teachers to submit evidence of progress, for example when checking whether there has been enough progress in extended writing. They manage the school's budget efficiently and ensure that the pupil development grant is used effectively to alleviate the effect of poverty.

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:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Publication date: 10/09/2019