



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

A report on

**Ysgol Rhys Prichard
Llanfair Road
Llandovery
Carmarthenshire
SA20 0HY**

Date of inspection: September 2019

by

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

About Ysgol Rhys Prichard

Ysgol Rhys Prichard is a community primary school that is situated in the town of Llandovery in Carmarthenshire local authority. There are 187 pupils on roll, including nursery age children who attend school on a full-time basis from the term in which they reach their fourth birthday.

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%. The school has identified around 15% of its pupils as having special educational needs, which is slightly lower than the national percentage of 21%. Around 30% of children come from Welsh-speaking homes. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The school was last inspected in March 2014 and the current headteacher was appointed in September 2018. A new building is being built for the school, with the intention of opening it in February 2021.

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 school is a caring and inclusive community which promotes positive attitudes towards pupils' wellbeing successfully. The school has a strong Welsh ethos and provision encourages pupils to make use of the Welsh language in all aspects of their life and work. As a result, most pupils take pride in their bilingualism and feel that they are an important part of their local area.

Many pupils take advantage of the opportunities that are provided for them to develop as skilful learners. Many pupils develop their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills regularly. When they are given purposeful opportunities to use their numeracy skills across the areas of learning, a majority of pupils make appropriate progress. However, many pupils do not concentrate for extended periods or show enough pride and care in the presentation of their work. A minority of pupils also do not show enough respect towards staff and their peers.

Staff work together successfully and establish a supportive working relationship with pupils, which fosters a supportive learning environment for them. They plan a suitable range of relevant experiences that develop pupils' skills appropriately, on the whole. However, a majority of staff over-direct learning and, as a result, pupils are not given enough opportunities to influence their own learning or to be enterprising and independent learners.

The headteacher has a robust vision and succeeds in sharing it purposefully. Leaders develop improvement planning processes consistently. However, the school does not act on the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation astutely or purposefully enough in order to prioritise specific areas for development. Leaders' judgements are too generous and the school's priorities do not reflect the obvious weaknesses well enough. As a result, leaders do not have enough of an effect on improving provision and raising standards.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that leaders act more effectively in setting a strategic direction and challenging the school's performance
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation processes in order to identify clear priorities for improvement and monitor them effectively
- R3 Ensure consistency in teaching in order to ensure pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning
- R4 Analyse and make efficient use of progress-tracking information
- R5 Ensure that pupils are given regular and suitable opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum
- R6 Improve pupils' independent learning skills and increase the effectiveness of pupils' voice groups in influencing the school's life and work

What happens next

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

During their time at the school, most pupils make sound progress from their starting points. They show a suitable interest in their work and build successfully on their previous learning. Pupils with special educational needs make strong progress against their targets and achieve well. Overall, there is no difference between pupils who are eligible for free school meals and their peers. Many pupils acquire relevant Welsh communication skills and make consistent progress by the end of key stage 2.

Most pupils listen appropriately to adults and each other. They speak confidently, on the whole, and follow instructions and respond to questions skilfully in a suitable range of learning contexts. In the foundation phase, most pupils use a beneficial range of vocabulary and explain clearly what they have learned, for example when building a house for the three little pigs. Many pupils in key stage 2 communicate effectively in both languages and are willing to respond, make comments and express relevant opinions. They use original vocabulary, where appropriate, for example when discussing the work of the artist, Hokusai.

A majority of pupils' reading skills are developing successfully. By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils read fluently and accurately, and strive diligently to build unfamiliar words. They read with appropriate expression and meaning, and are keen to discuss the content of their books. An example of this is that Year 2 pupils read a variety of texts in order to learn about how to take care of the world. Many pupils in key stage 2 read intelligently and meaningfully in both languages. They differentiate well between factual and fictional books, and discuss their content successfully. They research purposefully on the internet in Welsh and English in order to gather and collate information, for example about Ray Gravell. They practise their higher-order reading skills effectively when gathering information about Llandovery castle.

Many pupils make consistent progress in their writing skills. They record for different purposes in an effective range of contexts. In the reception class, most pupils spell simple words fairly correctly when writing a poem about the sea. By the end of the foundation phase, they write descriptive and interesting pieces with increasing accuracy, for example about Twm Siôn Cati. In key stage 2, many pupils develop their writing skills successfully in both languages by varying their vocabulary and syntax in order to develop their ideas sensibly. On the whole, they show a sound grasp of form, for example when Year 4 pupils write a story about Llyn Llech Owain. They show originality by selecting vocabulary carefully when writing the diary of a child in Swansea during the Blitz. However, many pupils do not complete extended work to the same standard consistently. Across the school, rudimentary punctuation errors and spelling mistakes are littered throughout the work of a minority of pupils. Work is also not presented neatly enough and a majority of pupils do not show enough pride and care in the presentation of their work.

In the foundation phase, most pupils' mathematical development is developing appropriately. They use suitable number and measuring strategies in different contexts, for example when weighing ingredients to make food for the birds. They

develop a sound understanding of the properties of shapes and use this information to design and create a boat. In key stage 2, most pupils build successfully on their previous learning. They have a sound understanding of number facts and use various calculation methods correctly, on the whole. Many use their numeracy work appropriately when calculating the results of scientific experiments. However, a majority of pupils, particularly in key stage 2, do not make sound progress to the appropriate level in their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

In terms of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, many pupils in the foundation phase use electronic devices independently when taking pictures and filming each other. In key stage 2, many pupils are able to create multimedia presentations successfully. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 create codes to develop games and instructions. They are able to use spreadsheet formulae effectively to calculate the area of different rooms and the cost of carpets for those areas.

By using a range of purposeful software, pupils across the school develop their creative skills effectively. For example, pupils in Year 2 create an animation about the story of Cragwen the turtle, and pupils in Years 3 and 4 create green screen films skilfully to create a weather report. By Year 6, pupils create interesting films and animations about their favourite books and authors.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Adequate and needs improvement

Nearly all pupils are happy at the school and feel completely safe there. They know whom to approach for advice if anything is worrying them and are confident that the school responds to any concerns they may have in a timely manner. Nearly all pupils know how to make sensible choices about eating healthily and the effects of a healthy lifestyle, for example when choosing what to include in their lunchboxes. Most pupils understand the importance of exercise and take pride in the variety of opportunities that they are given to keep fit. Nearly all pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of staying safe on the internet.

Most pupils are welcoming and friendly towards adults and visitors, and show pride when talking confidently about their school. A majority of pupils' behaviour is consistently good across the school. They interact appropriately with each other in the classrooms when working in pairs or small groups, and around the school. However, a minority of pupils' behaviour in the classroom does not show enough respect towards staff and their peers, and this has a negative effect on their learning.

On the whole, a majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. These pupils concentrate well, enjoy learning and complete tasks effectively, and show appropriate perseverance and resilience in order to succeed. However, a minority of pupils' concentration skills are not developing purposefully enough for them to reach their full potential. They are too dependent on adults for support and guidance. As a result, they do not develop as creative and independent learners.

Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and enjoy competing for the attendance shield every half term. This aspect is also one of the school's strengths. A suitable range of pupil groups, such as the eco council, helps to improve aspects around the school. Most members of these groups understand that teachers and leaders listen carefully and act in line with their suggestions, for

example in raising the awareness of staff and pupils of how to use less electricity and water around the school. However, on the whole, the pupil's voice does not have enough of an influence on the work and direction of the school.

Pupils take pride in their community and take part regularly in a range of activities, including services in the church and the annual Sheep Festival. They are active in supporting various charities, both locally and nationally. This has a positive effect on their understanding of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Across the school, overall, staff foster a positive relationship with pupils. They provide a valuable learning environment, which contributes appropriately to pupils' wellbeing. Teachers set clear learning objectives for pupils and use a suitable range of relevant resources to engage their interest. They use suitable questioning techniques in order for pupils to recall their previous knowledge and develop their ideas skilfully. In the best practice, a minority of teachers ensure high expectations and that lessons have a suitable pace, and pupils are supported to achieve well for timely periods. However, this is not consistent across the school, particularly in key stage 2. As a result, a majority of pupils do not concentrate, take responsibility for their learning or make enough progress during lessons.

Teachers and support staff work together effectively as a team. They support pupils soundly and encourage them, on the whole, to persevere with their tasks. They prepare resources to facilitate learning and use them purposefully in order to support pupils. However, across the school, a majority of staff over-direct learning and, as a result, do not support pupils to become increasingly independent learners.

Staff plan a suitable range of activities and learning experiences that provide appropriately to address pupils' specific needs across the school. They ensure regular opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils develop their creative writing and animation skills effectively by working with a local author. Teachers provide relevant opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Staff provide pupils with timely oral feedback in order to enable them to know what they are doing well and understand what they need to do to improve their work further. Most pupils in the foundation phase respond suitably and improve their work, as appropriate. However, across the school, teachers' expectations are not high enough in terms of ensuring that pupils respond to feedback.

The principles of the foundation phase are developing appropriately. On the whole, effective focus tasks and continuous activities are provided, which develop pupils' skills beneficially. Areas within the classrooms encourage pupils to be creative and adventurous learners. On the whole, teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in the outdoor environment.

Teachers ensure that pupils are proud of their local area and are an integral part of Welsh community activities. Teachers create an ethos that promotes the Welsh language and take advantage of suitable opportunities to enrich pupils' language. For example, they prepare activities for pupils to learn about local artists and hold a

school eisteddfod. They conduct relevant visits that enrich their learning, for example to the Botanic Gardens and Dinefwr castle. This raises pupils' awareness of their local area and increases their interest in Welsh traditions, culture and history successfully.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate and needs improvement

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care and wellbeing are a strength. The school is a caring community with an inclusive and happy ethos. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe and take pride in their school.

Provision to promote pupils' understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily is effective. The school provide a range of opportunities for pupils to consider their health and wellbeing through activities with a whole-school focus on healthy living, for example through an investigation to discover how many grams of sugar are in different drinks.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully by providing appropriate opportunities for them to reflect on values in assemblies and visit local places of worship. Fun activities, such as creating an online safety song in the foundation phase, ensure that pupils understand the importance of online safety effectively. As a result, nearly all pupils understand the importance of using the internet safely.

Staff work well with a wide range of specialist services, including educational psychologists and occupational therapists, to provide beneficial advice and support for pupils with special educational needs. The school has a range of useful provision, including specific support programmes for pupils. The use of intervention to develop pupils' self-confidence and social skills is successful. This has a positive effect on the personal and social development of these pupils.

Leaders track pupils' progress regularly. They analyse information appropriately and use it relevantly across the school. However, processes are not effective enough to ensure that the progress of all pupils, or specific groups, is identified comprehensively. As a result, leaders do not have a sound enough understanding of pupils' progress over time.

The school has a beneficial relationship with parents and communicates with them effectively. As a result, parents are aware of the school's activities and events, and how to support pupils with their work.

The school works successfully to develop pupils' understanding of their community, for example as they entertain Llandoverly friendship club in concerts and services. On the whole, the school provides purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills through the work of the eco council. However, the pupil's voice does not allow enough opportunities for pupils to influence decisions about their learning or the direction of the school.

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

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

The headteacher has ensured opportunities for stakeholders to help the school to develop a clear and purposeful vision. Leaders succeed in creating a happy, caring and inclusive community, which places an effective emphasis on pupils' wellbeing. They support teachers to develop pupils' skills regularly in an appropriate variety of activities. However, leaders do not ensure that provision challenges pupils' standards successfully enough in order for them to reach their potential.

On the whole, leaders have begun a journey to establish a purposeful curriculum. They have ensured that there are robust opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills within lessons and by engaging with the community regularly. Leaders ensure that pupils are given relevant opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum. They have responded appropriately to the requirements of the digital competence framework, and many pupils make positive progress in their ICT skills.

The governing body is supportive of the school and has focused successfully on resolving a number of important issues. It has ensured stable leadership and specific leadership time for the headteacher. Recently, governors have sought to ensure that the local authority formalises the school's linguistic category before it moves to the new building. Governors have not yet focused sufficiently on holding the leadership team to account for standards, provision and leadership.

Leaders have established a useful range of self-evaluation processes in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement. They have set a rigorous and transparent monitoring programme over a period of two years, and have shared this purposefully with staff. However, monitoring has not always been accurate enough to identify what needs to be improved in the school and to plan purposefully to raise pupils' standards.

Leaders create a culture and ethos to support staff's professional learning by providing opportunities for them to increase their professional knowledge, understanding and skills. They do so by providing an opportunity for teachers to research best practice, in addition to implementing changes in provision. This has led to an improvement in standards of oracy in the foundation phase and establishing the outdoor area. Training sessions are effective and, in the best practice, they link closely with priorities in the school improvement plan. A notable example of this is developing staff's confidence in their digital skills, and this is having a positive effect on pupils' skills across the school. Performance management procedures have been established and are operational. Through these, leaders address underperformance, where necessary. However, the process has not ensured that teaching is consistent enough and, as a result, a minority of pupils do not make enough progress.

The headteacher is very enthusiastic in terms of developing working between schools, and has played a prominent part in establishing the Bro y Cestyll network. This purposeful co-operation is useful for sharing staff's ideas and providing opportunities for pupils to take part in activities that enrich their learning experiences. A good example of this is the film creation project, which has developed pupils' creativity and digital skills effectively.

Leaders have ensured an appropriate level of staffing and learning resources to deliver the curriculum appropriately, and these resources are used efficiently, on the whole. Decisions on expenditure link appropriately with the school's priorities for improvement. They make good use of grants, for example by using the pupil development grant effectively to employ an intervention assistant, who provides inclusive support.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

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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Publication date: 25/11/2019