



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

A report on

**Ysgol Y Graig
Ffordd Coleg
Lon Talwrn
Llangefni
Ynys Môn
LL77 7LP**

Date of inspection: January 2019

by

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

About Ysgol y Graig

Ysgol y Graig is situated in the town of Llangefni, in Anglesey local authority. There are 380 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. The school has ten single-age classes, three mixed-age classes and two part-time nursery classes.

Over a three-year-period, around 22% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is higher than the national percentage of 18%. Around 71% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The school has identified 27% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is higher than the national percentage of 21%. Very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in January 2016. The school was last inspected in November 2010.

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, many pupils develop effective Welsh communication skills and make good progress with their oracy, reading and writing, considering their starting points. Many pupils' English skills when discussing, presenting written work and reading are developing purposefully. Only a few pupils show their true abilities successfully when writing at length in Welsh and English. Most acquire sound mathematical concepts and purposeful information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

Teachers and assistants care very diligently and conscientiously for their pupils and provide them and their families with highly valuable support and guidance. As a result, pupils feel very safe at school. They take pride in their relationships with staff and express their thanks for the staff's dedication to their needs and interests.

The headteacher has a thorough understanding of the school's needs. She works closely with the governors to make improvements and builds wisely on the school's strengths. They also target areas for development purposefully through regular self-evaluation and strategic planning procedures.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that the school addresses the safeguarding issue that was raised during the inspection
- R2 Ensure that leaders monitor teaching effectively and provide individuals with constructive feedback to improve their practice further
- R3 Challenge all pupils to perform at their best consistently, particularly when writing at length
- R4 Ensure that pupils apply their numeracy skills effectively to solve problems more independently across the curriculum
- R5 Improve provision to support teaching and learning outdoors in the foundation phase

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, around half of pupils have Welsh communication skills that correspond with the standard that is expected for their age. During their time at the school, many acquire effective Welsh communication skills and achieve well. Many pupils with additional learning needs achieve soundly against their personal targets.

Many develop effective speaking and listening skills, which contributes successfully to their learning. They are confident orally, speak eloquently and listen attentively to others. For example, pupils in the foundation phase explain clearly which objects sink and float in the water tub. Many pupils' oral English skills in key stage 2 are good, particularly as they elaborate on the Tudor period and specific events such as the Battle of Bosworth.

Many pupils develop purposeful reading skills. In the foundation phase, many read an interesting range of texts clearly. They understand the content of their books well when reading and build unfamiliar words purposefully, by using regular phonic strategies. They recognise the characteristics of familiar characters, such as Goldilocks, intelligently and offer sensible explanations for the purpose and effect of their actions. Many in key stage 2 pronounce clearly when reading in both languages. They enjoy fictional and factual books and research meaningfully on the internet, including tracing the history of the town of Llangefni and creating a timeline of the life of the famous singer, Elvis Presley. As a result, they use their higher order reading skills to find information from different sources effectively.

Many, across the school, write well for different purposes. They use a range of contexts purposefully to convey their personal opinions. In the foundation phase, many write interesting pieces in Welsh. Good examples include New Year's resolutions and a letter of permission to visit a local garden centre. In key stage 2, many write meaningfully in both languages for a wide range of purposes. For example, they compare living in the city and living in the countryside knowledgeably, and identify the differences between opaque, translucent and transparent objects correctly. However, pupils' extended writing does not reflect their true abilities, particularly those who are most able.

On the whole, most pupils across the school have a sound understanding of mathematical concepts. They follow instructions to expand their understanding purposefully during lessons. As a result, pupils in the foundation phase measure each other's height before creating a block graph of their results. They also recognise the properties of shapes well when creating pictures of dinosaurs and follow instructions correctly to measure footprints on the school playground.

Many pupils in key stage 2 use data with increasing accuracy and present it in various forms to complete mathematical tasks successfully. For example, they study a plan of a new house carefully to discover the perimeters of rooms, the area of the building and the cost of laying carpet throughout the house. They also plot coordinates confidently in the four quadrants by using a horizontal and vertical axis correctly. However, only a minority of pupils across the school choose suitable mathematical methods to complete new tasks independently without adult guidance.

As a result, only a minority apply their numeracy skills purposefully to solve problems across the curriculum.

Most pupils in the foundation phase use ICT equipment confidently. They use electronic tablets to gather information about the characteristics of the seasons of the year, such as autumn leaves. They also use a green screen effectively to portray the nativity and create purposeful databases to gather information about the birthdays of members of the class. Most pupils in key stage 2 show good ICT skills, on the whole, apply their skills sensibly and choose the most effective methods to present their work. They create formulae independently to add and subtract numbers on a spreadsheet, and programme it purposefully to reflect the accuracy of the answer in different colours. Most pupils also use safe passwords purposefully to access learning websites to complete their work, both in the classroom and at home.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils convey loyal feelings towards their school and take pride in the close relationships between themselves and staff. They are very willing to discuss any concerns with staff and are confident that they listen to them. As a result, they feel safe within the school's inclusive and familial ethos. Playground buddies support the ethos of family and sympathy towards others effectively. They are vigilant on the playground and are ready to provide support to pupils who are anxious.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to teachers' instructions and apply themselves purposefully to their work during lessons. They are enthusiastic learners who apply themselves to new experiences promptly, such as painting a colourful landscape of the dinosaur world. Most pupils' willingness to discuss their work and work successfully with their peers is a sound feature among pupils. As a result, they respect the contributions of others and respond positively to their ideas.

Most pupils contribute beneficially to their learning by providing ideas to be included in the termly themes. They express valid opinions about what to learn in order to develop their understanding further. They understand that voices are important to improve their learning. They also take advantage of opportunities to visit the local area, such as the town's record office and a nearby windmill. As a result, pupils expand their knowledge and understanding of their local area intelligently.

Nearly all pupils' behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, is very good. They are polite and respect their peers, staff and visitors. They take advantage of 'healthy mindset' sessions to create a calm environment and to consider important issues, such as human rights and justice. This is valuable practice and contributes effectively to their aspirations. As a result, nearly all pupils respond positively to the supportive ethos that is provided for them.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily, and take part in regular exercise activities. In addition to their lessons, older pupils take advantage of a variety of interesting activities to improve their fitness, such as football sessions and the running club. Most pupils are aware of the dangers that can arise in their lives and know what steps to take, should the need arise. For example, nearly all pupils, in line with their age, understand the importance of online safety and outline the dangers that can arise as a result of irresponsible use of the internet.

Most pupils are tolerant and sensitive to the needs of feeling of other pupils who are similar to or different from themselves. As a result, they have a sound awareness of fairness and the importance of equal opportunities. For example, they understand that different beliefs have specific rights and traditions, such as Hindus in India. They also have a thorough understanding of the importance of sustainability. They are able to explain confidently the importance of recycling food and specific goods, such as paper and card. They are knowledgeable about the effect of pollution and the dangers of the irresponsible practices of the human race to nature. For example, they respond in horror to the harmful effect of plastic goods on sea turtles and hedgehogs.

Pupils who have responsibilities take their roles seriously. Members of the school council and the team captains shoulder their responsibilities diligently. As a result, they have a sound understanding of their leadership roles within the school. They take great pride in their roles, as they have been elected by their peers. The eco council is also active, and the sports ambassadors organise engaging activities for their peers and younger pupils.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that engages most pupils' interest effectively. Teachers organise a variety of stimulating experiences, which include valuable visits to historic institutions, such as the Tudor house in Conwy. They plan interesting themes that promote learning and support pupils' knowledge and understanding successfully. They include pupils' ideas meaningfully when planning engaging lessons, which hold their interest and motivate them to succeed. The effective use of mind maps strengthens pupils' ownership of their work. Nearly all teachers succeed in making their classes stimulating and engaging places where nearly all groups of pupils are able to learn productively. This is done through colourful and appealing displays, which are valuable and beneficial in supporting teaching and learning.

The school succeeds in providing effectively for the foundation phase within the classrooms. However, outdoor provision has not been developed to support and enrich teaching and learning.

On the whole, the quality of teaching is good. Most teachers use a variety of different methods effectively when delivering lessons, which has a purposeful effect on most pupils' standards. However, in a few classes, the slow pace of presentations limits pupils' ability to achieve to the best of their ability, particularly those who are most able.

Teachers and assistants work together successfully and support learning purposefully by providing specialist and stimulating interventions. The supportive working relationship, which is evident in all classes, nurtures respect and courtesy, and creates a productive learning environment. They plan effectively for the pupils that they support, including those with additional learning needs. As a result, many pupils make good progress against their personal targets.

Nearly all adults model polished language and encourage and support pupils to use Welsh of a high, polished standard consistently. As a result, many pupils' standards of oracy are good.

On the whole, provision to nurture literacy skills is sound in both languages. All teachers plan effectively to introduce the statutory requirements of the curriculum and to improve pupils' literacy skills through interesting themes. Themes reflect the school's nature and local context successfully. For example, they record the history of Llangefni in bygone times purposefully. Teachers deliver interesting and stimulating experiences for pupils, which have a good effect on their oral and reading skills from day to day. For example, their meaningful presentations on comparing and appreciating human diversity targets pupils' writing skills effectively. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum.

Standards of teaching in mathematics are sound across the school, and pupils receive comprehensive experiences within different areas of the curriculum. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum to the same standard as can be seen in mathematics lessons.

Teachers develop pupils' ICT skills purposefully. They provide interesting opportunities across the school to create various presentations, spreadsheets and to record their experiences on electronic tablets. For example, in the foundation phase, teachers challenge pupils to create a branching database on dinosaurs. In key stage 2, they provide valuable opportunities to research on the internet, before creating a script that portrays a dialogue between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care and wellbeing are a strength. The school is a very caring community with a familial, inclusive and happy ethos. Staff encourage pupils successfully to work together and behave courteously. As a result, pupils are confident, treat others with respect and behave very well.

Arrangements for tracking pupils' progress are sound. Assessment results are used effectively to measure pupils' progress. The procedure identifies pupils with additional learning needs successfully. Teachers arrange purposeful support through specific activities, such as phonics sessions, which succeed in improving pupils' achievements. Assistants also support pupils meaningfully in useful intervention sessions. As a result, pupils make good progress towards achieving their personal improvement targets.

The school supports pupils with emotional and social needs successfully, and works purposefully with external agencies. As a result, pupils receive caring support, as is received in the inclusive nurture class. This develops pupils' wellbeing and social skills effectively.

The school provides beneficial opportunities to ensure that pupils are able to make sensible choices about how to stay safe, for example when using the internet and wearing a seatbelt in a car. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. However, the inspection team brought a health and safety issue to the attention of the school's leaders.

Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is very robust. There is a strong tradition of providing valuable opportunities for pupils to perform in local and national concerts and eisteddfodau. This contributes successfully towards increasing many pupils' self-confidence, in addition to their awareness of their Welsh heritage and their local area. Arts activities are used valuably to expand pupils' cultural experiences, for example by working with a local artist and taking part in the school orchestra and choir. This promotes pupils' expressive skills well, in addition to their confidence to work with others effectively.

There is a good relationship between the school and parents. They receive information through social media and letters and, as a result, are aware of the school's activities and events. Staff provide useful training sessions for parents to improve their awareness of up-to-date procedures in education, such as teaching methods in the foundation phase. As a result, parents have a better idea of how to help their children at home.

There are beneficial arrangements to help pupils to make wise decisions, for example by providing opportunities for the school council to express an opinion on improving pupils' standards, wellbeing and Welsh cultural experiences. As a result, the school holds a homework club, a running club and plays contemporary Welsh music publicly every day.

There is a valuable range of physical activities, including after-school clubs, which succeed in promoting pupils' fitness and engaging their enthusiasm to stay healthy. The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily. For example, pupils sell fruit during the day, which promotes a healthy lifestyle.

The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to contribute to activities within the community, such as the Mayor's Sunday Service and raising money for good causes. As a result, pupils develop a good understanding of their local area and develop their social skills effectively through activities, both locally and further afield. Daily assemblies also promote pupils' spiritual and moral development effectively.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear vision, which is based on the school's motto, 'A rock solid foundation'. The school provides a solid start for pupils, which allows them to succeed by developing their standards and wellbeing further. The school broadens pupils' horizons and aspirations effectively in order to nurture a realistic understanding of what is beyond their square mile. This strategic vision leads to a highly caring, safe and inclusive ethos across the school, which ensures that pupils achieve well.

The school has a clear staffing structure and the expectations of all roles are defined firmly against specific responsibilities. Arrangements for staff meetings are robust and create an effective communication network, which places a purposeful focus on raising pupils' outcomes. The headteacher schedules planning, preparation and assessment periods wisely, in a way that releases staff from the same school years at the same time. This is an effective means of sharing expertise and ensuring consistency in planning, assessment practices and expectations. As a result, the procedure allows staff to scrutinise jointly, moderate pupils' work and ensures consistency in provision purposefully.

There are effective procedures for managing the performance of teachers and assistants. These are linked directly with the school's priorities and address the staff's personal development needs successfully. For example, they are currently striving to target pupils' independence in the classroom.

The school has rigorous self-evaluation procedures. There is an obvious link between the findings of self-evaluation procedures and the priorities in the school improvement plan. The school defines priorities well and targets them sensibly to measure progress and identify aspects that need further attention. There is a detailed timetable of lesson observations, learning walks and scrutiny of pupils' work, which leads purposefully to effective monitoring reports. These show clearly the areas that are in need of attention. However, leaders do not monitor the recommendations from scrutiny reports rigorously enough, particularly when trying to improve aspects of teaching and individuals' accountability for their roles within the school.

Governors provide purposeful guidance and set an effective challenge for the school. They visit the school to evaluate the effect of activities on pupils' outcomes regularly. For example, they discuss the recent improvements in pupils' ability to make decisions confidently, and in gaining independence in their learning. They monitor expenditure and the effectiveness of resources sensibly, which includes good use of reserves to maintain inclusive provision across the school. As a result, they contribute well to the school's life and success, and hold the school to account for its performance as critical friends.

The headteacher, the senior management team and governors focus well on using all parts of the building to support pupils' learning and progress. For example, they have recently created a nurture class to target the specific needs of vulnerable pupils in the foundation phase. However, there is a lack of outdoor provision in the foundation phase. Resources in the outdoor area do not enrich pupils' experiences successfully enough to develop their skills further.

The school makes very creative use of the pupil development grant to meet pupils' needs in a way that makes them more willing to learn. For example, it employs a welfare officer and a play therapist, who are highly successful in improving pupils' self-respect and social skills. The welfare officer is also a valuable link between vulnerable families and the school, which improves the attendance of individual pupils effectively.

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.

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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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