



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

A report on

**Ysgol y Tywyn
Caergeiliog
Holyhead
LL65 3NP**

Date of inspection: June 2019

by

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

About Ysgol y Tywyn

Ysgol y Tywyn is situated on the outskirts of the west coast of Anglesey. The school serves the village of Llanfihangel-yn-Nhowyn, in the main.

There are 112 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 12 part-time nursery age pupils. They are divided into four mixed-age classes.

Over a three-year-period, 18% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals, which is line with the national percentage. A few pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic backgrounds.

The school has identified around 30% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is higher than the national percentage of 21%. Very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2017 and the school was last inspected in October 2012.

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 y Tywyn is a happy and caring community, in which most pupils develop to become confident, able learners. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic and keen to develop new skills. The headteacher's strong leadership ensures a clear strategic direction for developing the school.

Teachers have high expectations and work together flexibly to plan extensive and stimulating experiences to ignite pupils' curiosity. The use of local and community links is an excellent feature, which ensures that learning has a purpose. As a result, the curriculum is broad and exciting, and ignites nearly all pupils' imagination.

Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well, care for each other and show respectful and amiable attitudes toward staff and everyone who visits the school.

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 Raise standards of Welsh in key stage 2
- R2 Ensure regular and appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R3 Share good practice in teaching across the school in order to ensure consistency

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, most pupils' basic skills are in line with what is expected for their age. As they move through the school, most make good progress in their learning from their starting points.

Across the school, most pupils listen well and give careful consideration to the views of their peers. They show respect and courtesy when taking part in discussions, and develop their oral skills effectively during their time at the school. In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh and use a wide range of vocabulary when talking to adults. Most use the Welsh language confidently when working independently, for example when role-playing the story of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee. In key stage 2, most pupils listen attentively and contribute purposefully to group and class discussions. Pupils' oracy skills develop appropriately from their starting points. They discuss their work confidently and use an increasing range of language patterns correctly. By Year 6, most use the language that is most appropriate for the audience, for example when making oral presentations on aspirations.

Most pupils in the foundation phase make good progress in their Welsh reading skills. They enjoy discussing books and show a sound understanding of their reading materials. In key stage 2, most read soundly and discuss the content of their books skilfully. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils develop as confident readers in English and discuss the features of a range of reading media maturely. More able pupils compare the structures and writing styles of different authors confidently.

Most pupils in the foundation phase make good progress in their writing skills. They form letters correctly and write an increasing range of sentences competently when presenting their work, for example when writing a portrayal of the 'corrach bach' (little elf). By the end of the phase, many write independently. They use their literacy skills effectively across the curriculum and punctuate their work relevantly. In key stage 2, most pupils develop their work interestingly across a wide range of writing genres. They use techniques, such as rhetorical questions, skilfully in persuasive texts. For example, pupils at the top of the school write a powerful speech based on Martin Luther King's dream, and outline their feelings maturely, by referring to first-hand evidence to support their views. Across the school, nearly all pupils show pride in their work and present their work neatly.

Although foundation phase pupils have a sound awareness of the Welsh language, many pupils' skills in key stage 2 are not as strong. They do not use the Welsh language confidently enough when working independently or at informal times. However, nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the advantages of being bilingual and see the Welsh language as a living and useful language.

Most pupils' mathematical skills in the foundation phase and key stage 2 are developing well. Most pupils in nursery and reception recognise numbers well and place them in the correct order confidently. By the end of the stage, many have a sound grasp of number facts and use this knowledge effectively to solve number

problems in their activities. For example, most measure the outline of bodies to the nearest centimetre and more able pupils use centimetres and metres appropriately when completing the same work. In key stage 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of mathematical features, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They develop a sound awareness of number, shape, measurement and data handling. Most use their mathematical skills effectively in order to solve real-life problems, for example when calculating the cost of an educational visit to a museum in Liverpool. However, across the school, pupils do not use their numeracy skills regularly enough when working across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively across the curriculum. Most pupils in the foundation phase take digital pictures to record tasks. Older pupils in key stage 2 combine their skills in order to create an impressive presentation, for example when creating a parody of the work of Edward Lear. Their understanding of how to use spreadsheets when modelling is developing appropriately.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils' behaviour throughout the school is exceptionally good. They interact maturely with each other in the classroom, during break time and around the school. Pupils are extremely welcoming and friendly, which means that the high number of newcomers who join the school settle easily and feel part of the school community very quickly. This is a notable strength.

Pupils treat each other, visitors and staff respectfully. They talk enthusiastically, confidently and with obvious pride in their school. Nearly all pupils feel safe and know who to approach should they be worried about anything. They are confident that the staff would deal well with any disputes.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate well and persevere for extended periods. They are very willing to discuss their work, their successes and the next steps in their learning with adults. They work together effectively in groups and pairs, and support each other, when necessary.

Pupils who are part of the school's committees develop their responsibilities well. They contribute effectively to the school's councils and take pride in the opportunity to develop their leadership skills in order to help other pupils understand the importance of their work. For example, the healthy council creates a development plan in order to plan its work for the year. It monitors progress against its priorities effectively and discusses the effect of its work well. It has purchased re-usable bottles for all pupils in order to reduce the use of plastic and help to encourage pupils to drink water at school. These pupils are also active in supporting various charities and environmental campaigns, including cancer charities and national cycling events. This has a positive effect on most pupils' awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Most pupils have a very good awareness of how to stay safe online. They discuss the importance of not sharing passwords, and the dangers of disclosing personal information. Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of making healthy choices. They are aware of the importance of eating fruit and drinking water. The school

council has sent a letter to parents to raise awareness of the importance of providing a healthy packed lunch and to provide them with ideas. They have also met with a catering company in order to share their views on the standard of food in the school kitchen and what they would like to have as a healthy school lunch.

Most pupils understand the importance of exercise and take part in energetic activities in the air force gymnasium. This promotes their physical fitness successfully.

Most pupils take pride in the opportunities they are given to play a part in their local community and further afield, for example by attending the family day at the airport and through their success in an international choral competition.

Most pupils develop well as moral and knowledgeable citizens through their increasing awareness of values that are promoted by the school. For example, they use their work on different religions to appreciate and relate effectively to newcomers to the school, wherever they come from. This helps to nurture the school's welcoming ethos.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The school provides exciting learning experiences that stimulating and ignite nearly all pupils' imagination. As a result, most pupils apply themselves to their learning and make good progress during their time at the school.

Teachers plan together strategically and organise stimulating visits and visitors skilfully. This encourages teachers to develop as ambitious, confident and aspirational individuals. Visitors include local artists, a priest from the armed forces and pilots from the air force. A notable example of this is the visit by one of the heroes who rescued young children from a cave in Thailand. This prompts pupils to write thoughtfully and encourages them to feel empathy towards others. Many teachers adopt a flexible planning method, which considers pupils' suggestions, in addition to local and international current events. For example, following the recent storm in Holyhead, pupils studied the geographical and human effect on the historical harbour and local residents.

Staff have a sound understanding of the principles and ethos of the foundation phase. They make good use of the areas both inside and outside the classroom to teach new skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. They provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to learn through practical experiences. For example, pupils reinforce their understanding of the order of numbers by 'walking the pirates' plank'.

Teachers and assistants identify their pupils' needs well. There is an excellent working relationship between them, which creates a respectful and stimulating learning environment across the school. As a result, nearly all pupils have an enthusiastic attitude towards learning.

Many teachers use effective teaching methods which engage the interest of all pupils. They present clear learning objectives to pupils and share them regularly to ensure that learning has a purpose. Teachers provide exciting lessons and organise imaginative activities to ensure that all pupils are given a valuable opportunity to work

in pairs, groups and independently. In the best practice, lesson presentations are lively and stimulate pupils to learn effectively. For example, staff act as one of the residents of the Tryweryn valley in order to discuss and emphasise empathy with key stage 2 pupils. In many classes, in which teaching is most effective, teachers plan valuable opportunities for pupils to work independently, and encourage them to persevere with any difficulties in their work. In these classes, teachers have high expectations and provide pupils with purposeful feedback to encourage them to think for themselves. In a minority of classes in which teaching is less effective, activities are not effective enough to support and challenge pupils of all abilities so that they make the best possible progress in lessons.

Teachers assess pupils' work correctly and make good use of their assessments to help pupils to understand their own strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers provide constructive praise at appropriate times and, as a result, have a good idea of pupils' understanding. In all classes, assistants help the teachers well and all adults question pupils skilfully in order to assess their understanding and challenge their ideas. Teachers plan beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills and digital competence to a good standard across the curriculum. However, the planning and delivery of numeracy skills have not been developed as well.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a caring and inclusive ethos in a familial environment. Pupils' wellbeing and happiness are a priority. Staff are successful in nurturing pupils' caring attitudes towards each other and their learning.

The school supports personal and social development successfully. Staff give good attention to providing meaningful experiences for pupils to be able to fulfil important duties as members of the school community. All of the school's staff value pupils' opinion and ideas and take them seriously, which means that the pupil's voice is a strength throughout the school. For example, older pupils and the 'Ffrindiau Ffeind' (Kind Friends) respond sensibly to other pupils' concerns and take valuable care of the younger pupils on the playground.

The school has clear plans to provide a variety of practical and stimulating learning experiences for pupils. They are successful in develop their awareness of their culture and heritage, their local community and the wider world. For example, most pupils are given valuable opportunities to work with local artists and, as a result, they produce creative work of an excellent standard.

The school provides a beneficial and wide range of experiences to develop pupils' creative skills effectively. The school organises regular art and music workshops, in addition to visits to residential centres. All of this makes a valuable contribution towards building pupils' self-confidence and social skills, and prepare them to become thoughtful and conscientious citizens.

All of the school's staff communicate well in order to identify and target pupils with additional learning needs. Teachers share individuals' plans and targets with parents and make good use of external agencies, when necessary. The school reviews pupils' targets regularly and includes pupils and all stakeholders appropriately in the process.

Teachers assess pupils' skills purposefully on entry to the school. There are useful systems to monitor and track pupils' achievement and wellbeing as they move through the school. These support pupils to identify and target purposeful support for pupils, including those with additional learning needs.

The school provides a beneficial range of interventions to support pupils to improve their basic skills in language, mathematics and wellbeing. The notable intervention for pupils with behavioural and wellbeing needs is very effective and ensures that these pupils have full access to the curriculum.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. It emphasises the importance of making wise decisions in terms of their lifestyle, and the importance of keeping fit. This has led to pupils playing a leading part in the process, by corresponding with parents to remind them about the school's healthy eating policy. The school also organises a number of purposeful activities to promote keeping fit. For example, teachers have organised a 'junior marathon' with pupils to raise money for a local charity as part of the key stage 2 theme work.

The school has a range of valuable links with local places of worship. This makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' spiritual development through weekly services. As part of the curriculum, pupils learn about Christianity and other religions, and about the cultures of other countries. This provision ensures that pupils are fully convinced that it is important for them to learn about other people's backgrounds. The school respects and welcomes pupils from various backgrounds and ensures that everyone feels at home. This nurtures pupils' positive attitudes effectively so that they are tolerant, and understand and respect differences.

As part of its caring ethos, the school celebrates pupils' successes regularly and takes advantage of daily opportunities to raise their awareness of values through daily assemblies. The emphasis on morals and spiritual development nurtures pupils' respect for themselves and others, which is characteristic of the pupils' excellent behaviour.

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

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides strong and robust leadership and sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school, with ambitious objectives for all pupils. He has shared the vision to strengthen Welshness in all aspects of school life to ensure that all pupils are fully bilingual when they leave the school. The headteacher and governors have conveyed this vision to staff, parents and pupils. This has led to establishing an inclusive learning community that focuses on developing this vision.

The school is supported very well by the governors. They have established comprehensive self-evaluation activities, which identify the school's strengths and most areas for improvement effectively. Their practice of monitoring and scrutinising performance across the school helps them to form a clear and accurate judgement about standards of pupils' work and achievement. As a result, they have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need to be developed further.

The school seeks the views of staff, parents and pupils regularly to ensure that all stakeholders are given a clear opportunity to make comments and suggestions to improve provision and raise standards. There are good links between the findings of self-evaluation procedures and the school development plan, which ensures that it is useful and effective. This is available to share on the school's intranet so that all teachers are able to provide input, which is then discussed in teachers' meetings. As a result, all staff have a sound understanding of the steps that they need to take to improve provision, including teaching.

The school's plans for developing staff link directly with current priorities and performance management procedures. They enrich the professional development of all staff very successfully. The school has good resources and leaders ensure that the budget is used purposefully to improve provision and standards. The significant investment in ICT equipment ensures that most pupils use their skills frequently and naturally. This means that there are good standards in this area.

Expenditure links well with the school's objectives, targets and improvement plans. The headteacher and governors monitor and manage expenditure very carefully and ensure that financial resources are used in full to support priorities for improvement. Because of the unstable nature of pupil numbers, the schools keeps reserves to ensures consistency in the school's staffing level. Purposeful use of grants, including the pupil development grant, ensures that the school is able to provide support to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and wellbeing. As a result, most of these pupils achieve as well as their peers.

The willingness of the headteacher and all staff to face changes and developments in the principles of the four aims of the Curriculum for Wales is innovative, and the creative aspect is a strong feature. Many pupils' art work is very good, and the respect that is given to display this work creates an attractive and colourful environment. Teachers have adapted provision to conduct practical and stimulating experiences and provide challenges for pupils to develop their independence. This engages nearly all pupils' interest. Agreed teaching strategies have been established with a clear emphasis on ensuring that pupils play an active part in their learning. The school's response to establishing the digital framework and promoting the Welsh language across the school is sound.

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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