



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Caerau  
Lon Caerau  
Caerau  
Cardiff  
CF5 5QZ**

**Date of inspection: January 2020**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Caerau

Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Caerau is situated in the Ely area in Cardiff local authority. It provides education through the medium of Welsh. There are 246 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 42 part-time nursery age pupils. The school has eight single-age classes. Very few pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes.

Over a three-year-period, around 26% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is significantly higher than the national percentage of 18%. The school has identified around 17% of its pupils as having special educational needs. This is lower than the national percentage of 21%.

The school was last inspected in May 2012. The current headteacher was appointed in September 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

The school is an inclusive and caring community, in which the headteacher and staff create a welcoming, supportive and hard-working environment for pupils. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make effective progress during their time at the school. Pupils use the Welsh language with pride and most pupils make good progress in their language skills.

All staff develop pupils' wellbeing diligently and conscientiously. Nearly all pupils enjoy attending school and show obvious enthusiasm towards their work. They have positive working relationships with staff and each other. As a result, nearly all pupils behave very well.

Teachers prepare lessons that engage pupils' interest purposefully and plan a range of interesting experiences that respond to their needs effectively.

Under the headteacher's robust leadership, leaders and staff have a clear vision. On the whole, they implement beneficial self-evaluation processes and address areas for improvement successfully.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills
- R2 Ensure appropriate opportunities for pupils to make choices in relation to their learning, so that they develop as independent learners
- R3 Strengthen the role of governors in monitoring the quality of provision and standards to enable them to challenge the school's performance

## **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' oral Welsh skills and number skills are lower than expected for their age. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make effective progress and achieve well by Year 6.

Many pupils' oral skills are good across the school. Many pupils who have no Welsh language skills on entry to the school use the language purposefully by the end of the reception class. In the foundation phase, many pupils use the Welsh language confidently in lessons and informal situations. Most pupils in Year 2 discuss confidently and maturely, for example about the effect of fires on the environment and nature. Many pupils make notable progress in their use of their Welsh oral skills as they move through the school. At the top of key stage 2, most explain and contribute briefly and maturely when debating 'should Tryweryn be flooded?'. They speak confidently in Welsh and English, and use formal language where appropriate. Most pupils' pride towards the Welsh language is evident as they talk about their work and their school. Overall, most pupils' listening skills are very effective.

In the foundation phase, many pupils develop their early reading skills effectively. By the end of the phase, many read fluently and recount stories confidently. They discuss their favourite characters purposefully. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils read accurately with a good understanding in both languages. They discuss the main events and characters, for example in the book 'The boy in the back of the classroom', enthusiastically. Most pupils gather information from different sources independently in order to produce written reports, for example about children's working conditions in the coalmines.

Many pupils' early skills in forming letters and beginning to write independently are developing effectively. By the end of the foundation phase, many write in different genres confidently. Good examples of this are their comparison of Mexico and Wales, and as they tell the story of Dwynwen. By Year 6, many pupils write extended pieces in a variety of styles successfully in both languages, and use interesting vocabulary to enrich their work. They present their ideas and knowledge effectively and show a sound grasp of spelling patterns, paragraphing and punctuation. Many pupils in key stage 2 write effectively for different purposes across the curriculum. For example, they create a magazine about Llangrannog, and write in creative ways to describe their own imaginary world. Most pupils' standards of handwriting and presentation are very neat across the school.

In mathematics lessons, most pupils make good progress in developing specific numeracy skills. In the foundation phase, most recognise, order and use numbers soundly, for example as they measure the size of the footprints of characters from the story of the Gruffalo, and place them in order from smallest to largest. Most use non-standard objects confidently to measure the length of different objects. Year 2 pupils collect temperature data from different areas in Australia, based on their theme about the country. They complete a spreadsheet successfully and display the data in the form of a bar graph. In key stage 2, many pupils have a sound understanding of place value. They present mathematics work at a level that is in line with their age

and ability. By Year 6, they write and handle numbers with up to six digits soundly as they complete a bank statement. They use a number of mental strategies confidently when multiplying and dividing whole numbers and decimals. Most pupils use their number skills confidently to reason, collect, record and analyse data, for example as they compare statistics about Wales. However, on the whole, they do not use their numeracy skills in various subjects often enough.

Most pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop effectively as they move through the school. In the foundation phase, many pupils develop their word-processing skills and draw pictures, for example of different nocturnal animals, purposefully. They also give instructions to a device to move around a floor map in different directions, and record their weather forecasts confidently. In key stage 2, most pupils create multimedia presentations effectively to present the Islamic faith, and older pupils create short films about homelessness. Most pupils in Year 6 create a database about different fish, and add information about countries in the Rugby World Cup to an interactive map successfully. Most pupils across the school save and show their work independently. They apply their ICT skills regularly across the curriculum.

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

Nearly all pupils at the school are happy. They feel safe at the school and know what to do if anything is worrying them. Most pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and what steps to take in order to receive support, where necessary. They are confident that the school responds promptly to any concerns they may have.

Nearly all pupils behave very well in lessons, as they move around the school and during playtimes and lunchtime. Nearly all pupils are caring towards each other and older pupils, and members of the 'grŵp law yn llaw' (hand in hand group) care for the school's youngest pupils during playtime successfully. Most pupils extend a warm welcome to visitors and treat all adults with respect. Most have a good awareness of fairness and the importance of equal opportunities.

Most pupils show a positive attitude towards their work and persevere well with tasks. They work effectively with their peers in groups and pairs, and respect each other's views. A good example of this is the co-operation, perseverance and support that a group of pupils provide to each other when planning and producing the digital magazine, 'Clecs Caerau'. Most pupils are ready to work at the beginning of lessons, and value the mindfulness sessions greatly. Older pupils feel that the opportunity to reflect in a calm environment prepares them well to cope with the day's activities and challenges. They listen attentively to presentations and move freely from one activity to the next. Many pupils contribute what they would like to learn during discovery afternoons successfully. However, they do not make independent choices often enough about how they would like to learn.

Many pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 take pride in the opportunities they are given to develop their role in representing the voice of other pupils. They undertake their roles of responsibility enthusiastically. A good example is the way in which the Criw Cymreictod encourages pupils to use the Welsh language incidentally. Members of the 'criw cydraddoldeb' (equality crew) have a successful influence on the school's happy and friendly environment by leaving uplifting messages around the school.

Through the energetic work of the eco committee, most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of reducing the use of plastic. Many pupils discuss the effect of regular exercise on their fitness levels and physical health and wellbeing confidently. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in physical education lessons and numerous extra-curricular activities, such as football and the Urdd's multisport club. Members of the school council have recently ensured that there is a secure area in which to lock bicycles on the school playground, and have organised an annual 'walk to school' week. They have also introduced equipment to be used on the school playground, to enable all pupils to practise their practical skills at break time and lunchtime.

Many pupils develop as moral and conscientious citizens by taking part in a number of fundraising activities or contributing to charities in their community, such as the local food bank and for the homeless. Digital leaders also visit a nearby residential home every other week to share their technology skills with the residents. This has a positive effect on their understanding of the needs of others and strengthens their understanding of social issues well.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Across the school, there is a good working relationship between staff and pupils, which has a positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing. Teachers create a supporting learning environment and a calm, peaceful atmosphere through a mindfulness session at the beginning of each day. They manage their behaviour skilfully and sensitively. All of this has a very successful effect on pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm towards their work.

The school is beginning to plan purposefully to address the new curriculum for Wales. Staff plan jointly and provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to influence planning at the beginning of their themes, which motivates them to play an active part in their learning. Teachers adapt planning skilfully to pursue pupils' ideas and lines of enquiry. For example, Year 2 pupils have recently shown empathy towards the bushfires in Australia, and the teacher has planned tasks purposefully and adapted their theme 'Yn y nos' (At night) in response to this. Staff provide a broad curriculum for pupils, which inspires them to learn effectively. For example, in order to develop the knowledge and skills of pupils in Year 6 to create a digital record of their experiences in Llangrannog, a cameraman and director from a television company in the city have presented the process of creating a film to them. These experiences strengthen pupils' engagement in their learning well.

All staff take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' language, which contributes beneficially towards developing pupils' oral skills. The strong Welsh ethos, in addition to provision, encourage pupils to make purposeful use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life. As a result, they develop as competent and confident bilingual learners. Teachers plan successfully to develop pupils' knowledge of Welsh history and culture. A good example is pupils' enthusiasm when explaining the significance of the school logo, which is based on a nearby fort, and their work on Owain Glyndŵr's influence on Wales. This reinforces pupils' sense of pride towards their local area and Welsh culture.

Most teachers ensure that their lessons have a good pace. They share the aim clearly and use a range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interest. On the whole, teachers set tasks with different levels of challenge, which are beginning to enable pupils to use their previous knowledge and thinking skills to try to solve problems. For example, Year 3 choose appropriate foods to create a food package for an astronaut. Teachers use questioning techniques purposefully to help pupils to understand new concepts and develop their knowledge and skills. A majority of teachers use assessment for learning, in addition to purposeful written comments, as a basis for providing pupils with purposeful feedback. As a result, many older pupils have a good understanding of what they are doing well and which aspects of their work need to be improved. They are beginning to contribute towards improving their own work suitably. However, although there are opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners, these are not consistent across the school. Staff have a tendency to over-direct activities across the school.

Teachers focus effectively on developing pupils' skills, and ensure that their plans and teaching provide opportunities for pupils to build on their abilities and previous knowledge. They develop pupils' literacy and ICT skills naturally as an integral part of planning. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in various subjects are inconsistent across the school.

On the whole, staff have embedded the foundation phase effectively. Through a number of varied activities, they introduce new skills, knowledge and understanding skilfully. Staff provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to learn through practical experiences in the indoor learning environment and outdoors.

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

The quality of care and guidance that are provided by the school is effective. This contributes successfully towards pupils' wellbeing, personal development and the good standards that they achieve. The calm atmosphere and caring ethos that permeate the school are strengths.

The school provides very effective support for vulnerable pupils in its nurture class each morning. These pupils benefit greatly from staff's expertise to support them emotionally, and this has a significant effect on improving their behaviour. One of the strengths of this provision is the genial way in which staff ensure that pupils develop effective social skills. As a result, all pupils rejoin their classes every afternoon. This provision has a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and on the progress that they make in their basic skills.

The school uses creative ways of including parents in their children's work. A successful example of this is the role of the family officer in providing support to parents and conducting a daily drop-in session to provide urgent support. Nursery and reception staff also conduct language and play workshops with the youngest pupils' parents on a weekly basis to enable parents to support their children at home. Parents appreciate the numerous methods that the school uses to contact them, particularly to share the work of each class every day. As a result, there is a close and supportive relationship between the school and parents.



The school has purposeful procedures to track pupils' progress and monitor their wellbeing. Staff identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Individual education plans focus well on individuals' specific needs and identify targets for improvement, which are shared purposefully with staff, parents and pupils. Staff monitor progress towards these targets beneficially and ensure that these pupils make good progress. Assistants make an excellent contribution by working skilfully to implement a wide range of purposeful intervention programmes, for example to provide programmes that build the co-operation skills of groups of pupils. The school has valuable partnerships with a range of external agencies that provide good support for pupils, for example the play therapist, who nurtures pupils' confidence and self-respect effectively.

Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is sound. There are good opportunities for pupils to experiment with a variety of art media, for example to create pictures similar to the work of famous artists, such as Kevin Burgess, and create models of sea creatures. Through opportunities to perform and compete at school and in the Urdd Eisteddfod, pupils' social skills and confidence develop well. Educational visits to places of interest, such as the museum at St Fagan's, Welsh shows and performances by pop musicians, increase pupils' awareness and appreciation of Welsh culture and history purposefully.

The school has robust procedures to promote eating and drinking healthily. At the beginning of each term, the pupil's voice has a positive influence on what extra-curricular physical activities the school provides each term. In addition to sports clubs, curricular activities increase pupils' knowledge well of what they need to do to stay healthy. Through circle time and mindfulness sessions, pupils have strong knowledge of moral and social aspects that can have a positive effect on them. Staff organise appropriate opportunities for pupils to experience spiritual elements by reflecting in collective worship sessions and learning about various religions in lessons. Through whole-school activities, such as anti-bullying and equality week, pupils gain respect for people from different cultures and backgrounds appropriately. The school is beginning to provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the wider world by studying Syria and inviting refugees to share their experiences with pupils.

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

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher has a very clear vision to create a homely and inclusive community. He shares this vision successfully with staff, governors, parents and pupils. The emphasis on ensuring pupils' wellbeing and Welshness has been embedded fully and is a natural part of the school's work. Staff work together effectively in order to maintain a positive, whole-school ethos, in which pupils feel happy and safe.

Staff with specific leadership responsibilities fulfil their roles effectively. Members of the senior management team use professional learning sessions and departmental meetings well as a platform to give feedback and inform other staff about developments in their areas or specific responsibilities. These meetings ensure that staff understand new initiatives and their part in delivering them. For example, they

lead on preparing aspects of the new curriculum for Wales and promoting Welshness. This has had a positive effect on adapting planning and raising the standard of pupils' oracy.

All staff work well within curricular teams. There are purposeful arrangements in place to manage their performance, and leaders provide them with valuable training opportunities. On the whole, targets address the school's priorities and national priorities appropriately, such as improving pupils' writing skills and providing more opportunities for pupils to contribute towards what they would like to learn.

The school is developing as an effective learning community. Within the school, staff's commitment to sharing their professional knowledge contributes effectively towards developing new methods of teaching and learning. For example, staff have introduced role-play areas across the school and plan effectively to develop pupils' digital skills in various subjects. This has led to a project with a nearby school to promote English literacy and ICT skills for pupils in Year 3. There are good links with other schools both inside and outside the cluster. This ensures beneficial opportunities to share good practice and reflect on the effect of their own practice on pupils' wellbeing. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for learning assistants to train in order to support individual pupils and implement a number of intervention programmes successfully.

The school has an appropriate programme for monitoring and evaluating a range of aspects of its work. On the whole, the self-evaluation process is purposeful and uses a wide range of first-hand evidence, including data analysis, scrutiny of books, lesson observations and conducting learning walks. Over time, the school has identified important areas for improvement, such as pupils' wellbeing. However, monitoring reports do not focus often enough on specific aspects that are in need of improvement.

The chair of governors, in addition to a number of members of the governing body, is experienced and understands the school's context well. Through presentations by the senior management team and many teachers, the governing body is developing its understanding of the school's performance and curricular developments purposefully. However, its role in holding the school to account for standards and pupils' attainment, and in contributing towards setting a strategic direction for the school, has not been developed in full.

The headteacher and governors ensure that the budget and additional grants link closely to the school's priorities, and expenditure is analysed carefully. The school makes creative use of the pupil development grant to improve the literacy and numeracy skills and wellbeing of those who are eligible to receive it. It employs teaching assistants to support pupils and has established a special haven for the most vulnerable pupils. As a result, these pupils make sound progress from their starting points.

## 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 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 the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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

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

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](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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