



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

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Chwilog

**Chwilog
Pwllheli
Gwynedd
LL53 6PS**

Date of inspection: May 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gynradd Chwilog

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Chwilog
Local authority	Gwynedd Council
Language of the provider	Welsh-medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	67
Pupils of statutory school age	47
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	14
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 21.3%)</i>	1.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 20.6%)</i>	12.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	87.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/01/2013

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

(a) The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Ysgol Gynradd Chwilog is a happy and homely school. All staff work together successfully to create a familial, friendly and Welsh ethos. As a result, pupils enjoy attending school very much. The way in which staff promote Welsh culture, heritage and the Welsh language is a significant strength across the school.

Nearly all pupils behave excellently. They take responsibility for their behaviour and are aware of the high expectations of adults. They are caring towards their peers, treat adults respectfully and are polite to visitors, whether in lessons or during break time. Pupils use the Welsh language highly effectively and speak completely naturally in an interesting range of learning contexts. They talk to each other, staff and visitors enthusiastically and naturally and show innate pride when speaking Welsh. Most pupils' creative skills are a strength at the school and, as a result, they develop to become creative learners who convey themselves with increasing confidence.

The school is administered effectively by a management team who have identified the important aspects for improvement, in addition to the necessary steps for implementing them. The school's monitoring and evaluation activities are insightful and accurate. The headteacher shares his vision, '*gwreiddiau cryf, canghennau uchel*' ('strong roots, high branches') clearly with everyone and the school community works diligently to realise it. The governing body is supportive of the school. Members have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, the governors' role as critical friends is limited.

Teachers plan effective activities that support pupils to make good progress in their literacy and numeracy skills. One of the most effective features of provision is that teachers tailor learning activities to take advantage of stimulating opportunities to challenge pupils to succeed. Learning experiences support pupils to develop their skills in real-life learning contexts. However, teachers do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the areas of learning.

Recommendations

R1 Provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills across the areas of learning

R2 Develop the role of governors as critical friends

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Learning

On entry to the school, most pupils have the skills that are expected for their age and ability. During their time at the school, they make strong progress in their skills from their starting points and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills successfully. They recall information quickly and interact effectively with each other. Most pupils show pure enjoyment in their work and immerse themselves fully in their learning.

One of the school's strongest qualities is that nearly all pupils develop their oral Welsh skills highly effectively and speak eloquently in an interesting range of learning contexts. They talk enthusiastically and naturally with each other, staff and visitors and show innate pride when speaking Welsh. For example, pupils in the reception class discuss the features of a bee skilfully and state that a bee has a "*pigyn pigog fel drain*" ("sting that is prickly like a thorn"). Pupils in Years 1 and 2 expand their vocabulary skilfully by discussing wildlife on the school's grounds. As pupils move through the school, they have a good grasp of language patterns and apply the Welsh language effectively when discussing subjects and presenting information. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils discuss the establishment of the National Health Service and present information about Aneurin Bevan confidently. By the end of their time at the school, most develop their oral skills effectively and discuss their work completely confidently in Welsh and English. They use vocabulary confidently in both languages, develop their discussion skills and present information highly intelligently.

Most pupils' reading skills develop soundly as they move through the school. Pupils in the reception class and Year 1 make effective progress in their understanding of letter sounds and are beginning to use reading methods well, for example when reading instructions on how to make cakes. Pupils in Year 2 are confident when reading a challenging range of learning texts and discuss the content with increasing confidence by using refined vocabulary. The school's oldest pupils build soundly on their skills, for example by using extended vocabulary, such as '*ffagl*' ('torch') and '*sleifio*' ('sneak') when discussing and appreciating the legend of Cantre'r Gwaelod. Most of the school's oldest pupils develop their reading skills highly effectively and use their knowledge of Welsh and English skilfully, for example when reading and analysing multimedia texts as part of their work on migratory birds.

Most pupils develop their writing skills successfully. The youngest pupils make marks when labelling the features of birds confidently. Nearly all pupils' skills develop highly effectively by the end of Year 2, for example by writing a letter to a pirate. They use an interesting range of adjectives and enrich the creativity of their work by using original idioms and similes. The standard of the youngest pupils' writing skills is a strength and this firm foundation gives pupils the confidence to develop their skills successfully as they move through the school. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils use words effectively when creating a poem about Owain Glyndŵr. At the top of the school, most pupils apply their writing skills confidently across the areas of learning and use Welsh and English skilfully. For example, the oldest pupils use language creatively when writing a television script following a visit by lifeboat officers to the school. Most pupils respect their work by presenting it neatly.

Most pupils' mathematics skills are developing consistently well. The school's youngest pupils develop their understanding of the value of digits from 0-20 effectively, for example as they count and add the number of legs that different insects have in the outdoor classroom. By Year 2, they apply their knowledge confidently by problem-solving, for example when measuring water volume to the nearest 50ml to create a habitat for insects in the wildlife pond. As pupils move through the school, most use their previous learning skilfully. For example, they solve practical problems by developing their understanding of co-ordinates further when planning their trip to Ynys Llanddwyn. By Year 6, they work together confidently to use the range of numeracy skills to take part in a variety of challenging activities. For example, they calculate the electricity supply needed to power a flashlight they have created successfully.

Many pupils make consistent progress in their ICT skills. Pupils in the reception class develop their digital skills effectively when inputting instructions in a programmable toy as part of their work on the story of Goldilocks. Year 1 and 2 pupils make relevant progress when gathering information about insects by using software to place facts in a pictogram. The school's oldest pupils use a range of software to present work across the areas of learning, for example by creating a presentation about an evacuee during the theme on the Second World War. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 apply their digital skills appropriately, for example as they input data into a spreadsheet to record the heart rate of their peers as part of their work on keeping fit. On the whole, pupils' ICT skills are developing suitably. However, a minority of pupils do not use their ICT skills regularly enough across the range of learning activities.

Most pupils' creative skills are a strength at the school. As part of the '*Plant Prysur*' provision in the outdoor classroom, pupils in the reception class knead playdough skilfully when re-creating a swallow. Older pupils compose and English rap when deepening their understanding of the importance of recycling and present it enthusiastically. Most pupils develop their creative skills by undertaking artwork skilfully, for example by changing and adapting the tone of a pencil to create effect when working with a local artist. As a result, pupils develop to become creative learners who convey themselves with increasing confidence.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils show pride in being members of the school's close-knit family and enjoy the rich learning experiences that support their learning. One of the school's strengths is the way in which pupils treat each other, adults and visitors with respect and courtesy.

Nearly all pupils behave excellently. They take responsibility for their behaviour at all times throughout the day and are aware of the high expectations of adults. They are caring towards their peers, treat adults respectfully and are polite to visitors, whether in lessons or during break time.

Pupils feel safe and healthy at the school and know who to approach if they have any concerns. They know how to stay healthy and what steps they need to follow to stay safe online, for example using a strong pseudonym when communicating digitally.

One of the most prominent qualities of the pupils is the way that they apply themselves enthusiastically to their learning and explain their findings effectively, for example when explaining the effect of the over-use of plastic.

Nearly all pupils use a range of learning methods confidently and successfully when finding the answers to questions and solving various problems. They develop their skills to work independently, in pairs or as part of a group effectively when persevering with tasks. They show confidence when responding to experts who visit the school, for example when the school nurse presents relevant information about food digestion in the intestine.

Nearly all pupils contribute to activities at the beginning of a theme by providing creative suggestions, such as possible lines of enquiry, for example studying a habitat for swallows that have nested on the school's grounds recently. They take pride in their work, whether orally, in a book or digitally. Most pupils show enthusiasm and intelligence when recalling previous learning, for example when explaining thoroughly how they develop their digital skills by working with a partner to create and perform a script on Cantre'r Gwaelod.

Nearly all pupils have physical skills that are appropriate for their age. They use these skills energetically when using the adventure course on the school field. This develops pupils' interest in taking part in regular physical activity.

Nearly all pupils have a good awareness of the need to protect the planet, for example through activities and discussions about a global environmental conference. They design areas in the garden and plant hedges to create suitable habitats for insects by using and recycling bits and pieces effectively.

Pupils who have been elected to represent their peers on the school's councils shoulder responsibility with passion and enthusiasm. They give other pupils an opportunity to express an opinion about whole-school developments and work resiliently to steer provision, for example by designing a new sign for the school entrance.

Following the pandemic, inspectors are not reporting on pupil attendance rates during the 2021-2022 academic year. Instead, the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance will be reported on as part of Inspection Area 4.

Teaching and learning experiences

All of the school's staff share the same vision, which has a clear focus on providing a rich range of learning experiences for pupils. Through this vision, staff engage and maintain pupils' interest and meet their needs skilfully. Teachers plan activities that support pupils to make good progress in their literacy and numeracy skills. One of the most effective features of provision is that teachers tailor learning activities skilfully and take advantage of stimulating opportunities to challenge pupils to succeed. For example, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy and creative skills highly effectively when planning wind turbines as part of their work on creating renewable energy. As a result, these learning experiences support pupils to develop their skills constructively in real-life contexts. However, teachers do not

provide regular enough opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills across the areas of learning.

On the whole, the curriculum builds systematically and cohesively on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure progression as they move through the school. This provides a firm foundation as staff develop their plans further to introduce the Curriculum for Wales.

Pupils are given relevant opportunities to share ideas as part of their learning activities. For example, staff provide opportunities for the youngest pupils to apply their skills successfully in activities that they have suggested as part of the '*Plant Prysur*' provision. The oldest pupils are given valuable opportunities to organise educational trips that deepen their understanding and broaden their knowledge effectively. These opportunities provide beneficial activities for pupils to make purposeful choices about their learning.

Provision that supports pupils to take pride in the Welsh language and their heritage is at the heart of the school's success, for example as the youngest pupils sing familiar Welsh nursery rhymes and songs enthusiastically. The school's oldest pupils work with a local creative artist to compose modern words to the tune of *Moliannwn* and perform the whole piece charmingly. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to build on this firm foundation when planning activities that represent the cultural and diverse nature of Wales and the wider world. This support pupils to discuss contemporary issues and broaden their horizons skilfully.

Teachers and assistants work together highly effectively by providing a rich range of learning experiences. For example, staff provide opportunities for the youngest pupils to work together effectively to create a hide to watch the swallows that have nested at the school. The oldest pupils' staff plan activities skilfully to expand all pupils' understanding and deepen their knowledge effectively.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to achieve to the best of their ability in the indoor and outdoor classrooms. The youngest pupils' staff take advantage of every opportunity to promote the principles of the foundation phase highly successfully, for example by creating an area to support pupils when investigating insects. As pupils move through the school, most develop to become creative learners, for example as they develop their design skills as part of the '*Prendigedig*' enterprise project. Staff facilitate learning skilfully and support pupils to take increasing ownership of their learning which, in turn, encourages them to become independent learners.

Staff challenge pupils effectively and question them skilfully. Teachers provide timely support wisely to support pupils. Leaders monitor pupils' progress and achievement appropriately. By doing so, teachers adapt provision to meet pupils' needs. This ensures that learning activities allow pupils to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement. Pupils receive relevant information about their children's progress, which enables them to support them at home, for example by developing their handwriting skills.

Care, support and guidance

The way in which staff promote Welsh culture, heritage and the Welsh language is a significant strength across the school. As a result, pupils' pride in their Welshness is highly effective. The Welsh and Welsh language ethos within the school spreads successfully to the local community.

The school promotes the importance of good behaviour, courtesy, respect and commitment very successfully. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent. The school's arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Staff promote and support a strong culture of safety and well-being within the school and online. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe at the school and take pride in their community and the various opportunities they are given.

The school provides robust provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Staff acknowledge the importance of early intervention and provide comprehensive support for individuals and groups of pupils from a young age. Teachers and learning assistants work together closely to ensure that pupils receive purposeful guidance. The school works closely with a variety of external agencies to provide valuable support for pupils, for example reading and mathematics support programmes to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of groups of pupils. As a result, all pupils with ALN have an effective individual education plan. These include relevant information and appropriate targets for pupils to progress successfully in their learning.

Staff support pupils with emotional and social needs skilfully and provide purposeful support programmes. They hold specialist workshops for the parents of pupils with ALN. This enables them to support their children effectively.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development successfully. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to celebrate pupils' successes during collective worship assemblies. Pupils are also given opportunities to take part by leading the worship, for example as pupils lead a prayer for their peers.

Staff encourage pupils to be responsible citizens who are willing to help others. There are a number of active committees at the school that meet regularly and their contribution to the work of the school and the community is very valuable. They promote the pupil's voice and encourage them to shoulder responsibilities and make sensible decisions. A notable example of this is the work of the committee to establish a '*Cyfaill*' ('Friend') strategy between the school's pupils. This successful strategy supports pupils and encourages them to take care of each other.

The school has robust procedures to promote eating and drinking healthily. As a result, most pupils talk confidently about healthy eating habits and understand the importance of a balanced diet. Pupils take part in various competitions and local tournaments. They are given appropriate opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities, for example the football and netball clubs, to develop their physical skills. Balance and fitness sessions on the school's adventure course enrich pupils' experiences successfully. These effective arrangements motivate pupils to keep fit. The school promotes pupils' well-being purposefully and encourages them to take

responsibility for their mental health, in addition to their physical health. A good example of this is the daily mindfulness sessions that are held in the classrooms.

To enrich provision, the school has a highly effective partnership with parents and the community. Through robust co-operation, the school keeps parents informed successfully about their children's progress. Staff organise regular activities to raise parents' awareness of different ways of supporting their children, for example by holding training on reading strategies to use at home. As a result, this has promoted reading skills with parents and their children successfully.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides a clear and robust strategic direction for the school. He has a creative vision that has been shared successfully with the school's partners. This close-knit partnership ensures that pupils develop as healthy and confident individuals in a happy, safe and welcoming community. The headteacher has high expectations of himself, the staff and pupils and, as a result, a caring, hard-working and Welsh ethos permeates all of the school's activities.

One of the notable features of his vision, '*gwreiddiau cryf, canghennau uchel*' ('strong roots, high branches'), is the focus on providing a rich range of real-life activities that support pupils to develop the skills necessary for the jobs of the future. Leaders take advantage of the expertise of parents and the wider community through visits to the school to share their talents and experiences with pupils. For example, pupils use their construction skills skilfully when making a performance stage in the outdoor classroom. Staff have a good proactive relationship with parents, which encourages them to be a key part of the school's life. The headteacher shares useful and timely information with parents, which ensures their understanding of all the school's activities.

Leaders' self-evaluation arrangements are effective. They consider first-hand evidence and the contributions of staff when evaluating the school's performance. Information from monitoring activities is used appropriately to set clear priorities for improvement. For example, leaders have identified the need to develop pupils' physical skills, which has already led to investing in an adventure course on the school field. On the whole, priorities focus firmly on supporting pupils to make progress in their skills. Leaders also address local and national priorities effectively, for example by responding to the requirements of the ALN Act.

The headteacher is extremely enthusiastic in developing opportunities for staff to co-operate both inside and outside the school, for example by establishing a valuable network between staff from the school and local schools. This purposeful co-operation is useful for sharing staff's ideas and planning opportunities for pupils to take part in activities that enrich their learning experiences. A good example of this is the way in which staff come together to develop their plans to introduce the Curriculum for Wales further.

Staff's leadership skills are developing soundly, which contributes successfully to creating strong leadership arrangements for the school. For example, teachers take advantage of purposeful professional learning opportunities to strengthen their leadership skills. They respond to the priorities in the school development plan

skilfully, for example as they lead changes in provision that supports pupils to develop their skills in the outdoor classroom. This arrangement of delegated leadership ensures that plans to introduce the Curriculum for Wales are developing appropriately and provides beneficial management of the school.

The governing body is dedicated and supportive of the school and has focused successfully on solving a number of important issues. Members have ensured that the school has stable leadership and a team of dedicated staff. By working with leaders and discussing examples of work with pupils, they have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, governors do not hold leaders to account for pupils' standards effectively enough. As a result, the role of governors as critical friends is limited.

The headteacher and governors plan expenditure carefully. They ensure that the budget and grants to develop provision are spent prudently. Expenditure links purposefully with the priorities in the development plan, which is monitored appropriately. For example, leaders provide opportunities for an assistant to follow training to provide a support programme to support vulnerable pupils. Governors also support the school appropriately by promoting eating and drinking healthily.

Leaders support staff to develop professionally by offering a wide range of training that aligns with the school's priorities for improvement. For example, staff take advantage of professional learning opportunities to provide woodwork activities in the Wood Hut. This promotes creativity in a supportive learning environment that nurtures pupils' enthusiasm effectively.

Nearly all parents praise the school's robust leadership and its influence on the dedication and expertise of all of the school's staff. The school has a caring mindset and a familial ethos. Effective communication between the school and its stakeholders ensures that nearly all parents play their part in the school's successes.

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/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, 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
- 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' well-being, 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 (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/>)

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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