



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

A report on
Ysgol Gynradd Y Tymbl

**Heol-y-Neuadd
Tumble
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA14 6HR**

Date of inspection: October 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gynradd y Tymbl

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd y Tymbl
Local authority	Carmarthenshire County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	140
Pupils of statutory school age	98
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	20
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 23.0%)</i>	23.8%
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 16.1%)</i>	28.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	12.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	12/11/2013

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 y Tymbl is a happy, caring and homely community. All staff work together effectively to provide an inclusive and friendly ethos where pupils are polite and behave respectfully. They treat their peers, staff and visitors with care. Most pupils show a positive attitude to learning and make extremely sound progress from their starting points. On the whole, a minority of pupils do not have the confidence to speak Welsh fluently enough with each other or adults. Many pupils develop their numeracy and digital skills well by the end of their time at the school. However, the reading culture does not encourage a majority of pupils to enjoy and make progress in their reading skills. Most pupils develop their creative skills highly effectively and their work is displayed and celebrated attractively around the school.

Staff have developed a broad and interesting curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge of the areas of learning and experience effectively. By doing so, pupils are confident in their knowledge of local history and traditions. Teachers' high expectations support pupils to complete work of a high standard and present their work in a polished and neat way. Staff identify the needs of all pupils exceptionally well and tailor learning support sensitively, where applicable.

Ysgol Gynradd y Tymbl is federated with Ysgol Llechyfedach. The headteacher, who works across both sites, has developed a team of staff who are passionate and conscientious. They work together successfully to share best practice across both schools to provide an exciting and interesting education for all pupils. Although both schools work together closely, for example by sharing educational trips and staff expertise, they have succeeded in fostering and maintaining their own unique identity.

Recommendations

R1 Develop pupils' oral Welsh skills across the school

R2 Strengthen provision to support pupils to enjoy and make progress in their reading skills

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

During their time at the school, many pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who are eligible for free school meals, make extremely sound progress from their starting points. They develop their skills to communicate with increasing confidence in Welsh and English and develop their numeracy and digital skills successfully by the end of their time at the school. They develop their knowledge and understanding of different areas regularly in learning contexts that are often based on local history and traditions.

Across the school, most pupils listen well to each other and adults and respect the views of others. Many of the youngest pupils develop their Welsh speaking skills beneficially and make an effort to speak while enjoying their learning. For example, they talk happily when conducting an experiment to see which material is best for Alffi's raincoat. As pupils move through the school, a majority develop their speaking and digital skills effectively when presenting information, for example when developing specific vocabulary about the properties of materials in their science work. On the whole, a minority of pupils do not gain enough confidence to speak fluently enough with each other and adults. This hinders their ability to develop vocabulary and patterns constructively, particularly in Welsh, when expressing themselves in a range of formal and informal situations.

A majority of pupils' reading skills develop appropriately as they move through the school. The youngest pupils deepen their knowledge of letter sounds skilfully and, by Year 2, they use a good range of reading techniques. For example, they immerse themselves completely when listening to, reading and re-telling the story of St Dwynwen. As their skills develop, a majority make consistent progress and read books that engage their interest appropriately. The oldest pupils use their higher-order reading skills beneficially, for example by finding and collecting information to create a script about the miners' strike in 1984. However, a minority of pupils do not develop their reading skills soundly enough in line with their age and ability. The reading offer is limited and the culture does not encourage a majority of pupils to enjoy reading independently. As a result, this slows their progress in reading at length in a rich range of learning contexts.

Many pupils develop their writing skills effectively as they move through the school. The youngest pupils make large marks in a good range of experiences and write words and simple sentences skilfully, for example when describing a hedgehog. By Year 2, many use adjectives and similes with increasing accuracy, for example when writing about Christmas lights. The oldest pupils use interesting vocabulary and phrases when composing a range of creative poetry. At the top of the school, most pupils' writing skills are sound and they present factual and creative information in an interesting range of learning contexts. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils develop their vocabulary successfully when writing an article about the Aberfan disaster. Teachers' high expectations support pupils to achieve work of a high standard and present work in a polished and neat way.

Many pupils' mathematics skills are developing soundly across the school. In the reception class, many count up to 10 and back confidently and deepen their

understanding of place value skilfully. As pupils move through the school, they have a sound grasp of a good range of mathematics skills and develop them systematically. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils estimate and measure the distance from the village of Tumble to different towns in Wales with a good level of accuracy. The oldest pupils are challenged regularly to use their numeracy skills skilfully in an interesting range of learning contexts. For example, they work together effectively when calculating the cost of resources and sales profit as part of their initiative to make poppies when fundraising for charity as part of their work on the Second World War.

Many pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop effectively in interesting activities across the areas of learning. The youngest pupils use technology to support their literacy and numeracy skills. As pupils' skills develop, many include pictures and text and present factual information skilfully, for example when creating an advertisement about healthy foods. By Year 6, many use software effectively to add a voiceover and music to an image relating to the Second World War. They edit their creative work into an interactive presentation skilfully to respond to the needs of the audience.

Most pupils develop their creative skills highly effectively and their work is celebrated attractively around the learning environment. They immerse themselves in a variety of interesting activities that encourage them to develop their skills further, for example when pupils in Year 1 and 2 perform a piece of music by following a graphic score about fireworks. The oldest pupils develop their art skills skilfully by adding relevant detail when emulating the work of Welsh artists. Pupils are given an opportunity to compete each year in a variety of competitions in Eisteddfod Gadeiriol y Tymbl.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Most pupils enjoy being at school and feel happy within its inclusive, homely and caring ethos. Nearly all pupils say that they feel safe at the school and know whom to approach if anything is worrying them. They are given valuable opportunities to express how they feel, to explain what is important to them and describe how adults at the school can support them and help them to learn. Many of the school's pupils have a sound awareness of the digital world and how to keep themselves and others safe online.

Most pupils behave well across the school and understand the importance of respecting rules, which has a positive influence on their day-to-day behaviour. They are polite and considerate of others and treat their peers, familiar adults and visitors to the school with respect and care. As a result, they develop as moral, knowledgeable and responsible citizens who understand how their actions affect others.

They work effectively with each other and listen attentively to the views of others, for example when building a shelter as part of the theme on the Second World War. They are enthusiastic learners who are happy to give tasks a try, understand that it is fine to make mistakes and that it is an important part of the learning process. Most are aware of their targets for improvement and consider them when completing their daily tasks. For example, the school's older pupils explain specific aspects of their

writing that they need to develop and are given valuable opportunities to improve their work.

Across the school, most pupils listen attentively to instructions and presentations and concentrate successfully for extended periods. Overall, pupils of all ages and abilities demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and apply themselves enthusiastically to their tasks when dealing with challenges and solving problems. At the top of the school, pupils develop their enterprise skills successfully by planning, cooking and selling their produce as part of their '*Cadw'n Iach a Heini*' ('Keeping Fit and Healthy') theme. As a result, many pupils develop to become ambitious and skilful learners who show confidence when choosing tasks independently.

Many pupils appreciate that they are given valuable opportunities to undertake a wide range of rich and interesting activities. They suggest ideas to be included in their themes and discuss sensibly with their teachers. They appreciate that teachers listen to their views in the classrooms and include their ideas when planning. Most pupils understand how to make healthy choices in relation to eating, drinking and physical activity. They develop their physical skills effectively by undertaking a range of physical activities enthusiastically during lessons and after school. They are aware of the importance of taking care of their mental well-being and develop effective strategies to help them if they are worried.

The pupil's voice is developing effectively and pupils are beginning to have a beneficial influence on the school's decisions. For example, the oldest pupils contribute to the school's life and work by running a pop-up shop to sell sunflowers to raise money for the Ukraine Appeal. Most pupils contribute regularly to various charities. This has a positive effect on their understanding of the needs of others, both locally and nationally. Pupils on the Eco Committee also develop an appropriate awareness of the importance of sustainability and how they can help to take care of their world.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school's curriculum is broad and engaging and ensures that most pupils engage fully with their learning. Leaders and teachers consider the needs of different groups of pupils successfully, including those who have been identified as having additional learning needs and those from disadvantaged homes.

Leaders have established a robust vision for introducing the Curriculum for Wales. Useful working groups, which include staff from both schools, work together closely to share expertise, develop their plans and meet pupils' needs. Valuable resources such as '*y cwpwrdd*' ('the cupboard'), which is a virtual location where a rich range of planning documents are kept, promote co-operation successfully. The use of effective plans to promote pupils' spoken Welsh is beginning to have a positive effect on their confidence when using the language in different contexts. Leaders have created a useful plan, '*pen-i-gamp*', which outlines techniques and activities for staff to use when supporting pupils' numeracy skills.

The curriculum provides an interesting balance of learning experiences which develop pupils' skills consistently across the range of ages and abilities. The youngest pupils' teachers and assistants ensure that effective learning experiences are embedded skilfully in the learning areas in the classroom and the outdoor areas.

Overall, provision to develop pupils' skills is sound and many make purposeful progress. However, the reading environment and range of texts do not support the enjoyment and progress of a minority of pupils to make consistent progress in their reading skills.

Across the federation, teachers and assistants listen to pupils' ideas and work together to incorporate them in their work. There are regular opportunities for pupils to suggest the next direction they would like to follow when working on different broad and interesting themes.

Both schools work together successfully in developing pupils' awareness of the area's history, culture and traditions, and look at the Tumble and Llechyfedach area in a wider context. Working together as a federation promotes this successfully, for example by using familiar place names, such as Mynydd Mawr and Y Gors, for the classes. A notable example of an activity that is inherent to the local area is the poignant written work by Years 5 and 6 discussing children who worked in the coalmines many years ago. The oldest pupils also learned about Jac Tŷ Isha, a local character who was exiled to Australia during the nineteenth century. These learning experiences promote the pride of pupils in Tumble in their heritage and their square mile.

There is a close and highly supportive working relationship across all of the school's classes. Teachers and assistants know the pupils and their families very well and ensure that all pupils feel safe and happy in their classes. Across the schools in the federation, teachers question skilfully and encourage pupils to move forward in their learning and test their understanding. Learning aims are discussed and shared skilfully with pupils in line with their age and ability. There is a very close working relationship between pupils and teachers, and pupils understand the importance of feedback in developing their work. Good procedures have been established and there are regular opportunities for pupils to give their partner feedback, before the teacher provides concise and useful written feedback. As a result, the oldest pupils have a good grasp of what they need to do to develop their work further. Relevant information about pupils' progress and well-being is shared beneficially with parents.

In most lessons, teachers provide an effective range of activities. These are often graded with support in more structured steps for specific groups of pupils. Teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to offer ideas about the direction in which they would like to take their learning, for example by setting a specific context for completing certain tasks.

Activities in the form of rich tasks allow staff and pupils to bring different elements of the areas of learning and experience together. For example, a healthy mind and keep fit project, such as '*Shwmae ffres*', provides opportunities for the oldest pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills skilfully, including comparing costs and profit. Teachers share information on the school's secure social websites to promote awareness of the work locally. Challenging '*datrys mewn deg*' ('solve in ten') tasks promote pupils' independence successfully.

Leaders and teachers develop rich opportunities for pupils to make choices about the most effective method of completing a task in specific contexts. For example, as a result of an educational visit, pupils chose how they would like to summarise their response to the trip. Some pupils chose to use computer equipment to create a film

clip and others decided to use a cartoon to express their views on the visit. These activities promote pupils' independent learning skills successfully.

Care, support and guidance

The supportive relationships between staff and pupils contribute soundly to creating a caring community with a calm and homely ethos. Teachers and assistants know the pupils well and respond extensively to their emotional and social needs. The positive attitude of the staff and positive environment in all classes support pupils to settle quickly and develop their independence and creativity skills beneficially. This encourages pupils to foster positive attitudes to learning. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Teachers follow established arrangements, such as the class overview, which is a means of creating a comprehensive picture of individual pupils as they move through the school. They use one-page profiles at the front of pupils' workbooks to develop a sound understanding of all pupils' needs. The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) works highly effectively with officers from the local authority. They provide staff with valuable support to understand their roles in full as they support pupils with additional needs to make good progress against their support targets. As a result, pupils receive efficient and inclusive support to provide and implement purposeful support targets to improve pupils' learning and their personal and social skills.

Support programmes to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and well-being are comprehensive and most pupils respond enthusiastically to these activities. As a result, most pupils who receive further support make good progress from their individual starting points. Support sessions, which focus on pupils' well-being, are effective and encourage nearly all pupils to express their feelings. "*Fi yw Fi*" ("I am Me") celebrations enrich pupils' self-respect and enable them to share their feelings with others successfully. This has had a positive effect on the behaviour of most pupils. The school works effectively with local schools and external agencies to provide pupils with specialist support. They support pupils with educational, emotional and social needs skilfully.

The school plans a range of beneficial trips and visits to enrich the curriculum. Pupils also visit the local area, which engages and maintains pupils' interest in learning successfully. For example, pupils visit the local butcher to learn about the heart and to buy goods to make pizza.

School assemblies contribute soundly to developing pupils' moral and spiritual attitudes, for example as pupils learn about various religions. Various activities to support pupils' emotional well-being are effective, for example as pupils take part in a sensory treasure hunt outdoors. Written work on bullying, COP 26 discussions and research on equality promote pupils' understanding of the importance of the school's values, such as happiness, respect and responsibility. These activities contribute positively to nurture pupils' understanding to become principled and knowledgeable citizens. Opportunities to foster pupils' leadership skills are developing appropriately.

Rich opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their understanding and celebrate Welsh heritage and culture, which include research into the origins of local place names. Teachers present activities skilfully, for example by providing

opportunities for pupils to conduct research on Betty Campbell. The school's link with a child in Brazil provides an opportunity for pupils to explore issues relating to national and international equality, diversity and inclusion. A positive element of these lessons is the high standard of questioning that encourages intelligent discussions by pupils. For example, pupils research the jobs that are available to men and women and compare salaries around the world. As a result, pupils' thinking skills develop well as they discover more about the topic in question.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has established a robust vision for the federation, which is based on creating a happy and inclusive environment that promotes the development of all pupils' skills and emotional, physical and social well-being to their fullest. This vision is shared effectively across both schools and all staff are passionate about providing exciting and interesting opportunities for pupils. One of the federation's notable strengths is the way in which staff work together regularly to share good practice and learn with and from each other. As a result, pupils receive similar experiences within the same supportive and caring ethos. A prominent feature of the schools is that leaders and staff succeed in fostering and maintaining the unique identities of both schools. The headteacher has high expectations of herself, staff and pupils and encourages all pupils to enjoy their learning in an inclusive learning environment. As a result, pupils are polite and welcoming and give of their best in developing their skills across the areas of learning.

The headteacher has ensured that there are robust arrangements in place to evaluate pupils' progress and provision. Leaders have a clear and detailed timetable which guides the school's self-evaluation and improvement procedures. This includes a wide range of appropriate monitoring activities that leaders and teachers implement conscientiously. Monitoring reports are detailed and identify strengths and areas that are in need of attention accurately. Leaders use the outcomes of these activities effectively to set sensible priorities for improvement.

Governors are very supportive of the federation since being established as one united body. Although governors have not resumed their usual self-evaluation activities in full following the pandemic, such as learning walks, they continue to be very knowledgeable about the school's main issues. They receive beneficial information from leaders about the federation's life and work, which reinforces their knowledge and understanding well. They have a thorough grasp of pupils' progress and provision that has been established to support areas for improvement. For example, they are fully aware of the effect of the lockdown periods during the pandemic on pupils' emotional well-being and linguistic skills, alongside the support programmes and linguistic plans that have been developed to remedy this. They challenge staff about pupils' progress and the success of provision regularly. They recognise the advantages and benefits of being part of a federation and make decisions for both schools effectively.

Leaders manage funding carefully and organise the school's resources effectively. The school has a good range of resources and there is plenty of equipment of a high standard to meet pupils' needs purposefully. The outdoor areas for the youngest pupils' classes and around the school, such as the '*Sgubor Sgiliau*' and the '*Cartws*', are stimulating areas that enrich pupils' learning experiences effectively. Leaders make effective use of a number of different grants, for example by using the pupil

development grant to conduct support programmes and well-being groups. As a result, most pupils are more willing to undertake tasks both inside and outside the classroom.

Staff performance management arrangements are effective. Assistants are part of the process by discussing their needs with the class teacher and assistant headteachers. This means that they have purposeful targets and opportunities to receive training that helps them when working with pupils, for example when delivering activities as part of the mental numeracy scheme.

Regular professional learning opportunities are available to staff, which link closely with their personal professional needs and the school's priorities for improvement. They meet regularly to share ideas and support each other, for example by giving short presentations on effective teaching practices. As a result, there is a highly effective ethos of co-operation between both schools, which contributes productively to the strong sense of teamwork within the federation. Leaders work closely with a network of other federated schools. This provides purposeful opportunities for them to share and learn from the successful practices of similar schools.

The school has forged a productive relationship with parents. They appreciate that staff are welcoming and that there is effective co-operation between the school and home, for example when a parent supported families with their digital skills during the lockdown periods. Staff have recently held a coffee morning to support parents as they support their children with language and number work at home.

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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