



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

A report on

Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni

**Llangefni
Anglesey
LL77 7NG**

Date of inspection: January 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni

Name of provider	Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	686
Pupils of statutory school age	582
Number in sixth form	104
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Secondary is 20.2%)	15.4%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Secondary is 17.8%)	25.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	78.5%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	09/01/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	05/05/2014
Start date of inspection	23/01/2023

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to 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 Gyfun Llangefni provides care and well-being of the highest quality for its pupils so that they can succeed, whatever their needs. Staff succeed in creating a sense of family and know the pupils very well. Provision for additional learning needs (ALN) is a strength and pupils are given valuable opportunities that ensure progress academically and in their personal development. There are successful methods for dealing with a range of needs, particularly for pupils who find it difficult to cope with their emotions.

Pupils show pride in being part of the school community. Many are ambitious and show a positive attitude, and persevere with their work. Although the school's attendance has improved slightly this year, the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is too low. Most pupils behave in a civilised manner and move around the school site in an orderly manner. The quality of the buildings is deteriorating and they are in need of upgrading.

A notable quality of the school is the close and supportive working relationship between teachers and their pupils. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan imaginatively to engage pupils' interest. Teachers plan appropriately to develop pupils' skills. As a result, many pupils speak well, are strong readers and write confidently. They develop their numeracy skills purposefully in a range of subjects. In a majority of cases, teachers give pupils useful written feedback. However, the quality of written feedback is too varied, which means that pupils do not always understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Teachers work together effectively within the school, with primary schools and external agencies to provide a range of experiences for pupils. A notable element of this provision is the outdoor experiences and gardening lessons that are provided for pupils to develop subject skills and wider skills in contexts outside the classroom.

The headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision based on creating an inclusive community school. He is passionate and ambitious for pupils, staff and the school's wider community. By prioritising the well-being of pupils and staff and providing valuable support, leaders have developed a school with a supportive ethos and a caring and safe community. Based on their quality assurance work, leaders have a robust overview of strengths and areas for improvement in their areas and recommend useful actions for improvement. However, not enough attention is given to pupils' standards and progress in quality assurance and self-evaluation processes. As a result, leaders do not identify weaknesses in pupils' skills in enough detail to plan to improve them.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation, prioritising and planning for improvement
- R3 Improve the quality and effect of feedback for pupils
- R4 Improve the quality of the accommodation

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to (i) provision for pupils with additional learning needs and (ii) outdoor and gardening provision, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Learning

Many pupils make sound progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in their lessons and over time. A few pupils make very strong progress. Many pupils have a sound understanding of previous learning and succeed in applying this to new and unfamiliar contexts. A few pupils show a particularly thorough understanding, for example when linking data and findings from medical tests to give a patient a correct diagnosis in their science lessons. Most pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make strong progress from their starting points and against their targets.

Most pupils listen attentively to the teacher and many are willing to give verbal answers. They listen respectfully to their peers, communicate clearly and discuss naturally with each other in Welsh. Most have a sound grasp of subject-specific terms and use them purposefully and confidently in Welsh and English. When responding to the teacher's questions, a majority of pupils give extended oral answers and justify their responses. However, a few pupils' answers are too simple and superficial. Many pupils share ideas purposefully with each other orally and are confident to share with the whole class. A few pupils are reticent and unwilling to contribute orally. A very few pupils also speak across the teacher and their peers at times.

When reading in Welsh and English, many pupils locate relevant information in texts effectively and find meanings appropriately. They succeed in coming to a reasonable conclusion from the reading pieces, for example when analysing sources on the welfare state in their history lessons. Many pupils read to answer examination questions appropriately and a majority do so competently. The most able pupils do not always interpret examination questions in a sufficiently sophisticated manner. A majority of pupils identify literary techniques appropriately but they do not always discuss the effect of these techniques in enough detail. They also develop their ability to interpret language and meaning robustly, for example by reading between the lines when reading the novel 'After Tomorrow' in their English lessons. When they are given an opportunity to do so, a minority of pupils read aloud confidently. A few do so with conviction and read energetically and convey meaning well.

In general, many pupils' writing is technically correct and they structure sentences suitably and paragraph appropriately in Welsh and English. They use suitable vocabulary and a few have very rich vocabulary. Across the subjects, many pupils write at length successfully in a range of genres and for a variety of audiences. For example, in their religious education lessons, they use their knowledge of people's attitudes to war to create a script for a radio programme. A majority of pupils show a sound understanding of subject terminology when writing. They respond purposefully to feedback to improve their work. A minority of pupils make consistent spelling mistakes and punctuate incorrectly.

Many pupils develop their number skills successfully in mathematics lessons and other relevant subjects. They produce graphs correctly with headings and lines of best fit. When they are given an opportunity to do so, these pupils analyse graphs sensibly, for example to discover the relationship between the rate of solution formation as a solution cools. Most more able pupils complete their number work

successfully with very few mistakes. Most understand the elementary concepts of algebra and a majority of pupils reorganise formulae, exchange units, estimate and round up successfully. Many pupils succeed in applying their number skills to solve problems. Specific examples of this are using a scale to calculate the distance between different places, applying the Pythagoras theorem to help the air force to target correctly and dividing the bill between customers in a café. Many pupils use equations correctly. A few pupils are not sure enough about how to deal with fractions or to complete calculations that require more than one step.

Pupils develop their digital skills appropriately in their information and communication technology (ICT) lessons and other subjects. Many search confidently for relevant information online. They produce work digitally based on research, for example information about the football World Cup after finding suitable and relevant websites. Many succeed in creating spreadsheets to display data and a majority use the program to create a graph, for example following their digital emulation of a scientific experiment. A majority of pupils take advantage of opportunities to produce their own questionnaire for research and work together on online documents to collate information.

A majority of pupils develop creative ideas successfully, for example by designing a clock inspired by the Memphis design group in their technology lessons. They succeed in expressing an opinion on their ideas and how to develop them. Many pupils experiment successfully with colour and tone to improve compositions in their artwork. In their Welsh lessons, many are creative when writing the ending of the short story '*Hen Stori*' by Sonia Edwards.

Many pupils use their thinking skills skilfully, for example when evaluating the reliability of medical tests. By working independently, pupils develop their thinking skills further, for example by responding to targets and identifying strengths and weaknesses in their writing and improving them. However, they are not always given an opportunity to practise their thinking skills independently as the teacher structures the work too much. Many pupils demonstrate robust physical skills which enable them to do a variety of exercises to improve their fitness.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Pupils' standards of well-being and their attitudes to learning are an obvious strength. There is a strong sense among pupils of being part of the school community and they show pride in being pupils at Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni. Many pupils enjoy school, feel safe and are clear about who to turn to for support if they need it. Most pupils do not feel that they are bullied and that the school's staff respond quickly to the rare cases that occur.

Pupils are welcoming towards visitors and communicate confidently and courteously with their teachers and fellow pupils. Most pupils are well behaved, arrive at their classrooms punctually and are ready to work. They move around the school grounds in a civilised and orderly manner.

Most pupils see the importance of developing their fitness and living a healthy lifestyle and take advantage of opportunities to be outdoors, for example in the gardening and outdoor lessons. Pupils also benefit from rich extra-curricular

activities, which provide opportunities to socialise and enjoy with friends, for example in the homework club and LGBTQ+ club.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and many are willing to contribute to class discussions and show enthusiasm and interest in their lessons. Many pupils work together productively in small groups and respect the views of other pupils. A majority of pupils work independently and show perseverance and ambition, for example when responding to assessment to improve their extended writing. Many pupils show respect for the presentation of their work. However, a very few pupils do not concentrate sufficiently and find it difficult to stay focused for long periods during lessons.

Pupils take advantage of beneficial opportunities to express their views about the school and a majority feel that the school listens to them and makes changes as a result. For example, the school provides free period products following a suggestion by members of the school council. Pupils undertake valuable leadership roles through year forums and the school council. Members of the sixth form are enthusiastic ambassadors who are welcoming towards visitors and show pride in their school. They benefit from opportunities to lead the school's younger pupils and develop useful co-operation and organisation skills, for example by chairing the school council, leading the science club and supporting Year 7 pupils with their reading.

Sixth-form pupils are extremely eloquent and polite. They have a very mature attitude towards the school's life and work. Most are enthusiastic about the courses that are available to them at the school and in partnership with a local consortium. In lessons, they have very positive attitudes and show an interest in what is being taught. They persevere when working on extended tasks and show strong oracy skills.

While whole-school attendance has improved slightly in comparison with the same period last year, the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is significantly lower than that of other pupils at the school.

Teaching and learning experiences

In most lessons, teachers foster a close and supportive working relationship with their pupils. They are enthusiastic and manage pupils' behaviour sensitively. As a result, there is a hard-working ethos in their lessons.

Nearly all teachers have comprehensive subject knowledge. Many plan their lessons carefully to engage pupils' interest and ensure progress in their skills and subject understanding. Most teachers provide attractive learning resources that are well planned. They use time efficiently by providing learning tasks for pupils as soon as they come into the classroom and adapt the pace of the lesson skilfully according to pupils' progress.

In many lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide them with an appropriate level of challenge. In a majority of cases, teachers adapt their teaching skilfully in line with pupils' specific learning needs. In many lessons, teachers provide clear explanations of subject concepts. They share useful success criteria with pupils and provide them with examples of work of a high

standard so that they understand what to aim for. Overall, teachers work effectively with assistants to support pupils with specific learning needs.

In a few cases, teaching is inspiring. In these cases, teachers have extremely high expectations of pupils and they are passionate about their subject. These teachers plan their lessons creatively, which motivates pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. They ask probing questions to stimulate pupils to think more deeply and question their hypotheses.

In many lessons, teachers move around the classroom to monitor pupils' progress and provide them with beneficial support, where necessary. However, in a few cases, the classrooms are very small and are an obstacle to this. In many cases, teachers use effective questioning techniques. They use closed questions to check pupils' subject knowledge and some open-ended questions to probe their understanding and extend their responses.

In a majority of cases, teachers provide pupils with useful written feedback. Their comments acknowledge good work, give advice on how to improve and provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to improve their work. However, the quality of written feedback is too varied. In a minority of bases, observations are too superficial or are only complimentary. In these cases, opportunities for pupils to improve their work meaningfully are limited.

There are specific aspects for improvement in a few lessons. In these cases, planning is not careful enough to ensure that pupils make progress and there is not enough challenge for more able pupils. These teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve or their use of the Welsh language. They do not use questioning techniques effectively enough and have a tendency to continue to present while pupils talk amongst themselves.

The school provides a curriculum that engages pupils' interest and motivates them to work productively and make progress in their learning. There is careful planning to develop skills within lessons and, more recently, during registration periods. These experiences are developed further in intervention sessions for specific groups of learners. The literacy and numeracy skills co-ordinators provide suitable guidance and support for middle leaders and teachers through training and meetings. There are regular opportunities for pupils to practise their oral, reading and writing skills and similar opportunities to develop numeracy and digital skills are beginning to become embedded, although they do not always provide a sufficient level of challenge outside the mathematics, science and ICT department.

Following the pandemic, the school has prioritised providing a range of extra-curricular experiences for pupils. A wide variety of educational visits and trips is organised locally, nationally and abroad for pupils of all ages, including a trip to the Royal Welsh Show, trips to France, the 'skilful women' STEM workshop and a visit to Beaumaris Castle and jail. The school enriches the experiences of younger pupils by guiding them to learn about their local area, for example by learning about local saints and the island's industries. In humanities and well-being lessons, pupils are given a suitable opportunity to discuss issues related to the history and experiences of black people, prejudice and discrimination.

In planning to introduce Curriculum for Wales, the school is experimenting and adapting to implement its vision of providing the best educational experiences for its pupils. Leaders at all levels work together enthusiastically, for example within areas of learning and experience and in partnerships with other secondary schools. The school works very effectively with local primary schools to ensure that pupils' experiences build on previous learning and allow a smooth transition from primary to secondary. A notable element of the new provision for pupils in Years 7 and 8 is the rich learning experiences that are provided through outdoor learning. For example, in the gardening lesson, pupils are given a valuable opportunity to develop a community garden on the school grounds and take responsibility for planning and maintaining the garden. Around this practical work, pupils learn about different aspects such as sustainability, conserving wildlife and mindfulness and apply a wide range of skills in a real-life context. In the outdoor lessons, pupils are given a beneficial opportunity to develop a range of personal, physical and practical skills before being given an opportunity to implement them in a trip to Crafnant outdoor centre.

A prominent feature of the school curriculum is the increasing attention to providing experiences in health and well-being, in particular for the school's younger pupils. Valuable consideration is given to issues such as emotional well-being, developing positive attitudes towards themselves and others and developing a responsible attitude towards the body and mind. In partnership with external agencies, the school provides appropriate personal and social education activities for the school's older pupils.

The school provides a wide choice of GCSE courses, including financial literacy and computer science. Options are enriched further through courses that are provided by the local college, for example courses in construction, engineering, and hair and beauty. Through 'Hwb', the school provides useful alternative courses and experiences that respond to the needs of a small cohort of pupils who are at risk of disengaging from their education. This provision has a positive effect on the attendance and attitudes of these pupils towards their education. The school works closely and effectively with local education institutions to broaden the range of courses that are available for post-16 pupils, including occupational courses such as civil engineering and creative media. Flexibility in the co-operation allows pupils to pursue their chosen subjects and the practical arrangements for travelling between schools are smooth.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to celebrate Welsh heritage and being Welsh, for example through the school Eisteddfod, local Eisteddfodau and opportunities to work with the Urdd. The school promotes the benefits of being multilingual but a number of first language Welsh pupils choose to complete written work through the medium of English.

Care, support and guidance

Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni is a caring, inclusive, Welsh community that places the well-being of pupils at the heart of everything it does. The school's staff know the pupils very well and provide well-being support that is tailored to the needs of all pupils.

The school places a strong emphasis through all well-being work on overcoming barriers to learning. The school's well-being website provides valuable support for all pupils and parents and there is a confidential helpline to report any concerns. The school provides timely and effective support to address well-being issues and comprehensive provision ensures that all pupils are given an opportunity to succeed. The 'Angor' is a safe space for pupils to receive individual support and assistance and provides pupils with daily access to a designated adult to support them.

Through the clear leadership of the additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) and the ALN team, the school has made very good progress in transferring to the new arrangements. The ALNCo has created comprehensive provision that includes detailed data, clear guidelines, purposeful training and original resources for teachers and assistants. All of this information equips them to be confident in meeting the learning needs of specific pupils.

Pupils who attend the 'Noddfa' provision receive purposeful interventions and support and feel safe and happy. Pupils with emotional needs are supported very well to help them to deal with their emotions and cope with day-to-day life at school and at home. The ALNCo and other members of the team use a number of valuable sources to review their provision regularly and adapt in line with pupils needs in order for them to succeed.

The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is done through assemblies, thought for the day and through its personal and social education programme. Provision is tailored according to the well-being needs of pupils. For example, reflection sessions are provided for pupils to calm their thoughts, in addition to necessary first aid training.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to influence school life. The class forums, year forums and the school council provide an opportunity for pupils to express their views openly and make decisions. For example, they evaluate the school's behaviour system and develop it to reward more effectively.

The school works purposefully with external partners to ensure personal support that focuses on the pupil's needs. The school works effectively with the police, the youth worker and health services to ensure that all pupils receive the care and support they need to attend school and be successful.

The school has appropriate systems to monitor and promote good attendance. These include purposeful strategies for pupils who are absent due to emotional difficulties so that they return to education. Overall, attendance strategies have not had a sufficient effect on reducing the absences of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.

The school's ethos and culture promote pupils' well-being and safety successfully. This permeates all of the school's work. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are sound. The school ensures that all members of staff receive regular training on safeguarding issues and preventing radicalisation. As a result, staff understand their role and responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. The school responds promptly to concerns about pupils by working effectively with external agencies. The grounds are extensive and access is managed tightly to ensure the

safety of pupils and staff. Although the school has tried to improve the appearance of the building and there are current plans to adapt and improve, some parts of the building are in poor condition.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is a passionate leader who is determined to ensure the success of pupils and the school community. He is clear in his aspiration to provide the best education for pupils and develop them as responsible members of their local community. The headteacher and other leaders have a clear and ambitious vision based on creating an inclusive, community-focussed school where everyone's success and well-being is a priority. This vision permeates all of the school's work. As a result, leaders have developed a caring school that sets high expectations for all aspects of its work. Pupils, leaders, staff, governors and parents convey obvious pride in belonging to Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni.

Members of the senior management team provide the headteacher with strong support. They have an appropriate understanding of their areas of responsibility. Their responsibilities have been distributed fairly reasonably but they are not currently cohesive enough.

Many middle leaders have a sound understanding of their roles and have an appropriate grasp of pupils' progress and skills. On the whole, they are effective in their work and lead their areas of responsibility robustly, although they are not always strategic enough in meetings or when planning for improvement.

Line management arrangements are sound and, overall, the level of challenge for middle leaders is appropriate. There are regular meetings between middle leaders and their line managers where relevant issues are discussed, including self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

A purposeful calendar ensures progression and co-ordination between quality assurance activities, assessment systems and meetings. There are agreed agendas for all meetings to ensure consistency in the issues that are discussed. Performance management arrangements are appropriate and, in many cases, there are suitable links between objectives and whole-school priorities.

The school uses a range of electronic methods effectively to communicate with parents. Leaders also provide valuable opportunities to seek parents' views on the school's work as part of quality assurance processes.

The governors are a passionate team who have an intelligent awareness of the school. They challenge leaders rigorously and regularly and act as an effective critical friend. For example, they insist on receiving a business plan for any expenditure at the school. They use their skills and experience to support the school and develop their understanding through links with specific departments. They are not fully aware of their statutory role in setting appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The business manager, the headteacher and governors manage funding effectively. They use grants appropriately to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, the school contributes towards the costs of educational trips.

Most leaders identify the main strengths and areas for improvement well. Robust self-evaluation has enabled leaders to identify sensible priorities and implement effective actions. This has led to improvements in important aspects of the school's work, including strengthening the pastoral system, improving the quality of leadership and teaching.

The school collects and analyses evidence from a range of valid sources and includes all of the school's stakeholder groups in the self-evaluation process. For example, it seeks the views of pupils and parents regularly. However, middle leaders and other staff are not given enough opportunities to observe lessons.

There is a valuable system of various reviews of different aspects of the school's work, such as provision for a particular school year or ALN provision within departments. Leaders work beneficially with governors, the region and other schools to strengthen and validate their quality assurance processes and self-evaluation work.

Based on their quality assurance work, leaders provide useful overviews that summarise strengths and areas for improvement on specific aspects and recommend useful steps for improvement. However, not enough attention is given to pupils' standards and progress within the school's quality assurance and self-evaluation processes.

Through effective self-evaluation, leaders have identified sensible priorities for improvement that reflect the needs of the school and the local community, in addition to national priorities. However, improvement planning in departments and areas does not always reflect cross-school priorities. There is not enough clarity surrounding the main whole-school priorities that apply to departments or areas. As a result, departments and areas do not support and drive whole-school priorities as well as they could.

Overall, there are suitable arrangements for allocating responsibilities and identifying appropriate timescales within improvement plans. However, arrangements for reviewing progress against improvement plans are not clear or robust enough. For example, the same person who is responsible for a priority also evaluates progress against it. When reviewing progress, middle leaders have a tendency to identify whether they have completed actions rather than evaluating the effect of their work. In addition, it is not always clear when or how progress should be reviewed against improvement plans.

The senior leadership team organises a calendar of beneficial professional learning activities for staff. The quality of the training that is provided for assistants so that they can support pupils with specific needs is a strong feature. There is a range of useful opportunities for staff to interact with staff from nearby schools, particularly in preparing for the new curriculum. There is a useful programme for leaders who are new to the role to develop their leadership skills. There is a range of opportunities for teachers to consider various teaching methodologies, including how to interact with

vulnerable pupils. There is a suitable link between the school's self-evaluation findings and the range of professional learning activities, for example sessions to refine methods of assessing pupils' work and provide them with feedback. However, as leaders do not evaluate teaching in terms of its effect on learning in enough detail, they do not always plan their professional learning to improve specific aspects of teaching.

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 (where appropriate) 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, where appropriate
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- 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' 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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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