



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gynradd Penparc**

**Tremain  
Cardigan  
SA43 1SQ**

**Date of inspection: March 2023**

**by**

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

**This report is available in Welsh**

## About Ysgol Penparc

Name of provider	Ysgol Penparc
Local authority	Ceredigion County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	94
Pupils of statutory school age	79
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	
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>	6.5%
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>	20.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	49.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/09/2014
Start date of inspection	20/03/2023

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](https://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 Penparc is a caring, happy and welcoming community. Staff, parents and pupils take pride in their school and feel strongly that it is a privilege to be a member of the close-knit learning community. Leaders have high expectations, particularly in terms of promoting well-being and ensuring that pupils enjoy their time at the school. Many pupils are enthusiastic about their learning activities and talk excitedly about their experiences.

Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and courtesy, which supports most of them to behave well. They appreciate that staff are caring towards them and provide stimulating learning opportunities for them. As a result, pupils are keen to achieve well in an inclusive learning environment.

Staff provide a curriculum that offers a good range of interesting experiences across the areas of learning and experience. Teachers have a beneficial working relationship with pupils and identify their personal and learning needs well. As a result, all staff provide appropriate support and assistance to support pupils to make progress.

Teachers develop pupils' skills through probing questions and provide beneficial opportunities for them to discuss their learning. With the support of teachers, pupils become increasingly independent when forming success criteria for their tasks. However, teachers do not always provide feedback that identifies the next steps in pupils' learning effectively enough. On the whole, there are few opportunities for pupils to make choices independently about what they would like to learn and how to present their work.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, where equity and well-being for all pupils are at the forefront. The headteacher's positive attitude and infectious enthusiasm promote effective co-operation among leaders, staff and the school's wider community. Leaders have an appropriate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are supported by a dedicated team of governors who share the vision and are developing their responsibilities to support and challenge the school appropriately.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that feedback from staff provides the next steps in pupils' learning effectively
- R2 Ensure regular opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about what to learn and how to present their work

## **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 communication skills expected for their age. During their time at the school, many pupils make sound progress across the areas of learning.

Most pupils' oral skills are developing well across the school. For example, Year 1 pupils enunciate clearly and with appropriate intonation when presenting information about the importance of healthy eating to their peers in a school assembly. Across the school, most pupils listen attentively to the contributions of others and respond by using suitable language and tone of voice. They treat their peers and adults with respect and courtesy at all times.

Many pupils develop their reading skills effectively across the school. They show an interest and enthusiasm in books from an early age. Pupils in the Reception class listen attentively to stories and respond appropriately to adults about the content. By Year 2, they read clearly and carefully and use phonological understanding to read unfamiliar words correctly. Most of the oldest pupils read English books intelligently and with increasing fluency. They have a sound understanding of what they read and discuss the characters and context of stories confidently. However, overall, pupils are less confident when reading Welsh texts which, in turn, slows their progress.

Across the school, most pupils' writing skills are developing appropriately. The youngest pupils experiment with different mark-making methods and begin to form letters correctly. Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 show an awareness of the form of a sentence and punctuate with increasing accuracy. They use similes effectively when writing sentences about dinosaurs, for example when saying that the brontosaurus is tall like a giraffe. As they move through the school, many build on their skills appropriately and write increasingly at length across a range of genres. For example, Year 6 pupils write a letter to the First Minister to try to persuade him to promote the use of electric cars.

Most pupils develop their mathematics skills robustly. The youngest pupils count to 10 confidently and experiment with using number bonds. By Year 4, many solve problems relating to train timetables skilfully. The oldest pupils recognise and write numbers beyond 10 million and calculate the perimeter and area of compound shapes confidently. On the whole, pupils apply their numeracy skills appropriately across the curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils record the number of different types of vehicles they see on a trip around the village. They present the data in the form of a bar chart and choose the axis scales correctly.

Most pupils' digital skills are developing appropriately. Year 2 pupils create pictograms to record how members of the class feel, for example. Year 4 pupils create a multimedia presentation to share information about their favourite author, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 use a spreadsheet to record data and produce a line graph to compare the monthly temperature in Wales and Qatar. However, the wider digital skills of a very few pupils are not developing strongly enough.

Many pupils' creative skills are developing well. For example, the oldest pupils work with a chief bard to compose a poem for the World Cup competition. They also apply their skills well when working with a local artist to create colourful murals that represent their interpretations of local history.

Many pupils show positive attitudes to physical activities. They enjoy physical education sessions and apply themselves appropriately to develop their skills. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their football skills appropriately in valuable sessions that focus on developing their passing skills. The oldest pupils improve their fitness through a series of sessions with an international champion which, in turn, promotes their interest and deepens their understanding of the importance of regular exercise.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Most pupils enjoy attending school and feel happy within its inclusive and caring ethos. They are polite, friendly and treat their peers, staff and visitors with respect. A majority of pupils talk maturely and enjoy sharing their experiences with adults. Nearly all pupils know whom to approach if anything is worrying them and are confident that staff respond appropriately to any concerns. They have a sound awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe online.

Most pupils behave very well during lessons and on the playground. They settle to work quickly in the classroom and play together enthusiastically during break times. Most pupils concentrate well and engage conscientiously in lessons. They listen attentively to the school's adults and work diligently to complete activities fairly independently. They work well with others and listen sensibly to each other's opinions, for example when discussing whether it is a good idea to get rid of the playing field in Cardigan to build a car park.

Many pupils appreciate that teachers are beginning to ask them for their opinions when planning learning activities. Pupils in the older classes enjoy contributing ideas and questions to the mind maps that are shared with their parents. This strengthens the relationship between the home and school successfully.

Pupils who are members of the School Council and the various other committees contribute their ideas well in an appropriate range of activities. They influence school decisions, such as which sports equipment pupils enjoy using during break times. Recently, the *Dreigiau Doeth* have succeeded in securing funding from Y Ferwig Council to install sound equipment throughout the school to raise the profile of Welsh music and the Welsh language.

Most pupils contribute to various charities regularly and they have clear ideas of who should benefit from their contributions. For example, the Well-being Council decided to make a contribution to a local food bank following a Christmas service by all of the school's pupils. This has a positive effect on their understanding of the needs of others, both locally and nationally. As a result, they develop as ethical, knowledgeable citizens who show empathy and maturity when talking about others.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and discuss the effect of exercise on their health knowledgeably. They

participate enthusiastically as individuals and are keen to work together as a group in a range of learning experiences.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The school is making appropriate progress in developing its curriculum to align with the principles and aims of the Curriculum for Wales. By working purposefully with a wide range of partners, leaders are developing their vision for a curriculum offer that provides a wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences and meets the needs of many pupils. Well-being, equality and the rights of the pupil are at the heart of this vision.

Staff work with pupils to plan an appropriate range of themes and learning activities that engage the interest of many pupils and motivate them. For example, at the beginning of themes, pupils suggest interesting activities they would like to undertake. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and apply themselves purposefully to their tasks. The robust working relationship between staff and pupils and the inclusive learning environment are notable elements of the school.

The school plans purposefully to develop pupils' skills. Teachers provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop their oral skills. For example, pupils in the Reception class discuss different combinations of two numbers that come to a total of nine confidently. Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to read a range of texts as part of the class's thematic work, in addition to providing appropriate opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of genres. Teachers plan appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in various contexts. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their thinking and digital skills effectively when conducting an enquiry to discover the relationship between children's height and shoe size. They create graphs correctly to present their data and help them to come to a conclusion.

Teachers provide interesting experiences for the youngest pupils to learn outdoors. For example, pupils in the Reception class develop their creative skills by using bricks and wood to build a shelter for the dinosaurs. Teachers reinforce learning appropriately by planning purposeful experiences for the oldest pupils. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 refine their numeracy skills by discovering examples of acute and obtuse angles on objects that are situated around the campus.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities to promote Welsh history and culture, for example by celebrating Welsh Language Music Day and supporting the Wales football team during the World Cup. On the whole, this has a positive effect on pupils' spoken Welsh skills. However, a few pupils speak English when completing tasks in the classroom and when talking to their friends in less formal situations.

Where teaching is at its best, teachers and other adults recall previous learning effectively. They support pupils' needs appropriately and in a timely manner and develop pupils' thinking skills effectively through probing questioning. In these sessions, beneficial opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their work, for example as they respond to success criteria for their tasks. In less effective teaching practice, the pace of presentations and activities is too slow and teachers have a tendency to over-direct learning. Overall, teachers do not provide opportunities for

pupils to make independent choices about what and how they learn. As a result, a very few pupils lose interest in their learning which, in turn, hinders progress in their learning.

Teachers provide a few suitable opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback. However, teachers pay too much attention to spelling and grammatical errors, rather than important aspects that are relevant to the task. As a result, pupils do not know what to improve in different aspects of their work, and how, effectively enough. As a result, a few pupils do not always achieve to the best of their ability.

Teachers plan valuable educational and residential visits for pupils, which reinforce learning appropriately. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit a local adventure park and pupils in Years 3 and 4 take advantage of valuable experiences at the Urdd residential centre in Llangrannog. These visits have a positive effect on most pupils' co-operation skills and resilience.

Annual reports for parents report clearly on pupils' progress, in addition to their areas for development.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school promotes values based on the principles of the Curriculum for Wales appropriately. This lays a foundation for a caring community in which all pupils can develop and thrive. The headteacher and teachers have an interest in and thorough knowledge of the needs of all pupils. They place a strong emphasis on offering provision that meets the individual needs of pupils to develop them as well-rounded learners.

Leaders have effective systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' well-being and progress. By doing so, staff have a thorough knowledge of pupils' well-being and learning needs. The school has robust arrangements for supporting pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) across the school. These including producing a clear provision map, useful one-page profiles and individual development plans. They provide an appropriate range of support programmes that help pupils to make appropriate progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills, in addition to supporting their well-being. For example, staff provide an effective support programme for pupils with emotional needs to support them well to feel comfortable at school, promote good behaviour and enjoy their learning. The headteacher and additional learning needs co-ordinator work in partnership with parents and external agencies effectively, for example with the specialist speech and language team to support pupils' language skills.

The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual, moral and social aspects. Acts of collective worship provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect on important values and issues such as healthy relationships. The school also provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect on current affairs and different religions and cultures in assemblies and class activities. For example, the youngest pupils develop their creative skills when creating 'Rangoli' patterns by using a variety of different materials. Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to learn about ethical issues, such as supporting local charities and protecting the environment. For example, the oldest pupils have visited the local garage to discuss the benefits of



driving electric cars. By conducting celebrations, such as the International Women's Day, staff increase pupils' awareness and understanding of issues relating to diversity and equality effectively.

In promoting pupils' cultural development, teachers provide a variety of valuable experiences and appropriate opportunities for them to celebrate their Welsh heritage and culture. For example, pupils compete in the Urdd Eisteddfod and attend an outdoor centre. As a result, pupils develop to become enterprising and confident citizens.

Leaders provide appropriate opportunities for pupils, including those from vulnerable backgrounds, to develop valuable leadership skills by being members of various committees. For example, the *Dreigiau Doeth* encourage their peers appropriately to speak Welsh when playing on the playground during break times. As a result, nearly all pupils feel that they are given an opportunity to voice their opinions as the school's adults listen to their suggestions.

The school's arrangements for promoting regular attendance are robust. The headteacher monitors attendance thoroughly and works effectively with parents and other agencies to achieve this. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and there are robust systems in place to ensure that pupils are safe at the school.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has a clear vision that is based on developing pupils' well-being within an inclusive environment. This supports pupils to be happy and make progress in their skills. The headteacher has engaged regularly with partners, such as parents, pupils, governors and the wider community to create and share the vision. The headteacher and assistant headteacher work together passionately to realise this vision. Teachers and assistants are dedicated and contribute successfully to the school's efforts to provide a well-rounded education and effective well-being support for pupils.

The headteacher has high expectations of his own performance and of the staff. This is reflected in the ambitious targets for improvement as part of the performance management processes for teachers and assistants. Leaders monitor progress against targets regularly. Leaders address underperformance robustly.

Leaders create a positive culture of promoting and supporting staff's professional learning. There are extensive opportunities for them to attend courses and training that link directly to their individual needs and the school's priorities. They work closely with other schools and share good practice regularly. Following training, staff cascade useful information and resources to their colleagues.

Leaders address local and national priorities well. Staff have begun to introduce the Curriculum for Wales appropriately and plan relevant activities successfully to raise pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy. They provide varied experiences in supporting specific pupils to reduce the effects of poverty on educational attainment.

The headteacher ensures that there are appropriate self-evaluation arrangements in place to evaluate learning and provision. Leaders evaluate the standard of teaching

regularly and all staff use various sources of evidence to gather and discuss relevant information about pupils' progress and the school's performance. The headteacher has a fair picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, not all monitoring activities focus in enough detail on the effect of provision on pupils' progress. There is a relevant link between self-evaluation activities and plans for improvement. Leaders monitor progress against the improvement priorities regularly and report their findings appropriately to staff and governors.

Governors know the school and its community well. By receiving and discussing rigorous reports from the headteacher, they are beginning to challenge leaders on issues such as tracking progress in pupils' literacy, for example. Governors support the school's work and undertake their duties conscientiously, for example by visiting the school to talk to pupils about their work and scrutinise books. However, the focus of their visits is sometimes too broad to support them to challenge leaders on specific areas. As a result, governors have a suitable understanding of pupils' progress and standards and the quality of teaching. They discuss provision for eating and drinking healthily and ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to promote this with pupils.

Leaders manage the school's funding carefully. Expenditure links appropriately with the priorities for improvement. Leaders listen suitably to the pupil's voice and pay attention to the requirements of the curriculum when adding to provision regularly. Good use is made of the pupil development grant to ensure that vulnerable pupils have equal access to valuable learning experiences.

The school has beneficial partnerships and links with a number of local organisations. It has benefitted from financial donations from local councils, such as Y Ferwig Council and Cardigan Council to improve the school's provision. It has a strong relationship with the Cylch Meithrin that is situated on the same site. This contributes soundly to providing a valuable experience as pupils start at the school. Leaders contact new parents at an early stage to share important information about pupils' well-being and learning needs. This supports staff to put arrangements in place and prepare to meet pupils' needs in a timely manner.

## 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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