



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

A report on

Ysgol Glan Morfa

**Ffordd Y Morfa
Abergele
Conwy
LL22 7NU**

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Glan Morfa

Name of provider	Ysgol Glan Morfa
Local authority	Conwy County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	255
Pupils of statutory school age	195
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	26
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>	18.6%
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>	9.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	15.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2008
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	03/02/2015
Start date of inspection	02/10/2023

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

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

Overview

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Glan Morfa is a happy and homely community where pupils and staff work together effectively. Most pupils make good progress and apply their skills successfully in different contexts. Pupils who are new to the Welsh language on entry to the school develop their understanding quickly and, over time, become confident and mature speakers. They respond enthusiastically to opportunities to enjoy aspects of contemporary Welsh culture and members of the school's councils support them successfully. Pupils' behaviour is excellent during lessons and informal times. They interact maturely and look after each other in a caring manner.

Teachers and assistants know the pupils exceptionally well and promote their well-being effectively. Pupils who have been identified as having additional learning needs (ALN) are given suitable support, which allows them to make strong progress over time. Staff provide a broad and rich curriculum and pupils contribute their ideas purposefully for learning activities.

Leaders and staff are responding successfully to the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales and focusing on developing relevant principles with pupils. Teachers vary their teaching methods effectively to develop pupils' confidence and independence. In the best practice, teachers challenge and support pupils to make extremely strong progress. However, in a few cases, teachers do not provide activities that challenge pupils to make progress in their skills in independent learning activities.

There is a strong culture of co-operation and sharing expertise within the school. The headteacher has a clear vision for developing the school further, which is supported by members of the governing body, leaders, teachers and assistants. Self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures have been established firmly. Leaders aim for continuous improvement and allocate funding carefully to develop provision and meet pupils' needs.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure appropriate challenge to support pupils to make progress in independent learning activities
- R2 Disseminate the strongest teaching practices across the school

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, pupils' skills are similar to what is expected for their age and stage of development, except for the Welsh language skills of most. Over time, most pupils make strong progress in their skills. Across the school, pupils recall their previous learning confidently and, by the top of the school, develop as mature learners who understand how they learn best. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals, pupils with ALN and those who are affected by poverty, make sound progress.

The oral Welsh skills of nearly all of the youngest pupils develop soundly. They are immersed in the language successfully and show an increasing understanding of Welsh vocabulary and patterns. For example, they sing nursery rhymes and contemporary songs in a lively manner when greeting each other and learning the days of the week. Many Year 2 pupils speak confidently and correctly and explain how they complete their tasks and which aspects they found most challenging. Many Year 3 and 4 pupils develop appropriate questioning skills, for example when interviewing Roman and Celtic soldiers during a role-play activity. Many Year 5 and 6 pupils speak Welsh and English by using extended vocabulary. Many discuss systematically in a group when solving numerical reasoning problems.

Across the school, many pupils read at a level that is appropriate for their age and stage of development. The most mature readers in Year 2 begin to adapt their tone of voice to create effect and meaning, and gain fluency by reading increasingly extended pieces. Many Year 3 and 4 pupils speak confidently about their favourite authors and their satisfaction when reading different genres. They read fluently and correct themselves when a word or phrase is challenging. Most Year 6 pupils read confidently and maturely. They discuss their favourite characters and explain why different material appeal to them. Many gather information successfully to fulfil the requirements of different tasks.

Many pupils make sound progress in their writing skills and show a consistent grasp of spelling and punctuation. For example, the youngest pupils use imperative verbs when creating instructions to make a blackberry crumble on an electronic tablet. Pupils write in an interesting range of genres, for example when creating a script following an interview with a person who lives in Lesotho. Many Year 5 and 6 pupils write to a good standard in a variety of contexts in both Welsh and English. They have a sound grasp of genres in both languages and use various elements, such as similes, to enrich their work. For example, they write effective biographies of the African author, Beverley Naidoo.

Most pupils' numeracy skills are developing well. The youngest pupils have a sound grasp of the elements of number, shape and data. They apply their skills successfully, for example when creating graphs to show their favourite character. Most of the oldest pupils have a sound understanding of measurement and use standard units correctly. They apply their numeracy skills beneficially in different contexts. For example, most Year 5 and 6 pupils explain how they use a mathematical formula to discover the age of trees on the school field.

Most pupils use digital devices skilfully to support their learning. For example, at the top of the school, pupils create various animations highly effectively by using coding packages. From an early age, pupils record their work to share it safely with their families and friends.

Most pupils develop their creative skills successfully. The youngest pupils create faces by using natural materials, such as twigs and leaves from the school field. Pupils enjoy going to the musical instrument box in the outdoor area to compose pieces to accompany characters from the story Rala Rwdins. The oldest pupils learn about the Charleston dance as part of their work on the Second World War.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils' behaviour is excellent during their activities, while working independently and while playing with their friends during break times and lunchtimes. They are very considerate of their peers and respond maturely when pupils face specific challenges. Most pupils interact well with their peers and adults who care for them. They know what to do if they are worried about any aspect of their experience at school. Most express their feelings confidently and are willing to share any concerns they have.

Nearly all pupils enjoy taking part in physical activities during their lessons and extra-curricular activities. They enjoy activities such as walking a mile a day and feel that this supports their well-being effectively. Activities such as the weekly challenge maintain a focus on their well-being successfully.

During activities, nearly all pupils are ready to learn. The youngest pupils develop their learning skills with increasing independence. As they move through the school, most develop increasing confidence and concentrate for extended periods while learning and playing in the classroom or the outdoor areas. For example, the youngest pupils persevere when controlling bicycles successfully and develop the confidence to take risks.

Many of the oldest pupils persevere in an extremely mature manner and offer support to their friends when completing tasks. They are willing to ask for support from members of the group. At the top of the school, they complete a digital diary and update it weekly, which supports them to summarise their personal development, their oral skills and supports their well-being highly successfully.

Most pupils have a thorough understanding of the importance of equality and respecting others. The oldest pupils consider and discuss children's rights meaningfully. They are aware of the importance of sustainability and considerate of the effect of people on the environment. They understand the school's rules and feel that they are treated fairly.

A few pupils represent their peers on different councils, such as the school council and the eco council. They value the close and supportive relationship with leaders and staff and enjoy working together and gaining confidence by committing themselves fully to these groups. Members of the school council share experiences with other pupils in the region, for example by attending a children's rights conference.

Most pupils enjoy being challenged by independent learning activities and demonstrate effective perseverance when trying to complete their tasks. For example, Year 2 pupils work excellently by selecting the relevant challenge when completing independent tasks and do their best to complete them in full. Most pupils are enthusiastic during lessons and concentrate highly effectively for extended periods. The youngest pupils understand the classroom arrangements quickly and learn to play happily alongside their friends.

Most pupils engage fully with their learning and show a positive attitude towards new work. Across the school, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to share ideas and suggestions about what they would like to learn. As a result of these notable opportunities, most pupils immerse themselves fully and enjoy their learning successfully.

Most pupils listen maturely to the contributions of others and learn to respect their views. The oldest pupils model these behaviours very effectively for the youngest pupils. They respect each other's views and understand the importance of tolerance. This promotes the school's kind ethos successfully. As they mature, pupils develop an increasing awareness of the importance of receiving and responding to feedback from their peers and teachers. At the top of the school, this relationship has been established highly effectively and pupils understand the effect of feedback as they develop their skills and do their best.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school provides a rich curriculum and provides learning experiences that stimulate pupils successfully. This valuable provision covers the areas of learning and experience of the Curriculum for Wales purposefully and engages pupils' interest and enjoyment successfully. Teachers work together effectively to plan a rich curriculum while ensuring progression in pupils' skills. Staff give a prominent place to pupils' ideas as part of the planning process. Leaders and staff work with pupils, parents and governors to design a curriculum that incorporates the relevant principles. The ethos of Welshness is a prominent feature of the curriculum, which weaves throughout all the school's life and work.

Across the school, teachers provide clear and effective guidance during learning activities. They motivate pupils successfully and, as a result, most pupils concentrate for extended periods and work independently from an early age. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and encourage respect and courtesy from them.

Where teaching is highly effective, pupils make extremely effective progress. In these examples, pupils work independently by applying their skills successfully across the curriculum.

Teachers and assistants support pupils' needs skilfully and develop their thinking skills effectively through probing questioning. Purposeful opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their work, for example as they respond to success criteria for tasks or when assessing the work of their peers. The curriculum provides activities that meet the learning needs of all pupils and provides suitable support programmes to support and challenge them. Teachers and assistants work together diligently to provide resources and support that ensure a fair opportunity for all pupils to benefit

from experiences and make progress, including those who are eligible for free school meals. Staff provide useful feedback, which allows pupils to develop their work successfully.

Staff make extremely effective use of the extensive outdoor areas to promote learning. Pupils learn about their natural environment while developing their skills, for example by selecting natural resources to depict characters. Outdoor activities promote the creative skills of the youngest pupils effectively. For example, they create and perform a puppet show on the *'llwyfan llon'* stage and compose musical pieces to convey characters from Gwlad y Rwla in the music corner.

Staff plan purposefully to develop pupils' skills. Provision supports pupils to use and apply their skills regularly and at an appropriate level across the curriculum. Teachers take advantage of every opportunity to extend pupils' spoken Welsh skills in activities in the classroom and outdoors. For example, teachers support pupils to practise imperative verbs in the mud kitchen and when planning and leading a fitness session for Roman soldiers.

Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to read a range of suitable and engaging texts as part of the class's thematic work, in addition to providing regular opportunities for them to write in a variety of genres. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in various contexts. For example, at the top of the school, pupils apply their numeracy and digital skills successfully by creating a database of carbon emissions in the environment in some of the world's main cities. However, teachers do not always provide activities that challenge pupils to make progress in their skills in independent learning activities. As a result, pupils do not always achieve to the best of their ability.

The school enriches the curriculum by inviting visitors and organising visits to develop pupils' understanding of specific learning areas, for example when pupils visit a museum while learning about the Romans. Teachers provide exciting opportunities for pupils to work with local artists and national poets, for example when creating a poem with Bardd Plant Cymru (the Welsh language Children's Laureate Wales) and working with an environmental artist. They also take advantage of resources in the local area to stimulate learning, including regular visits to Abergele library and Pentre Mawr Park.

Teachers and assistants provide relevant learning activities to develop pupils' personal and social education skills. Through the visits of the community police officer and links with external agencies, most pupils have a clear understanding of issues relating to their well-being, their healthy lifestyle choices and their behaviour. The school has a strong ethos of promoting and supporting the pupils' physical and emotional well-being.

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

Care, support and guidance

All staff are committed to ensuring high-quality care and support for pupils. They work together successfully to create a happy and inclusive environment which

celebrates diversity and Welshness highly effectively. The school's curriculum supports pupils' health and well-being successfully through a range of activities that promote values such as respect, empathy and compassion effectively.

Staff have a thorough knowledge of pupils and their needs. They establish comprehensive procedures to track pupils' progress and well-being and pay careful attention to those who are eligible for free school meals. Staff use the information from these processes appropriately to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. They provide a wide range of support programmes at an early stage, which enables pupils to make sound progress against their targets in literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The school provides effective provision for pupils with ALN. The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo), with the support of teachers, creates detailed profiles which include important information about pupils' interests and how to promote their well-being to support them to reach their targets. The ALNCo tracks progress from their previous attainment in detail. Teachers make beneficial use of support from agencies and specialists, for example in implementing methods to support pupils with specific speech and language needs. As a result of this detailed work, most pupils with ALN make good progress.

The headteacher and all staff provide purposefully to meet pupils' well-being needs. These experiences include delivering a well-being support programme and providing valuable sessions in the outdoor area, including the '*Llong Lles*' and the '*Llwyfan Llon*'. The school introduces the 'Right of the week', which provides opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of their rights.

Teachers and assistants place a clear emphasis on the pupil's voice when planning the curriculum by selecting themes, making mind maps of potential activities and creating questions that they would like to investigate. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils agree on the theme '*O dan eu traed*' ('Under their feet') and contribute ideas for activities and make suggestions about visits that could enrich the work.

The school has a good range of councils that promote the pupil's voice effectively. The councils provide opportunities for pupils to influence the school's life and work. For example, they contribute to creating the school rules and arrange to extend invitations to famous Welsh people to visit the school to ignite the pupils' passion towards the Welsh language.

Provision to promote health and fitness is popular among pupils and has a direct effect on their well-being. The school provides opportunities that encourage pupils to take part in a range of sport and leisure activities. For example, the youngest pupils benefit from purposeful opportunities to use the outdoor area to develop their physical skills and there are opportunities for the oldest pupils to take part in various competitions. As a result, most pupils develop as healthy and confident individuals.

The school promotes pupils' awareness of their heritage and contemporary Welsh culture effectively. For example, they enjoy contemporary Welsh music and composing poems with the Welsh language Children's Laureate of Wales, Casi Wyn. As a result, pupils are proud to be Welsh.

The school's culture promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. It holds daily collective worship sessions, with an opportunity to pupils to reflect on values and the attributes needed to give of their best. Provision places an emphasis on learning about other cultures in addition to Christianity. Pupils are given an opportunity to learn about cultures such as Judaism, which includes researching the traditions, buildings and celebrations of these religions.

The school monitors pupils' punctuality and attendance effectively. The procedures that are used to challenge low attendance are comprehensive and have a positive effect on attendance rates.

The culture of safeguarding is a priority for all members of staff across the school and they ensure that all pupils are aware of how to stay safe online. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, with the valuable support of the deputy and all staff, works highly effectively to create a Welsh and caring learning environment that is committed to the pupils. The headteacher's clear and wise guidance ensures a purposeful strategic direction. The headteacher ignites the enthusiasm of all members of staff to do their very best for the benefit of the pupils. The shared vision of the school community is based firmly on developing well-being, high standards and maintaining good working relationships. As a result, nearly all pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning and take pride in their school and their Welshness.

The school's self-evaluation and quality assurance arrangements are highly effective. Leaders and teachers scrutinise work and discuss it with pupils, visit learning sessions and seek the views of parents purposefully. This enables leaders to identify strengths and areas for improvement accurately. They plan purposefully to improve aspects such as developing pupils' Welsh reading skills. They focus firmly on progress and raising pupils' standards, presenting experiences that enrich pupils' learning experiences. They are also very considerate of the importance of maintaining the well-being of pupils and staff.

Leaders discuss and act on issues that are linked to agreed priorities. All teachers are responsible for an area of learning and experience, which contributes successfully towards developing their confidence when undertaking leadership roles. Assistants are key members of the school team and contribute skilfully to supporting learning and promoting pupils' well-being and social skills.

Leaders plan purposefully to meet local and national priorities. Staff address recent development in education enthusiastically. For example, they provide valuable opportunities for pupils to benefit from the principles and expectations of the Curriculum for Wales and implement key elements of the ALN Act effectively.

Members of the governing body have sound knowledge of the performance and effect of the school's procedures on pupils' progress and well-being. They share responsibilities conscientiously and conduct appropriate visits to evaluate the effect

of provision on standards and progress. They receive and respond to useful information and presentations from the headteacher and other leaders about the school's work. They challenge leaders meaningfully and contribute appropriately to shaping improvement priorities. They work with leaders and pupils to ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders ensure that expenditure links purposefully with the school's objectives and improvement plans. The headteacher and governors use the budget effectively to enrich the curriculum and promote learning. They link expenditure appropriately with their current priorities and monitor funding carefully to ensure value for money. A good example of this is the recent investment in resources for the outdoor area for the youngest pupils. Leaders use the pupil development grant wisely, which has a positive effect on the progress and well-being of individuals and specific groups of pupils. Leaders ensure a very good supply of resources that support learning effectively, including digital equipment, stimulating reading books and suitable equipment to promote outdoor learning.

The headteacher, with the support of other leaders, fosters a productive relationship with parents and ensures that they have effective communication methods to enable them to raise any issues that may affect their children's learning and well-being. For example, the headteacher shares a regular newsletter that contains information about important issues about the school's work. Staff share pictures and digital clips of pupils securely, which provides parents with valuable information about pupils' learning experiences.

Another strong feature of leadership is the purposeful opportunities that support staff to develop professionally. This includes opportunities to attend tailored training on developments in areas of the Curriculum for Wales. Performance management procedures promote teachers' professional learning appropriately and have a direct effect on pupils' progress and standards. The school has an active relationship with the schools in the cluster and secondary schools, which includes conducting reviews of specific provision across the family of schools. This is a good opportunity for staff to share practices and benefit from professional learning.

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:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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