



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

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Beddgelert

**Beddgelert
Gwynedd
LL55 4UY**

Date of inspection: November 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Gynradd Beddgelert

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Beddgelert
Local authority	Cyngor Gwynedd
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	31
Pupils of statutory school age	21
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>	13.8%
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>	*
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	47.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	02/04/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	13/11/2023

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

Most pupils enjoy their time at this inclusive and homely school, which promotes their well-being effectively. Nearly all pupils are polite and respectful towards each other, staff and visitors. This is a strong feature of the school.

Staff know the pupils well. They provide a range of stimulating activities that engage most pupils' interest successfully. They ask probing questions that are effective in terms of recalling previous learning and developing pupils' thinking skills. At the beginning of a new theme, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to what they would like to learn. This promotes pupils' interest in their work and gives them an opportunity to take ownership of learning themes. Staff provide purposeful oral feedback, which enables pupils to identify spelling and punctuation errors in their work. However, feedback does not always provide opportunities for pupils, particularly the older ones, to identify and act on the next steps in their learning.

Pupils are given purposeful opportunities to develop their skills across the areas of learning and experience, including their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. As a result, many pupils make sound progress in developing their skills over time. However, teachers tend to over-direct learning. As a result, pupils are not given purposeful enough opportunities within learning activities to develop their skills with increasing independence.

The sense of teamwork is strong across the school. The headteacher is supported by a small team of staff and a governing body who are passionate about the school. Together, they work together enthusiastically to identify the school's strengths and act on the areas for improvement. There is a firm emphasis on developing pupils' Welsh language skills, which has a positive effect on raising many pupils' standards of Welsh. Leaders and staff provide information for parents about events and occasions within the school. However, communication methods are not always effective enough and parents do not receive enough timely information about their children's progress or to support, maintain and improve their children's attendance.

Recommendations

- R1 Provide activities that support pupils to extend their skills to the best of their ability when applying them in independent learning activities
- R2 Provide pupils with feedback that enables them to identify and act on the next steps in their learning
- R3 Strengthen communication methods between the school and the home, so that parents receive timely information about their children's progress and support to improve their attendance

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, many pupils have low Welsh communication skills. From these starting points, most pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make sound progress in a wide range of skills.

In the school's lower years, many pupils' oral Welsh skills develop well. They use a suitable range of vocabulary to extend their conversations, for example when describing the importance of being kind to 'Wali' the puppet. Nearly all pupils listen attentively during story sessions and when following teachers' instructions. As they move through the school, many pupils' oral skills develop soundly in both languages. They speak Welsh confidently, for example by using rich vocabulary to describe the weather as part of their theme. They express their views with increasing confidence by using a range of suitable vocabulary, for example when discussing the features of different bridges in the area.

Many of the youngest pupils use their phonological knowledge confidently as they read simple words during language sessions. As they develop their skills, they read aloud with increasing confidence by using a range of reading techniques. They discuss a simple text sensibly, referring to characters in the books they read. At the top of the school, most pupils read with increasing confidence. They read a range of texts in both languages and pronounce unfamiliar words correctly, most of the time. They use a range of effective techniques to identify unfamiliar vocabulary, for example when reading a text about dinosaurs. They read, analyse and summarise the content of factual texts purposefully, for example when learning about the life of Jemeima Nicholas.

Many pupils' early writing skills develop well. With the support of staff, the youngest pupils begin to write simple sentences by using descriptive vocabulary, for example when writing a story about their favourite animal. By Year 2, they use simple verbs and adjectives confidently to enrich text, for example when writing about the story of the dog, Gelert. Most older pupils write in an interesting range of purposeful genres in both languages. They use sentence patterns with increasing accuracy and include interesting adjectives to enrich their work, for example when writing a monologue about characters from the legend of King March.

Many of the youngest pupils use number strategies with increasing accuracy and have a good grasp of number facts. Many pupils recognise the names and properties of 2D shapes and produce simple tables and graphs confidently, for example to show the favourite colours of the pupils in the class. In the school's upper years, most

pupils have a sound understanding of number facts and calculation methods. By Year 6, most pupils have a sound understanding of negative numbers, for example when measuring the difference in temperature between two countries. They have a good understanding of shape and space, for example when finding the area and perimeter of standard and non-standard shapes.

Many of the youngest pupils' digital skills develop well. They use an electronic tablet purposefully to record and save their work. They use a range of apps confidently, for example when creating a simple animation of an imaginary character. As they move through the school, most pupils' digital skills build appropriately on their previous learning. They use the internet to search for information and use spreadsheets successfully to present their findings, for example when calculating the distance tea travels around the world.

Across the school, pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills successfully for different purposes. For example, the youngest pupils write rules to keep themselves safe as part of their work on health and well-being. Older pupils develop their extended writing skills effectively, for example when writing a formal letter to the village residents to thank them for attending the Macmillan coffee afternoon. They develop their understanding of money and profit through the '*tyfu pum punt*' ('Make £5 grow') enterprise scheme.

Across the school, most pupils' creative skills develop effectively. They use a good range of tools and resources to emulate the artistic styles of famous Welsh artists. They enjoy performing in school concerts for the local community, for example the harvest thanksgiving service at the church.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Many pupils enjoy attending the school and are proud of it and its community. They feel safe and know whom to approach if something is worrying them. They feel that staff treat them fairly and consider some of their ideas. The behaviour of nearly all pupils is excellent in classes and around the school and they treat adults and visitors with respect and courtesy. Nearly all are polite and considerate. Older pupils take care of the younger ones naturally and maturely. This is a strong feature of the school.

Most pupils demonstrate strong attitudes to learning and develop as hardworking and conscientious learners. They listen attentively to presentations and work consistently well individually, in pairs and in small groups. They work harmoniously and, when given an opportunity to do so, apply themselves enthusiastically to undertake challenges. However, the school's older pupils are not always given purposeful opportunities to work and develop their skills with increasing independence.

Many pupils enjoy contributing to what they would like to learn within their termly themes. Through the use of the planning walls and discussions at the beginning of a new theme, pupils share their ideas and add questions about what they would like to learn. As a result, many pupils feel that staff listen to their ideas and consider them when planning learning activities for them. This contributes soundly to ensuring that many pupils show satisfaction and interest in their work.

A majority of pupils read over their work and correct some errors sensibly, for example in terms of spelling and punctuation. They respond appropriately to oral feedback from staff; however, they do not always understand what the next steps are to improve the content of their work.

Pupils who are members of the school council enjoy the opportunities they are given to influence some aspects of the school's life and work. For example, they have recently been at the forefront of deciding on activities to promote parents' use of the Welsh language at home. However, pupils are not given purposeful opportunities to discuss their ideas without the supervision and intervention of adults. As a result, they do not believe that they are given enough opportunity to express their opinions and influence important aspects of provision within the school, including opportunities to decide independently how to record their work or what equipment they would like to use.

Nearly all pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and understand the effect of regular exercise on their health. They participate enthusiastically in physical activities, including daily running activities and playground games during break times.

Most pupils develop to become ethical and informed citizens. They have a sound understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the importance of treating everyone equally. They treat others with empathy and compassion, for example when discussing the challenges facing refugees during times of war. Most of the school's oldest pupils understand the importance of taking care of the planet, for example the need to reduce waste by recycling at school and at home.

Most pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. However, the attendance of a few pupils is lower than expected.

Teaching and learning experiences

All members of staff have a caring and sound working relationship with pupils, which supports their well-being and education successfully. Teachers provide a purposeful learning environment that promotes the values and principles of the new Curriculum for Wales successfully.

Staff plan a range of interesting experiences that provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through the range of areas of learning and experience. As part of the theme 'Y Goedwig' ('The Forest'), the youngest pupils are given beneficial opportunities to visit their local area while comparing the village's ancient trees. By doing so, they have deepened their understanding of the properties of different types of trees. Older pupils study the history of the bridges in the village of Beddgelert, which broadens their understanding of their local area successfully. Staff take advantage of purposeful opportunities to enrich the curriculum's activities by inviting visitors to the school. For example, as part of developing pupils' understanding of Welsh traditions, the winner of the crown in the National Eisteddfod came to the school to discuss his work and success with pupils. Most pupils' understanding of Welsh heritage and culture is developing well.

Teachers use a range of probing questioning methods which are effective in recalling previous learning and guiding the direction of learning purposefully. Staff consider pupils' ideas sensibly when planning a range of purposeful activities. As a result, most pupils have sound attitudes to learning. Teachers provide purposeful oral feedback which supports pupils to identify mistakes in their work, including spelling and punctuation errors. However, feedback is not always specific enough for the learning activities. As a result, pupils in the school's upper years do not pay meaningful attention to improving the most important aspects of their work.

Teachers provide rich opportunities for the youngest pupils to apply their literacy skills purposefully, for example when writing a series of sentences to describe their favourite animal. In the school's upper years, staff develop pupils' skills effectively, for example when writing a letter to the residents of the village to thank them for attending a coffee afternoon. Teachers provide an effective range of activities for pupils to develop their numeracy and digital skills, for example when measuring the length and height of local bridges before presenting their findings in a spreadsheet. However, at times, staff tend to over-direct learning and they do not always provide purposeful opportunities for older pupils to develop their skills with increasing independence. This hinders pupils' ability to decide how to present their work and which equipment to use.

Staff work enthusiastically and passionately to improve pupils' Welsh. They use songs and movements effectively as part of their presentation methods and reinforce vocabulary and language patterns successfully. Staff speak Welsh skilfully and correctly and encourage pupils to use Welsh that is natural to their local area. As a result, many pupils make sound progress in their Welsh language skills. Their language skills are also developed effectively in English and at an appropriate level in French as pupils move through the school.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a caring and inclusive community that promotes good behaviour, courtesy and respect among pupils. There is a close and effective working relationship between staff and pupils and this is reflected in most pupils' positive attitudes towards the school's life and work.

There are beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills. Through weekly physical exercise sessions and the playground games and resources that are provided for pupils during break times, they develop their physical skills effectively.

Recently, the school has identified the need to improve provision to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to discuss what is worrying them. Weekly circle time sessions and the 'Worry Box' are effective in ensuring that pupils have an opportunity to discuss issues that are important to them. Leaders have robust arrangements for identifying pupils with ALN from an early age. Teachers and assistants work regularly with parents to develop individual plans to support these pupils to make progress in their skills. Assistants support pupils' individual needs effectively by providing a range of programmes to improve pupils' literacy skills. This is effective in ensuring that most pupils make sound progress in their learning.

Teachers raise pupils' awareness of the importance of being caring and conscientious citizens through activities that support national charities, for example by raising money for less fortunate citizens in poor countries. Staff promote pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully. Within whole-school assemblies and weekly circle time sessions, opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their own values and beliefs and learn about the importance of respecting others.

Staff provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to express their opinions about some aspects of provision, including purposeful opportunities for them to discuss their ideas at the beginning of a new theme. However, leaders do not provide regular enough opportunities for pupils on the school council to discuss their ideas without too much direction. As a result, pupils are not given opportunities to think independently about which elements of provision they would like to influence.

Teachers organise a number of beneficial visits for pupils, which promote their interest in history, culture and their community successfully. For example, as part of the Owain Glyndŵr day celebrations, teachers organise a historical trip for the whole school to visit Harlech castle. This is effective in deepening pupils' understanding of important characters in Welsh history and their impact on the nation. As part of provision to develop their creative skills, pupils are given purposeful opportunities to undertake a number of artistic activities, including being part of the 'Anthem Eifionydd' choir and the pop group 'Dreigiau Beddgel', to create a song with local celebrities.

Leaders ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding permeates the school. However, leaders do not use communication methods effectively enough with the parents of a few pupils with low attendance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a sound vision that is based on providing purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in a happy and safe environment. Staff support the headteacher's work effectively and the sense of teamwork permeates the school. The headteacher allocates responsibilities effectively among the staff, for example with assistants leading interventions to improve pupils' literacy skills. Leaders have robust arrangements to support staff's professional development, which link purposefully with the school's improvement priorities and their individual targets.

There is a robust strategy for improving pupils' Welsh language skills and their understanding of Welsh culture and heritage. As a result, many pupils speak Welsh confidently around the school. Leaders use the pupil development grant effectively, for example to support pupils to improve their skills.

Recently, many new members have joined the governing body. As a result, the school has identified in its improvement priorities the need to conduct training and induction for the new governors to improve their understanding of their role in supporting the school. The governing body receives appropriate reports from the headteacher each term, which focus on progress against the priorities in the improvement plan. Governors challenge the school's progress against the improvement priorities and ask probing questions in a timely manner. Through

sub-panel meetings, members of the governing body are given beneficial opportunities to contribute to other issues, including the school budget and health and safety issues relating to the site. Members of the governing body visit the school regularly, conduct learning walks and attend events during the term. Following the visits, they report on pupils' skills and provision to the rest of the governors in meetings of the full governing body. As a result, the governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Leaders ensure a culture of safeguarding pupils and all members of staff have a sound understanding of the procedures. The governing body ensures that the school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking, for example by encouraging pupils to eat fruit and drink water during the day.

Where practice is at its best, staff work effectively with families to share important information with parents, for example about events within the school and their children's progress. This is effective in helping parents to know how to help develop their children's skills within the home. However, there is no consistency across the school in terms of sharing information with parents and, as a result, not all parents receive sufficient information in a timely manner, for example about their children's progress.

The school has a very close relationship with the community. It recently received a grant from 'Cymdeithas Gwynant' to develop the school garden. As part of this, members of the community attend the school to work with pupils to hold gardening activities during the year.

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

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/>

This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).