



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

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Pencarnisiog

**Pencarnisiog
Ty Croes
LL63 5RY**

Date of inspection: March 2024

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gynradd Pencarnisiog

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Pencarnisiog
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	69
Pupils of statutory school age	49
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	9
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 23.7%)</i>	11.6%
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 13.2%)</i>	10.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	89.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	January 2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	02/02/2016
Start date of inspection	11/03/2024

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 Pencarnisiog is a happy and caring learning community where pupils learn confidently and play together happily. Nearly all pupils feel safe and know that adults at the school care for them and that they can turn to them when they face challenges or difficulties. From a very young age, they form strong working relationships with each other and staff, which supports pupils to treat all members of the school community with respect and courtesy. As a result, nearly all pupils' behaviour is excellent during learning sessions and when moving around the school.

Most pupils speak Welsh confidently and use the language completely naturally both inside and outside the classroom and take pride in their Welshness, their heritage and their school. Pupils develop a strong voice in the learning environment and have a positive influence and effect on the wider life of the school.

Most pupils show strong progress from their starting points in a good range of skills, including those with additional learning needs (ALN). The digital and creative skills of nearly all pupils develop strongly and are a notable element of provision. However, there are not enough opportunities for the oldest pupils to develop their extended writing skills in different contexts across the curriculum.

Staff provide a rich and balanced range of learning experiences that meet pupils' wider learning needs and interests successfully. Provision fosters increasing independence among pupils and they persevere effectively during their activities both in the classroom and the outdoor learning areas.

Teachers set clear learning objectives and develop activities at a pace that is suitable for learning. Teachers question pupils effectively to encourage them to think and develop their ideas. However, teachers' written feedback does not always support pupils to know what to do to improve the quality of their work.

The headteacher provides inspiring, effective and considerate leadership. Regular information is provided to parents about the school's events. However, the agreed communication methods are not always clear and effective enough for parents to report consistently about their children's well-being, learning and attendance.

The headteacher has high expectations of herself and everyone in the school community to do their best for the pupils. The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they do not provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge effectively enough to support the headteacher to undertake her teaching and leadership duties in full.

Recommendations

- R1 Expand opportunities for the oldest pupils to write at length in different contexts
- R2 Improve teachers' feedback to ensure that pupils know what to do to improve the quality of their work
- R3 Develop effective and sustainable leadership procedures to support the headteacher to undertake her duties in full
- R4 Improve agreed communication methods with parents to ensure consistent understanding when reporting on their children's well-being, learning and 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, most pupils' skills are appropriate for their age and stage of development. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with ALN and those who are eligible for free school meals, make strong progress across the areas of learning from their individual starting points. They make very good progress in their digital, creative and Welsh speaking skills. Pupils' progress in these skills are notable strengths of the school.

Most pupils develop their listening and speaking skills firmly across the school. In the nursery and reception classes, they develop their listening skills effectively and respect each other's contributions, for example when discussing and choosing which adjectives are best to describe an Arctic polar bear. Most of the oldest pupils develop their oral skills skilfully in Welsh and English. They communicate effectively and contribute purposefully to class discussions and express their opinions clearly and maturely, for example when discussing and explaining the characteristics of an effective astronaut. As part of their theme work, they begin learning a foreign language and acquire simple language patterns effectively, for example when teaching Spanish to 'Dafydd the Dragon'.

Most pupils' reading skills develop well as they move through the school. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds from a young age and use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words. By Year 2, they use their reading skills confidently to read story books and discuss the

content in an informed manner. On the whole, most of the oldest pupils develop their reading skills successfully in both languages, particularly in English. They vary their tone of voice purposefully and use punctuation correctly to demonstrate their understanding and engage the listener's interest.

Pupils' early writing skills develop well. Pupils in the nursery and reception class make marks successfully by using a good variety of media. By Year 3, they write in an appropriate range of contexts for different audiences, for example when writing extended pieces about the legend of Branwen. As pupils move through the school, many use their Welsh and English writing skills appropriately in a variety of genres. For example, they use short verb forms and similes effectively when writing the diary of an evacuee during the Second World War. However, the oldest pupils do not develop their extended writing skills effectively enough across the areas of learning. They also do not improve the quality of their work consistently enough which, in turn, slows their progress.

During their time at the school, many pupils' mathematics skills develop well. By Year 2, most pupils learn how to use mathematical equipment confidently, for example when using scales correctly by using standard units to measure the weight of fruit independently. Many Year 3 pupils double and treble two-digit numbers successfully when throwing balls at a table in the outside learning areas, for example. Most of the oldest pupils have a good understanding of mathematical concepts, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They calculate the area and perimeter of regular shapes intelligently and understand the relationship between percentages, decimals and fractions well. They apply their numeracy skills successfully in rich contexts across the areas of learning, for example when creating a database about the solar system.

During their time at the school, nearly all pupils' digital skills develop soundly. Most of the youngest pupils use a digital globe independently, for example to compare the geographical features of Pencarnisiog and Trevelin skilfully. The oldest pupils create a database about space satellites and use formulae skilfully to analyse the information.

Across the school, most pupils develop their physical skills successfully. As part of the 'Tour de Môn' challenge, they have cycled the distance of the Anglesey coastal path on an indoor cycling machine. Many pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 create and perform Hindu dances confidently for an audience.

Most pupils' creative and artistic skills develop effectively. The youngest pupils develop their skills by using scissors, glue and paint brushes confidently, for example when creating colourful dragons with various materials. Pupils across the school have worked enthusiastically with a local musician to compose, perform and record a special anthem for their school, which has deepened their understanding and appreciation of music effectively.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils enjoy attending school and feel very happy within its inclusive and caring environment. They feel safe at school and are confident that staff will listen to

their concerns and support them appropriately. Pupils' attendance rates at the school are a strength.

Almost without exception, pupils understand the school's rules and listen carefully to their peers and adults. As a result, nearly all pupils behave excellently in lessons and around the school. They are polite and treat staff, visitors and each other with respect. This is an excellent feature of the school's ethos. As they move through the school, most pupils listen attentively and respect the opinions of their peers.

Across the school, most pupils take care of their emotional well-being and are given purposeful opportunities to discuss their feelings on a daily basis. For example, the youngest pupils express their feelings on a chart outside the classroom. Most of the oldest pupils take part in beneficial circle time sessions or write a note in a worry box to share their feelings privately. By doing so, they are confident that staff respond to their concerns immediately and support them appropriately. Most pupils develop as ethical and informed citizens and show a strong awareness of what it means to be a good friend, which makes a valuable contribution to the school's familial ethos.

Nearly all pupils have a positive attitude to learning and develop into ambitious and enterprising pupils who are ready to learn. Year 2 and 3 pupils show infectious enthusiasm towards their learning. They enjoy activities that challenge them to do their best, for example when emulating the work of a famous artist using a variety of materials skilfully. Most pupils apply themselves curiously to their learning immediately and are keen to complete tasks. They work well together and focus on their activities for extended periods.

Across the school, most pupils discuss their work and previous learning confidently. They provide each other with valuable support during learning activities, when necessary. When they are given an opportunity to do so, many pupils use oral and written feedback appropriately to make progress in their learning by responding to comments from staff and their peers.

Most pupils across the school benefit from the opportunities they are given to decide on aspects they would like to learn more about, whether when learning independently or when working productively with their peers. For example, the oldest pupils use their creative skills to programme a 3D digital printer skilfully to create imaginative models of space aliens. Most pupils are interested in the themes they learn and undertake the tasks provided for them enthusiastically. For example, pupils in the nursery and reception class explore enthusiastically and try to identify the names of the spring flowers that grow on the school grounds.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to make healthy choices about eating and keeping fit. They speak maturely about how cooking lessons give them a good awareness of the importance of healthy meals and food hygiene. Most pupils participate energetically in a good range of physical activities, for example gymnastics, Zumba and running around the school playground. As a result, this has a positive effect on their fitness and physical well-being. Most pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe online through appropriate learning sessions and by receiving advice from the local police officer.

Members of the school's various councils take their responsibilities seriously and are very keen to contribute to improvements at the school. For example, the language council has ensured that Welsh music can be heard around the school on a daily basis. Through this, nearly all pupils are immersed in the Welsh language and acquire valuable vocabulary and language patterns from an early age. Members of the school council also organise monthly cooking lessons, while members of the eco council make the school's environment attractive by planting trees and vegetables. As a result of the work of the councils, many pupils feel that staff value and act on their opinions, for example by allowing them to order a digital resource after completing the 'Tour de Môn' cycling challenge.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers plan a stimulating and up-to-date curriculum that supports pupils to engage successfully with their learning. This enables them to develop and apply their skills in a balanced range of contexts over time, particularly their digital and numeracy skills. Teachers plan cohesive termly themes and provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to contribute to what and how they want to learn. The rich experiences provided by staff build systematically on pupils' knowledge and understanding and promote and develop their independent learning purposefully. As a result, the purposeful learning environment promotes the values and principles of Curriculum for Wales successfully.

Teachers make purposeful use of the village and the local community, which is rich in history, and the area's rich and legendary traditions, as a basis for learning that 'starts at their feet'. Staff enrich pupils' learning experiences with a range of visitors and visits to local places of interest as a stimulus for theme work. For example, arrangements are made for pupils to visit the Royal Fusiliers museum at Caernarfon Castle as part of a theme on the Second World War. As a result, teachers ensure that pupils have a broad knowledge and understanding of their identity, Welshness and their place in their local community, Wales and the wider world. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to attend residential courses which support them to be principled and informed citizens.

Across the school, teachers plan a range of effective activities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills across the curriculum. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills, for example Year 2 and 3 pupils write a detailed description of '*Y Trên Hud*' ('The Magic Train') and an interesting monologue about the history of St Dwynwen. At the top of the school, teachers develop pupils' skills appropriately. For example, pupils write an application letter to be interviewed for a job as an astronaut. However, teachers do not provide sufficiently regular opportunities for the oldest pupils to develop their extended writing skills in a rich range of contexts across the areas of learning.

Provision to develop pupils' digital skills is an excellent feature of the school's work. From an early age, pupils in reception and Year 1 upload and share their work with staff independently. As pupils mature, teachers plan engaging experiences to develop their digital skills. For example, the oldest pupils use a programmable device to measure the amount of water in soil in a scientific experiment. Teachers provide a good range of activities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills, for example Year

2 pupils participate enthusiastically in a 'right angle hunt' and use a protractor correctly to identify and measure objects in the outdoor and indoor learning areas.

The principles of foundation learning have been embedded firmly. Teachers provide a range of interesting learning activities that are presented in a rich learning environment. Many activities in the learning areas develop pupils' independence successfully; for example, Year 1 pupils enjoy dressing up and singing the school anthem harmoniously in the performance area.

There is an effectively working relationship among the school's staff, which fosters a happy and positive learning ethos for pupils. All staff manage pupils' behaviour extremely effectively and treat them equally and with appropriate respect. They use praise and oral feedback purposefully to celebrate successes and guide them to the next steps in their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work together proficiently, identify pupils' needs and respond to them effectively.

Teachers set clear and purposeful objectives for learning sessions and the clarity of their expectations supports the development of pupils' skills purposefully. Teachers and support staff question pupils skilfully to enrich their understanding and develop their learning. Staff also know when to intervene and when to let pupils persevere independently. When they are given an opportunity to do so, pupils assess their own learning and offer comments on the work of their peers. Staff provide relevant oral feedback to encourage pupils to consider what they are doing well and how to improve their work. However, teachers' written feedback is not consistent and does not always support pupils to improve the quality of their work.

An excellent feature of the school's work is the way in which teachers and learning assistants encourage pupils to take pride in the Welsh language. Staff work enthusiastically and passionately to polish pupils' spoken Welsh by speaking Welsh skilfully and correctly with them. All staff encourage pupils to use Welsh that is natural to their local area. As a result, most pupils speak Welsh spontaneously and make sound progress in their Welsh language skills.

Teachers assess the progress and development of individuals and specific groups thoroughly. This provides them with a useful picture of the development of all pupils and how to plan the next steps in their learning.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a safe, happy and caring community and the relationship between the pupils themselves and between pupils and staff is a strength and contributes exceptionally to the school's familial atmosphere. The respect and care from staff are a strong feature which has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and readiness to learn.

Across the school, staff support pupils' emotional, health and social needs successfully to support them to engage positively with their learning and benefit from the variety of opportunities it provides. Support sessions that focus on pupils' well-being are effective, which enriches their self-respect and social skills successfully.

The school offers effective provision for pupils with ALN. This includes specific and purposeful support programmes to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The additional learning needs co-ordinator makes good use of the support available from external agencies and implements the new ALN Act procedure effectively. Leaders track the progress of pupils with ALN well in relation to their personal targets. The school communicates appropriately with the parents of pupils with ALN about their progress and puts the pupil at the heart of the support process. As a result of monitoring and evaluating provision regularly, most pupils with ALN make sound progress against their targets.

The school has strong arrangements for promoting physical exercise and healthy eating among pupils. This raises pupils' awareness of the importance of choosing a healthy lifestyle effectively, for example staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to cook healthy snacks as part of the curriculum. A range of opportunities are organised to develop pupils' fitness and physical skills through sessions such as gymnastics and opportunities to take part in a good range of sports competitions. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to be active and undertake responsibilities during the school day, for example the oldest pupils take care of the digital resources and ensure that they are charged regularly and kept tidily.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development successfully. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the difference between good and bad and what it means to be a good citizen. Pupils have also worked with a well-known Welsh poet to write a new prayer that is unique to their school. The oldest pupils compare the similarities and differences between religion in Wales and France intelligently.

Teachers plan appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about the work of influential people in Wales and around the world, for example when learning about Betty Campbell. This helps them to respect differences and develops them into ethical and intelligent citizens. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of different types of faith, for example when teaching about different festivals such as Diwali and Holi and by creating colourful lanterns to celebrate the Chinese New Year. As a result, this helps pupils to develop an understanding of celebrations in other cultures and religions.

Staff provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to contribute to decision-making processes within the school. For example, a school uniform recycling scheme is beneficial, where pupils bring used clothes to school to be washed and redistributed to other pupils who need them. The school council has also organised a day to celebrate diversity successfully. As a result, these experiences support pupils to investigate issues relating to tolerance, empathy and respect for others. The school's procedures to ensure pupils' punctuality and regular attendance are sound. Staff keep appropriate records of absences and contact parents in a timely manner to discuss any concerns about their children's attendance. Effective use is made of external services to support this. Leaders set high expectations for pupils' safety and have established a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's inspiring, effective and considerate leadership sets a clear strategic direction for the development of the school. She has a firm vision based on providing every possible opportunity to prepare '*plant Penc*' ('Penc children') for life outside school within its caring, familial and Welsh learning community. The headteacher conveys this vision successfully to staff, pupils, parents, governors and members of the local community.

The headteacher and governors ensure a strong culture of safeguarding pupils and all members of staff have a sound understanding of the procedures. As a result, pupils feel safe and happy at school, demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and make strong progress in a range of skills during their time at the school.

The headteacher has high expectations of herself, the staff and pupils. Caring for the well-being of staff and pupils is at the heart of all her work. They uphold a high level of professional values and conduct, which contributes successfully to ensuring that the school is a safe and homely haven that values the well-being and education of its pupils. As a result, nearly all pupils' behaviour is sound.

The headteacher allocates roles and responsibilities appropriately and holds staff to account purposefully for the quality and impact of their work. The headteacher is supported efficiently by a small team of staff who work together closely to ensure continuous improvements. However, responsibilities and duties for some specific aspects of the school's work have not been shared mindfully enough.

Leaders address local and national priorities well. Across the school, there is a strong emphasis on developing the Welsh language and Welsh culture among pupils. For example, pupils have worked closely with a well-known Welsh poet to write '*Penillion Penc*' about their school and their community. Visits are also organised to legendary places in the area to bring these stories to life for pupils. As a result, these experiences strengthen their sense of belonging to the school, their pride in their identity and develops their pride in being confident Welsh speakers.

The headteacher ensures that detailed self-evaluation arrangements are in place to evaluate learning and provision. She has developed a clear and detailed timetable which helps to guide the school's self-evaluation and improvement processes. The headteacher evaluates the quality of teaching regularly and staff use various sources of evidence to gather and discuss relevant information about pupils' progress and the school's performance. For example, this includes scrutinising pupils' books and detailed analysis of internal data on pupils' progress. As a result, leaders have a balanced picture of the strengths and areas for development. The headteacher and leaders monitor progress against the improvement priorities regularly and report their findings to staff and governors effectively.

The governing body understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities appropriately and know the school and its community well. Jointly with the headteacher of a nearby school and the regional officer, they conduct valuable learning walks and evaluate provision and standards regularly by scrutinising books with the staff. By receiving and discussing the headteacher's thorough reports, they challenge the headteacher sensibly on relevant issues, such as the need to develop the oldest pupils' extended

writing skills, for example. As a result, the governing body knows the school's strengths and priorities for improvement well. However, members of the governing body do not always provide the headteacher with appropriate support to undertake her teaching and leadership duties in full.

The headteacher and governing body manage the school's funding well. They allocate the pupil development grant effectively to provide additional support to improve pupils' well-being and skills and ensure that the school has plenty of good quality resources that meet pupils' needs sensibly.

The governing body ensures that the school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking, for example by encouraging pupils to eat fruit during break times, providing cooking sessions and drinking water from the fountain.

The positive ethos and culture of the school promotes and supports the professional learning of all staff well. The headteacher links professional learning clearly to self-evaluation findings and the school's improvement priorities. As a result, all staff are given useful individual targets as part of the thorough performance management processes. Staff are given regular opportunities to attend training that meets their professional development requirements. For example, a member of staff acts as a 'digital facilitator' and trains staff from other local schools by supporting and strengthening their digital competence skills.

On the whole, there is a productive relationship between the school and parents. The Parents' Association is extremely active in raising money for the school, for example by organising an auction night and a Christmas fair. The headteacher and staff use digital communication methods purposefully, for example through an app and social media, to inform parents about events on a regular basis. However, the school's current communication methods are not always clear and effective enough for parents to report on their children's well-being, learning and attendance.

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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