



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

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Cemaes

**Cemaes
Anglesey
LL67 0LB**

Date of inspection: May 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gynradd Cemaes

Name of provider	Ysgol Cemaes
Local authority	Anglesey
Language of the provider	Welsh-medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	73
Pupils of statutory school age	59
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	6
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 21.3%)</i>	21.8%
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 20.6%)</i>	32.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	33.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	16/10/2012
Start date of inspection	03/05/2022
Additional information	

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 Cemaes is a happy, caring and homely school where pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Nearly all pupils show pride when talking about their school and their community. A strong feature of the school's life is the way in which pupils behave so positively and maturely towards others. They are polite and thoughtful and treat visitors and their peers with respect and care. All staff have an effective working relationship with pupils, which promotes good attitudes to learning and wellbeing, in addition to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

Welsh is new to most pupils on entry to the school. Overall, the youngest children make slow progress in their oral skills during their first years in the school. However, many pupils develop their oral and writing skills suitably as they move through the school. Their reading, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, in addition to their physical skills, develop soundly from their starting points. However, teachers do not always ensure that all pupils are challenged fully or build on their skills effectively enough across the school.

The headteacher's leadership makes a valuable contribution to establishing a strong team ethos and a sense of belonging among the staff. They have worked successfully with each other to create a purposeful vision and undertake beneficial personal development to support pupils. Members of the governing body are supportive of the headteacher and her staff. However, the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement arrangements are not effective enough to address important areas. As a result, leaders do not have a sound enough understanding of the school's current situation in terms of what is good and what needs to be improved.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' oral and written skills
- R2 Ensure that teaching provides an appropriate challenge to meet all pupils' needs
- R3 Plan purposefully to provide beneficial and cohesive opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum
- R4 Improve self-evaluation and planning for improvement processes

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Learning

On entry to the school, many pupils' basic skills correspond to what is expected for their age, except in Welsh where the language is new to most pupils. During their time at the school, most pupils make adequate progress in their learning and achieve appropriately.

Nearly all pupils listen well to adults and each other. Overall, the oral Welsh skills of the school's youngest pupils are slow to develop as they acquire a new language. However, a majority show an understanding of the language when trying to discuss their learning and play, for example by using simple vocabulary such as 'gwag' ('empty'), 'hanner llawn' ('half full') and 'bron yn llawn' ('almost full') when discussing how much liquid is in a jug. In Year 2, many pupils expand their vocabulary appropriately and speak with increasing fluency and confidence. As they move through the school, most older pupils develop their oral skills appropriately in Welsh and English. They begin to contribute purposefully to class discussions by expressing their views while trying to sell Anglesey as a tourist attraction.

Most pupils' reading skills are developing well. The youngest pupils show an interest in books and stories and respond appropriately to the content. By Year 2, they build on their understanding of reading strategies successfully and read sentences with some accuracy, for example as they read information to discover facts about famous Welsh people. Many older pupils read purposefully in various contexts. They recognise the main features of texts successfully and use their skills to gather information from a variety of sources, for example when researching questions about the legend of Llyn y Fan.

Most of the youngest pupils' early writing skills develop soundly as they practise their fine motor skills by weaving and making vegetables from playdough. In Year 2, many begin to write in simple sentences and show a sound understanding of punctuation rules. They begin to write in a series of different contexts, for example when writing a description of where in the world they would like to visit and why. Many of the school's older pupils build on their writing skills appropriately. Overall, they show a sound understanding of spelling patterns and how to use paragraphs and punctuation. They understand the features of different genres of writing appropriately and adapt their style and structure to different topics suitably, for example when writing Bendigeidfran's speech from the Mabinogi. However, overall, across the school, writing skills are not developing strongly enough considering pupils' age and ability, particularly when writing extended pieces.

Most of the youngest pupils make sound progress in their mathematical development. In Year 2, they have an intelligent grasp of shape, number and measurement facts, for example when using standard units of measurement to measure the volume of liquids. At the top of the school, most pupils have a secure understanding of mathematical concepts. They apply their numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum, for example when creating and analysing the climate graphs of Wales with those of Australia.

Most pupils' information and communication technology skills are developing well. The youngest pupils combine their skills successfully, for example when using an electronic tablet to create an animation of the story of Easter. The oldest pupils build firmly on this foundation by creating and editing a video as part of their 'from field to fork' project.

Across the school, most pupils' problem-solving and creative skills are developing suitably. The school's youngest pupils are beginning to predict and experiment to discover which fruits float and sink with a good degree of accuracy. In Year 2, pupils plan and create models of Anglesey skilfully by using wood and nails to make an outline of the island as part of an enterprise project. At the top of the school, pupils succeed in using their numeracy skills appropriately to solve a limited variety of challenges.

Most pupils' physical skills are developing soundly through a variety of beneficial experiences and activities. The school's youngest pupils develop their fine motor skills successfully, for example by using various art equipment to make bubbles out of a variety of shapes. The school's older pupils also develop their physical skills soundly by taking part in a variety of sports activities or as part of their themes, for example when learning a folk dance as part of their 'Cymru Cŵl' week.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

One of the school's strongest features is its homely environment and the kind and gentle way in which many of the older pupils care for their younger peers. This contributes soundly to the school's inclusive nature and caring ethos. Nearly all pupils behave well both inside and outside the classroom. They are polite and thoughtful and treat their peers and visitors with respect and care. Most pupils enjoy school and describe it as a happy and friendly place and give status and prestige to the golden rules that they have in place. Nearly all pupils show pride when talking about their school and community and enjoy learning about the local area, for example when creating an imaginary story by using pictures of legends from the village as a prompt and creating a mind map of their favourite place in Cemaes.

Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They show an interest in their work, concentrate for extended periods and are willing to persevere in order to succeed. The youngest pupils also undertake their activities in the learning and play areas independently and practise and develop their skills successfully, for example when practising their fine motor skills and Welsh language in the mud kitchen and by making a bowl of food using different fruit and vegetables.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and doing regular exercise. They take pride in the opportunities they are given to improve their fitness in lessons and other sports sessions. Pupils also take advantage of beneficial opportunities to grow, sell and cook their own vegetables and the foundation phase theme is full of opportunities to discuss and taste healthy foods.

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know whom to approach for advice if anything is worrying them. Most have a sound awareness of how to stay safe online and understand the importance of keeping their passwords secure.

Members of the school council are proud of their role and undertake their duties seriously. They are happy that adults at the school listen to their views. However, the council's role has not been developed fully following the pandemic and it does not have a clear influence on the school's life and work.

Most pupils take full advantage of suitable opportunities to suggest what they would like to learn within the class theme and offer their own learning pathways, where appropriate. The youngest pupils provide enquiry questions at the beginning of a theme and the oldest pupils are beginning to provide ideas about what they would like to learn within the learning areas. This contributes well to their attitude to the school's life and work and most pupils show enthusiasm and ownership of their own learning.

A majority of pupils appreciate and respond appropriately to oral feedback from adults and their peers. Overall, pupils discuss each other's work suitably and refer appropriately to success criteria. However, evidence of learners' progressing their learning by responding to the teacher's comments and correcting their work is limited.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, inspectors will not be reporting on pupil attendance rates during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. However, inspectors will consider the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance as part of inspection area 4 (care, support and guidance).

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff have an effective working relationship with pupils, which fosters a supportive and inclusive environment. They use various questioning techniques soundly to check pupils' understanding. All staff encourage pupils to work effectively together to complete tasks and solve problems, for example as pupils at the top of the school make bridges as part of the story of Bendigeidfran. They set clear learning objectives and use a range of beneficial resources to engage pupils' interest, particularly by making purposeful use of outdoor learning and play areas.

Across the school, teachers plan experiences to meet pupils' needs appropriately. Although they track pupils' progress regularly, very little use is made of this information to identify the next steps in their learning. As a result, teachers do not always tailor experiences effectively enough to challenge all pupils to make the best progress and develop their learning in full.

Teachers and assistants model the Welsh language effectively and take advantage of beneficial opportunities to enrich pupils' language, for example by singing familiar rhymes, nursery rhymes and songs. However, staff's expectations of the pupils' use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life are not consistent enough. As a result, pupils do not always strive to respond or communicate in Welsh, particularly the youngest pupils.

The school does not plan effectively enough to develop pupils' skills progressively across the school. As a result, the existing plans do not ensure consistency or progression from one year to the next and learning experiences do not always provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their skills adequately. However,

teachers prepare learning experiences that provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop elements of literacy, numeracy and digital competence suitably across the curriculum, for example as the school's oldest pupils recall the history of the tragedy of the 'Royal Charter' and use this information to map the voyage. The school's youngest pupils are given beneficial opportunities to apply their skills independently in the learning and play areas. Pupils have frequent access to the outdoor areas and benefit greatly from interesting activities both inside and outside the classroom. A good example of this is the opportunity for pupils to create vegetables in the malleable area and perform as a character from the book 'Supertato'.

The school has begun to experiment with preparing for the Curriculum for Wales by looking at the statements of what matters and by beginning to familiarise itself with the progression steps.

Care, support and guidance

All staff work together successfully to create a happy, caring and inclusive ethos at the school. They promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Valuable acts of collective worship ensure opportunities for pupils to consider the views of others, in addition to giving them an opportunity to reflect on how they can look after each other. The school develops pupils' ability to reflect on religious customs and on their own beliefs and values successfully. For example, they are given an opportunity to study a wide variety of religions, such as Hinduism and Judaism and work together on extremely interesting activities, such as creating a Diva lamp and Rangoli and Mendi patterns.

The school fosters shared values, such as honesty, fairness and justice particularly well among pupils. This is highlighted in the pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour around the school. Pupils are encouraged from an early age to tell a trusted adult if they are worried or concerned about something. Purposeful posters that are displayed around the school, in addition to termly lessons from the police liaison officer, support this well. Throughout the pandemic, the school has also continued to work with external agencies to maintain and support pupils' wellbeing and safety successfully.

Purposeful whole-school activities are held to promote the Welsh language and Welshness and to engender pupils' pride in the culture and heritage, for example by celebrating St David's Day by taking part in the parade in the catchment area. Data from the Welsh Language Charter highlights that most pupils are proud to speak Welsh; however, pupils' use of the language is inconsistent across the school.

There are appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily, in addition to keeping fit. This has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of issues relating to their health and wellbeing. Pupils are given fruit and milk every day and the youngest pupils research healthy foods. The school also provides beneficial opportunities to encourage pupils to take part in sports and leisure, for example through weekly sports sessions held by the Urdd.

The school has robust procedures for pupils with additional learning needs. Individual development plans and one-page profiles for pupils with additional learning needs

include clear and purposeful targets that correspond to pupils' needs. Staff monitor and track the progress of pupils with additional learning needs appropriately. This information enables them to provide suitable interventions to meet individuals' needs. The school works effectively with a number of specialist agencies, such as the local authority's specific Additional Learning Needs team to provide pupils and their parents with valuable support and guidance.

Staff have succeeded in providing pupils with purposeful emotional support throughout the pandemic. They also make regular use of the dedicated room, 'y nyth', which is available for conducting intervention groups and promoting staff wellbeing. They also make effective use of a range of purposeful strategies and provision to support pupils' wellbeing, including using a feelings tree to discuss their feeling when they arrive in the morning.

There is appropriate communication with parents and opportunities are provided each term for parents to share information with them through meetings and reports. Staff are very good at responding immediately to any concerns.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and all staff undertake purposeful training and take part in regular staff discussions. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has established a supportive culture that encourages staff to take part in beneficial opportunities to develop their understanding and skills. Her leadership makes a valuable contribution to establishing a strong team ethos and a sense of belonging among the staff. This ensures that nearly all are passionate about the school and its community. There are robust arrangements for monitoring staff performance, which ensure that their needs and those of the whole school are given due attention when planning their personal development. A good example of this is the purposeful training that they have received during the pandemic, including courses on how to support pupils' wellbeing during this difficult time. As a result, staff have worked successfully together during the lockdown periods to support pupils and their families by providing online learning experiences and further support, where necessary.

The headteacher has worked with a range of stakeholders to create a purposeful vision that reflects the school's principles and journey towards the future. Although preparations for the Curriculum for Wales are in their early stages, the school's leaders and staff succeed in realising a key element of the vision, which is to ensure an environment where pupils are happy and learn. The school's most experienced teachers have undertaken purposeful training to develop their leadership skills. This is having a positive effect on important elements of provision, such as strengthening provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Overall, the staff's roles and responsibilities are clear, although this does not always have a strong enough influence on the school's work and strategic direction.

Members of the governing body fulfil their statutory duties appropriately and show a suitable awareness of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. For example, they have worked well with the headteacher and the local authority to

reorganise the school's staffing structure to prevent over-expenditure in the annual budget. The governing body also ensures that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. They receive termly reports from the headteacher that highlight the school's life and work suitably. However, restrictions during the pandemic have prevented members of the governing body from operating fully in their role as critical friends and challenging decisions robustly enough.

The school's arrangements for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are not effective enough to address important areas. Although leaders have identified and improved elements of provision, such as pupils' reading skills and the learning and play areas at the bottom of the school, they do not always evaluate the quality of provision and standards in enough detail. The recent school improvement plan includes a suitable range of priorities, although the actions are not always incisive enough and do not focus sufficiently on improving pupils' skills. Progress monitoring reports against the priorities are also not evaluative enough and do not highlight the next steps clearly enough. As a result, leaders do not have a sound enough understanding of the school's current situation in terms of what is good and what needs to be improved.

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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