



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

A report on

Ysgol Iolo Morganwg

**Broadway
Cowbridge
CF71 7ER**

Date of inspection: June 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Iolo Morganwg

Name of provider	Ysgol Iolo Morganwg
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	Welsh-medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	203
Pupils of statutory school age	139
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	41
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>	2.5%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 22.2%)</i>	4.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	73.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0%
Date of headteacher appointment	06/11/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/05/2013
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 Iolo Morgannwg provides a stimulating and happy learning environment that places a high priority on its pupils' wellbeing. The school has a warm and Welsh ethos. Staff work together effectively and have high expectations for their pupils. This supports pupils to develop as conscientious, confident and bilingual citizens.

Most pupils make very sound progress from their starting points and there is effective provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Pupils have a strong voice in the school and thrive in their roles as learning coaches. They contribute well to their termly themes and persevere exceptionally well during their activities. Pupils enjoy researching when discovering information within their local area, for example when learning about the journey of bananas from the Caribbean to Barry.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and her enthusiasm and guidance in terms of developing the new curriculum are key. The curriculum is designed around the school's new values and shared vision. Staff provide exciting learning experiences that enable pupils to develop the skills that they need to access the whole curriculum and learn effectively. This has a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of their learning experiences and their strong progress from their starting points. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in all classes. Leaders ensure that staff benefit from professional learning opportunities that have a positive effect on teaching and learning.

Governors know the school well and ask challenging questions about decisions when necessary. They are proud of the pupils' progress as they develop as confident, bilingual learners.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that planning to develop pupils' extended writing skills is rigorous enough in all classes
- R2 Provide specific feedback so that pupils know exactly what the next steps are to improve the quality of their work
- R3 Strengthen and sharpen the school development plan to be able to measure the effect of the actions for improvement on provision

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Learning

Many pupils start in the nursery class with language and mathematical development skills that are at the expected level for their age. As they move through the school, most pupils make very sound progress. Vulnerable pupils and those with additional learning needs develop increasing confidence and persevere successfully with their learning activities.

Pupils in the nursery and reception classes listen attentively and interact effectively with adults, developing sound oracy, language and communication skills. They succeed in re-telling familiar stories confidently, for example by using a story map to recall the story of the Sower. By Year 2, most use natural Welsh syntax as they create a successful puppet show from the story '*Criw'r Coed a'r Gwenyn Coll*'. Most of the school's older pupils develop their oral skills skilfully in Welsh and English. They communicate effectively and contribute purposefully to class discussions, expressing themselves clearly and maturely. Most pupils take pride in the Welsh language and understand the advantages of bilingualism. They use the Welsh language naturally when talking to each other in formal and informal situations.

Most pupils' reading skills are developing well. The youngest pupils use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words. By Year 2, they use their reading skills confidently, for example when reading information to find facts about Owain Glyndŵr. Most of the older pupils read intelligently in various contexts in both languages. They vary their tone of voice and use punctuation correctly to demonstrate their understanding. They also develop their higher-order reading skills purposefully to gather information from different sources, for example when finding information about Betty Campbell, which deepens their understanding of racism and racial equality.

Many pupils apply their writing skills successfully. They show a good awareness of the importance of the elements of punctuation and accuracy when spelling. Year 1 pupils play with words skilfully when writing rhyming couplets to write a poem about nature. Most older pupils write effectively in a range of factual and creative contexts in both languages. For example, they write a diary from the perspective of a Jew during the Second World War, which shows empathy and sympathy.

Most pupils across the school make sound progress in their mathematics and numeracy skills. At the bottom of the school, they recognise numbers to 10 and count to twenty. Pupils in the Reception class succeed in calculating change from 10p successfully when selling goods in the shop. Most older pupils build well on their number knowledge and use it successfully in areas across the curriculum, for example as Year 3 pupils analyse data effectively to compare the weather in Nairobi and Cowbridge. Most pupils develop their understanding of shape confidently, for example as Year 6 pupils build various 3D shapes and use a formula to calculate the number of edges.

Most pupils apply their digital skills skilfully. The youngest pupils control a programmable device confidently. Many of the school's older pupils, including pupils

in Year 4, develop their ability to combine multimedia methods in increasingly complex ways. They create a combination of text, images, graphics, sound and video to provide an effective presentation, for example on the Daughters of the Sea.

Many pupils interact with each other effectively when expanding their thinking skills to solve a problem, for example when considering the important features when building a bridge that meets specific criteria.

The development of pupils' artistic and musical skills is effective, for example as Year 4 pupils design and sew a sea creature and as Year 3 pupils perform a rhythmic African song. The school's youngest pupils apply themselves enthusiastically to warm-up activities in a physical education lesson, while the school's older pupils develop their physical skills by taking part in a variety of sports activities.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Pupils' wellbeing and positive attitudes to learning are an obvious strength. Nearly all pupils feel that they are respected and treated fairly by teachers and this contributes to the friendly and warm ethos that is such a prominent part of the school's everyday life. Most pupils treat their peers and adults with the same respect in the classroom and around the school.

During lessons and break time, most pupils are very well behaved. They show a willingness and desire to undertake the challenges that are provided for them and complete their tasks enthusiastically. There is confidence and resilience in the way in which they undertake their tasks in the classroom and outdoors and they are able to concentrate for extended periods. Most pupils show perseverance when problem-solving, for example in devising effective ways to transport water from the main building to the pond in the wild woodland area.

Supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing is one of the school's priorities and, as a result, most pupils understand how to respond appropriately to situations that affect their emotional wellbeing. Nearly all pupils feel safe within the school and know whom to approach for support. Nearly all pupils feel safe from physical and verbal abuse. The school council has been included in the process of reviewing the anti-bullying policy and nearly all pupils feel confident that the school deals quickly and effectively with any cases of bullying.

Most pupils have an understanding of the need to keep fit and eat healthily and use this understanding to make healthy choices in their school life and beyond. They explain why it is beneficial to eat healthy snacks during playtimes and why foods with too much fat and salt should be avoided. Most pupils appreciate the importance of regular exercise and enjoy taking part in physical education sessions, yoga sessions and extra-curricular sport clubs. The youngest pupils enjoy developing their physical skills on the small bicycles.

Most pupils develop a sound understanding of the importance of moral citizenship through their awareness of the key values that are promoted on the school's coat of arms, which was designed by pupils. Older pupils are able to explain the importance of equality as part of their work on rights, for example when discussing the theme of multicultural roots in contemporary poems. Most pupils show empathy towards others

and are keen to support those who are in need, for example by planting sunflowers to raise awareness of the adversity faced by the people of Ukraine.

Most pupils take their leadership responsibilities seriously and pupils are enthusiastic members of the school council, the eco committee, the ambassadors, *Criw Calon Cymru* and the digital wizards. They discuss their leadership roles confidently and provide intelligent reasons for making decisions. They are given regular opportunities to report back to the rest of the school about their decisions and most pupils feel that leaders listen to their views. The child's voice is prominent in the everyday life of the school, for example by guiding teaching during '*Heriau Hwylus*' challenge sessions. Through the work of the digital wizards and the '*We Ffrind*' ('Web Friend'), most pupils understand how to stay safe online.

Following the pandemic, inspectors are not reporting on pupil attendance rates during the 2021-2022 academic year. Instead, the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance will be reported on as part of Inspection Area 4.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school's vision in terms of the curriculum, '*Hwyl iddynt oll wrth lwyddo*' ('May everyone enjoy success in achieving'), is the focus of learning. Most teachers plan thoughtfully for interesting learning experiences that reflect the school's ethos and encourage pupils to develop as ambitious and confident learners. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to contribute to their own learning, such as discussing their ideas openly and asking specific questions before starting on new themes. As a result, they show enthusiasm and interest in their learning.

Teachers, and pupils at the top of the school, reflect on the effectiveness of the curriculum regularly, and give appropriate consideration to developments towards the new curriculum. Teachers think carefully about the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, which have now been embedded in the school's values, and how these can be reflected while planning their curriculum. For example, as part of the values of fairness and respect, pupils discuss racism and the influence of footballers on the international campaign to reduce this on the terraces and on social media.

Since returning to school after the pandemic, practitioners provide opportunities for visits and trips to expand learning. For example, Year 4 pupils visit a Roman museum in Caerleon to learn about the life of the Romans. Practitioners also take advantage of opportunities to invite visitors to the school to enrich learning. For example, a historian from the museum in Cowbridge brings Roman artefacts to enrich theme work.

There are good relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers and assistants care conscientiously and loyally for their pupils. This reinforces the strong sense among pupils that the school is a happy and valued place. Teachers and support staff have high expectations in terms of behaviour. They use praise and encouragement appropriately and this creates a hard-working learning environment. The weekly reward systems now weave into the school's values, for example by promoting the importance of effort and perseverance to pupils, alongside presenting a good piece of finished work.

On the whole, teachers provide learning experiences that give pupils regular opportunities to develop and apply elements of literacy, numeracy and digital competence skilfully across the curriculum. For example, pupils at the top of the school use these skills skilfully to write a report to produce an appealing digital film about a key character from Wales. However, planning to develop pupils' extended writing skills is not rigorous enough across the school. As a result, pupils in all classes are not given the opportunity to write at length in a range of genres across the curriculum. The quality of experiences at the bottom of the school is rich and the appealing outdoor area is used effectively, for example when searching for various insects.

Teachers use various questioning techniques effectively to broaden pupils' understanding. Most teachers ensure a smooth pace to their lessons and use a balance of effective techniques, which include work in pairs and groups that develops valuable linguistic and social skills. Most set clear learning objectives and use a range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interest and support their learning. This enables pupils to use their previous knowledge and thinking skills effectively when completing tasks.

Teachers and learning assistants give pupils constructive feedback so that they understand how to improve their work, particularly orally. There is now consistency in these strategies of using praise and feedback purposefully to celebrate successes. However, feedback is not specific enough for pupils to know exactly what the next steps are to improve the quality of their work.

Teachers model language masterfully. The school's strong Welsh ethos and provision encourage pupils to use the Welsh language purposefully in all aspects of school life. As a result, they develop as competent bilingual learners.

Care, support and guidance

All staff contribute successfully to develop a happy, caring and safe ethos at the school. They foster shared values, such as care, kindness, fairness and respect exceptionally well. This is highlighted in the pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour around the school. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Through the school's regular creative opportunities, local performances such as '*Gŵyl Fach y Fro*' and regional and national Urdd competitions, staff support pupils to gain the confidence to take part in an interesting variety of extra-curriculum activities. These opportunities support most pupils to use their imagination and refine their creative skills while engaging successfully with the expressive arts, for example by emulating traditional jewellery from Kenya.

The school provides opportunities that contribute well to developing pupils' spiritual and ethical skills and support pupils to investigate issues relating to tolerance and respect towards others. For example, concentrating on a twinning project with a school in Kenya provides useful opportunities for pupils to reflect on important messages, such as tolerance and helping others, and link them with their own experiences.

The school provides effective provision for pupils with additional learning needs, which includes purposeful support programmes. Leaders track the progress of these pupils in relation to the targets in their individual plans and their progress from their starting points. Teachers take advantage of services and partnerships proactively to provide purposeful support for learners, including those with additional learning needs.

There are successful procedures in place to track and monitor pupils' progress. Staff identify pupils who could benefit from additional support at an early stage. They provide a purposeful variety of interventions that support these pupils to make valuable progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills and improving their wellbeing. The recent focus on strengthening support and guidance for pupils' emotional and social needs enables them to engage positively with their learning. This support is provided in the 'Cwtch' room, which is a pleasant learning environment. As a result of learning how to express their feelings and control their emotions effectively, these pupils are happier and complete class tasks more confidently. The additional learning needs co-ordinator uses meetings with teachers and assistants to evaluate the effect of this support regularly. Together, they set useful actions for improvement that enable pupils to continue to make appropriate progress.

Staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to take part in physical wellbeing sessions. These motivate pupils to keep fit and appreciate the importance of doing so; for example, pupils in the reception class understand the effect of exercise on their heart rate. The school promotes pupils' wellbeing purposefully and encourages them to take responsibility for their mental health in addition to their physical health. A good example of this is the yoga sessions and regular provision in the wild woodland, where pupils work confidently outdoors to develop their awareness of the names of the trees and flowers that grow on the school grounds.

Teachers and learning assistants promote the Welsh language and embed pupils' Welshness successfully. They elicit pupils' pride in their identity, heritage and culture through interesting activities, for example a charring ceremony to emulate the National Eisteddfod in Year 2.

Teachers encourage pupils to be independent in their learning and to take advantage of opportunities to shoulder responsibilities and contribute to the work of the school and the wider community. The inclusive ethos ensures that pupils are given good opportunities to become members of the various councils, such as *Criw Calon Cymru*, the digital wizards, the eco council and the school council. The councils meet regularly and make a very valuable contribution to the work of the school and the community. For example, the school ambassadors are very knowledgeable when guiding visitors around the school.

Leaders monitor pupils' attendance through a robust arrangement, working closely with parents and external agencies.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's effective and robust leadership sets a clear strategic direction for the development of the school. She has a clear vision that is based on preparing

pupils to become confident, enterprising and ambitious learners in a safe environment. She shares this vision effectively with staff, pupils, governors and parents. As a result, a caring, hard-working and Welsh ethos is evident at the school. Her purposeful strategic direction inspires teachers and learning assistants to maintain and raise standards. Staff share this ambition with pupils and promoting shared values is an integral part of school life. The school's motto: "*Hwyl iddynt oll wrth lwyddo*" ('May everyone enjoy success in achieving'), permeates the school very prominently. As such, there is a shared pride and understanding of the school's new values between staff and pupils.

The school's self-evaluation arrangements are effective. Leaders consider first-hand evidence and the views of parents, pupils and staff by analysing questionnaires when evaluating the school's performance. Although the activities of the monitoring process had to be adapted as a result of the pandemic, overall, leaders identify issues that need to be addressed. For example, priorities focus on raising standards of wellbeing and oracy, preparing very appropriately for the Curriculum for Wales and the additional learning needs transformation programme. However, leaders have not yet identified the need to improve provision to provide opportunities in all classes for pupils to develop their extended writing skills. The school development plan identifies the criteria and actions for improvement effectively. However, the plan is not incisive enough in identifying the expectations to measure the effect of actions for improvement on provision.

Regular staff meetings are held to organise and implement activities to achieve the shared priorities. All teachers are responsible for an area of the Curriculum for Wales or a specific aspect of the school's work. Learning assistants are key members of the school team and all staff contribute consistently to improving pupils' standards of learning, wellbeing and social skills.

Governors have a good understanding of their responsibilities. They are supportive of the school's work and influence its direction purposefully, for example by being critical friends while introducing the school's local curriculum. They understand the school's current priorities and why they are important. For example, they have a sound understanding of the effect of the pandemic on pupils' achievement and progress.

The school's governors and leaders manage their budget well. The school allocates and monitors the pupil development grant and other additional funding carefully, ensuring that they support the relevant pupils. Leaders ensure that the school has plenty of good quality resources that meet pupils' needs sensibly. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily.

Leaders address local and national priorities skilfully. Together with pupils, staff, governors and the wider community, they have produced a clear vision for the development of the Curriculum for Wales. They provide staff with valuable opportunities to begin to experiment with different approaches to delivering the curriculum, such as providing purposeful opportunities for pupils to reinforce their skills across the curriculum through the '*Heriau Hwylus*' method at the top of the school.

There is a productive relationship between the school and parents. Leaders use digital communication methods to inform parents about events regularly. They also hold open evenings to share the principles of pedagogy, for example the 'Croeso' ('Welcome') sessions for the parents of nursery and reception pupils.

Regular professional learning opportunities are provided for staff, which link effectively with the outcomes of the school's evaluation activities and priorities for improvement. The headteacher supports teachers to conduct research on an aspect of their classroom practice to identify the effect on pupils' attainment. On the whole, performance management processes are robust and help to identify staff's needs appropriately. As a result, there is an ethos of enthusiastic and effective co-operation, which makes a significant contribution to the school's warm and welcoming ethos.

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 (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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