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

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bronllwyn

Colwyn Road
Gelli
CF41 7NW

Date of inspection: November 2022

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bronllwyn

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bronllwyn
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	227
Pupils of statutory school age	171
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	29
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average *(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)*	16.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) *(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)*	2.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	65.5%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	02/07/2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	04/03/2014

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

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

Overview

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bronllwyn is a happy and homely school. All staff work together successfully to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment for pupils. As a result, pupils build highly positive relationships with members of staff, which contributes positively to the lively learning environment.

Pupils acquire the Welsh language quickly and effectively and speak confidently in an interesting range of learning contexts. They show pride in speaking Welsh and are proud of developing as confident, bilingual learners by the end of their time at the school.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are strengths. They are caring towards their peers, treat adults with respect and are polite to visitors, whether in lessons or during break time. Most pupils listen carefully to instructions and apply themselves enthusiastically to their learning. They work together diligently on a range of tasks.

The school's clear vision for developing the curriculum and the firm emphasis on shared values support teachers and staff to provide a rich range of interesting learning experiences that engage and maintain pupils' enthusiasm and meet their needs successfully. However, provision does not always support pupils to make increasingly independent choices about their learning.

Most pupils make good progress across the school, including those with additional learning needs. There is a strong focus on developing literacy skills in all classes and teachers and support staff work together effectively to ensure that pupils achieve well by using these skills. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their numeracy skills often enough, and digital skills, across the whole range, have not been developed sufficiently. Pupils' knowledge of e-safety is a strength.

The headteacher provides clear and purposeful leadership. She values the views of staff, pupils, parents and governors and ensures that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. She is supported skilfully by a dedicated governing body with a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Recommendations

R1 Improve aspects of pupils' digital skills

R2 Develop regular opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

R3 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress from their individual starting points.

Most pupils listen exceptionally well to each other and adults. Across the school, pupils' oral skills are developing soundly. Most pupils at the bottom of the school start to develop simple vocabulary quickly. By Year 1 and 2, most expand their vocabulary appropriately to talk about their work and experiences by using local dialect naturally, for example when describing the features of the autumn following a visit to the local park. Most of the older pupils' oral skills build successfully in both languages. They speak Welsh with increasing confidence and use purposeful vocabulary, for example when discussing whether the Wales footballers will be successful in the World Cup. At the top of the school, most discuss their work intelligently and maturely in Welsh and English by using rich vocabulary, for example when voicing different opinions about the dangers of global warming.

Many pupils' reading skills are developing well. The youngest pupils use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words correctly. By Year 2, they use their reading skills confidently and explain the content. Many of the older pupils read intelligently in various contexts in both languages. They vary their tone of voice and use punctuation purposefully to demonstrate their understanding. They also scan purposefully to gather information from different sources. For example, when researching the history of Nelson Mandela as part of their theme work, they deepen their understanding of fairness, justice and human rights. Many pupils develop their thinking skills successfully when reading text and prioritise key features to reinforce their understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

As they move through the school, most pupils' writing skills develop well. In the nursery and reception classes, most pupils show enthusiasm towards writing when experimenting with mark-making. By Year 2, pupils write in an appropriate range of contexts, including creative genres. Many of the school's older pupils build on their writing skills successfully and show a sound grasp of familiar spelling patterns, paragraphing and punctuation in both languages. They adapt their style and structure to different topics effectively. For example, they write a formal letter to urge the Prime Minister to reduce the dangers of global warming and write memorable portrayals of key characters from history.

Most pupils' mathematical skills are developing well. The youngest pupils are able to count to 10 successfully. They enjoy rummaging in the sandpit for diamonds that correspond to a specific number to apply their understanding of one-to-one correspondence. This encourages pupils to enjoy mathematics from an early age. As pupils move through the school, most deepen their understanding of the four mathematical rules and use standard units confidently and independently when calculating the perimeter and area of various objects on the school grounds. However, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills to the same standard across the curriculum.

Many pupils' digital skills develop gradually as they move through the school. Many of the youngest pupils use an electronic tablet effectively to record their work and control a programmable toy confidently, for example. In the older classes, many research safely on the internet and use suitable programs to make multimedia presentations of their work. However, across the school, very few develop a good understanding of how to handle data, create spreadsheets to model real-life situations and produce various purposeful graphs. Nearly all pupils' knowledge of e-safety is very robust.

Pupils' creative skills are developing well throughout the school. Most use a variety of materials and styles skilfully to produce impressive artwork. Many of the older pupils develop various instrument-playing skills suitably.

Most pupils develop good physical skills throughout the school. For example, they take part in a variety of lessons that promote their health and well-being, such as playing team games and taking part in fitness and dance sessions.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils are polite and treat each other and adults with a high level of respect. They value and respect the contributions of others, for example by allowing others to speak or by staying calm when their peers disagree with them during circle sessions. Nearly all pupils feel happy at school and speak enthusiastically about their experiences and what they learn. They greet each other fondly, are friendly to each other and hold doors for others as they move around the school. They forge highly positive relationships with members of staff and are confident that they listen to them. This is a strong feature that contributes positively to the lively learning environment.

Most pupils behave well in lessons, while moving around the school and during their leisure time. They are caring towards each other and demonstrate pride in the local area and their school. They take pride in the Welsh language and their heritage. For example, they sing the World Cup anthem of the Wales team with passion and enjoyment. This has a positive influence on pupils' well-being and attitudes to learning and their contributions are central to the school's ethos and vision statement, *'Dwlu ar Ddysgu' (Love Learning)*.

Most pupils contribute purposefully to what they learn. For example, they take advantage of the opportunity to share their interests and aspirations when contributing to mind maps at the beginning of the termly theme. As a result, pupils' enthusiasm and participation in their learning is sound. Most pupils appreciate and respond to timely feedback from adults and their peers by using consistent strategies such as *'Pinc Perffaith'* ('Perfect Pink') and *'Gwirio'r Gwyrdd'* ('Check the Green'). Many pupils assess their own work and that of their peers confidently.

Most pupils show perseverance and resilience when competing tasks, for example when researching and calculating the cost of a visit to Qatar. Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, are willing to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities. As a result, pupils play a purposeful part in the school's life and work, for example by appointing senior leaders and when the Criw Cymraeg visit two nearby English-medium schools to lead Welsh singing lessons.

Many pupils have a good understanding of how to be healthy and confident individuals and understand, for example, how to make healthy choices in relation to

their diet. They talk intelligently about the importance of eating fruit and vegetables. They have a very sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and visits by the community police officer reinforce this. Pupils develop as knowledgeable and principled learners by leading an online meeting about the importance of e-safety for parents, staff, governors and the local community. Most pupils develop their physical skills well during lessons, break time and lunchtime and through sports and fitness sessions. For example, pupils develop their balancing skills and strengthen their muscles by using the climbing wall on the school playground.

Most pupils develop to become ambitious and skilful learners who are ready to learn. They interact successfully with adults and persevere with their work, for example as Year 1 pupils build a famous attraction, such as the Eiffel Tower, from large wooden blocks.

Most pupils develop as ethical and knowledgeable citizens, for example through their awareness of fairness and equality by studying famous people as part of Black people week. They talk confidently about the 'right of the month' and what it means to them. Most pupils develop their understanding of the purpose of rules, rewards and punishments at school, for example by implementing the class behaviour steps.

Teaching and learning experiences

Across the school, learning experiences promote the school's vision well. Teachers provide a stimulating and purposeful curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and experiences effectively. They have revised the schemes of work in implementing the Curriculum for Wales by providing regular opportunities for pupils to develop a range of learning experiences in authentic contexts. This has a very positive effect on most pupils' motivation, commitment and achievement. The wider principles of the curriculum are developing appropriately by nurturing pupils to become ambitious and enterprising learners and to 'aim for the stars', which is a key part of the school's vision.

All members of staff have a highly positive relationship with pupils. They work together as effective team members and provide a wide range of activities that support pupils to make progress in their key skills and social skills. For example, Year 5 pupils use their literacy skills and digital skills and work together to produce a film of a football match with live Welsh commentary.

The school's staff work together enthusiastically and passionately to immerse pupils in the Welsh language from their first period at the school. They use songs and movements effectively as a key part of their daily *'Clebran Cywir'* programme. Most staff model language masterfully, show enthusiasm towards the language and have high expectations for pupils' standards of oracy. This enables many pupils to make good progress in acquiring the language and using it in different contexts. The school's strong Welsh ethos, alongside provision, encourages pupils to make purposeful use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life. As a result, they develop as competent bilingual learners. The school also provides successful weekly sessions for Year 3 pupils to learn French to become multilingual. Teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' thinking, reading, oral and writing skills and, as a result, they use them confidently across the curriculum. However, planning to develop pupils' digital and numeracy skills does not ensure enough opportunities for pupils across the school to apply their whole range of skills regularly.

Teachers succeed in making their classes stimulating and engaging places. Colourful and interactive displays in the classrooms and corridors support learning skilfully. The attractive learning areas in the indoor and outdoor classrooms are used purposefully to encourage pupils to work productively and enrich their experience. Planning for challenges in the form of a carousel for the school's oldest pupils provides opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and experiences effectively. However, on the whole, staff over-direct which, in turn, hinders pupils' ability to make increasingly independent choices about their learning. Overall, provision does not support pupils effectively enough to make independent choices about how they learn.

The school takes advantage of continuous opportunities to enrich the curriculum, for example through educational trips to St Fagans to learn about the Victorian era and other places to develop pupils' scientific investigation skills. It also invites visitors to the school and seeks input from parents. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to learn about other cultures, for example as they learn about the Diwali festival and the importance of Mehndi in Hindu celebrations.

Staff's oral feedback is a strength and helps many pupils to know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Teachers monitor pupils' learning through regular use of probing and supportive questions. For example, teachers give pupils time to think before responding and provide opportunities for them to discuss their work with partners. Staff address any misconceptions in a timely and purposeful manner. Teachers also provide effective written feedback. As a result, many pupils refine their work independently and make beneficial improvements.

Care, support and guidance

All of the school's staff are dedicated to creating a caring, homely and warm community. They support pupils to develop a strong awareness of the school's values and, as a result, nearly all pupils are polite and treat others with respect, kindness and tolerance.

The school provides beneficial opportunities to develop pupils' moral and spiritual understanding during assemblies and class activities. Staff encourage pupils to consider the views of others sensitively and to acknowledge and respect equality, diversity, inclusion and the importance of values such as tolerance. For example, pupils in Year 3 study the story of Rosa Parks to consider the courage of black people who have stood against injustice.

Provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a strength at the school. Staff recognise the importance of early intervention and provide individuals and groups of pupils with comprehensive support from an early age. Teachers and learning assistants work together closely to ensure that pupils receive purposeful and meaningful guidance in the classrooms and outdoor areas.

The school has a comprehensive range of provision that is used effectively to support pupils to make progress in their key skills. The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) is very effective in her role and ensures that pupils' individual education plans are up to date. Plans are reviewed regularly with pupils, teachers and parents. The ALNCo guides the school in terms of tracking the progress of pupils with ALN and those who receive interventions thoroughly. As a result of provision

and monitoring, most pupils with additional learning needs and vulnerable pupils make sound progress against their targets.

The school has robust procedures for promoting eating and drinking healthily. As a result, most pupils speak confidently about healthy eating practices and understand the importance of a balanced diet.

Older pupils are given appropriate opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities, for example the Urdd sports club where they develop their physical skills. Weekly fitness sessions and rugby training by external agencies enrich pupils' experiences successfully. Through the school's regular creative opportunities, performances such as the Urdd national jamboree and the school choir's performances in the community, staff support pupils to gain confidence and take part in an interesting variety of activities. These important opportunities support pupils to refine their creative skills while engaging in the expressive arts successfully.

There are a number of opportunities for pupils to influence school life and develop their leadership skills by shouldering additional responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council or a member of the Criw Cymraeg. The Criw Cymraeg is proactive in improving the Welsh language across the school in lessons and during playtime. For example, it has raised money to buy colourful and appealing posters to encourage the use of the Welsh language on the playground. It also organises sessions for parents and the local community to learn Welsh through the weekly *'Caffi Cymraeg'* café at the school. The school council gives presentations to the governing body and this gives them an opportunity to contribute to inform the school's strategic direction. It also organises activities such as a Halloween disco to raise money. Leaders plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in formal and informal situations. For example, the Criw Cymraeg visit two nearby schools to support them with their Welsh language charter.

The school celebrates its Welsh heritage positively. Learning opportunities based on the local area are a common feature of the school; for example, older pupils design leaflets to promote Rhondda to tourists. The school also holds events to celebrate St David's Day and pupils are given an opportunity to compete in Urdd Eisteddfodau and achieve success.

The school's safeguarding culture and arrangements to keep all pupils safe are robust. Staff promote and support an anti-bullying culture and positive attitudes to managing pupils' behaviour. The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. Teachers plan activities that develop pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm effectively. For example, they teach pupils about online safety and develop their understanding of appropriate and inappropriate relationships. They work effectively with the police to present these messages in an engaging and positive manner.

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

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a clear vision that is based on creating a comprehensive and caring school in which pupils' well-being is at the heart of all of the school's work. Alongside her deputy, she sets appropriately high expectations, which help to ensure

that most pupils maintain high standards and develop positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning. Staff work exceptionally well as a team and embody professional values that set a strong example for pupils.

Regular staff meetings include a clear focus on the school's priorities for improvement. All staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school addresses national priorities effectively, which include purposeful changes by delivering the Curriculum for Wales and creating a positive culture towards developing pupils' reading skills.

Senior managers are supported skilfully by a dedicated governing body, which has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher informs governors intelligently about pupils' learning and they act well on improving provision, such as installing a canopy and outdoor resources to develop outdoor activities. They undertake their work diligently as a governing body and as members of relevant sub-committees. For example, new staffing plans have been approved for the financial year to allow time for leaders to lead the work of designing a purposeful curriculum and to provide effective internal professional support to staff. As a result, all staff feel that they develop professionally and are very proud to be a part of the school's hard-working community.

Governors promote effective practices to ensure that pupils eat and drink healthily and leaders advise parents on the importance of nutritious food and a balanced diet.

The school's processes for evaluating its effectiveness and quality assurance are purposeful and include all members of staff. The monitoring timetable ensures that the self-evaluation cycle is an effective process which includes listening to pupils and parents, lesson observations, learning walks, scrutiny of pupils' work and holding meetings to measure pupils' progress. This leads to good improvements, particularly in pupils' oracy skills. Self-evaluation reports identify strengths and areas for improvement accurately. The school development plan identifies suitable actions and targets to measure progress. It focuses firmly on improving well-being and progress in pupils' skills by referring to national and local priorities.

Leaders create a positive culture and ethos to promote and support the professional learning of all staff. As a result, all members of staff understand their responsibilities well and take advantage of valuable opportunities to develop their skills and understanding. For example, all staff are part of Curriculum for Wales workshops and either work with local schools in triads or work together internally on designing the curriculum. Staff performance management arrangements are robust and make a valuable contribution to their professional development. They are given regular opportunities to conduct case studies and act on them effectively. Support staff create an effective virtual room to track the progress of vulnerable pupils, in addition to those who attend intervention sessions. This has a positive effect on pupils' commitment and achievement.

Leaders manage the budget and resources carefully. Expenditure links appropriately with the priorities for improvement. The Pupil Development Grant is used purposefully to ensure that vulnerable pupils are supported and do not miss out on valuable experiences.

Leaders communicate effectively with parents, for example by using a dedicated app and sharing newsletters, and make appropriate adaptations to support parents' individual needs. Leaders also give parents valuable advice on how they can support

their children, for example by displaying key information about how to stay safe online on the school's website and providing workshops on the importance of developing pupils' reading skills. They also refer parents to useful external services regularly and work closely with the Family Liaison Service, where necessary.

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.

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