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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on
Ysgol Penysarn**

**Penysarn
Amlwch
Anglesey
LL69 9AZ**

Date of inspection: January 2012

by

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Under Contract For

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Context

Ysgol Penysarn is some two miles from Amlwch and serves the local village and the surrounding area. It is maintained by Anglesey education authority.

At the time of the inspection, there were 96 pupils aged between 3 and 11 on the school's roll. They are arranged into four classes, two in the Foundation Phase and two in key stage 2. Children are accepted into the school on a part-time basis in the September following their third birthday. Pupils represent the full range of ability. Welsh is the main language in the homes of approximately half the children. Each pupil is expected to be fluent in both English and Welsh before transferring to the secondary school.

The school describes the area from which the children come as being one that is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.

The percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, namely 20%, is higher than the county and national averages.

Almost 23% of the pupils have special educational needs, which is substantially higher than the county and national averages.

The school was last inspected in March 2006. The headteacher was appointed to his post in September 2005.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Pensarn in 2011-2012 is £3414 per pupil. The maximum individual school budget per pupil in primary schools in Anglesey is £6563 and the minimum is £2636. Ysgol Pensarn has the 29th highest school budget per pupil of the 50 primary schools in Anglesey.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The school's current performance is adequate because:

- most children in the Foundation Phase make consistent and clear progress;
- pupils' wellbeing is good;
- the school is an inclusive community, where relationships are positive and pupils are valued; and
- the partnerships with the community are good.

However:

- the progress of some pupils, especially the more able in key stage 2, is not as good as it should be;
- the provision for pupils of different abilities is not planned carefully enough, and
- only a minority of pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work.

Prospects for improvement

The school has adequate prospects for improvement because:

- members of staff are committed to the pupils in their care;
- staff and governors have started to use performance data more effectively; and
- the school is working effectively as a learning community.

Even so:

- aspects of the processes of self evaluation and planning for raising standards are not rigorous enough.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

R1 ensure that more pupils achieve the higher levels at the end of the key stages;

R2 improve standards of writing in both English and Welsh in key stage 2;

R3 ensure that curriculum planning in key stage 2 meets the needs of all pupils;

R4 improve the governing body's understanding of data trends and comparisons with similar schools in order that they are better enabled to bring the school to account; and

R5 ensure that the self-evaluation and monitoring processes give specific focus on pupils' outcomes.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan that will show how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Results of teacher assessments at the end of key stage 1 at the expected levels show that pupils' achievement at seven years of age compare well with pupils in similar schools and the Welsh average. In key stage 2, results for pupils at eleven years of age at the expected level are lower than those of pupils in similar schools and the Welsh average. Apart from in Welsh at key stage 1, the percentage of pupils who achieve the higher levels over the last four years is also lower than the family of schools and the Welsh average.

Overall, girls achieve better than boys. In key stage 2, this difference is higher than in similar schools. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. However, work in pupils' books and in class observations shows that the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

In the Foundation Phase, most children make consistent and clear progress across all the areas of learning. Their knowledge and understanding is developing well.

In key stage 2, the majority of pupils can recall previous learning well and display appropriate knowledge and understanding of what they have learnt in several subjects. Even so, some pupils are less certain when discussing previous work and their knowledge and understanding is not always sound enough. By the end of key stage 2, the thinking skills of the majority of pupils are developing well and they apply these appropriately to new situations.

Pupils' awareness of Welsh and local history and culture is good.

The standards and progress made by many of the pupils across the school in the key skills of speaking and listening are good.

In the Foundation Phase, most listen intently and respond confidently to the teachers' questioning. Clear and appropriate progress can be seen in their reading and writing skills and they attain standards that are in line with their age and ability. Their confidence develops quickly as they choose their learning activities and engage enthusiastically in them.

In key stage 2, many pupils listen intently and concentrate well. They speak confidently during lessons and contribute sensibly to group discussions. By the time they transfer to the secondary school, the oral skills of most pupils have developed well in both English and Welsh.

Pupils' reading standards in key stage 2 vary. Those in the highest level of ability read fluently in both English and Welsh, change inflexion effectively and showing clear maturity. They discuss aspects of a book and confidently display understanding of ideas, events and their favourite characters. Pupils of average and lower ability do not scan a text quickly. Even so, they successfully use reading strategies to find the meaning. They are uncertain in discussing the contents of a book and in talking about well-known authors.

A report on Ysgol Penysarn
January 2012

The majority of pupils write for different purposes and in different styles with increasing ability. The punctuation and spelling skills of the majority are developing appropriately but some of them do not have appropriate spelling and grammar skills.

In both languages, their creative and extended writing skills have been insufficiently developed across the curriculum. Only a few pupils write long pieces of work.

The handwriting and presentation of work in the books of a minority of pupils is not good.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils' personal and social skills and their life skills are developing well and prepare them well for life and work outside the school.

Almost each child displays good awareness of the need to undertake physical exercise and to eat healthily.

Almost all pupils are courteous and respect each other; this can be seen in the help they give to each other. Most show interest, motivation and pride when undertaking their activities.

Within classes and during break and lunch times, the behaviour of almost all pupils is very good. Each one feels safe in the school and state that only very little bullying or harassment takes place.

Members of the school council actively make decisions and represent pupils' opinions well. They have had a positive effect on aspects such as the school environment, resources and deciding on which charities to support.

A minority of the pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work. They are uncertain when discussing their targets.

At nearly 95%, attendance rates are good and higher than similar schools and national averages.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Adequate

The school provides a range of appropriate experiences that fire the children's interest, but it does not always fully meet the needs of the different abilities.

Schemes of work meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and religious education and appropriate attention is given to developing skills. Interesting experiences are provided to promote the learning in the Foundation Phase in a variety of situations both within and outside the classroom. The thematic nature of the provision in key stage 2 and its relevance in the context of the pupils drives the learning. However, over dependence on worksheets limits the development of pupils' writing skills across the curriculum. Through uniform tasks for whole years, opportunities are missed to extend pupils of higher ability.

Good attention is paid to thinking skills in key stage 2. Through purposeful planning the school succeeds in ensuring that literacy, numeracy and information technology skills develop appropriately across the curriculum.

A report on Ysgol Penysarn
January 2012

The Welsh dimension has a prominent place in the school's planning with valuable visits locally stimulating the learning. The school successfully uses language tickets to promote the use of Welsh. Staff regularly take advantage of opportunities to promote Welsh culture. The commitment to Urdd activities is a good example of this.

Thematic work in the classes offers good opportunities for children to develop awareness of global citizenship.

Teaching: Good

Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it to plan purposefully. The provision inspires and challenges many of the pupils at the school. Class management is consistently firm throughout the school and teachers create a friendly and caring ethos.

During the sessions observed, the teaching was good overall. Where the teaching is at its best the presentations were incisive with effective use of resources and the work set challenged the range of abilities. Where the teaching is less effective, there is a lack of focus to the lessons and a lack of structures to support the learning.

The numerous resources of standard available in the school are used appropriately to enrich the learning experiences.

Supportive oral feedback is provided and useful recommendations offered through the marking. However, opportunities for pupils to correct and improve their work are scarce. Insufficient purposeful periods are planned for pupils to act on the feedback given. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils' self-assessment and the use of assessment for learning methods continue to develop throughout the school.

The school shares good information on pupils' progress and targets in parents' evenings and comprehensive reports are provided at the end of the year that report on the progress of each pupil.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing are good with the school achieving 'Healthy School' status. The provision for promoting pupils' awareness of the importance of keeping fit and eating healthily are comprehensive and support their learning successfully. The learning experiences effectively promote pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This contributes greatly towards the feeling of community that exists within the school.

Pupils benefit from the school's relationship with various agencies. The school succeeds in targeting the support purposefully in order to enrich and develop pupils' experiences.

The school has appropriate security procedures and policies.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and ensures access to the curriculum for each pupil. The school identifies the needs of these pupils early in the Foundation Phase and uses standardised tests in key stage 2 to track progress. Individual educational plans are reviewed annually through consultation with parents/guardians and other appropriate agencies; these are comprehensive documents and are used in the classes.

Learning environment: Good

The school has a supportive ethos and much emphasis is placed on working together and respecting adults and children. The school is an inclusive community that promotes equal opportunities for all pupils, paying particular attention to the engagement of boys. Clear emphasis is placed on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity.

There are sufficient appropriate resources that meet the needs of the range of ages and abilities well, and effective use is made of them. The learning environment is attractive with stimulating displays and artefacts in the classrooms and in communal areas. The school building and grounds are used effectively and are well maintained.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
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Leadership: Adequate

The headteacher, staff and governors work effectively to nurture a supportive whole-school ethos where pupils feel they are valued. This is reflected in the high standards of pupils' wellbeing.

Regular meetings ensure effective communication and a strong feeling of teamwork. The school has an appropriate range of managerial and curricular policies that are implemented efficiently. All staff have responsibilities and clear job descriptions that are appropriately undertaken. The continuous professional development of staff is supported through a suitable performance management system that sets relevant targets for improving individuals within the context of the school.

The school makes good use of performance data to identify individuals in need of support and to set appropriate targets for them. The procedure has been updated recently to keep a better track on pupils' progress over time. Even so, monitoring arrangements, including class observations and examining pupils' work do not concentrate effectively on the achievement of specific groups of pupils.

The governors are supportive of the school's work and increasingly aware of their responsibilities. Appropriate steps have been taken to strengthen the governing body's contribution with regard to setting whole-school priorities. They are beginning to use data more effectively but as yet governors have insufficient understanding of how good standards and quality are throughout the school, especially with regard to data trends and comparisons with similar schools. As a result, they are not executing their role of critical friends effectively.

The school pays appropriate attention to a number of local and national priorities. The Foundation Phase is well established at the school and the school is active in its promotion of bilingualism to all the school's stakeholders. Increasing attention is given to the children's voice and there is good emphasis on children's wellbeing.

Improving quality: Adequate

Arrangements for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are appropriate. The process is inclusive and the school actively seeks the opinions of parents, pupils and teachers. The school carefully analyses formal results at the end of the Foundation

A report on Ysgol Penysarn
January 2012

Phase and key stage 2 but the self-evaluation process is insufficiently based on using lesson observations and examining pupils' work.

The self-evaluation report prepared by the school prior to the inspection offers a clear opinion on the school's good features but the report does not clearly recognise areas in need of improvement.

Priorities in the school development plan concentrate appropriately on improving outcomes but there is no clear and obvious link between the self-evaluation report and the plan's priorities.

The procedures are identified under the different priorities together with the expected outcomes and monitoring progress. Responsibilities for implementation are also identified and resources are earmarked for supporting the developments but the structures for monitoring progress aren't thorough enough and the role of governors in the process is insufficiently developed.

The good collaboration between staff enables them to share information and expertise. The school is working appropriately to extend its commitment to professional networks especially with schools within the catchment and the local secondary school. A good example of this is the improvement in the development of the thinking skills of many pupils in key stage 2.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a range of partners which is having a beneficial effect on pupils' wellbeing and attainment. There is a very strong partnership with parents and the local community. They are very supportive of the school and contribute towards many activities, including fund raising to improve the educational provision.

There is good collaboration with a nursery group located on the site which helps to prepare the children well for their period at the school.

There is a good partnership with an appropriate range of external agencies and institutions such as the health and social services in order to meet the specific needs of individuals when necessary. This has a positive effect on developing the wellbeing and attainment of those pupils.

The school has a good strategic partnership with schools in the catchment and the local secondary school. These arrangements are effective, for example in standardising and moderating teachers' end of key stage assessments and to ensure a smooth transfer to the secondary school.

Resource management: Adequate

The school has sufficient suitably qualified staff to undertake its work effectively. Teachers and assistants work well together as a team and there are appropriate opportunities for them to develop their professional skills.

The school has a good range of appropriate resources. The headteacher and governors monitor the budget appropriately. They manage the good supply of resources available for all the school's needs effectively, ensuring good use is made of them. The school buildings and grounds are also managed and maintained well.

Overall, considering pupils' outcomes, the quality of teaching, care and guidance, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Teachers' assessments at the end of year 2 in key stage 1 and at the end of year 6 in key stage 2 must be handled with care due to the small number of children in a year which could significantly affect the school's performance from one year to another.

Overall, results at the end of key stage 1 show that the achievement of many pupils at seven years of age compares well with pupils in similar schools.

During the last four years, the percentage of pupils that achieve level 2 (the expected level in Welsh, mathematics and science for children at seven years of age) varies. In Welsh, the school's performance is consistently amongst the highest 50% of similar schools in respect of numbers entitled to free school meals and amongst the highest 25% in the last two years. The school's performance in mathematics and science is not as good and tends to be amongst the lowest 50%.

In 2011, each child achieved the expected level in Welsh. In mathematics and science, the school's performance was lower than the Welsh average and with the lowest in the family.

The number of pupils that attained the higher level 3 in Welsh was higher than the Welsh average but lower than the family of schools. In mathematics and science, the number was significantly lower than that in the family of schools and the Welsh average. Overall, over the last four years, the percentage that achieves the higher level in Welsh compares well with the Welsh average and the family of schools. The percentage achieving the higher level in mathematics and science was lower than the family of schools and the Welsh average over the last three years.

There is no difference between the achievement of pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals and that of their peers. There is no significant pattern that shows any differences between the results of girls and boys at the expected level but in the last two years, more girls than boys have achieved the higher level in Welsh.

Overall, results for pupils at eleven years of age at the end of key stage 2 are lower than those for pupils in similar schools and the Welsh average. In three of the last four years, the school's performance in relation to the expected level in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, for pupils at eleven years of age (the core subject indicator) has been lower than schools in the same family and the Welsh average.

In 2011, 75% of the pupils achieved the expected level, namely level 4, in each of the four core subjects. This is lower than the average of schools in the same family and the Welsh average. Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school is amongst the lowest 25% in each subject.

In three of the last four years, the school's performance against the core subject indicator has been amongst the lowest 50% of similar schools in respect of numbers of children entitled to free school meals. In English, Welsh and mathematics it was in the lowest 25% in two of the last three years.

In 2011, the percentage of pupils achieving higher than the expected levels at the end of key stage 2 (level 5 or higher) is with the lowest in the family in each core

A report on Ysgol Penysarn
January 2012

subject. Overall, the percentage that achieves the higher level is lower than the average of schools in the same family and the Welsh average in three of the last four years.

There is no difference between the achievement of pupils entitled to receive free school meals and that of their peers.

In key stage 2, girls consistently achieve better than boys in each of the four subjects. This difference is significantly higher than the family and national averages in 2011.

Examining pupils work and evidence from classroom observations fully supports this judgement.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires Number of responses: 15

Almost all parents/carers agree or strongly agree that the school:

- is well run;
- provides a good variety of activities; and
- helps their child to become more mature and to shoulder responsibility.

Almost all parents/carers agree or strongly agree that their child:

- likes the school;
- receives support to settle in well when starting at the school;
- makes good progress;
- is encouraged to be healthy and to undertake regular physical exercise;
- is safe at the school; and
- are well prepared for moving on to their next school.

Almost all parents/carers agree or strongly agree that:

- the teaching is good;
- pupils behave well;
- staff expect their children to work hard and do their best; and that
- staff treat each child fairly and with respect.

Almost all parents/carers agree or strongly agree that:

- they feel comfortable in asking the school questions, or making suggestions or identifying a problem.

Most agree that:

- the homework given builds well on what their child has learnt in the school;
- they are given regular information on their child's progress;
- the school gives appropriate additional support in relation to any individual specific needs; and that
- they understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires Number of responses: 48

All pupils agree that:

- the school deals with any instances of bullying well;
- the school gives many opportunities for regular physical exercise;
- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress;
- homework helps them understand and improve their work;
- they have sufficient books, equipment and computers to undertake their work; and that
- almost all the children behave well during break time and lunch time.

A report on Ysgol Penysarn
January 2012

All pupils agree that they:

- are doing well at the school;
- know who to talk to if they are worried or concerned, or if they find their work difficult;
- learn how to stay healthy; and that
- they feel safe at the school.

Nine pupils felt that other children did not behave well and this affected their ability to do their work.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mervyn Lloyd Jones	Reporting Inspector
Goronwy Morris	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Owain Roberts	Peer Inspector
Gareth Owen	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.