



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on
Ysgol Santes Gwenfaen
Rhoscolyn
Holyhead
Anglesey
LL65 2DX

Date of Inspection: May 2011

School number 6602163

Inspection number 1890

by

Mr Merfyn Lloyd Jones

Reporting Inspector under contract to Estyn

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 Santes Gwenfaen is a bilingual Community Primary School. It is located on Ynys Cybi and serves the villages of Rhoscolyn and Trearddur Bay as well as the rural hinterland. A third of the pupils live outside the traditional catchment area. There is a waiting list for admission to the school. Attendance is good and in line with national attendance targets. The area is described as being neither prosperous nor economically challenged.

The school has 103 full-time pupils aged 4-11, and 12 part-time nursery children on the register representing the full ability range. Pupils are taught in mixed year group classes. The pupils are admitted on a full-time basis at the beginning of September following their fourth birthday. English is the main language spoken in the homes. Since 2006 the school moved from teaching Welsh as a second language to first language Welsh.

Two pupils have a statement of additional learning needs and 18 pupils are either on school action or school action plus for extra support. Thirteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

The school was last inspected in June 2005. Since then, there has been an increase of 19 per cent in pupil numbers and considerable modifications have been made to the school building.

The current head teacher was appointed in September 2006 and is currently on maternity leave. The school is currently managed by a teacher in charge. In addition to the head teacher, there are four full-time and one part-time teacher at the school.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Santes Gwenfaen is £3128, which compares with a maximum of £15,158 and a minimum of £2685 for primary schools in Anglesey. The school has the 40th highest budget per pupil out of the 52 primary schools in Anglesey.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school is good because:

- good achievement and progress is made by most pupils;
- the quality of care, support and guidance leads to high standards of pupils' wellbeing;
- teaching is good and pupils benefit from an interesting curriculum; and
- the quality of leadership and management is good.

Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because:

- it has demonstrated its ability to raise standards;
- of the strong partnerships, particularly with parents and the community; and
- the commitment of the head teacher, staff and governors to continued improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve further the school should:

R1 improve the standards of Welsh particularly at key stage 2;

R2 develop pupils' skills so that they have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve their work;

R3 ensure that learning activities meet the needs of all pupils; and

R4 ensure that there is a clear link between the process of self-evaluation, priorities for improving outcomes and pupil targets.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most pupils make good progress in their learning. In the Foundation Phase, they make good progress and become increasingly confident learners. As they progress through KS2, they make good progress in most areas of learning. They recall their previous learning well and show good knowledge and understanding of what they have learnt in many subjects. All pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) achieve well against personal targets and make good progress relative to their ability, interests and prior attainment.

Most pupils throughout the school make good progress in their communication skills in English. Most pupils speak confidently, listen well and read an appropriate range of texts accurately and with expression. Most pupils' writing skills are good throughout the school, they write for different purposes and in different styles with increasing maturity.

Most pupils apply their numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) skills securely in a range of contexts. Most pupils' creative skills across the school are very good.

Most can apply their skills well to new situations showing increasing confidence as they progress through the school.

The majority of pupils are making good progress in their Welsh language skills particularly in the Foundation Phase and up to year 4. They are developing a progressively wider vocabulary and respond confidently to the teacher. Their ability to read and write in Welsh is progressing well at the lower end of the school and by a few of the more able pupils in years 5 and 6. Generally however, progress by many pupils in years 5 and 6 is not as secure. Pupils' awareness of Welsh geography, history and culture is good.

Statutory teacher assessments in 2010 indicate that 100.0% of pupils at KS1 achieved the core subject indicator (CSI) i.e. the expected level 2 in the three subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science in comparison with the family average of 86.4% and the national percentage of 81.6%. In the same year at KS2, 100% of pupils attained the CSI at level 4 or above in English or Welsh, mathematics and science compared with the family average of 71.7% and the 78.2 % nationally. When compared with schools, which have a similar number of pupils entitled to receive free school meals (FSM), this places the school in the top 25% of schools in Wales.

Consideration of the data over the past 4 years indicates that the school's performance at both key stages at the expected level in English, mathematics and science compares favourably with schools which face similar challenge.

Performance at the higher levels 3 and 5 is more variable. The number of KS1 pupils attaining the higher level 3, in Welsh, mathematics and science is consistently below family, LA and all-Wales figures. At KS2, the number of pupils attaining the higher level 5, whilst generally above family, LA and national figures in English, mathematics and science indicates a decline in English and science since 2008. The difference between the performance of girls and boys and between the performance of free-school-meals (FSM) pupils and non FSM pupils is less than family and national averages.

Performance in Welsh at KS1 has improved significantly over the past 4 years and at level 2 is amongst the highest in the family in 2010. The data indicates that oracy, reading and writing skills have improved significantly since 2007. However, the number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in Welsh continues to be below family, LA and national averages. At KS2, whilst improving between 2007 and 2009, performance in Welsh is consistently below family, LA and national averages and in 2010 was the lowest in the family.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils have a good awareness of health and safety issues. They all understand the need to take exercise and to eat healthily.

Attendance at 95% is good and above that of similar schools, the local authority (LA) and national average. Most pupils arrive punctually for school. All pupils feel valued and this impacts very positively on the standards they achieve. All pupils are polite, courteous and respect each other. Most show very positive attitudes to learning and concentrate well when working. The behaviour of nearly all pupils is very good both within classes and at break and lunchtimes. Most pupils' feel safe in school and say that little bullying or harassment occurs.

Members of the school council are actively involved in making decisions and represent the views of pupils' well. Their influence on school life is very evident.

Pupils' personal, social and life skills are developing well and they are well prepared for life and work outside school.

The majority of pupils as they progress through the school are developing appropriate skills in understanding how well they are doing. Generally however, they are unclear as to what they need to do to improve their work.

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

Teachers provide a good range of stimulating and enriching learning experiences to meet the needs of pupils. Lessons are planned well, using a range of interesting

approaches. Learning activities, however, are not always adapted to suit the needs of all learners.

Very good use is made of the external environment and outdoor education is an outstanding feature of the school's work. These opportunities together with an extensive range of visits beyond the school contribute significantly in broadening and enriching the learning experiences of many pupils.

Planning and provision for developing pupils' communication skills are good. There are well planned opportunities for pupils to develop ICT skills across the curriculum. Planning for numeracy is good with good evidence of numeracy skills being used in a number of subjects. Thinking skills play an important part in lessons. Pupils' problem solving and creative skills are promoted effectively particularly in science and history.

The curriculum and extra-curricular activities successfully promote pupils' awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. Pupils' awareness of global warming, the Healthy Schools and Eco Schools programmes, successfully promote their understanding of the wider world.

Provision and planning for Welsh language development has improved significantly since the last inspection. The emphasis on the teaching of Welsh as a first language has been particularly effective in the Foundation Phase, KS1 and lower KS2. Provision in upper KS2 is less effective. Opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge of the Welsh dimension across the curriculum are good.

Teaching: Good

The overall quality of teaching is good with some examples of excellent teaching. Teachers have high expectations and good up-to-date subject knowledge. Clear learning objectives and success criteria are used effectively across the school. The pace in almost all lessons is good and a range of teaching methods and resources are used effectively to stimulate and challenge most pupils to do well. Teachers have established good working relationships that foster effective learning.

The good support provided by the classroom support assistants makes an important contribution to the learning of groups of pupils. This has a very positive effect on the standards they achieve. Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of the learning intentions and provide helpful oral and written feedback and comments. Most pupils are aware of targets being set for them; however, they do not always know what they need to do to improve their work.

The school has clear, efficient systems for tracking and maintaining information on pupils' progress. Teachers make good use of standardised tests as well as teachers' own assessments to measure progress and to set challenging and realistic targets.

Moderation across the cluster schools in the core subjects is enabling teachers to have a better understanding of the standards expected. Reports to parents are

detailed and helpful and set general targets for improvement and include opportunities for parents to comment.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Care, support and guidance are good. Effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing as well as to encourage their involvement in their school and the wider community. The school develops pupils' sense of responsibilities effectively and their role in decision making is developing well and is becoming an important element of pupil voice at the school.

The school liaises effectively with an extensive range of external agencies and services. Induction programmes are tailored to meet the needs of pupils and transfer arrangements to the local secondary schools are good.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Procedures for monitoring and prompt follow up of unexplained absences are effective.

There are good procedures and systems for identifying, supporting and monitoring pupils' with additional learning needs. Most additional support is provided effectively within classes, with occasional withdrawal for additional support. Classroom support assistants are well used. Individual education plans are appropriate and are regularly evaluated and updated, in consultation with parents.

Learning environment: Good

The school ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils. Parents, staff and pupils all comment very favourably on the strong sense of care, inclusion and belonging that exists in the school. The curriculum is fully accessible, regardless of gender, race or religion.

Provision for collective worship meets statutory requirements and contributes well to pupils' spiritual development through opportunities for reflection and worship. The accommodation provides a stimulating and well maintained learning environment to support teaching and learning. Resources are of good quality and these are used well to support pupils' learning needs.

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

School leaders have a clear vision which is communicated effectively to staff, parents and pupils. The head teacher provides effective leadership and has established a culture that strives for improvement. Expectations are high. In the

absence of the head teacher, the teacher in charge ensures that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of the school's strategies and plans. Good policies and strategies for improvement have been implemented and impact positively on standards and quality of provision.

The school's governing body actively seeks to ensure that the strategic vision for the school is implemented. It is well-informed about the performance of the school in comparison to similar schools and understands the issues that affect it. Governors actively seek the opinions of parents where appropriate, and work effectively with the head teacher as critical friends. The governing body has adopted an appropriate complaints procedure and ensures that this is adequately explained to parents.

The school is making good progress in introducing initiatives that meet local and national priorities. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing. The school's commitment to developing the provision for Welsh and raising the standard of Welsh throughout school has had a significant impact on standards particularly in the Foundation Phase and KS1. The emphasis on developing pupil fitness and wellbeing through Outdoor education is a particular strength of the school.

Improving quality: Good

Overall, the process of self-evaluation and development planning is good. Staff and governors are committed to maintaining and improving standards and work conscientiously to ensure a whole-school approach to self-evaluation. They use a range of evidence appropriately to identify strengths and areas for development.

Performance data is carefully analysed to identify how well pupils achieve and any under-performing that is evident. However, arrangements for monitoring developments do not focus sufficiently on pupil outcomes.

Arrangements are in place to seek the views of parents and pupils and their views and comments are considered seriously. The governing body is fully involved in discussing, commenting and challenging the findings of the self-evaluation report.

Although the school identifies some important areas for development the link between the self-evaluation report, priorities in the school development plan (SDP) and pupils' targets for improving their work is not always clear. Although priorities for improvement as identified in the SDP are appropriate, the identified actions are not specific enough as to how they are likely to affect improvement.

There are good examples of effective teaching practice being shared within the school. The school pays good attention to Performance Management and members of staff are given every opportunity to acquire new skills. There is good evidence of the impact of training on pupil outcomes. The effective professional learning community within the school and beyond enables staff to develop and share their professional knowledge purposefully and successfully. This has a positive impact on quality and standards.

The school has addressed all the recommendations from the last inspection and has made good progress in improving outcomes.

Partnership working: Good

There are effective partnerships with parents and carers. The school communicates regularly with them and they appreciate the information that they receive from the school about their child's progress.

There are strong links with the local nursery that is based in the school grounds and effective transition arrangements exist between the school and the secondary schools to which the pupils transfer. Constructive collaboration exists with other primary schools in the catchment area.

The school continues to develop links with the local community and local businesses support the work of the school. Members from the community come to the school to share experiences with the pupils and local visits enrich the curriculum effectively. The extensive partnerships with outdoor education providers are a particular strength. The school is at the forefront of creating the materials and developing a programme of study based on the wildlife, environment, development and sustainability of the Menai Straits.

The school makes effective use of local authority services for staff development and raising standards.

Resource management: Good

Management of resources is good. There are a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff. They are deployed effectively. The school identifies and meets the needs of all staff through effective performance management procedures. Teachers make good use of planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time. The arrangements meet the needs of the school effectively.

The school accommodation is very well ordered and managed. There is a good range of learning resources. These are managed and used well. Investment to enhance standards of accommodation, particularly the outdoor learning facilities, actively promotes pupils' learning opportunities. The school manages its finances well. Spending decisions are clearly linked to priorities for improvement.

The management of the school is cost effective and efficient. In view of the good progress made by most pupils, the high level of care, support and guidance provided and the efficient use of the wide range of resources, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

Forty parent questionnaires were returned and all expressed the view that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the school and that the quality of teaching is good. A few parents do not agree that the homework that is given builds well on what their child learns in school. Nearly all agree their children like school, feel safe and settle in well. They all believe that their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise. Nearly all parents believe that their children are making good progress at the school. All say that staff expect the children to work hard and to do their best. Nearly all parents say that children behave well in school and that all are treated fairly and with respect. Many parents say that children receive appropriate support in relation to any particular individual needs and that they are kept well informed about their child's progress but a few disagree. Nearly all believe that their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school. Most say that they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or problems. Almost all parents who expressed an opinion believe the school is well or very well run.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Forty-nine pupils in KS2 completed the questionnaire. All say they feel safe in the school and nearly all know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. Many think that the school deals well with any bullying but a few disagree. They all say that the teachers and other adults help them learn and make progress and nearly all say they know whom to ask if they find the work difficult. Most pupils believe that they are doing well at school but a minority do not feel that homework helps them understand and improve their work. Nearly all say that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work and that the school provides many opportunities for them to get regular exercise and how important it is to keep healthy. The majority of pupils think that other children behave well and that they can get their work done and many say that children behave well at playtime and lunchtime.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Mr Merfyn Lloyd Jones	Reporting Inspector
Mr Goronwy Morris	Team Inspector
Mrs Doli Edwards	Peer Inspector
Mr Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Miss Sara Roberts	School Nominee