



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up activity: significant improvement**

**Ysgol Y Friog
Friog
Fairbourne
Gwynedd
LL38 2RQ**

Date of visit: December 2014

by

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

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The monitoring team

Anwen Griffith	Reporting Inspector
Dyfrig Ellis	Team Inspector

Outcome of visit

It is judged that Ysgol Y Friog has made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2013.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing Ysgol y Friog's name from the list of schools that are in need of significant improvement.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

Due attention is paid to the Literacy and Numeracy Framework in the whole school plans in order to raise standards. The successful co-operation with schools in the catchment area and beyond to plan jointly on the basis of the framework now ensures regular opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Teachers plan jointly and have mapped skills successfully in order to ensure progression and continuity.

Writing across the activities of the Foundation Phase in Welsh is of a high standard and shows obvious progress over a short period. Pupils use vocabulary that is appropriate to the task when writing independently.

In key stage 2, the curriculum includes valuable opportunities for developing literacy skills. As a result, work in pupils' books shows sound progress.

Many pupils apply their writing skills well, especially when acquiring information on the internet. Many pupils use higher reading skills effectively in order to discover the main messages of the text. Most are able to write pieces independently in a variety of forms and use their writing skills for various purposes successfully. This is a strength at the school. Most pupils punctuate consistently and paragraph their work, and spell correctly in both languages. The majority of the oldest pupils in the school redraft and amend their work successfully.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase show a sound understanding of number strategies. At the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils use their numeracy skills successfully across areas of learning. They use a range of measuring skills appropriately and choose the correct standard units. An example of this is pupils reading a scale on a thermometer when comparing the weather in Wales with that in Lesotho.

In key stage 2, most pupils apply their numeracy skills successfully across a range of curriculum subjects. They use their numeracy skills very effectively in everyday situations, for example when conducting a survey on tourism in the area and calculating the cost of insurance following floods in the local area.

Recommendation 2: Raise standards in information and communication technology

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

Most pupils' standard of work in information and communication technology (ICT) across the school is very good. Teachers' long-term plans identify prominent opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills regularly in a range of cross-curricular activities. Development of ICT skills is now a core part of the learning experiences.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase make confident use of the wide range of ICT resources that is available to them. Control equipment and mobile tablets drive the learning and reinforce tasks successfully. Older pupils at the school produce data handling work to an especially good standard and show considerable maturity when discussing the most appropriate methods for collecting, interpreting and presenting data. They succeed in combining a variety of information and media when creating and developing their ideas for different audiences.

By the end of key stage 2, the majority of pupils use ICT confidently and independently to choose relevant information from a variety of sources. Many check the validity of these sources, and understand that poor quality data produces unreliable results. Most pupils' ability to co-operate in order to solve problems and to learn about managing, sequencing and estimating is developing appropriately.

Many pupils use database spreadsheets confidently in their work and many pupils' standards of work processing is developing well, for example as they plan information leaflets and presentations on recycling.

An increase in key stage 2 pupils' ICT skills is tracked carefully by teachers. This ensures progression in the experiences that are introduced to pupils and has a positive effect on standards.

Recommendation 3: Improve the quality of teaching and ensure that teachers challenge all pupils, especially the most able pupils

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school provides a wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences that meet the needs of almost all pupils successfully. There is a clear emphasis on presenting practical learning experiences across the school that foster a genuine curiosity and desire among pupils to learn. The good working relationship between pupils and staff leads to a positive learning environment, in which pupils are challenged appropriately. The school provides good opportunities to develop independent learners. This enables pupils to make decisions and take ownership of their learning, and challenges them to work towards attaining their personal targets.

The school has taken purposeful steps to identify more able pupils and to provide beneficially for them. Good use is made of the information to target pupils of higher ability in mathematics and language specifically, in order to plan the next steps in learning. The headteacher co-operates closely with schools in the cluster in order to

provide extending experiences for more able and talented pupils. This is beginning to have a good effect on pupils' standards. This partnership also provides valuable opportunities to enable staff to share good practice in teaching, standardising and planning.

The new progress tracking system that is used enables teachers to monitor these pupils' progress effectively and to prioritise appropriate intervention programmes for individuals and groups. Specific governors also monitor the provision for more able and talented pupils. This helps to ensure that teachers plan their lessons in detail and use a good range of strategies to ensure that pupils attain higher levels.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen systems for assessment and assessment for learning

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school's procedures for assessment, reporting and recording are effective and teachers are now more aware of pupils' needs. Regular opportunities are provided to enable pupils to discuss their work consistently during lessons and teachers and pupils agree on suitable success criteria. The feedback given to them shows pupils clearly what they need to do in order to improve their work further. Key stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of the marking code and use it effectively when assessing their own work and that of their peers. Pupils have regular opportunities to respond to these comments and they refine their work as necessary.

There is a regular system of setting personal targets for pupils for language and mathematics, which has a positive effect on standards. Many targets are challenging and pupils discuss their progress and contribute to the process of setting subsequent targets. Self-assessment and peer assessment are often a prominent part of work in classrooms. By the end of the Foundation Phase, pupils are very confident in agreeing on clear criteria before assessing their work.

Following close co-operation with schools in the cluster, robust procedures are in place to standardise and moderate pupils' work. Teachers use the information effectively to create purposeful assessment profiles in order to validate pupils' standards.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen the school's strategic leadership and management

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

Under the firm leadership of the headteacher, the school's strategic leadership and management are good. Following relevant training, successful co-operation with a number of schools and sharing good practice, school leaders take a more strategic role in the school's work. There is now an ethos of successful co-operation among the school's stakeholders. School leaders act effectively and their meetings focus clearly on raising standards.

The post-inspection action plan is a comprehensive document that identifies measurable and quantitative outcomes and useful actions. The school development plan that is based on the findings of the school's monitoring processes and self-evaluation is comprehensive and an active document that is monitored regularly by school leaders.

Governors are more aware of their responsibilities as strategic leaders. Through regular visits, they have direct evidence of the school's performance and they contribute very effectively to setting a strategic direction for the school's work.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that the school's self-evaluation process is more evaluative and that monitoring focuses more specifically on raising standards

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school self-evaluation document is a comprehensive and evaluative document that gives a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school makes good use of a wide range of sources of evidence. This includes direct evidence, along with detailed analyses of performance data.

Teachers and governors observe lessons, scrutinise books regularly and produce comprehensive reports of the findings. These reports are evaluative and pay increasing attention to specific aspects. This provides useful information for identifying priorities for improvement. Monitoring outcomes are shared successfully in staff meetings and governors' meetings regularly. This ensures that staff and school leaders have an active part in the process. Very successful arrangements have been established in order to seek the views of pupils, parents and members of the governing body.

Regular reviews to measure progress in implementing the objectives of the school development plan focus clearly on raising standards. A good example of this is the progress that can be seen in standards of skills. The post-inspection action plan and the school development plan are monitored very successfully by school leaders.

Recommendation 7: Strengthen the governing body's role as a critical friend

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The governing body now takes a more active role in the life and work of the school. Sub-committees and the full committee meet regularly and they now receive minutes of the previous meetings and the agenda in advance. This enables governors to operate more strategically. Since the core inspection, governors have received valuable training from the headteacher and the challenge advisor to develop their questioning skills to enable them to challenge the school more effectively. All governors have a responsibility for specific aspects of the school's work and they monitor progress against the recommendations successfully.

Through regular monitoring visits, and taking part in 'learning walks', governors have a good understanding of standards, as well as the life and work of the school. Their written reports are evaluative and provide constructive comments, in addition to the steps that need to be developed further. These reports are shared with the remainder of the governors in full meetings.

Governors have a sound awareness of the school's performance over time. They receive detailed reports from the headteacher on pupils' progress and performance at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. Governors are more confident when asking questions and use the information effectively to challenge the school and hold it to account for its performance. They now operate more strategically.

Recommendations

In order to maintain this progress and improve on it, the school should continue to maintain the level of progress that it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where more progress is necessary.