



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

A report on

**Ysgol Edmwnd Prys
Gellilydan
Blaenau Ffestiniog
Gwynedd
LL41 4DY**

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by

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

About Ysgol Edmwnd Prys

Ysgol Edmwnd Prys is situated in the village of Gellilydan, near Blaenau Ffestiniog, in Gwynedd local authority. There are 34 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work.

Over a three-year period, around 14% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage of 18%. Around 77% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The school has identified 32% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, and none has a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils with additional learning needs is higher than the national percentage of 21%.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in January 2013. She is responsible for another nearby school and divides her time between the two schools. Ysgol Edmwnd Prys was last inspected in June 2013.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

During their time at the school, most pupils acquire successful Welsh communication skills and make good progress in their oracy, reading and writing, considering their starting points. Most pupils' English skills when discussing, presenting written work and reading are developing well. A few pupils show their true abilities successfully when writing at length in Welsh and English. Most develop their mathematics and concepts of numeracy effectively, and their information and communication technology (ICT) skills show their confidence and ability purposefully. Teachers and assistants care for their pupils loyally and provide reliable care and support for them and their families. As a result, pupils feel safe at school. They are very grateful to the staff for their commitment towards their needs and interests. They also care for each other and respect their peers and adults. The headteacher has a sound understanding of the school's needs. She works very closely with the assistant headteacher. As a result, they build sensibly on the school's strengths and improve areas for development wisely through robust quality improvement procedures.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Develop pupils' extended writing skills effectively to reflect their true abilities
- R2 Challenge the most able pupils to perform at their best consistently
- R3 Enrich resources in the outdoor area in the foundation phase to develop pupils' skills further
- R4 Develop the role of governors to challenge the school better as critical friends

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many children's Welsh communication skills correspond with the standard that is expected for their age. During their time at the school, most acquire sound Welsh communication skills and make good progress. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve effectively against their personal targets.

Most pupils achieve successfully in developing their oracy and listening skills. They speak confidently and understand that listening attentively to others makes an important contribution to their learning. As a result, most talk eloquently about their work. For example, foundation phase pupils explain clearly why they choose specific equipment to style each other's hair when role-playing. Most pupils' English oral skills in key stage 2 are good, particularly as they conduct research into the age of princes and Welsh castles.

Most pupils develop sound reading skills. In the foundation phase, most read a wide range of texts in Welsh clearly. They discuss the content of their books intelligently and build unfamiliar words purposefully by using phonic strategies. They identify the qualities of their heroes purposefully, and give sensible explanations for the effect of individuals' acts on their favourite characters. Most pupils in key stage 2 read meaningfully and enunciate clearly in both languages. They enjoy reading fictional and factual books and research conscientiously on the internet, including tracing the Mimosa's voyage to Patagonia and the lives of the Welsh people there. As a result, they practice their higher order reading skills to discover information from different sources effectively.

Many pupils across the school write appropriately for different purposes in a range of contexts. In the foundation phase, most write interesting and accurate pieces in Welsh. Good examples include the diary of the pirate, Barti Ddu, and an evaluation of music about a train ride journey in Brazil. In key stage 2, many write meaningfully in both languages for a wide range of purposes. For example, they describe the horror of the trenches in the First World War thoughtfully and consider the difference between gravity and upthrust purposefully. However, pupils' extended writing does not reflect their true abilities, particularly those who are most able.

Most pupils achieve well in numeracy. They apply their previous knowledge to new situations across the curriculum effectively. A good example is the way in which foundation phase pupils compare the temperature in Wales and Kenya. They identify the differences at particular times of the year successfully. As a result, they create a mural of ideas and a database of information to improve their understanding purposefully.

Most pupils in key stage 2 have a sound understanding of how to use data with increasing accuracy and present it in various forms. Most of the older pupils understand that they need to use different graphs to convey scientific information effectively. For example, they create a line graph to compare the temperature in Wales and the South American highlands accurately. They also use scale to measure and compare the size of Caernarfon and Harlech castles, and experiment

with real-life situations, such as water supply, to investigate costs purposefully. As a result, most pupils in key stage 2 complete tasks and apply their extended numeracy skills successfully.

Most pupils in the foundation phase use ICT equipment confidently. They use electronic tablets to gather information about animals in Africa well, and animate effectively to create a story about a rabbit that steals carrots from a garden. Most pupils in key stage 2 show sound ICT skills, apply their skills well and choose the most effective methods to present their work. For example, they use databases well. They record the length of children's body parts and the diameters of their heads in order to interrogate and order information to discover specific patterns. Most use secure passwords purposefully to access learning websites to complete their work, both in the classroom and at home.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Most pupils across the school have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to teachers' instructions and concentrate well on their work during lessons. They are enthusiastic learning to apply themselves confidently to new experiences, such as painting African patterns on a house. Most are very willing to discuss their work with their peers, and this very successful co-operation is a strong feature in all classes. As a result, most pupils respect the contributions of others and respond positively to their ideas.

Nearly all pupils convey loyalty towards their school. They announce with pride that they are safe and know what to do if anything is worrying them. Most are very caring towards each other, empathise intelligently with their peers' concerns and behave well. They listen sensibly to other people's views and respond maturely to each other and express their opinions clearly. They are happy to discuss any concerns with members of staff and are confident that they listen to them carefully.

Older pupils receive guidance on how to support the younger pupils, and implement this conscientiously. This is a valuable practice and contributes effectively towards nearly all pupils' sensible behaviour. As a result, most pupils have a clear awareness of the importance of treating everyone with respect and courtesy. For example, they listen attentively to adults and each other during lessons and respond promptly and enthusiastically during rugby sessions.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and take part in regular physical exercise activities. They understand the dangers that can arise in their daily lives and know which steps to take, where necessary. For example, nearly all pupils, in line with their age, understand the importance of online safety and outline the dangers that can arise as a result of irresponsible use of the internet.

Most pupils contribute beneficially to their learning. They provide ideas to be included in the termly themes and understand that their voices are important in improving their learning. As a result, they broaden their knowledge and understanding well, such as taking advantage of opportunities to visit Yr Ysgwrn to trace the history and life of the local poet, Hedd Wyn.

Most pupils are tolerant and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of other pupils who are similar to or different from themselves. As a result, most have a sound awareness of fairness and the importance of equal opportunities. For example, they have a thorough understanding of the importance of sustainability. They are able to explain the significance of saving water to water plants and picking up litter to keep the village tidy. Most pupils are also knowledgeable about the features of other countries and cultures. They show a good awareness of the particular features of foreign countries, such as the Welsh culture in Patagonia and relevant details about Judaism.

Most pupils are conscientious and take their duties seriously. For example, members of the school council undertake their responsibilities diligently. As a result, they have a sound understanding of their leadership roles within the school. They take great pride in their roles, as they have been elected by their peers. They discuss their leadership roles confidently and give purposeful reasons for making decisions on behalf of others within the school community. For example, they present their ideas wisely for the school improvement plan and discuss the ways forward and progress against targets intelligently.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that engages most pupils' interest effectively. Teachers provide a wide variety of stimulating experiences. They plan interesting themes that promote learning and add successfully to pupils' knowledge and understanding. They have recently begun to respond to the requirements of the new curriculum. They consider pupils' opinions and aspirations wisely when planning engaging lessons, which include the pupil's voice. As a result, teachers adapt planning skilfully to follow pupils' threads and ideas.

Staff have a sound awareness of the principles of the foundation phase, and teachers provide varied and stimulating opportunities, particularly in the indoor area. For example, teaching is creative and skilful, and the use of music invigorates learning purposefully, such as following a train journey to Villa Lobos. As a result, they provide regular opportunities to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully across the areas of learning. The outdoor area is used regularly to develop independent learners. However, there are no suitable resources in this area to develop pupils' skills wholly effectively.

In key stage 2, the school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in a variety of effective contexts. For example, it provides opportunities to organise data and consider the differences between times of war and peace.

Across the school, teachers use a variety of successful teaching strategies, which have a positive effect on most pupils' standards. Assessment for learning and healthy mindset strategies are used purposefully as an integral part of teaching and learning. Teachers model polished language and encourage pupils to use the Welsh language regularly. This is a strong feature of their work. As a result, most older pupils have effective translanguaging skills and develop as confident bilingual learners. However, at times, teachers do not challenge pupils to work to the best of their ability, particularly those who are most able.

There is an effective and supporting working relationship across the school. Teachers and assistants work together successfully, which supports learning well, by providing purposeful interventions, where necessary. They model principles and attitudes effectively, which nurtures courtesy, respect and a commendable learning atmosphere. Classroom arrangements are sound, and teachers manage pupils' behaviour highly effectively. As a result, there is a caring and hard-working relationship between teachers and pupils across the school.

Planning for individual lessons is rigorous, and activities are tailored to meet most pupils' needs. As a result, they make good progress in their skills during lessons and, as a result, they are confident learners. Teachers share lesson objectives and success criteria effectively with pupils. This ensures that pupils are able to set their own success criteria, discuss the requirements with their peers, and assess their own work and that of others confidently. However, at times, there is too much emphasis on administering records in relation to the success criteria. This hinders opportunities for pupils to begin their learning promptly.

The school provides a wide variety of learning experiences that meet pupils' needs well. The school enriches learning experiences by inviting visitors to the school, such as environmentalists to plant willow trees and discuss Keep Wales Tidy. It provides educational visits to different places in the local area as a prompt for theme work.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community. The pupil's voice is central to the school's work and ethos, which encourages confident and loyal learners. The familial ethos promotes respect and courtesy among pupils across the school. As a result, they take pride in their day-to-day activities and the wider community. All staff focus on effective co-operation for the benefit of all pupils, in order for them to achieve their best consistently.

Arrangements for tracking pupils' educational progress have been refined recently. They are detailed and rigorous. Assessment results are used well to provide all pupils with purposeful support, including those with additional learning needs. As a result, most pupils make sound progress from their starting points. However, teachers do not use information from progress-tracking to prepare challenging enough activities for the most able pupils in order to challenge them effectively.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development successfully through regular collective worship and opportunities for pupils to reflect quietly. 'Healthy mindset' sessions provide valuable opportunities for pupils to discuss important issues, including human rights, fairness and justice.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is rigorous. Their needs are identified at an early stage. The 'one page profiles' are planned carefully and reviewed thoroughly in consultation with pupils and parents. One of the strengths of this process is the pupil's voice, which is at the heart of the profile. The school works well with external agencies, such as educational psychologists, language units and speech and language therapists. As a result, they ensure that all pupils with needs receive the support that they need to make progress against their individual learning steps.

There is a valuable and successful relationship between the school and parents. They have an opportunity to play a key part in school life and to support pupils' education effectively. All parents have a strong sense of belonging to a caring community, which derives from the school's willingness to operate an open-door policy at all times. As a result, communication between the school and the community is successful. For example, parents play a key part in school life by providing support to pupils during arts and craft activities for eisteddfodau.

The school has good arrangements for promoting eating healthily and keeping fit. For example, pupils grow fruit and vegetable to sell to the community, which promotes and develops their business skills effectively. The school encourages healthy lifestyles purposefully. It provides weekly sports lessons, successful extra-curricular activities and swimming lessons, which has a strong effect on pupils' awareness of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are given sensible equal opportunities to develop their educational, physical and creative skills. Opportunities include personal education lessons to discuss the dangers of substance misuse and how to stay safe online. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school's life and work, the local community and the wider world. For example, they take part in services, eisteddfodau, sports competitions and charitable activities. The school promotes Welsh culture and heritage effectively. For example, educational visits to local castles and residential visits raise pupils' awareness of their local area purposefully. The school invites visitors to the school to conduct workshops and projects to promote Welsh music and plays. As a result, pupils are given valuable opportunities to perform and learn about their heritage.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher has established a clear vision for the school, which is based on developing pupils, to the best of their ability, in a happy, supportive, Welsh environment. The headteacher is supported very effectively by a talented and robust assistant headteacher. As a result, leaders operate a system that allocates responsibilities to staff intelligently, for example when the headteacher is at the other school of which she is in charge.

Leaders address local and national priorities purposefully. For example, they are beginning to prepare for the new curriculum by using challenges to stimulate pupils' creativity within interesting themes, such as Welsh castles and princes. A strong focus on developing the Welsh language charter also has a positive effect on pupils' use of the Welsh language in formal and informal situations.

There are rigorous and up-to-date self-evaluation procedures in place. Leaders of both schools in the cluster use regular meetings to deal with quality improvement plans and practices effectively. These include scrutinising work and lesson observations to identify strengths and areas for improvement regularly, and following an annual monitoring timetable. As a result, self-evaluation procedures build a genuine, honest and up-to-date picture of the school.

Priorities in the improvement plan are based directly on the outcomes of self-evaluation procedures. They focus firmly on maintaining and improving pupils' standards. Leaders allocate responsibilities to target the priorities in the improvement plan purposefully. Staff have a sound understanding of the areas for development. A strong feature of this procedure is the school council's recommendations about how to have a beneficial effect on the school's targets. For example, they contribute well to developing a healthy mindset amongst themselves. As a result, they contribute effectively to supporting improvements for the future.

Governors have appropriate knowledge of the school's performance. They understand the school's aims well and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. They ensure that the school is staffed well, which includes assistants to support pupils in the classroom. However, governors do not challenge the school purposefully as critical friends, nor hold it to account for its performance robustly enough. Although they visit classes occasionally, scrutinise work and conduct meetings with leaders, they do not measure the effect on provision on pupils' standards purposefully enough.

Effective staff development procedures link directly with performance management procedures. This has a positive effect on staff's skills and expertise. For example, staff target the effectiveness of reading strategies, early interventions and scientific activities across the schools in the catchment area intelligently, in order to improve pupils' skills. As a result, they share their expertise with their colleagues regularly, and training has a positive effect on pupils' outcomes.

Leaders make purposeful use of staff and the building. On the whole, the school's grounds are used effectively. However, resources in the outdoor area in the foundation phase do not enrich pupils' experiences successfully enough to develop their skills further.

Leaders ensure that the budget and additional grants to develop provision, improve standards and enhance the curriculum are used efficiently. A successful example of this is the purposeful use of the school's surplus to employ additional staff to support in the classrooms. The school monitors this well by focusing carefully on the effect of provision on pupils' standards. The pupil development grant is used sensibly to improve provision and raise the standards of pupils who are eligible to receive it. As a result, expenditure links purposefully with the priorities in the school improvement plan.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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

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