



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

A report on

**Ysgol Yr Hendre
Ffordd Cae Philips
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL55 2AT**

Date of inspection: October 2018

by

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

About Ysgol yr Hendre

The school is situated in Caernarfon in the county of Gwynedd. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 398 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll. Pupils are divided into 16 classes.

Over a three-year period, around 22% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is higher than the national percentage of 18%. Many pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified around 22% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is slightly higher than the national percentage of 21%. Very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

Since the last inspection in February 2013, the staffing structure has changed significantly. The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2016.

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

The headteacher's vision to raise standards and develop pupils' confidence, independence and wellbeing has been established firmly. All staff reinforce and promote these values successfully and work together well to realise the vision by developing school provision and raising standards. The headteacher has established and cemented a highly effective leadership team that works together to set a definite strategic direction.

One of the school's strengths is the sensitive support for the most vulnerable pupils. Staff support pupils with emotional, health and social needs very effectively. They know pupils well and make rigorous and purposeful use of the information that derives from robust systems to track pupils' progress. Leaders have refined the self-evaluation processes and monitor and evaluate the school's performance effectively. As a result, by the end of their time at the school, nearly all pupils make beneficial progress and achieve well from their starting points.

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 the pupils' voice in order for them to have more responsibilities and opportunities to make important decisions that affect the school's life and work
- R2 Improve attendance
- R3 Ensure opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to develop the full range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to how the school supports vulnerable pupils and their parents, in addition to pupils with specific needs, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many pupils' skills are below the expected level for their age. By the end of their time at the school, nearly all pupils, including those with additional needs, make beneficial progress and achieve well from their starting points.

Many nursery pupils listen well and use the Welsh language naturally when talking to peers and adults. By Year 2, most discuss their work confidently and use a range of vocabulary and language patterns skilfully. Most pupils in key stage 2 develop their oral skills successfully in both languages, by expressing their opinions and taking part in discussions with increasing confidence. At the top of the school, most pupils have sound translanguaging skills. They extend their sentences successfully when discussing their work maturely.

Most pupils' reading skills in the foundation phase are developing effectively. Nursery pupils begin to recognise letters and sounds at an early stage and develop this successfully in the reception class. By the end of the foundation phase, most develop as skilful readers. They discuss the content of stories, such as the Three Little Pigs, maturely. In key stage 2, most read intelligently and with increasing fluency in various contexts in both languages. By the end of the stage, many vary their tone of voice and use punctuation correctly in order to convey the story effectively.

Most nursery pupils make marks soon after they start at the school, and show appropriate fine motor skills. They build on these skills successfully across the foundation phase and, by Year 2, most use their writing skills skilfully. For example, they write a series of simple sentences to re-tell a story and record customer orders in the cafe. They spell and punctuate a majority of common words correctly and use conjugated verbs naturally to vary sentences. In key stage 2, most pupils develop their writing skills successfully in both languages. They adapt the style and structure to different contexts appropriately, for example to write a diary to summarise the feelings of an evacuee when moving to Wales during the Second World War. At the top of the school, many pupils use a wide range of adjectives, similes and metaphors to enrich their work very successfully. However, the handwriting and presentation of work of a majority of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not neat enough.

Most pupils' numeracy skills are developing well. By the end of the foundation phase, many have a sound grasp of number facts up to 100. They use standard and non-standard units soundly when measuring footprints to solve the problem 'who was the thief?' Their understanding of the properties of 2D and 3D shapes is sound, and many use mathematical vocabulary confidently to discuss their work.

In key stage 2, most pupils' understanding of mathematical operations, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, is sound. In Year 4, many round to the nearest ten, hundred and thousand comfortably. They collect, analyse and present information effectively in different forms to support their work across the curriculum. An example of this is preparing and creating a price list for their shop based on research into the cost of core resources. At the top of the school, most pupils use a wide range of mental calculation methods confidently.

Most pupils across the foundation phase develop a full range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills and apply them confidently across the areas of learning. For example, they create graphs to show the different types of houses in which pupils live. From a young age, pupils use different apps purposefully, for example when creating an audio book based on a special animal shelter.

Overall, pupils' ICT skills in key stage 2 build appropriately on this foundation. Many research and present information purposefully when researching the history of the Romans and religious leaders. However, most do not have a competent understanding of how to use spreadsheets to an appropriate level when modelling, and they have an insecure grasp of how to use databases.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and appreciate the robust support from teachers and assistants. They have confidence and faith in the adults at the school to ask for advice and support. Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of keeping themselves safe online, and discuss the dangers that may arise intelligently. Nearly all pupils are well behaved during lessons and in informal situations around the school. They are polite and treat each other, staff and visitors with respect.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and keeping fit. A majority of pupils take part in extra-curricular exercise activities and attain high standards nationally, for example in gymnastics, football and netball activities.

Through the work of the school council, the pupil's voice is developing appropriately. Members are beginning to seek the opinion of their fellow pupils and discuss their views maturely in their meetings. They plan activities for raise money for charities, and this increases pupils' awareness of the needs of those who are less fortunate in their community and the wider world. Many pupils across the school value the work of the 'ffrindiau ffeind' (kind friends) on the playground, as this enables them to play with others and have fun. However, the pupil's voice has not yet been developed in full to influence the school's life and work.

Most pupils concentrate well in lessons and apply themselves to learning immediately. They support each other's learning effectively in lessons and are willing to help others to learn. Most pupils work effectively when undertaking their tasks. In the foundation phase, most undertake their tasks and activities independently and challenge themselves successfully. Across the school, pupils persevere when solving problems and using their thinking skills, and begin to respond positively to the encouragement to try without the fear of making a mistake. For example, many pupils in Year 4 enrich their mathematical understanding of angles by using control language to create different shapes with 10 sides. Many pupils check their work against success criteria, for example in the foundation phase when evaluating building a shelter.

Most pupils develop as moral and knowledgeable citizens with a sound awareness of fairness and tolerance. They have an increasing awareness of the rights of the child and the values that are promoted by the school. They explain the importance of good behaviour and encourage their fellow pupils to be kind, persevere in their learning and be ambitious. This urges pupils to think about the world and work outside their habitat, for example by studying to become a palaeontologist.

Overall, pupils' attendance is improving. However, it does not yet compare favourably enough with that of similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Most teachers establish a safe learning environment where there is obvious respect between pupils and teachers. This helps to create an environment where pupils are willing to work hard and do their best.

Teachers and leaders provide appropriate and interesting learning experiences. They use their increasing understanding of the curriculum that is being developed for Wales, alongside the current national curriculum. For example, when planning, they think carefully about how well learning opportunities will contribute to pupils' progress towards achieving the four purposes of the new curriculum. Very recently, most teachers have developed an ethos in which pupils are given freedom to try without the fear of making a mistake, and they encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes. Pupils respond to this very positively and are willing to undertake their work independently.

Teachers share the lesson aim with pupils regularly and provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to review and evaluate their work. They explain tasks clearly and question purposefully in order to ensure that everyone understands. Staff give pupils beneficial feedback on how to improve their work further. As a result, pupils develop the skills to self-improve effectively.

Nearly all teachers deliver lessons skilfully and provide various activities that engage pupils' interest well. They model language effectively and this strengthens pupils' oral skills successfully. Teachers work together effectively, particularly when planning jointly across two same-age classes. Overall, teachers and classroom assistants work together successfully. This provides pupils with beneficial support in line with their needs, and enables them to complete their tasks and make progress.

The school provides a varied range of interesting learning experiences that engage most pupils' interest successfully. Teachers provide valuable opportunities at the beginning of each theme for pupils to provide ideas about what they would like to learn. They have recently asked parents for ideas about what would be interesting for pupils to learn about a particular theme. As a result, useful ideas have been received in order to study a local aspect that is linked to the Second World War.

Staff provide a broad curriculum that inspires pupils successfully. They make successful use of a commercial scheme to provide experiences that engage pupils' interest and which are enriched with local history. Examples of this include organising visits to local castles and a Segontium Roman fort. Local experts are used very purposefully to engage pupils' interest. For example, foundation phase pupils benefit from input from a famous local archaeologist to develop historical investigative skills when studying dinosaurs. In key stage 2, use is made of a scientist who works for an international company when learning about energy as a focus within science and technology. However, provision for extra-curricular activities, other than sports, is limited.

One of the school's strengths is the provision to develop pupils' creative skills. There are frequent opportunities to develop, refine and perform their music work and gymnastics. Provision to develop pupils' art skills is also very robust, and this is enriched by studying and emulating the work of famous local artists. The joint art project with Ysgol yr Hendre in Patagonia, which includes creating murals about local history, has enriched pupils' experiences.

The principles of the foundation phase have been embedded successfully. Teachers provide a productive learning environment and plan creative learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors, to meet pupils' needs and interests. Staff motivate pupils to discover and learn independently from the outset. They develop pupils' skills effectively by providing stimulating and interesting experiences for them, for example based on dinosaurs.

Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills effectively across the areas of learning. However, they do not provide regular enough opportunities for them to develop the full range of ICT skills across the curriculum in key stage 2. The school provides very well for specific groups of pupils, including those with additional learning needs and vulnerable pupils.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has very robust systems for tracking pupils' progress, and staff make rigorous and purposeful use of this information. This ensures that staff identify individuals and specific groups who need additional support at an early stage. Staff use these procedures effectively to provide purposeful education and support to meet pupils' needs successfully.

Support for the most vulnerable pupils is a strong feature of the school's provision. It supports pupils with emotional, health and social needs very effectively. A notable example of this is the nurture scheme for pupils who attend sessions in the school's 'Hafan'. The school responds to the needs of bereaved pupils and parents very sensitively by providing weekly support sessions for a specific period.

Support for children with medical and sensory needs is a strength of provision. A good example of this is the care from assistants for children with hearing and sight needs. This means that pupils are able to play a full part in school life. The way in which the school uses the expertise of external agencies to support pupils and their families is effective. The strong link with the police makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of the dangers of drugs and staying safe online.

All pupils with additional learning needs have a purposeful individual education plan. The school has placed a very clear focus on developing a strong and open partnership with the parents of these pupils, and has established a homely system that encourages them to contribute to the process. A successful feature of the process of setting purposeful targets to create individual education plans is the way in which the school encourages everyone to contribute. Staff review these plans regularly with pupils and their parents, and adapt them where necessary. This ensures that pupils and parents understand what they need to do in order to improve.

The school provides appropriately to develop pupils' spiritual and moral attitudes by arranging opportunities for them to reflect in collective worship sessions. Staff encourage and nurture pupils to convey their feelings successfully. These experiences enable them to know the difference between right and wrong, and to work together and respect each other's views within a caring and inclusive environment. An example of this is the probing discussion between two Year 4 pupils during reflection in the class assembly. One felt strongly about the injustice and lack of equality in developing countries when there is no fair trade. However, the development of religious education is inconsistent across the school and, as a result, pupils do not receive enough purposeful experiences.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking among pupils. The school provides a beneficial range of sports activities that promote health and fitness well and this has a positive effect on pupils' standards of wellbeing. Pupils benefit from strong links with the town's football and rugby clubs, in addition to strong links with a supermarket and a home for the elderly in the town. This ensures that pupils take pride in their area.

The school's provision for preparing pupils to be active citizens by making decisions about the school's life and work is developing suitably. Arrangements help pupils very successfully to make decisions in the class that influence what they learn. However, provision has not ensured that the pupil's voice has been developed fully to influence the school's life and work. Overall, teachers over-direct the school council and, as a result, pupils are too reliant on them.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. The school monitors pupils' attendance with the county, but their efforts to increase the attendance rate has not yet had enough of an effect.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher and leaders have a very clear and robust vision to develop the school as a successful learning community by providing a high standard of education and wellbeing for all pupils. This vision is based on raising standards and developing pupils' confidence, independence and wellbeing. This is one of the school's strengths.

The headteacher has established and cemented a highly effective leadership team, which has set a decisive strategic direction. They share this successfully with staff, governors, parents and pupils. Members of the senior management team have high expectations of themselves and others. They use their expertise skilfully to ensure support and encouragement for staff to commit themselves fully to the vision. Nearly all members of staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are developing effectively as a team.

Leaders encourage staff to undertake professional learning successfully within the school and through a range of beneficial networks with schools across the region. A good example of this is the training that is given by members of the senior management team on how to develop assessment for learning. This has enabled all staff to use these practices more confidently with pupils, in addition to developing the leaders' confidence and leadership skills.

The school responds very positively to most national priorities. For example, the school has started to experiment with planning based on the four purposes of the new curriculum.

The school has robust procedures to manage the performance of teachers and, more recently, assistants. This ensures that they receive support to realise the priorities in the school development plan, in addition to the professional needs of individuals. A few learning assistants are trained effectively to support individual pupils and specific groups of pupils with various interventions and strategies. This is one of the school's strengths and has a positive effect on the wellbeing and standards of these individuals, and on implementing a range of intervention programmes successfully. For example, staff at 'Yr Hafan' have received training on 'nurturing' in order to meet the needs of specific pupils.

The school has a very strong culture of continuous self-evaluation, which focuses clearly on pupils' outcomes and wellbeing, and provision. Leaders make effective use of parents' views and input each term as part of their self-evaluation procedures. However, they do not yet include the pupil's voice effectively enough in this process.

Leaders have refined processes skilfully in order to ensure that they evaluate the most important aspects. Procedures are rigorous and enable leaders to identify, monitor and evaluate the school's performance effectively. They use a wide range of data on pupils' achievement and attainment successfully as part of this process. As a result, leaders and teachers target and challenge individual pupils, in addition to identifying any patterns of underachievement across the school. For example, the school has succeeded in improving pupils' numeracy skills.

There is a clear link between the findings of the self-evaluation procedure and the priorities in the school development plan. This document is comprehensive and includes an effective summary for staff and governors. Leaders use action research well to support their actions. However, it is too early to see the full effect of quality improvement processes on the school's outcomes.

Governors are supportive of the school and have a good understanding of pupils' standards and achievement. They receive comprehensive information from the headteacher and valuable presentations from staff on specific aspects of the school's life and work. Members of the governing body make a beneficial contribution towards guiding the school's strategic direction, and conduct learning walks and talk to pupils and staff regularly. All of this develops their understanding of the school's work appropriately and enables them to challenge the school.

Leaders manage the budget very carefully and ensure that expenditure links well with plans for improvement. The school makes good use of the pupil development grant to support vulnerable pupils across the school, and particularly in 'Yr Hafan'.

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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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