



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gymraeg Mornant  
Picton Road  
Picton  
Penyffordd  
Holywell  
CH8 9JQ**

**Date of inspection: December 2019**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gymraeg Mornant

The school is situated near the village of Picton, close to the coastal road that links Prestatyn and Holywell in Flintshire local authority. There are 48 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 7 nursery age pupils. They are divided into two mixed-age classes.

On average, over the last three years, around 26% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national percentage of 18%. Twenty six per cent (26%) of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is higher than the national percentage of 21%.

Very few pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Around 9% of pupils speak English as an additional language.

The school was last inspected in October 2014 and an acting headteacher was appointed in September 2018. Since 2016, the school has been part of a formal federation with Ysgol Uwchradd Maes Garmon under one governing body.

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 school is a caring and inclusive community, where a high priority is placed on developing pupils' wellbeing. Pupils work together maturely, and the relationship between them and the staff is a strong feature. The school has a prominent Welsh ethos, and staff encourage pupils to use the Welsh language regularly in all aspects of their life and work. Pupils take pride in their bilingualism and feel that they are an important part of their local area.

By building on their previous learning and planning interesting experiences, teachers ensure that pupils' skills are developed well. As a result, by the end of their time at the school, many achieve well from their starting points, particularly in terms of their literacy skills.

The acting headteacher provides the school with robust leadership, and promotes a clear vision in order to improve it further. She identifies the school's main strengths and areas for improvement thoroughly. With this information, and with the support of the governing body, she provides a clear strategic direction for the team's hardworking team of staff. This has led to obvious improvements in provision and standards, particularly over the last year.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Refine provision to develop pupils' numeracy and ICT skills
- R2 Improve pupils' spelling skills
- R3 Share good practice in terms of teachers' feedback across the school

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well from their starting points. As they move through the school, they build successfully on their previous learning and apply new knowledge quickly.

In the foundation phase, most pupils have sound literacy skills. Pupils who have no Welsh language skills on entry to the school learn the language quickly and, by the end of Year 2, most use rich and natural language when talking to adults and their peers. Many pupils' reading skills develop successfully and, by the end of the phase, they read fluently and accurately, and strive diligently to identify unfamiliar words. They read with appropriate expression and meaning, and are keen to discuss the content of their books. Many of the youngest pupils in the foundation phase set out and present imaginative and factual written work in different ways, and begin to write short sentences that are linked with familiar patterns. By the end of the foundation phase, many write for different purposes with increasing independence, for example when comparing life in the middle ages with modern day life. More able pupils in the phase translanguage from English to Welsh confidently, for example when researching nocturnal animals.

Most pupils' literacy skills are developing well in key stage 2. They listen attentively to the views of others and discuss various topics maturely. Many pupils make sound progress in their reading in Welsh and English. They scan for information skilfully to gather information from the internet, for example when creating a presentation about Japan and origami. When responding to a wide range of reading texts, they express an opinion about the content and show a sound understanding of the main ideas, events and characters. Many pupils make sound progress in their writing skills in Welsh and English. They use wide vocabulary and include purposeful facts to support writing, for example when creating simple reports in science. They use their imagination and previous learning effectively, for example when writing a homesick letter from a soldier during the First World War, and when writing a poem with wide vocabulary. By Year 6, many write at length and independently successfully, for example when writing a report about Wales' victory in a rugby match against Australia. Across the school, most pupils have clear handwriting, and work is legible and presented effectively. However, a minority of pupils' spelling is not accurate enough.

Across the school, a majority of pupils apply their numeracy skills well in activities across the curriculum. In the foundation phase, many use their measuring skills to calculate the length of a shadow, and present the results in the form of a graph. In key stage 2, many apply their skills sensibly in a few activities across the curriculum, for example when calculating the mean and average of results in their scientific investigations. They present their findings sensibly in accurate graphs. However, their use of a range of numeracy skills across other areas of the curriculum to the same level as in their mathematics work is limited.

As they move through the school, many pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop soundly. They use equipment and software

confidently from an early age, and appreciate the importance of staying safe while using the internet. In the foundation phase, the youngest pupils create and present information and ideas by using an art and word processing package purposefully, for example when describing the work of a farmer. They use data-handling software sensibly to create a simple chart of their favourite fruit and vegetables, for example. By key stage 2, many pupils use the internet effectively to search for information, and are beginning to create multimedia presentations successfully to present their findings, for example on rainforests. However, although pupils have been given more opportunities to apply their ICT skills recently, they have not mastered the full range of these skills soundly enough.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Nearly all pupils show pride in their school and develop as confident learners. They feel safe within the supportive learning community, and most feel comfortable turning to their peers and adults for advice and support. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the importance of drinking water, eating healthily and taking part in physical activity. Many pupils reinforce this effectively by taking part in a suitable range of physical activities, for example lunchtime fitness clubs, the mile a day activity, and netball and football sessions.

Nearly all pupils behave exceptionally well within the school and during break times. They are courteous towards each other and treat staff and visitors with respect. Older pupils show a natural caring attitude towards younger pupils. Many pupils are familiar with discussing in groups and among themselves, and respect others when they are speaking. In the foundation phase, most pupils show a sound understanding of classroom organisation and move around the various areas confidently and independently.

Many pupils make a beneficial contribution to their learning by suggesting ideas to be included in their study themes. They ask investigative questions that guide learning, for example 'what happens to the apples in the Mornant orchard?'. Pupils make good use of the local environment enthusiastically, particularly the school grounds. This contributes successfully towards their natural curiosity and encourages them to become investigative learners.

Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They are hardworking and enthusiastic learners who stay on task for extended periods. Across the school, most pupils work well together in the classroom and show a keen interest in their work. They develop perseverance and resilience successfully, and respond positively to the 'Meddylfryd Mornant' (Mornant Mindset) strategy.

Many pupils have sound knowledge of sustainability and global citizenship. The oldest pupils discuss the effect of deforestation in the Amazon on the planet. They take pride in the opportunity to contribute to community activities, which have a positive effect on developing many pupils' sound understanding of social issues and the needs of others. Many pupils take pride in opportunities to lead on relevant issues in order to help and improve the school, for example by contributing to the work of improving the school's internet.

## **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

One of the school's strengths is the close working relationship between pupils and staff. This creates a positive learning environment where pupils are willing to persevere in order to complete their work, and behave exceptionally well. Another strong aspect is the emphasis that staff places on developing pupils' spoken Welsh skills, which leads them from an early age to become competent bilingual learners.

Teachers link their lessons skilfully in order to ensure appropriate opportunities for pupils to build on their previous learning. They explain new concepts clearly to pupils, and provide tasks that are tailored appropriately for the range of ability within the classes. This motivates pupils to learn and contributes successfully towards ensuring that most make sound progress and achieve well.

Teachers and staff know the pupils well, which enables them to provide them with specific support in order to help improve their attainment and wellbeing. They use questioning techniques skilfully to help pupils to understand new concepts and develop their knowledge and skills. When supporting in the classroom, staff provide beneficial oral feedback, which focuses well on how pupils can improve their work, and encourages them to persevere. Recently, the school has refined its practice of giving feedback to pupils. Teachers now provide purposeful written feedback, which often refers to improving pupils' skills, particularly in terms of their writing skills. However, the new feedback practices are not yet consistent enough across the school. In the best practice, comments are diagnostic, acknowledge pupils' best contributions and outline what they could improve. Recently, pupils have been given regular opportunities to assess and reflect on their own work and that of their peers. A good example is pupils in key stage 2 suggesting improvements to their peers' ICT presentations, by leaving electronic notes on each other's work.

Teachers provide a good variety of stimulating experiences for pupils, which include engaging opportunities for them to work with pupils from other schools on various projects. For example, through the 'Hedd' project, the school has worked with other schools and Theatr Clwyd to provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to improve their literacy skills by creating an engaging animation. Many pupils are given useful opportunities to influence elements of their learning, for example by contributing ideas that are linked to their theme on Japan. Robust preparations are in place to revise the school's curriculum to meet the principles of the new curriculum for Wales. A rich variety of opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about Welsh culture and develop a good awareness of Welsh history and customs.

On the whole, provision to develop pupils' skills is good. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across other areas of the curriculum. For example, teachers plan effective opportunities for pupils to consider the content of the class's reading book and improve their oral skills and, in turn, prepare them to produce pieces of relevant extended writing. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills, particularly by using data to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding. However, opportunities for pupils to use aspects of their numeracy skills in various other subjects to the same level as in their mathematics work are limited. Teachers' plans to develop pupils' ICT skills and implement the digital competence framework are sound. Recently, they have increased opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in various contexts, such as

researching and presenting information about different castles in Wales. However, there are not extensive enough opportunities for pupils to apply their full range of ICT skills regularly across the curriculum.

The principles of the foundation phase have been established successfully, particularly in terms of ensuring provision of interesting focus tasks and continuous activities for pupils. Teachers use the outdoor areas creatively to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school has a homely atmosphere and effective arrangements to support pupils' wellbeing. An obvious strength is the emphasis that staff place on developing all pupils' values and wellbeing, and all benefit greatly from the caring working relationships that exist. Staff promote pupils' good behaviour effectively, which ensures high standards of courtesy and respect, and they provide valuable opportunities for pupils to gain a good awareness of their rights.

Teachers and assistants identify pupils' needs at an early stage and take appropriate and timely steps to support them effectively. The school's close-knit atmosphere leads to regular formal and informal discussions about pupils. The school has recently established effective procedures to track the progress and wellbeing of groups of pupils. Staff use the information that derives from these procedures successfully to allocate specific provision for them. Intervention programmes in the classroom are sound, and support specific pupils' learning successfully, for example to strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills. For pupils with special educational needs, they provide purposeful individual education plans, and parents and pupils are included regularly in producing and revising them. As a result, the school ensures that most pupils with additional needs make good progress against their personal targets.

In the classes, staff ensure beneficial opportunities for pupils to choose activities that are of interest to them within the termly study themes. As a result, pupils are beginning to have more of an influence on what they would like to learn. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to shoulder responsibilities by undertaking roles on the various committees. A hardworking school council has been established with representation by pupils from each year. These experiences develop pupils' understanding of the importance of contributing to society, and help them to develop as responsible citizens. The school, in addition to the school council, organises fundraising activities to support a number of charities. For example, they sponsor a child from Cambodia. This has a positive effect on most pupils' awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

The school fosters a valuable relationship with parents by providing them with useful information about their children's performance and wellbeing regularly. There are valuable opportunities for parents to support their children; for example, the school holds a Welsh-speaking cafe and sessions to develop pupils' thinking skills by using scientific skills.

The school provides purposefully to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural attitudes. It makes good use of the local community in order to enrich pupils'



experiences. For example, the school has established a community choir that performs in the community often, and invites members of the community to the school regularly. The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development effectively by providing collective worship assemblies and through personal and social education lessons of a high standard. Teachers ensure that collective worship assemblies are valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider the needs of others in a spiritual environment. Staff provide good opportunities to nurture tolerance and equality effectively. As a result, pupils' personal and social development is successful.

Provision to encourage pupils to be physically and mentally healthy is effective, and there are valuable arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. The school encourages pupils to use their imagination effectively and promotes creativity successfully. A good example of this is the recent project to create masks and a dance for a parade in Llandudno, by working with a local theatre.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

As part of the leadership team within the federation, Ysgol Mornant's acting headteacher provides the school with robust leadership and management. This is based on a vision that focuses on pupils' wellbeing, developing the Welsh language, improving standards, and ensuring a successful future for the school. The school's stakeholders share this vision enthusiastically.

The acting headteacher is very enthusiastic in ensuring a firm focus on strengthening provision and improving pupils' standards and wellbeing. Work to promote the Welsh language in the school is commendable. Leaders and staff are very effective in ensuring that teaching and learning experiences enable pupils to become bilingual by the end of their time at the school. The governing body is very supportive of both schools within 'Ffederasiwn Cwlwm'. They act passionately to ensure Welsh-medium education in Flintshire. The role of governors as critical friends is developing suitably.

The school has manageable self-evaluation procedures, which provide useful evidence for leaders to understand the school's main strengths and areas in need of improvement. They use this information sensibly to develop a purposeful improvement plan with valid priorities and measurable steps. By allocating staff to meet different aspects of these priorities, the school has a good record of improvement, particularly over the last year. Recent examples of success include progress in pupils' literacy skills, sensible investment in ICT resources to strengthen provision, and beneficial strategies to support and improve pupils' wellbeing.

Leaders ensure that staff have fair access to valuable opportunities for professional development. Opportunities for teachers to take more direct responsibility for the school's improvement priorities provide useful experiences for them to contribute specifically to improvements. Recent training to familiarise staff with ways to improve pupils' attainment, through different interventions, is contributing well towards strengthening provision. This has led to improvements in the mathematics and

reading skills of a cohort of pupils. Staff performance management arrangements support their professional development appropriately and provide valuable opportunities for them to discuss their contribution towards improving quality and standards within the school.

The school uses its resources efficiently and proportionately, and makes the best of its indoor and outdoor environment in order to support teaching and learning effectively. Leaders have identified the need for additional ICT resources to strengthen provision and, following recent investment, there are now more significant opportunities for pupils to begin to apply their skills across the curriculum. The school makes suitable use of the pupil development grant in order to support specific groups to improve their skills further, particularly their literacy skills.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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