



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Hamadryad  
Hamadryad Road  
Butetown  
Cardiff  
CF10 5UY**

**Date of inspection: February 2020**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Hamadryad

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Hamadryad is situated in Butetown in Cardiff local authority. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work, and English is introduced to pupils in key stage 2. The school opened on a temporary site in September 2016 as one reception class with 17 pupils, before moving to a new building during the spring term 2019. There are 174 pupils on roll, including 66 nursery age pupils who attend on a part-time basis. There is only one class in key stage 2, namely Year 3.

The school serves one of the most multilingual and multi-ethnic areas in Wales. Pupils represent 15 different ethnic groups. Across the school, pupils speak 21 different languages, including Welsh and English.

On average, over the last three years, slightly less than 9% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is significantly lower than the national average of 18%. The school has identified around 13% of its pupils as having additional learning needs. This is significantly lower than the national percentage of 21%. Many pupils come from English-speaking homes, but around 11% come from Welsh-speaking homes.

The current headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2016. The school has not had a core inspection before as it is a new school.

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 happy and inclusive community, where a high priority is given to developing pupils' respect and wellbeing. Pupils work together maturely and there is an excellent relationship between them and staff. There is a prominent Welsh ethos at the school, and staff encourage pupils to use the Welsh language regularly in all aspects of school life. Pupils take pride in their Welshness and feel that the language is a very important part of their multilingual community. This is a strong feature of the school.

The headteacher provides the school with robust leadership and promotes high standards, co-operation and highly positive attitudes towards the Welsh language. The governing body supports the school effectively in order to provide valuable experiences for all pupils. Parents support all of the school's activities successfully and contribute effectively towards creating a familial and welcoming environment within a multicultural community.

Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods and resources thoughtfully to support learning and ensure that pupils acquire the Welsh language at a very early stage. Support staff make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. Staff establish an excellent working relationship which fosters successful learning. They have very high expectations, and visits and visitors are used effectively to reinforce learning activities. As a result, most pupils make strong progress in their learning.

<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 Ensure that provision for numeracy provides an appropriate challenge for more able pupils to achieve to the best of their ability
- R2 Strengthen the role of pupils in expressing an opinion directly on the school's wider procedures

## **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 establishing a highly successful Welsh ethos and pupils' pride in their Welshness in a multilingual community, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, only a few pupils are able to speak Welsh. However, across the school, nearly all gain highly effective Welsh communication skills and make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve soundly against their personal targets.

Nearly all pupils' speaking and listening skills are extremely sound across the school. They listen attentively to adults and respond purposefully to questions. For example, in the nursery, they join in well with adults to sell fruit and vegetables in the supermarket. By Year 2, nearly all pupils communicate naturally with their peers and use an increasing range of vocabulary very successfully. Most are confident and keen to present information and develop their ideas successfully, for example when creating a film about aquarium creatures. They speak confidently and articulately in Welsh and English, for example when discussing the features of attractions in Cardiff Bay for a visitor from America.

Most pupils develop their early reading skills effectively. As they move through the foundation phase, many use their phonological awareness successfully to read texts independently in the learning areas, for example when gathering information about ocean creatures. Most pupils have a sound awareness of the features of books, such as the author, blurb and title, and express a simple opinion on the content, giving valid reasons for their views. In Year 3, most make strong progress in their Welsh reading skills. They read a range of texts with accuracy, fluency and increasing emphasis, and discuss their likes and dislikes about the legends of Catre'r Gwaelod and Gelert successfully. Year 3 pupils' English reading skills are developing appropriately.

In the foundation phase, most pupils' writing skills are developing effectively. The school's youngest pupils record in a suitable variety of activities, for example when writing sentences to describe characters from Gwlad y Rwla. By Year 2, most pupils use the main features of different genres of writing effectively, for example when writing a letter from Branwen to Bendigeidfran, and when writing a report to recall their trip to Bristol aquarium. Most pupils in Year 3 write successfully in both languages, and use paragraphs and punctuation with increasing accuracy. They use an appropriate range of vocabulary in order to enrich their work, for example interesting adjectives to describe 'Cawr Carneddau'. Most write in a suitable range of genres and use purposeful language, for example when writing a factual report to attract visitors to Cardiff Bay.

In the foundation phase, many pupils make good progress in their numeracy skills. Their understanding of number facts and place value is sound. For example, pupils in the reception class succeed in doubling numbers up to 10 confidently in the context of Gwlad y Rwla. By Year 2, most pupils develop a good understanding of data, for example when sorting sea creatures on a Carroll diagram. Most pupils in Year 3 build well on their previous learning. They recognise four point directions on a compass and understand clockwise and anti-clockwise turns successfully. Most apply their numeracy work soundly, for example when comparing the temperature in various locations over a period of a week. However, more able pupils do not always complete work at an appropriate level when completing a range of numeracy tasks.

Most pupils across the school show confidence when discussing information and communication technology (ICT) work. In the foundation phase, most pupils use word-processing programs confidently, for example when writing sentences about the weather. They also control a movable toy effectively, and film their peers successfully when presenting weather forecasts. In key stage 2, most pupils develop their ICT skills skilfully and independently in various activities, for example by creating an information leaflet on various attractions.

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

Nearly all pupils behave excellently in the classroom. They move around the school consistently purposefully, for example by walking with their hands behind their backs to reinforce the strategies of the restorative scheme. Nearly all are extremely polite and very willing to talk to each other and adults, and explain their work maturely and intelligently. Most pupils discuss emotional and social concerns confidently by identifying how they feel on daily charts in their classes.

There is an excellent working relationship between pupils, and they treat staff very respectfully. This is a strong feature of the school, which contributes very positively towards the enthusiastic learning environment. As a result, nearly all pupils concentrate diligently for extended periods. Most understand and develop effective strategies to help them to persevere and overcome difficulties. They are beginning to accept that it is alright to make mistakes, for example by using specific strategies that have been established recently. Most are aware of their targets for improvement and give them consideration when completing their daily tasks. For example, pupils in key stage 2 explain specific areas for development in their factual writing skills in English.

Most pupils across the school work productively and effectively as individuals, in small groups and with partners. They make independent choices, support each other's learning effectively, and develop to become confident and ambitious learners who are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, Year 1 pupils emulate the characteristics of their character, 'Mo Mentrus', by choosing to use electronic tablets to record weather forecasts in the outdoor area.

Most pupils understand how to make healthy choices in relation to eating and drinking, and their physical activity and emotional wellbeing, including how to keep themselves safe online. They discuss maturely the importance of a balanced diet and the need to have a balance between different types of food in order to be healthy. They have a good understanding of the positive effect of exercise on their health. A good example of this is the way in which pupils use their scooters, bicycles and the walking bus to travel to school sustainably. This contributes effectively to the most pupils' positive mindset and prepares them purposefully for their learning at school.

Nearly all pupils take pride in their school and the fact that they are part of a multicultural community. This enables pupils to develop as knowledgeable, principled learners who emulate the characteristics of their character, 'Elliw Egwyddorol'. Most pupils feel safe at school. They know whom to approach for support and advice if they are worried, and feel comfortable doing so.

Many pupils are beginning to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities confidently. For example, the Welsh Language Commissioners coach others to play playground games through the medium of Welsh, and encourage their peers to use the language on a daily basis. This makes an exceptionally effective contribution towards establishing nearly all pupils' positive attitudes towards their Welshness.

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

One of the school's strengths is its robust Welsh environment, which encourages pupils from all backgrounds to take pride in the Welsh language. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods and resources thoughtfully to support learning, and ensure that pupils acquire the Welsh language at a very early stage. For example, all classes in the foundation phase hold a 'Caffi Clonc' (talking cafe) during snack time to introduce the language pattern of the week, and to encourage pupils to speak socially through the medium of Welsh. As a result, nearly all pupils speak Welsh confidently with their peers, teachers and visitors. All staff are skilful language models and promote the natural use of the Welsh language by all pupils from a very early age. Teachers provide creative opportunities for pupils to learn about Wales, for example by inviting Kizzy Crawford to sing in Welsh and by organising regular visits by people, such as the Welsh Language Commissioner. As a result, pupils develop to become confident and competent bilingual and multilingual learners who take great pride in their Welshness.

Support staff make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. Staff establish an excellent working relationship that fosters successful learning. All staff have very high expectations and all pupils understand this. There is obvious excitement in lessons, and activities flow effectively. The curriculum is enriched successfully through the regular use of visits. For example, Year 2 pupils visit Bristol aquarium and Year 3 visits Castell Henllys to learn about the life of the Celts.

Staff have a strong awareness of the principles of the foundation phase. They ensure that there is an effective balance between activities that are presented under the guidance of staff, namely 'On the island', and challenges that provide opportunities to 'Ride the wave' by working independently in the learning areas. Staff's thoughtful planning in terms of realising the school's vision, 'A secure anchor before setting sail', is effective. For example, the 'Capten Ari Allnod a'i fap trysor' strategy is used to introduce the lesson aims, and the 'Pili Parrot' method is used to provide opportunities for pupils to self-assess and reflect on their learning. As a result, many pupils' independent learning skills are developing soundly. The varied activities that are provided promote pupils' creative skills well, for example as Year 1 pupils experiment with a range of musical instruments to compose and perform a piece of music about the weather. This nurtures pupils' respect and self-discipline towards their work successfully. Staff's effective planning methods prepare them thoroughly to introduce the new curriculum for Wales and develop pupils as ambitious, confident and enterprising individuals.

Teachers use a prompt successfully to stimulate pupils. For example, a digital message was received from Iolo Williams recently, asking Year 2 pupils to present information about a unique ocean creature. These learning experiences enable many pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills successfully across the curriculum. However, provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills does not always challenge the most able to achieve in line with their ability.

Teachers provide pupils with stimulating and timely feedback, which enables them to improve their learning successfully. They share clear lesson objectives and use various effective questioning techniques to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Staff ask probing questions, which encourage pupils to extend their responses and deepen their understanding successfully. However, success criteria, in terms of numeracy tasks, are not specific enough to challenge more able pupils. In Year 3, pupils are beginning to work together to set their own success criteria for writing their own factual persuasive report. As a result, most pupils have a good understanding of the features of a range of writing genres.

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

The school is a happy, enthusiastic and inclusive community, which ensures that pupils feel safe and at home. The staff's endearing way of modelling respect and courtesy is a strong feature, and creates a caring and happy feeling that is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour. As a result, nearly all pupils aim for the highest praise within the school, which is a reference to the word 'Bendibwmerang'. The school ensures that pupils' wellbeing is at its heart, and that they develop to become responsible and confident citizens. Staff promote equality and diversity successfully by teaching pupils about different cultures. They provide an effective range of purposeful and inspiring periods for pupils to learn about Christianity and other religions, and reflect specifically on moral lessons. For example, staff promote the sense of belonging to the Hamadryad community by using the school's motto to nurture values such as to live together, work together and help others. There are effective opportunities for pupils to share this vision, for example in an International Language Commissioners' Conference that was held in Cardiff, and by visiting a Mosque regularly. As a result, many pupils discuss the features of different religions sensitively and knowledgeably. Reflection sessions are held regularly, which promote pupils' wellbeing and social development successfully. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school has effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress and wellbeing. Teachers use information about pupils' performance effectively when considering the progress of specific groups. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is thorough and effective. Staff identify their needs at an early stage and provide them with valuable support successfully. Support staff make a significant contribution to this inclusive provision. As a result, most pupils with special educational needs make strong progress over time. The school makes effective use of its robust links with external specialist agencies. For example, training was organised on the restorative method to equip staff to solve any problems in relation to negative attitudes among pupils, and help them to deal with any emotional challenges.

A strong feature of the school is the valuable and successful relationship between the school and parents. The school informs parents regularly about activities and events. A number of events are held to encourage parents to support their children in their learning, for example by explaining to them what being educated through the medium of Welsh will mean for their children in the long term. The school listens to parents' views and is supportive of their ideas. This is supported successfully by governors and Welsh-speaking parents, by holding learning sessions over the



summer holidays and promoting the Welsh language in a local shop. As a result, a sense of Welshness permeates all school life. The school promotes pupils' Welshness further by competing successfully in eisteddfodau and developing valuable links with S4C and Welsh poets.

The school has effective arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. The curriculum, physical education lessons and extra-curricular activities, such as the Urdd Multi-sport Club, ensure that most pupils understand the advantages of regular exercise. The school's vision for promoting sustainable ways of travelling to school is highly successful. As a result, most pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and many use their knowledge of this to try to have a positive influence on the habits of members of their family.

Opportunities to include the pupil's voice in school life are developing effectively. There are valuable opportunities for pupils and their parents to share ideas and contribute to learning experiences by discussing the term's theme together. The school provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to undertake leadership roles. For example, the 'Comisiynwyr Cymraeg' (Welsh Language Commissioners) teach playground games to pupils and encourage them to use the Welsh language in all of the school's life and work. As a result, most pupils are proud of their Welshness. The school council, known as the "senedd", has only recently been established. As a result, pupils' role in expressing an opinion on the school's strategic direction has not been developed robustly enough.

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

The headteacher has a robust and clear vision for the school, which is based on fostering respect and promoting pupils' Welshness and wellbeing. Over a short period, she has shared this highly successfully with staff, pupils', governors and the wider community. As a result, she has established a familial and welcoming ethos where everyone is proud to belong to Ysgol Hamadryad.

Members of the senior management and other members of staff work together expediently, fulfil their roles effectively and support the headteacher enthusiastically. Leaders plan effectively to meet local and national needs. Staff address recent developments in education enthusiastically, for example in beginning to prepare for the new curriculum for Wales and introducing the digital competence framework. The continuous focus on promoting the Welsh language and Welshness is successful and develops pupils' pride in their identity and heritage.

The headteacher has worked diligently in succeeding in uniting staff who are increasing year on year, and also establishing consistency in teaching strategies across the school. This contributes significantly towards the familial ethos of co-operation across the school. As a result, the effective learning community succeeds in attaining its ambitious objectives to offer provision that develops confident, enterprising and successful pupils. This reflects the school's motto, 'A secure anchor before setting sail', for children in the area in a warm, supportive and effective environment.

The headteacher ensures that staff meetings are held regularly and focus clearly on the school's priorities and on improving pupils' achievement. As a result, the school is successful in ensuring that young pupils enjoy the Welsh language and use it to discuss different contexts maturely.

The school has a successful culture of continuous self-evaluation, which focuses in detail on pupils' outcomes, and has begun to become embedded in the school's everyday life. There are robust systems to review progress, identify areas for improvement and take effective steps to implement them. These include a careful analysis of pupils' outcomes, progress meetings, scrutiny of books and regular lesson observations. All teachers are beginning to play an active part in the process of monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement. As a result, they know their school well and address most improvements quickly and successfully.

A robust feature of leadership is the purposeful opportunities that enable staff at all levels to develop professionally. This includes valuable opportunities for them to observe in other establishments. Performance management procedures promote staff's professional learning successfully and have a positive effect on standards. The school embraces school to school work, for example in terms of ensuring consistency in the restorative method between schools in the cluster. The special educational needs co-ordinator also shares her expertise within the cluster.

Members of the governing body have sound knowledge of performance and the effect of the school's procedures on pupils' standards and wellbeing. They share responsibilities conscientiously and hold suitable visits to evaluate the effect of provision on pupils' standards and wellbeing. As a result, they have organised a reading club over the summer holidays for pupils from non-Welsh-speaking backgrounds, and developed a pamphlet on the advantages of bilingual education for new parents. They hold the school to account appropriately and help to set clear guidance and strategies to develop it further as a successful learning community.

The school has a wide range of high quality resources. The headteacher and governors use the school budget effectively to enrich the curriculum and raise pupils' standards in all areas. They link expenditure appropriately with priorities in the improvement plan and monitor funding carefully to ensure its best use. They use the pupil development grant prudently to raise the standards of those who are eligible to receive free school meals. This work has a positive effect on the quality of provision and pupils' standards of wellbeing and attitudes to work.

## 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:

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