



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

A report on
Ysgol Llanfarian

Llanfarian
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 4DA

Date of inspection: January 2024

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Llanfarian

Name of provider	Ysgol Llanfarian
Local authority	Ceredigion County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	38
Pupils of statutory school age	32
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	12.7%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	21.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	21.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	03/09/2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/06/2015
Start date of inspection	22/01/2024

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

One of the notable features of Ysgol Llanfarian is that it is a caring and inclusive community that fosters pupils' well-being and promotes their learning successfully. The headteacher leads the school wisely and promotes a culture of co-operation effectively between the staff. The school is supported purposefully by the governing body, which implements evaluation processes well with the headteacher to guide the teaching and learning. The headteacher co-operates and communicates regularly with parents, which promotes the school successfully in its local community.

Staff identify the well-being and learning needs of all pupils effectively. They have a supporting working relationship with pupils, which contributes well to fostering their well-being and encouraging them to make progress in their learning. Teachers provide a range of relevant experiences that support pupils to make progress in their skills, particularly their language and digital skills. The pre-school 'Reading Club' promotes pupils' enthusiasm towards reading well. There is appropriate provision to support pupils to apply their numeracy skills through suitable experiences. Teachers enrich provision by organising interesting activities that help pupils to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of different themes. At times, staff provide pupils with structured instructions which restrict them from making independent choices about how to complete and present their work.

Pupils enjoy their learning and are happy when playing with their peers. They listen tolerantly and participate well in their learning. Many make progress in their skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the local area, Wales and the world in an informed manner. A strong feature of the school is the pupils' attitudes and courtesy towards each other and adults.

Recommendations

- R1 Provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in a variety of interesting areas and contexts
- R2 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about how they learn

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

On entry to the school, many pupils have low communication, number and personal and social skills. During their time at the school, many pupils, including pupils in specific groups, make sound progress from their starting points.

Across the school, most pupils listen tolerantly and respect the contributions of each other and adults. Many of the youngest pupils speak confidently about their work, for example when explaining how to build an obstacle course in the outdoor area. The oldest pupils communicate effectively in both languages and use relevant vocabulary and language patterns with increasing accuracy when contributing purposefully to discussions. As pupils' skills develop, many use mature vocabulary when discussing interesting areas, for example which foods decompose and biodegrade.

Most pupils' reading skills develop soundly. The youngest pupils use an effective range of reading methods to build words and gather meaning from the text. Most older pupils read with increasing expression and fluency, for example when reading information about Buddhism. One of the most obvious features of the school is the pupils' enthusiasm when discussing texts maturely, including texts written by Welsh authors, in reading sessions and at the pre-school 'Reading Club'.

Many pupils develop their writing skills effectively and apply them successfully across the curriculum. Many pupils' early writing skills develop well and they use adjectives creatively, for example when writing a story about the Three Little Pigs. The oldest pupils write in a wide range of genres in both languages and know their features well. For example, they use personalisation and extended similes to enrich their images of winter effectively. Overall, most pupils demonstrate a sound grasp of familiar spelling patterns, paragraphing and punctuation, for example when writing a letter to the government about their concerns about global warming. Across the school, most pupils present their work neatly and show respect and pride in their achievements.

Many pupils' mathematics skills develop consistently. The youngest pupils solve mathematical problems confidently, for example when estimating the size of different objects and identifying the difference between standard and non-standard methods of measurement. By the end of Year 2, they have an intelligent grasp of number facts, handling money and identifying the properties of 2D shapes correctly. Most of the older pupils have a sound knowledge of number, for example when discussing prime numbers and multiplying and dividing decimals up to 1000. At the top of the school, many pupils build regularly on their previous learning and deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts well. Overall, as pupils move through the school, they begin to apply their number skills in relevant areas, for example when calculating profit and loss when producing and selling strawberry jam at the summer fair. However, pupils do not apply and develop their numeracy skills regularly enough in a rich range of interesting activities in the classroom and the wider learning environment.

Across the school, most pupils' digital skills are sound. The youngest pupils use devices confidently and effectively to enrich their learning. They use different apps to

present their work by using multimedia methods, for example when presenting information about safety on the beach. The oldest pupils apply their skills successfully across the areas of learning, which includes gathering and analysing information to create a database about the features of birds, for example. They develop their spoken Welsh and digital skills highly skilfully, for example by presenting a digital clip when presenting instructions creatively on how to make sock puppets.

Most pupils develop their creative skills successfully. The youngest pupils work together diligently to solve problems while researching and experimenting with building bridges. Across the school, pupils develop their art skills well, for example as the oldest pupils experiment with watercolours when emulating famous artists.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils are happy within an inclusive and supportive environment and show pride in being a part of the close-knit community. Pupils are given beneficial opportunities to express their feelings and share them with adults within the school, knowing that good support is available to them continuously. They feel safe at school and know whom to approach if something is worrying them. By inviting visitors to the school, pupils deepen their understanding of safety in different situations, for example when the fire and rescue service visits the school. Pupils have a sound understanding of the digital world and how to stay safe when learning online, for example not to share e-mail addresses and passwords with strangers.

Nearly all pupils behave politely and treat each other, adults and visitors with respect and care. They listen to presentations maturely, concentrate for extended periods and commit to completing their tasks successfully. Most show consistent enthusiasm in their activities, for example as the oldest pupils learn about the features of music while playing an instrument to the accompaniment of Sosban Fach. They produce, and respond positively to, the school rules and take good ownership of them as part of the school's behaviour management arrangements. This contributes successfully to their positive attitudes to learning and fostering a supportive environment.

One of the notable features of the school is the way in which nearly all pupils learn together and work together productively. They show empathy for the contributions of others, for example when holding a joint reflection sessions on the theme of 'love' as part of the St Dwynwen's Day celebrations. On the whole, they show suitable resilience in their willingness to try new and more challenging tasks, for example when working together and solving problems effectively while designing a Celtic house.

Most pupils implement effective methods when completing activities and improving their work. For example, the youngest pupils support and challenge each other well when solving relevant challenging in the outdoor classroom. The oldest pupils consider whether 'pen, paper, device' is most suitable to use when responding to increasingly challenging tasks. However, at times, pupils are too reliant on the guidance of staff when completing activities.

Most pupils are aware of the importance of making healthy choices and keeping fit. They develop a good variety of physical skills as part of the school's health and

well-being provision, such as football and dance skills. They also respond positively to physical activities that are provided by visitors and partnerships, for example by taking part in various sessions that support their health and well-being. Pupils participate and compete in an appropriate range of local competitions, for example a swimming gala and cross-country running.

Across the school, nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of taking care of their emotional well-being and are given a daily opportunity to record it as part of provision. They benefit from occasional gardening activities and enjoy planting and harvesting different fruit and vegetables to make a profit at fairs. This contributes successfully to developing their entrepreneurial skills. For example, pupils demonstrate creative skills and effective financial education when developing a business idea in a '£5 Challenge' activity, which resulted in a national award for the school.

The oldest pupils are given relevant opportunities as part of the classroom provision to develop their leadership skills. They are also given suitable responsibilities through the activities of the school council and the ambassadors, who undertake different aspects such as develop the well-being and digital skills of their peers. Pupils choose different charities to donate food or money, for example by taking part in a sponsored walk in the local area to collect a commendable amount for people in Syria. As a result, they develop as informed and caring citizens who are keen to be active and tolerant members of their local community.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers seek and act on the comments and views of pupils, parents and governors effectively when planning the curriculum. They ensure that the vision in terms of the curriculum is based on developing pupils' well-being and their interest in their learning. Staff plan activities that provide a relevant range of learning experiences for pupils. Teachers include pupils' suggestions successfully in specific themes to engage and hold their interest. This supports pupils to enjoy and make progress in their skills across the areas of learning and experience.

Staff have a productive working relationship with all pupils and foster a positive and supportive environment for learning. Teachers provide a curriculum that supports pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding in local, national and international contexts. They identify clear objectives when planning activities. For example, pupils develop their skills when learning about the features of the Aberystwyth area and compare Wales with other countries around the world well. Pupils develop their oral skills effectively and expand vocabulary and patterns successfully, for example when discussing the total number of Welsh speakers in the local area and beyond. One of the strengths of provision is the way in which teachers provide activities that develop pupils' reading and writing skills jointly in purposeful activities. In the best practice, pupils also develop their digital skills as part of these activities. For example, older pupils complete research on the internet and collate information successfully in preparation for writing a digital letter about global warming. Overall, pupils develop their numeracy skills in structured activities. However, provision does not support pupils to apply their numeracy skills regularly enough in a variety of interesting areas and contexts.

The school enriches the curriculum by welcoming visitors and organising visits to develop pupils' understanding of specific areas of learning. For example, teachers arrange for pupils to participate in different workshops to develop their knowledge of France and their French communication skills as part of the theme 'Bonjour'. Staff also enrich pupils' experiences of life skills effectively, such as first aid sessions and communicating by learning sign language. As a result, pupils develop to become caring and principled citizens.

A strong feature of the school is the working relationship and staff's knowledge of each individual pupil. They provide a learning environment that motivates pupils to enjoy their learning and to make consistent progress. Staff have high expectations of the pupils and encourage them to achieve well consistently. They take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' Welsh skills and encourage them to improve their oral skills. Teachers present information clearly and provide pupils with purposeful guidance to complete their tasks. They support learning consistently and encourage them to succeed. However, at times, staff give pupils too many instructions, which limits their ability to make independent choices about how to complete and present their work.

Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to enjoy and engage with their learning in less formal situations. Pupils hold playground game sessions which encourage their peers to speak Welsh and a 'Reading Club' for their peers during break times. Staff also provide a variety of activities as part of the occasional after-school clubs, such as the St Dwynwen's Day disco. These opportunities encourage pupils to develop their appreciation of different experiences and encourage them to value the Welsh language and culture.

Staff provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to discuss and improve their work as an integral part of learning. They question pupils skilfully to extend their learning and support them to evaluate their achievements while considering the next steps in their learning. Teachers track pupils' progress and use this information purposefully to support them to make progress. They share relevant information about well-being and progress with parents in appropriate reports.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a warm and happy community and supports pupils' emotional, health and social needs effectively. Through a proactive relationship with the Cylch Meithrin, pupils settle quickly and become well-rounded members of the school community. The sense of belonging to the school is a core part of the inclusive ethos, where pupils are happy and foster important values. For example, pupils design and create an attractive mural at the entrance of the school on the theme 'we are kind'. The caring ethos that is provided for pupils is a strong feature of the school's life and work.

The headteacher and staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the needs of each individual pupil. Through this, they plan provision that meets the individual needs of pupils purposefully to nurture their well-being and support their learning. The school has established arrangements to track and monitor the well-being and progress of pupils and this information is used effectively to plan the next steps in their learning. Teachers also use relevant information about each

pupil's progress and interests to produce individual profiles. As a result, this ensures relevant support for their well-being and continuous provision for their learning. Effective support is provided through specific programmes for pupils who need additional support, including those who are a cause for concern. The school has effective partnerships with external agencies, which include the speech and language team and the educational psychologist.

The school provides for the effective development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural attitudes. Periods of collective worship provide relevant opportunities for pupils to reflect on important values and aspects, such as 'is there something good about being different?'. They learn about different religions appropriately, for example when learning about the Creation in Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Through this, together with learning about languages and cultures in different countries, pupils learn how to respect human rights and value other language and cultures around the world.

Teachers plan and present relevant information about personal and social education skilfully as an integral part of provision. Following recent training, staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about relationships and sexuality as part of their learning. This encourages pupils to discuss important aspects, which contributes firmly to their understanding of values and fairness in society.

Pupils deepen their appreciation of being valued members of the school, the local and national community successfully through a variety of activities. For example, teachers provide beneficial opportunities for them to learn about and discuss local features, such as the car wash, the River Ystwyth and the Pen Dinas monument. Pupils are given opportunities to go on visits to enrich their understanding of different themes, such as when learning about the Victorian era at Llanerchaeron mansion. The oldest pupils are also given an opportunity to attend a science fair at Aberystwyth University to take part in scientific activities. This contributes successfully to their experiences and aspirations for learning in the future.

There are purposeful arrangements for promoting pupils' punctuality and attendance. Leaders foster a strong culture of safeguarding and there are robust systems in place to ensure that pupils are safe on the site.

Leadership and management

The headteacher leads the school wisely and with complete dedication. She encourages pupils to develop their skills and talents in a caring and supportive learning environment. Her vision contributes firmly towards fostering an inclusive ethos of which pupils, staff and all of the school's partners are a core part. This enriches pupils' experiences as they learn and play happily with their peers and enhances their pride in living in the local community and Wales.

The headteacher's high expectations and a culture of regular co-operation between the small number of staff are a strong feature. The school operates effectively as a community that is ready to learn and improves provision continuously. For example, when sharing teaching and learning practices both inside and outside the school, staff interact purposefully with staff from other local schools to plan interesting themes and activities for pupils as part of developing Curriculum for Wales. These

opportunities for staff are provided appropriately to improve provision which, in turn, supports pupils to make progress, for example in their mathematics skills. This co-operation also develops staff's teaching skills effectively and supports the performance management arrangements. This motivates and supports staff to take part in an appropriate range of professional learning opportunities.

Leaders know the needs of pupils, the school and its community well. They undertake a variety of purposeful activities that support them to develop the school in an open and supportive culture. For example, as part of the monitoring and evaluation process, the headteacher seeks the opinions of pupils and parents about different aspects of the school's life and work. This contributes successfully to the self-evaluation process, in which the school's strengths and areas for improvement are identified in a deliberate and timely manner. The school's planning for improvement identifies clear actions and relevant aims to refine and develop aspects that focus most specifically on improving pupils' well-being and supporting their progress. Leaders have a successful track record of implementing changes and maintaining sustainable improvements, for example in implementing a consistent structure for evaluating the school regularly and thoroughly.

Members of the governing body support the headteacher and staff well and work diligently to ensure an inclusive education for pupils. They receive valuable information from the headteacher about the school's work and take part in a variety of relevant monitoring and evaluation activities. For example, following monitoring sessions, the members challenge staff to refine provision to support pupils to make consistent progress in their Welsh speaking and reading skills. As a result, the headteacher responds proactively and acts successfully to meet the needs of pupils and the school's other partners.

The school has robust arrangements for managing resources, included its financial resources. For example, with generous contributions from the parent and teacher association, staff invest in resources to develop the extensive outdoor area. Leaders spend the budget prudently and the governing body monitors this in detail, including the use of the pupil development grant. Members of the governing body promote a culture of safeguarding and promote provision for pupils' health and well-being successfully.

The school's relationship with parents is a strength, including with prospective parents who attend the Cylch Meithrin on the school grounds. The co-operation and continuous communication promote the school in its community highly effectively. For example, pupils perform in a variety of creative activities, such as annual shows and concerts in the village hall and church. They also compete in a variety of competitions in local shows each year. This builds pupils' confidence and develops their talents and skills well.

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/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, 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
- 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' well-being, 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 (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

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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