



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

A report on

Ysgol Llangwryfon

**Llangwryfon
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 4HA**

Date of inspection: May 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Llangwryfon

Name of provider	Ysgol Gymunedol Llangwryfon
Local authority	Ceredigion
Language of the provider	Welsh-medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	42
Pupils of statutory school age	34
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 21.3%)</i>	9.5%
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 20.6%)</i>	35.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	52.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/10/2013
Start date of inspection	16/05/2022
Additional information	

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

Ysgol Llangwryfon is a happy and homely school in which pupils show a high level of respect and behaviour. Staff show exceptional care for their pupils. They work hard to challenge them to work to the best of their ability from an early age. Pupils develop their basic skills strongly on their journey through the school. They develop as confident mathematicians and have a sound grasp of Welsh and English, although opportunities need to be provided to pupils to make choices more independently at times. As a result, pupils achieve well and make sound progress at the school.

Staff care exceptionally well for pupils' physical health and well-being. They provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and receive additional academic or emotional support, where necessary. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is a strength. Staff provide an exciting curriculum that appeals greatly to pupils' interests. They use the classrooms and the wider area to stimulate pupils, although there is a need to ensure more effective use of the outdoor area in the youngest years. Pupils are given experiences that develop them to become citizens who are knowledgeable about their area and heritage and are proud of their Welshness and their nation.

All staff create an effective team that works for the benefit of their pupils at all times. They know their strengths and are aware of what needs to be improved. The headteacher considers the views of parents and pupils when making decisions. The governing body supports the school effectively and keeps a close eye on finding to ensure value for money.

Recommendations

R1 Ensure more effective use of the outdoor area in the youngest years

R2 Provide better opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about their learning

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' skills are at the expected level for their age, except in Welsh where around half of pupils have skills that are lower than the expected level. Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress during their time at the school.

Nearly all pupils' listening skills in the school's youngest years are good. They listen to their peers and adults carefully and respond appropriately to them. The youngest pupils who are newcomers to the Welsh language learn the language quickly. They come to understand a wide range of words in a short period of time and gain confidence by talking to adults and their peers. By Year 2, they speak Welsh confidently and talk about their work and experiences maturely. For example, they talk to each other effectively to weigh different fruit on scales and discover the heaviest and lightest. Most of the school's older pupils develop their oral skills successfully in Welsh and English. They communicate effectively in both languages and contribute purposefully to class discussions. Nearly all pupils in the older years respond well to questions and listen attentively. They express an opinion maturely, for example when discussing moral decisions in a morning assembly. Pupils take pride in the Welsh language and use it naturally when talking to each other in their classes and during break times.

Nearly all pupils' reading skills are developing well. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds from an early age and use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words. By Year 2, they use their reading skills confidently to read story books and discuss the content knowledgeably. Many of the older pupils read intelligently in both languages. They pay effective attention to punctuation and vary their tone of voice to show understanding and engage the listener's interest. They use their higher-order reading skills effectively to gather information quickly and effectively.

Pupils' early writing skills are developing well. The school's youngest pupils make marks successfully in a variety of contexts and media. For example, they use chalk on the school playground and paint in the classroom to practise making shapes that convey writing. By Year 2, they write in an appropriate range of contexts for different audiences, for example in a diary about the weekend or instructions to make bread. Nearly all of the school's older pupils develop their writing skills successfully in both languages. By the end of their time at the school, they write skilfully in a variety of genres and show a mature understanding of paragraphing and punctuation, for example when writing an informal letter to a friend or a newspaper article about an event during the War of the Little Englishman.

Most of the youngest pupils develop sound numeracy skills. By Year 2, most recognise numbers up to 100 confidently and show a good understanding of number bonds, with some able to count beyond one hundred successfully. They learn to handle mathematical equipment confidently, for example when using scales to weigh or clocks to solve problems relating to time. In the school's older years, most pupils have sound number skills. They apply their mathematical understanding successfully

in contexts across the curriculum, for example when estimating and measuring how much liquid is needed to fill a milk churn and converting pints to gallons and litres.

In the youngest classes, nearly all pupils develop a valuable range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills successfully and consistently. They save their work successfully and are able to load it without support. Most program a rocket on a screen to travel around the planets. In the older years, pupils build appropriately on their previous skills. They use ready-made resources on Hwb confidently to support and facilitate their learning and show their work in a variety of ways for different audiences. They create animations of a high standard, for example to show the life cycle of a plant.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils are extremely polite and treat each other and adults with a high level of respect. They are happy and feel safe within the school's caring community. Careful consideration is given to the needs of their peers, particularly older pupils when caring for younger pupils. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons, during break times and when working independently. They play happily and contentedly during break times. Pupils are welcoming towards visitors and discuss aspects of school life with them confidently. They are very proud of their school and enjoy being part of its community. They appreciate opportunities to visit the local area regularly and enjoy periods of physical relaxation and reflection.

Most pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe online. They discuss the importance of not sharing passwords and the risks of disclosing personal information maturely. As a result, nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of making sensible decisions. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily. They are passionate about bringing fruit to school rather than crisps or chocolate. Nearly all pupils have a good awareness of the importance of keeping the mind healthy, in addition to the body. They use their well-being books and the 'worry box' effectively and know that staff will deal with any concerns in a timely and sensitive manner. The school's older pupils have mature knowledge of mental health and its importance.

Most pupils are enthusiastic learners who undertake class tasks eagerly. They respect the contributions of others and respond to them purposefully. They have a positive attitude towards their own learning and persevere consistently. They work together effectively in groups, in pairs or by supporting each other, where necessary. Across the school, nearly all have a sound understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. This contributes successfully towards the ethos of effective learning within the school and has a positive effect on most pupils' standards.

Many pupils undertake roles and responsibilities and develop their leadership skills appropriately. The restrictions of the pandemic have disrupted the council's ability to meet since the beginning of the year, but recently members of the 'playground buddies' and '*archwilwyr amgylchedd*' ('environmental inspectors') have undertaken their roles enthusiastically to have a positive effect on the environment and life of the school.

Following the pandemic, inspectors are not reporting on pupil attendance rates during the 2021-2022 academic year. However, the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance is reported on as part of Inspection Area 4.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff have a very warm relationship with their pupils. They treat them with kindness and consideration and this creates an inclusive environment that motivates pupils to learn effectively. Teachers and assistants provide a curriculum that engages the interest of nearly all pupils successfully. They plan a range of valuable experiences that reflect the school's nature and local context. Staff give clear instructions that enable nearly all pupils to undertake tasks confidently. They use various techniques effectively during these sessions to ensure that nearly all pupils understand and develop their skills. Teachers provide purposeful oral feedback and, where written feedback is at its best, it gives pupils a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. Opportunities for pupils to assess and reflect on their own performance and that of their peers are developing suitably.

Staff succeed in making their classes stimulating and engaging places where nearly all pupils can learn productively. All staff manage pupils' behaviour masterfully in classes and around the school and treat all pupils equally and with respect. This has a positive effect on pupils' standards and well-being.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this knowledge to guide learning successfully. They have high expectations and usually link their lessons effectively with previous learning. Purposeful co-operation between members of staff provides good support to enable pupils to complete their tasks and benefit from them successfully. This contributes effectively towards ensuring that all pupils make sound progress and achieve well. Overall, there is a suitable balance between experiences that are led by adults and opportunities for pupils to work independently. However, teachers have a tendency to over-direct activities and this limits opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Experiences that stretch and reinforce learning in the outdoor area for the youngest pupils are limited.

By encouraging pupils to make full use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life, staff ensure a very strong Welsh ethos. All staff take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' language in Welsh and English. This contributes beneficially to their polished oral skills. As a result, most pupils develop as competent and confident bilingual learners. Staff provide an interesting curriculum that develops pupils' skills effectively across all areas of learning. For example, older pupils enjoy solving challenges that appeal to their interests, such as discovering the perimeter and area of different farm fields.

Teachers have begun to adapt the curriculum to meet the purposes of the Curriculum for Wales by providing increasing opportunities for pupils to make decisions in relation to what they would like to learn, for example by responding to the youngest pupils' questions when planning their theme on food. Teachers provide a diverse range of valuable learning experiences for pupils that reflect the school's nature and context successfully and meet nearly all pupils' needs skilfully. A strong feature of provision is the valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about the local area and beyond. A notable example of this is pupils' work on studying the history of the

Rebecca Riots and the War of the Little Englishman during the nineteenth century. This contributes effectively to their understanding of their local area, their history and their culture. As a result, pupils take pride in their heritage and their Welshness.

Care, support and guidance

The school promotes pupils' courtesy, respect and commitment very successfully. They succeed in fostering a familial and caring ethos which creates a close-knit community in which pupils and staff care for each other considerately. They work together effectively to create a happy community in a safe learning environment. This is an excellent feature. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. The school provides a structured programme to promote the well-being of all pupils skilfully and nearly all pupils have a sound awareness of the need to protect themselves and others mentally and physically. The school has developed material to discuss themes such as *'Daw'r gwanwyn er gwaetha'r gaeaf'* ('No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow'). This means that pupils are given opportunities to develop reasoning skills and discuss the implications of mental anguish during the dark winter months. The school's older pupils created special posters to encourage adults to express their feeling and emphasis that it is important to talk, in response to a tragedy in the countryside. This activity prepares pupils skilfully for life skills in the future. The school has relevant arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily and pupils understand what they need to do to keep fit and healthy.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is exceptionally strong. Staff identify pupils' specific learning needs at the early stage and address them effectively. Pupils benefit from high quality support from skilful staff. For example, staff use a range of successful intervention programmes to help pupils to improve their social, emotional, literacy and numeracy skills. They have clear and measurable individual education plans. These contain relevant information and specific targets that provide successful strategies for their learning and how to overcome difficulties. Plans are reviewed regularly between teachers, pupils and their parents. The school works effectively with external agencies to support pupils to develop. As a result, all pupils make sound progress from their previous attainment. During the pandemic, staff shared their remote learning intervention strategy with other schools across the local authority as an example of good practice.

Staff provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to express their views and contribute to their learning and to the school's life and work. This enriches their experiences and prepares them well to take responsibility for their decisions and to consider the views of others. The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully. For example, pupils are given an opportunity to reflect and think about current affairs through the daily assemblies. The school also reinforces pupil's community values by arranging for them to take part in the local eisteddfod and raising money for good causes, such as the Ukraine appeal. However, plans for teaching pupils about multicultural communities and diverse relationships are not always presented purposefully enough.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has established a clear vision that is based on providing every possible opportunity to prepare pupils for life outside school. This is achieved in an inclusive and homely environment in which they foster values of fairness, respect, and love towards their local area and their language. The attitudes of all members of staff focus on meeting the needs of all pupils. Staff have formed a strong and effective team that understanding their roles and responsibilities well. The headteacher's calm and effective leadership sets high expectations that are recognised by pupils, staff, governors and parents. Staff know their school well. They communicate with each other effectively and have a continuous and effective focus on maintaining and raising pupils' standards of achievement and ensuring a high level of well-being.

The school's self-evaluation processes are effective and ensure that staff have a clear picture of its performance. They analyse and consider a wide range of evidence, such as lesson observations, internal assessments, scrutiny of pupils' work, local authority reports and seeking pupils' views. Teachers have identified relevant priorities for development as a result of this work. The focus in the improvement plan includes these priorities and important national priorities. The plan sets clear actions with responsibilities, professional development needs and relevant success criteria. The plan is evaluated each term to check that the school is realising its aims in a timely and effective manner.

Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and know it well. They have a sound understanding of the support provided by the school during the lockdown periods. Although the governors' usual activities of visiting provision within the school have not resumed since the pandemic, they receive up-to-date information about the school's situation through the headteacher's reports during virtual meetings. They continue to challenge the school effectively, for example through the headteacher's performance management arrangements. They work with staff and pupils to ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements for eating and drinking healthily. As a result, most pupils speak confidently about healthy eating practices and understand the importance of a balanced diet. Governors support the headteacher to manage the school's budget effectively by meeting the school's finance officer regularly and keeping a close eye on expenditure. They make effective use of various grants, including the pupil development grant, to ensure an appropriate level of staffing, good quality resources and purposeful training, for example to provide emotional support for pupils.

The school has effective procedures to manage the performance of teachers and assistants, based on their individual professional needs and the school's priorities. Staff have taken advantage of virtual methods to attend professional training during the lockdown periods. They allocate suitable courses and training through productive discussions with the headteacher. For example, the additional learning needs co-ordinator has completed a middle management courses and is in the process of completing a masters course in special needs. This means that the school will have the staff to support the headteacher more efficiently and prepare purposefully for the arrival of the additional learning needs transformation programme.

There is a strong relationship between the school and parents. They appreciate the efforts of the school's staff during the lockdown periods to teach their children and take such good care of their well-being. Recent parents' meetings have reinforced the strong link between them.

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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This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).