



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

A report on

Ysgol Maesglas Greenfield

**Greenfield
Holywell
Clwyd
Flintshire
CH8 7JW**

Date of inspection: April 2024

by

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

About Ysgol Maesglas Greenfield

Name of provider	Ysgol Maesglas Greenfield
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	237
Pupils of statutory school age	185
Number in nursery classes	19
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 23.7%)	38.8%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 13.2%)	11.9%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.8%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	07/03/2016
Start date of inspection	29/04/2024

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to 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 Maesglas is an inclusive and caring learning community where all pupils are nurtured and encouraged to prepare for their next steps in life through a family ethos. Pupil behaviour is good, and they show respect towards each other and staff and visitors. The school places a high priority on developing positive relationships between pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community.

The school provides a creative, broad, and balanced curriculum for pupils. Teachers plan a range of rich experiences and interesting activities that reflect the nature and local context of the school. They ensure that activities are suitably paced and provide stimulating learning experiences. However, learning activities do not always respond sufficiently to pupils' needs and challenge them to make the best possible progress. Staff tend to over-direct activities, and this limits opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners. Most pupils make sound progress from their starting points. They develop their literacy and numeracy skills appropriately by the end of their time at the school. However, pupils' Welsh language skills are underdeveloped.

The headteacher is an effective and firm leader. She has high expectations of herself and others and collaborates well with staff to ensure that all pupils are happy and safe. The headteacher is supported by a team of dedicated and hard-working staff who work together purposefully to meet pupils' needs. Governors support the school with commendable care and passion and have a good understanding of their duties and responsibilities. They provide leaders and staff with robust support and ensure that the school uses its resources appropriately.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that teaching provides appropriate challenge for all pupils
- R2 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to make choices about their learning and to work more independently
- R3 Improve pupils use of spoken Welsh

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

During their time in school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), pupils in the behavioural support unit and those affected by socio-economic disadvantage make sound progress in their learning and achieve well.

Across the school, most pupils are attentive listeners, and many are confident speakers. Most younger pupils communicate their ideas enthusiastically to adults and each other. For example, when describing the need for a character in their story to have a house to live in so she can keep cool in the hot sun. Older pupils develop effective communication skills, and their vocabulary widens successfully over time. In the oldest classes, most pupils speak articulately and with a mature level of confidence. However, across the school, pupils' understanding of the Welsh language and their use of Welsh oracy is underdeveloped.

Most pupils' reading skills develop well. The youngest pupils use an appropriate range of phonics strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words correctly. By Year 2, most read with increasing fluency and confidence, explaining the content well. Most of the oldest pupils read intelligently in various contexts in English. They vary their tone of voice and use punctuation purposefully to show their understanding. Most pupils discuss their favourite types of books and give reasons for that choice.

Most pupils' early writing skills develop appropriately. They make marks purposefully both inside and outside the classroom and begin to form letters and write simple words. As they move through the school, most pupils write effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes. As their skills develop, many use a good range of punctuation and spell more complex words correctly. Many of the oldest pupils use a rich vocabulary, for example when writing about the links between Holywell and the slave trade, they use adjectives imaginatively to bring to life the impact of the sea journeys on individual slaves.

Most pupils make sound progress in their mathematics and numeracy skills. From an early age, they develop a useful range of mathematical skills, enjoy mathematics challenges and undertake counting games and matching activities enthusiastically. By Year 3, many use their numeracy skills appropriately in other areas of learning, for example when using rulers and metre sticks to measure objects in the classroom. Most of the oldest pupils work confidently with the four rules of number and develop sound skills when handling data. For example, when recording and comparing the strengths of earthquakes in countries across the world.

From an early age, pupils apply their digital skills in a range of creative contexts to support their wider learning. By Year 2, many use a digital tablet confidently, for example when taking photographs and uploading them to an online platform independently. Many of the oldest pupils use their digital skills well to support their research work. For example, by producing presentations that ask questions of the reader, and provide hyperlinks to find the answer, such as finding famous landmarks in Wales.

Many pupils make good progress in their physical skills. The youngest pupils develop valuable balancing skills while energetically practising their bicycle control around the yard. The oldest pupils show positive attitudes to physical activities while practising their football skills and practically researching new ways to walk across the trim trail.

Most pupils' creative skills develop well through a range of stimulating activities. For example, the younger pupils investigate mixing paint colours to paint decorations for the outdoor area. Older pupils produce clay models to represent people trapped by the volcanic eruption in Pompeii.

Nearly all pupils develop their problem-solving skills effectively when working inside and outdoors. The youngest pupils discuss the need to build bridges between the tyres so that the sharks cannot get them as they make their way across a river. Older pupils investigate what they can do to make a difference to climate change around the world.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils, including those in the behaviour support unit, feel safe and happy in school and benefit from the strong working relationships with staff. They feel listened to and have people and places to go to if they are worried or upset. They know that their concerns will be addressed effectively.

Most pupils behave well in lessons, show kindness and respect to each other and welcome visitors, embracing the school values of 'ready, respectful, and safe'. Most pupils are polite and courteous. They are enthusiastic when sharing their learning with staff and visitors. Most pupils show a sound awareness of how to support their own well-being. For example, pupils identify how they feel when they arrive at the class in the morning and staff respond promptly to any concerns or requests for support.

Most pupils enjoy their learning experiences and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning. They are proud of their work and celebrate their achievements. Nearly all pupils work well collaboratively in pairs and small groups and are keen to share their ideas and answer questions. Many pupils show respect as they listen to and consider others' thoughts and opinions.

Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers' instructions and concentrate well on their work during lessons. Many discuss their work confidently and are prepared to listen to the views and ideas of others carefully. As a result, many are beginning to develop as collaborative thinkers. However, adults tend to provide too much scaffolding around pupils' learning, which means that the independent learning skills of many pupils are underdeveloped.

Nearly all pupils, including those with ALN, are willing to assume leadership roles and responsibilities and play a full part in the life and work of the school. Pupils who are members of various committees, such as the school council and criw Cymraeg, are beginning to have more prominent roles to the daily life of the school, such as brightening up the playground wall with Welsh themed graffiti and increasing the awareness and efficiency of recycling around the school. However, there is a

tendency for adults to over direct the work of these groups, which means that pupils do not take as much responsibility for their work as they could.

Most pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and the value of regular exercise. They make healthy food choices during the school day. They know the importance of staying hydrated throughout and enjoy participating in a range of extra-curricular activities to keep fit, such as the netball and football clubs.

As pupils move through the school, they begin to show an increasing understanding of their own identity. They enjoy learning about other cultures, languages and beliefs and regularly communicate online or through email with schools around the world, such as in New York and China. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of children's rights.

Most pupils value the feedback they receive from teachers about the quality of their work. Older pupils make increasing use of self and peer assessment and are keen to make positive changes to their work, particularly in writing tasks. They draw upon previous learning and use this effectively in their topic missions. This improves their self-confidence and supports their progress well as they move through the school.

Across the school, most pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of moral citizenship through their awareness of the values promoted by the school. Older pupils become aware of the importance of equality and inclusion as part of an oracy project related to the slave trade and supporting families in developing countries. This increases pupils' awareness of the importance of their contributions towards creating a caring society.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff develop positive, caring, and respectful relationships with pupils. Teachers and skilled support staff support pupils' learning effectively. They encourage respect and understanding, which leads to an inclusive and considerate culture. Staff's expertise in supporting pupils' emotional well-being enables them to sensitively assist pupils through the challenges they face daily. Provision for pupils' well-being development is a strength and most pupils make good progress in developing strategies to understand and manage their emotions well.

Staff work together effectively to plan an exciting curriculum that builds on previous learning and promotes progression in pupils' skills. Teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills. For example, planning to develop pupils' oral skills means that pupils' standards of English oracy have improved significantly. They provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, and physical skills on a regular basis. However, across the school, opportunities to develop pupils as independent learners and to enable them to make choices about their learning are limited.

The school's work to develop pupils' Welsh language speaking skills is at an early stage. Most teachers use basic Welsh language appropriately in the classroom, for example to welcome their pupils. However, they do not support pupils to develop their Welsh language skills sufficiently well over time and, as a result, pupils are reluctant to hold simple conversations.

Staff give prominence to ensuring that pupils' ideas contribute to the planning of the themes and learning experiences. As a result, most pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons and activities and show a constant desire to learn. Most pupils benefit from a range of trips and visits that support the curriculum and engage pupils' interest in their learning. For example, the youngest pupils make frequent visits to the local heritage centre for minibeast hunts and to explore the Abbey ruins.

Teachers create calm and welcoming classroom environments. Most teaching across the school is effective and teachers have a secure knowledge of the concepts and skills they are teaching. Most teachers deliver well-organised and purposeful lessons to engage and inspire the pupils. They provide suitable success criteria and learning objectives for lessons to support pupils to successfully complete their work. However, learning activities do not always respond to the needs and challenges of all pupils. As a result, a few more able pupils do not make expected or better progress with their learning during their lessons and activities. Nearly all staff use effective questioning to address misconceptions and to develop pupils' understanding. Across the school, effective verbal and written feedback helps pupils to identify how to improve their work. Teachers regularly identify targets for pupils that help them understand how to achieve the next step in their learning.

Teachers have developed a shared understanding of progression and use a range of assessments to gather data to track and monitor pupils' progress carefully. Teachers and leaders use this information to discuss every pupil's learning in meetings each term. They use these dialogues to plan for pupils' next steps in learning on a termly basis.

Teachers share information with parents regularly about their children's progress and well-being. Parents value the comments in open evenings, which include setting pupils' individual targets. This helps them to understand how they could help their children at home.

Care, support and guidance

Staff at Ysgol Maesglas create a caring community for pupils and their families. The supportive and friendly working relationships between staff and pupils is a strength of the school. This is reflected in nearly all pupils' good behaviour and their positive attitudes towards their learning and school life. Senior leaders develop strong links with the local community and organise beneficial opportunities for parents to take part in events and workshops. This supports them to support their child's learning at home effectively.

The school's provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is good. The effective ALN co-ordinators work with class teachers to assess pupils' needs at an early stage and devise valuable support plans where appropriate. These include setting achievable targets and using teaching approaches that support pupils to make progress. Staff monitor and evaluate the progress that pupils make in achieving these targets regularly. Where appropriate, additional outside agencies such as health services and the education psychologist, provide further support for school staff. As a result, during their time at the school, most pupils with ALN make good progress.

Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on their values, and the beliefs of others. They plan thoughtful opportunities for pupils to learn about different countries and cultures. All pupils, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantage, benefit from trips and visitors to the school, for example, by visiting St Winefride's Well, and comparing different parts of Wales. As a result, this deepens pupils' understanding of the wider world successfully.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development appropriately. Members of the local church attend the school each term to provide reflection days and the pupils participate in Harvest and Christmas services at the church each year. This encourages pupils to consider others' views sensitively and demonstrate values such as truth and respect. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activity sessions, both in lessons and extra-curricular clubs, such as netball and football. The well-equipped outdoor areas, help motivate pupils to keep fit and to develop their physical skills well.

Teachers encourage pupils to stand for election in the wide variety of pupil leadership roles. Pupils are passionate about their roles and campaign for change enthusiastically. For example, members of the eco group organise litter picks and monitor and evaluate levels of litter outside of school. This encourages pupils to consider their role as active citizens in wider society.

The school has pupils' well-being and safety at its heart. A dedicated family support worker works closely with parents to provide them with bespoke support and signpost them to external agencies when needed. This supports a close working relationship between families and the school, which in turn contributes to the sound progress pupils make during their time at the school.

There is a strong safeguarding ethos in the school, and all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for keeping learners safe. All staff use effective strategies to promote and support a culture of anti-bullying and positive attitudes towards managing behaviour. The school has robust strategies in place for promoting pupils' attendance and punctuality. Staff work effectively with parents and outside agencies to address any persistent absenteeism.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has created a caring and inclusive environment that ensures a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and a warm commitment to pupils' well-being. This caring environment enriches the school's vision to 'prepare pupils for their next steps in life'. As a result, most pupils show high levels of engagement and make sound progress from their starting points.

Leaders have worked with staff to establish a very strong sense of family in the school, and the headteacher enthuses all staff to do their best for the school and its community. Staff cooperate effectively and happily with each other to ensure rich and memorable provision within local and Welsh contexts.

The headteacher has high expectations of her own performance and of the school's staff. She places the well-being of pupils and staff at the heart of all her work. The headteacher is supported effectively by a teaching team who understand their roles

and responsibilities well, and undertake valuable professional learning to develop their skills and knowledge successfully.

All staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders ensure regular meetings to discuss the school's improvement actions and their impact. Teachers and support staff work well collaboratively to support school improvement, address national and local priorities and support the well-being and learning needs of each pupil.

Family engagement is strong. The school communicates effectively with parents and provides many opportunities for parents to visit school and engage in their child's learning. For example, when attending the reading morning, families and children listen to stories and take part in fun learning activities together. In addition, the school makes good use of the family support worker to hold beneficial drop-in sessions for parents to help them with managing family life and their own well-being.

The headteacher reviews staff performance regularly and sets targets for improvement closely linked to the school's development priorities and the quality of teaching. Staff benefit from visits to observe effective practice in other settings and use their observations to improve their own teaching. For example, visits to a local school have resulted in an improved outdoor learning environments for the youngest pupils. Senior leaders ensure that professional learning opportunities reflect the school's priorities well. For example, staff attend useful training to develop their ability to support pupils with emotional and behavioural needs in mainstream provision and in the behaviour support unit.

Leaders know the school well. They have developed thorough processes to evaluate its performance and plan for improvement. Robust self-evaluation procedures are at the heart of the school's life and work. These processes are based on a wide range of evidence, which includes lesson observations, scrutinising pupils' work and conducting learning walks. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are embedded well and enable leaders to identify clearly the most important aspects for improvement. The headteacher ensures that all staff have an active role in the process. As a result, the school has a good record of reviewing its practice and raising and maintaining standards.

Governors are supportive of the school and are useful critical friends. They fulfil their role in the school's self-evaluation processes effectively. The governing body receives appropriate reports from the headteacher each term, which focus on progress against the priorities in the improvement plan. Governors challenge the school's progress against the improvement priorities, by asking sensible questions in a timely manner. However, arrangements for the governance and leadership of the behaviour support unit are unclear.

The headteacher and governors manage the school's finances prudently. This includes the pupil development grant, which is used carefully to provide programmes that support the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, and emotional skills.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) 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 undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- 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' 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 (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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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