



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

A report on

Ysgol Morfa Rhianedd

**Cwm Road
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 1EG**

Date of inspection: March 2024

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Morfa Rhianedd

Name of provider	Ysgol Morfa Rhianedd
Local authority	Conwy County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	152
Pupils of statutory school age	133
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	19
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 23.7%)</i>	30.6%
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 13.2%)</i>	24.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	5.2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	09/04/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	26/01/2015
Start date of inspection	18/03/2024

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

Ysgol Morfa Rhianedd is a supportive community that promotes a caring ethos successfully. There are close working relationships between pupils and staff, which foster an effective learning environment and a constant sense of belonging to the school family. The support to promote pupils' learning and well-being and pupils' ability to access this support is a strong feature of the school. This contributes beneficially to supporting pupils to develop sound attitudes to learning.

Teachers plan sensible and interesting activities that promote learning successfully. Provision to extend learning experiences for pupils outdoors is purposeful and focuses on develop their skills through engaging activities. Most pupils develop purposeful listening, speaking, reading, numeracy and digital skills. However, teachers do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills. Overall, the quality of teachers' feedback does not support pupils to know what the next steps are in their learning effectively enough.

The headteacher leads the school skilfully and supports staff to ensure that pupils' learning and well-being are constant priorities. This is central to his ambitious vision. He works diligently with staff and governors to ensure that the school is an inclusive learning community that promotes positive opportunities for pupils. Leaders keep in close contact with the school's wider community and build on the positive relationship with parents. However, inspectors brought an issue relating to the safety of the school's site to the attention of the school's leaders during the inspection.

Leaders evaluate the school's work effectively by using regular and well-designed self-evaluation processes. The school's monitoring activities lead to relevant improvement plans and comprehensive training opportunities for staff to develop their skills through agreed professional learning.

Recommendations

- R1 Address the concern relating to the safety of the school's site that was identified during the inspection
- R2 Provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills
- R3 Ensure that the quality of teachers' feedback identifies the next steps in pupils' learning effectively

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' basic skills correspond to, or are lower than, what is expected for their age and stage of development. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make sound progress in their learning. As a result, they develop their skills well and improve their knowledge and understanding purposefully.

Most pupils listen attentively to adults and each other and respond enthusiastically to presentations. The youngest pupils' oracy skills develop well. By Year 2, they develop the ability to talk independently, for example when creating a story map on the lives of imaginary witches. Most of the oldest pupils develop effective spoken Welsh skills and take pride in their use of the Welsh language. Most use English confidently with correct vocabulary and language patterns. As a result, pupils communicate successfully and contribute purposefully to class discussions, and express their opinions clearly and maturely.

Most pupils' reading skills develop successfully from their starting points. Many of the youngest pupils use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words correctly. By Year 2, they use their reading skills confidently and explain the content sensibly. As pupils move through the school, most read meaningfully in various contexts in both languages. They vary their tone of voice well and use punctuation correctly and intelligently. They also develop their higher-order reading skills skilfully to gather information from different sources, for example when conducting research to compare and construct bridges for the giant, Bendigeidfran.

Many pupils' early writing skills develop well. By Year 2, many write in a wide range of contexts for different audiences, for example when recording facts about the traditions of the Hen Galan. Many of the oldest pupils build appropriately on their writing skills and show a consistent grasp of language register and paragraphing when writing at length. Across the school, many adapt their style to different texts in a satisfactory manner, for example when recalling and writing about the legends of the Mabinogion. However, pupils do not develop their extended writing skills systematically and consistently as they move through the school.

In the youngest pupils' classes, many pupils make good progress in developing their numeracy skills. In the reception class, many pupils have a good grasp of number facts up to 20 and, in Year 2, many use money confidently at the florist. They also describe the features and properties of 3D shapes accurately when building castles. By the top of the school, most use and apply their numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, they use coordinates confidently to create pictures of mythical characters. Most pupils have a sound understanding of a good variety of mathematical concepts.

Most pupils develop digital skills effectively. They log into digital platforms confidently to access their work. Many pupils in the nursery class program electronic robots confidently to follow particular paths. Year 2 pupils also make good use of educational software, for example when developing their coding skills to follow a

bee's journey from one flower to the next. Most of the oldest pupils make wise choices about the most effective equipment and software to consider for different purposes. They use a range of programs to present information well, for example when creating interesting podcasts about the history of Y Fari Lwyd. Most pupils create a database and spreadsheets skilfully, for example to compare the numbers and species of birds in the local area.

Most pupils develop their artistic skills well. The youngest pupils create art in a wide variety of contexts. For example, from the nursery class to Year 2, pupils work together effectively to emulate the artwork of a number of Welsh artists. Across the school, most pupils take advantage of opportunities to develop their creative skills, for example when creating contemporary dances.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

The school has a friendly and homely ethos. Pupils greet each other, staff and visitors politely and respectfully. Across the school, they are welcoming and willing to discuss aspects of school life purposefully with adults. Nearly all pupils feel safe and happy within the school's caring and inclusive community. They are confident that staff listen and respond promptly when they have concerns or need support. Pupils are proud of the various opportunities they are given and their achievements, for example when singing in a residential home in the local area.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. They discuss maturely the importance of not sharing passwords and the dangers of disclosing personal information. As a result, nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of making wise decisions.

Most members of groups are proud of their roles and take their duties seriously. Representatives work enthusiastically on a variety of activities and make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school. For example, the school council has sent a letter to parents to encourage them to ensure their children's punctuality and regular attendance at school. As a result, pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and on time.

Most pupils have a good awareness of the importance of keeping the mind and body healthy. Pupils are given purposeful opportunities to discuss their feelings on a daily basis and use dedicated areas within the classrooms and the '*Hwb*', '*Clwb Dwdlo*' and '*Den Distaw*' areas to promote their attitudes to learning effectively.

Most pupils develop their physical skills and make healthy choices regularly. They respond positively to opportunities to take part in a range of physical activities during lessons, break times and by attending clubs and extra-curricular activities. Pupils across the school also understand the importance of keeping healthy, for example when completing the well-being ambassadors' advent calendar challenges.

Across the school, most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They have a sound understanding of the school's values and reward systems. As a result, pupils' behaviour across the school is very good. They treat their peers with care, which supports the familial atmosphere across the school. They enjoy and apply themselves to their tasks with excitement and enthusiasm, particularly during weekly

practical and creative activities. These sessions contribute effectively to developing most pupils' co-operation, research and thinking skills. Many show perseverance in their learning and concentrate for extended periods.

Through their awareness of the values that are promoted by the school, most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of moral and creative citizenship. They have a meaningful awareness of their rights, for example by learning about the right of the month in assemblies. They have also donated food and various products to the local food bank. These initiatives help them to develop as ethical and responsible citizens.

Most pupils respond strongly to opportunities to plan jointly and influence what they would like to learn. For example, they share their aspirations when contributing to mind maps at the beginning of termly themes. As a result, most pupils have an interest and positive attitudes when engaging with their learning. However, at times, many pupils are over-reliant on guidance from teachers and are not confident enough to make decisions about how to organise and present their work.

A majority of pupils discuss their previous work and learning confidently. Many pupils read over their work and respond appropriately to feedback and improve some aspects of their work. However, across the school, pupils are not always aware of the next steps in their learning.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers plan a variety of engaging experiences in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales, which supports most pupils to make sound progress from their starting points. Teachers provide stimulating activities that promote pupils' interest effectively. For example, they visit the local area, such as Plas Mawr and a Tudor house in Conwy. As a result, pupils are keen to share their experiences with others about the local area, their town and beyond.

Teachers encourage pupils to share their opinions purposefully about what they would like to learn. They welcome pupils' ideas at the beginning of, and during, themes effectively. They listen carefully to pupils' views when planning thoroughly to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding in different contexts. They use their suggestions effectively when preparing activities; for example, the youngest pupils built a model of St David's Cathedral after discussing the history of St David.

The curriculum gives careful consideration to diversity and global events. For example, the oldest pupils discuss their ideas the change the world by creating an app to reduce food waste. Teachers plan learning experiences that reflect the cultural heritage of Wales and Welshness successfully. For example, they provide opportunities to convey the story of Gelert by using chalk on the surface of the playground in the form of a story map and create an animation of the story of Branwen. All staff also promote the advantages of learning and speaking Welsh successfully with pupils. Staff encourage and support pupils to communicate and respond in Welsh regularly.

On the whole, staff's teaching skills are sound. In the most effective sessions, teachers challenge pupils regularly to achieve to the best of their ability. Where

expectations are high, the pace and liveliness of activities engage and hold pupils' interest successfully and encourage them to persevere and succeed. On the whole, introductions to learning activities promote pupils' enthusiasm and desire to apply themselves to their activities promptly.

The working relationship between staff and pupils is a strength across the school. Staff know the pupils very well. In the best practice, they adapt learning activities effectively to respond to the needs of pupils, including those who need support with their work. Assistants provide pupils with good support, knowing when to intervene and when to allow them to complete their work independently.

Pupils are given a range of purposeful experiences to develop their skills across the curriculum. For example, staff in the reception class provide good opportunities for pupils to use natural materials to make a clock to reinforce their skills in telling the time. The oldest pupils also improve the quality of their oracy and reading skills while developing a monologue about Branwen's feelings during her captivity in Ireland. However, provision for pupils to apply their extended writing skills across the curriculum is not systematic and consistent enough across the school.

On the whole, teachers use assessment activities and relevant methods when responding to pupils' work. In the most effective practice, most teachers share verbal feedback skilfully to challenge and evaluate the quality of pupils' learning and to prioritise any learning needs promptly. Staff also question pupils probingly and provide appropriate opportunities for them to respond to feedback and written comments from teachers. However, overall, teachers' feedback does not identify the next steps in pupils' learning effectively enough to deepen their understanding and improve the quality of their work.

The school provides a beneficial and interesting learning environment in which specific areas are used purposefully to support pupils' learning. Staff create attractive displays and learning areas to stimulate and provide suitable opportunities for pupils to make choices about what and how to learn. Valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding in practical situations in the indoor and outdoor learning environment. For example, staff use the fitness equipment and the outdoor '*Llwyfan Llawen*' stage purposefully to provide stimulating learning experiences and to develop pupils' physical and artistic skills effectively.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a caring and happy community that promotes good behaviour and courtesy from all pupils. All staff are committed to ensuring that values, along with pupils' emotional well-being, are key to their work.

The positive working relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are a strong feature of the school. Staff know the pupils, their backgrounds and the local community very well. They place a priority on pupils' well-being and respond sensitively to their emotional and social needs. Across the school, staff use specific areas and purposeful resources to encourage pupils to relax and calm down before starting to learn. Beneficial intervention sessions support pupils' emotional well-being in a valuable manner. This contributes significantly to developing their social skills and their satisfaction when learning.

The school has relevant systems to track and monitor pupils' progress. The ALN co-ordinator has thorough processes for identifying pupils' well-being and educational needs. As a result of planning provision skilfully, pupils receive support that meets their needs effectively.

Staff work closely with families and external agencies to create effective support plans for pupils with ALN. This support, along with regular communication with parents, has a positive effect on their well-being and progress. They provide parents with specialist support through beneficial sessions to advise them on aspects of child development and life skills. This strengthens the close relationship between the school and the home and has a positive effect on co-operation and contact for the benefit of the family and the child.

Staff promote the importance of healthy eating and encourage physical fitness through a range of physical education activities, including extra-curricular sports clubs. The extensive playing fields allow staff to organise and provide a range of outdoor activities that contribute well to pupils' well-being and enjoyment of a variety of activities. This includes interesting exercise activities, such as the use of the outdoor gym and the climbing wall. Provision also promotes pupils' understanding of how to make healthy choices in terms of their lifestyle and the importance of keeping fit successfully.

Staff provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to voice their opinions to contribute to their learning and to the life of the school. The work of pupil councils contributes effectively to whole-school improvements. For example, the '*Capteiniad Cymraeg*' organise activities to promote the use of the Welsh language across the school during break times. This enriches pupils' leadership experiences and prepares them well to take responsibility for their decisions and consider other points of view. Most pupils express an opinion about their learning by planning for their themes. For example, the oldest pupils organise the '*Morfa Hafanaidd*' festival on the school grounds, which supports them to learn successfully about careers and the world of work.

One of the school's strengths is how staff promote and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and Welsh culture. Pupils are given rich opportunities to develop their expressive skills and embrace Welsh culture and history effectively. For example, they listen to contemporary Welsh music and emulate the work of Welsh authors and artists purposefully. This develops pupils' creative skills and self-confidence well and contributes to fostering pupils' respect and pride in their *cynefin*, or local area, successfully.

Collective worship arrangements provide meaningful opportunities to support pupils' spiritual and moral development. These sessions are held regularly and opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in them actively, for example by singing a variety of contemporary hymns and songs. Children's rights are a regular part of school assemblies. Staff also ensure beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect on current affairs and different religions and cultures in activities, such as Ramadan and Eid celebrations.

The school's processes for monitoring attendance and punctuality are effective. Staff communicate well with each other to support pupils and their families to improve

pupils' attendance. Staff understand their roles well in terms of safeguarding pupils and maintaining the school's inclusive ethos. The school's safeguarding arrangements are appropriate and are not a cause for concern. However, inspectors brought an issue relating to the safety of the school's site to the attention of the school's leaders during the inspection.

Leadership and management

The headteacher places pupils' well-being and learning at the heart of his vision. He focuses on placing the school at the centre of its community and ensures that pupils' voice is at the heart of this thoughtful vision. Governors support his commitment and staff act conscientiously on leaders' expectations.

The headteacher encourages staff to model consistent and robust behaviours and values. They are based directly on a caring ethos, which aims to benefit the school community and the lives of pupils and their families. This motivates pupils to take advantage of the engaging experiences that are available to them and to play a purposeful part in the school's key decisions. As a result, leaders ensure that an inclusive and caring environment permeates the school to encourage pupils to enjoy their learning.

Leaders create a supportive ethos among all staff and pupils. As a result, staff and pupils take pride in the school's motto: '*Ymdrech a lwydda*' ('Effort leads to success'), and work diligently to develop a positive mindset across the school. Their positive encouragement create an ethos of successful co-operation, which has a firm effect on pupils' attitudes to learning, such as through the successful use of the '*Den Distaw*' and the '*Ogof Ddarllen*'.

Leaders allocate responsibilities well and the headteacher holds staff to account sensibly for the quality and impact of their work. Leaders' processes for evaluating the effectiveness of provision are purposeful and based on a wide range of beneficial and reliable evidence. The thorough systems include scrutiny of pupils' books and skilful evaluation of pupils' progress and development. This includes improving pupils' numeracy skills through practical activities. Leaders also seek the views of other stakeholders well to inform their practices. For example, they consider parents' views and act intelligently on any findings, such as better communication through the use of social media platforms.

Regular evaluations and reviews by the headteacher and the governing body create a clear picture for leaders of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The link between self-evaluation activities and improvement planning is sound. Leaders use their findings effectively and set valid targets to improve the school's practices. Leaders share the school's safeguarding culture with all staff in detail, which includes regular checks of the safety of outdoor equipment.

Leaders keep in close contact with the school's wider community. They build on the strong relationships with parents and work together regularly to improve the quality of the learning environment, such as on the '*Diwrnodau Sadwrn Mwdlyd*' ('Muddy Saturdays'). Governors ensure that pupils eat and drink healthily and advise parents on the importance of nutritious food in their lunch boxes.

Leaders and staff make the best use of the school grounds. For example, pupils use the adventure equipment effectively to master and develop their physical skills, such as climbing and balancing. The outdoor provision for the youngest pupils is effective. This enriches their opportunities to develop their independent skills through a wide range of learning experiences.

Governors are knowledgeable and their positive input creates purposeful improvements across the school. They develop a sound understanding of the school's activities through learning walks and discussing pupils' work alongside teachers. They are very supportive of the headteacher and work with him and the staff sensibly, questioning the impact of their work in a sensible manner. The headteacher advises them reliably and honestly on how to improve provision. This includes the need to challenge pupils to improve their scientific skills and develop their reading skills to further extend their understanding of different texts.

Governors monitor the budget carefully. They ensure that decisions on expenditure focus directly on the school's priorities for improvement, such as investments in digital equipment and outdoor resources, such as the '*Cwt Cyfri*'. Leaders use the pupil development grant well to support residential visits and to implement specific interventions across the school by staff, which provide beneficial support for pupils to improve progress in their learning.

Leaders ensure that staff have access to effective learning opportunities. These opportunities support their professional development and correspond to their individual needs. These link well with the school's improvement priorities and have a good effect on developing pupils' skills, such as their emotional well-being. The school shares effective practices with local schools, which provides beneficial opportunities for teachers to compare and share their experiences with other teaching staff. As a result, professional learning opportunities support the school's ability to improve successfully.

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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