



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

A report on

Ysgol Santes Dwynwen

**Niwbwrch
Llanfairpwll
LL61 6TE**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Santes Dwynwen

Name of provider	Ysgol Santes Dwynwen
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales School
Number of pupils on roll	113
Pupils of statutory school age	94
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>	23.4%
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>	26.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	69.0%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	1.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	02/04/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	17/06/2024
This is the first inspection of Ysgol Santes Dwynwen since the merger of the area's primary schools in 2019.	

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

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

Overview

Ysgol Santes Dwynwen is a supportive community, which promotes a caring and positive ethos. There are warm working relationships between pupils and staff which foster a good learning environment and pride in belonging to the school family. Support to promote pupils' learning and well-being, and pupils' ability to use this support, is a strong feature of the school. This helps pupils to develop sound attitudes towards their learning and well-being.

Teachers plan interesting activities, which promote learning sensibly. Staff use the indoor learning environment productively to target pupils' needs purposefully and planning in terms of activities to promote pupils' learning is effective. However, provision of outdoor learning experiences is not as effective, particularly for the youngest pupils.

Most pupils develop purposeful listening, speaking, reading and digital skills. However, teachers do not provide enough valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing and numeracy skills. In addition, 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 in a meaningful and caring manner and supports staff to ensure that pupils' learning and well-being are consistent priorities. This is central to her inclusive vision. She works diligently with staff and governors to ensure that the school is a happy learning community that promotes positive opportunities for pupils. Leaders keep in close contact with the school's wider community and build on the active relationship with parents. However, inspectors brought an issue relating to the safety of the school's site to the attention of leaders during the inspection.

Leaders evaluate the school's work thoroughly by using regular and skilful self-evaluation processes. Monitoring activities lead to relevant improvement priorities and comprehensive training opportunities for staff to develop their skills through agreed professional learning.

Recommendations

- R1 Address the concern regarding the safety of the school's site that was identified during the inspection
- R2 Plan jointly to improve pupils' skills, particularly their extended writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R3 Ensure that the quality of teachers' feedback targets the next steps in pupils' learning effectively
- R4 Improve the quality and provision of outdoor learning experiences, particularly for the youngest pupils

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

Most pupils' skills are below the level expected for their age on entry to the school. Many pupils achieve well across all areas of the curriculum and make effective progress in their speaking, listening, reading and digital skills.

Most pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) achieve purposefully and make good progress in their learning. Across the school, pupils who need additional support, pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those from low-income households take advantage of all aspects of the curriculum successfully. As a result, they make purposeful progress from their starting points.

Many pupils' speaking and listening skills develop quickly. As they move from the nursery class to Year 2, they gain good confidence and answer questions sensibly while discussing tasks with their peers. For example, pupils in the reception class discuss their choices clearly while emulating the features of love spoons. From Year 3 onwards, pupils make good progress and develop a wider vocabulary in Welsh and English. They listen attentively to each other and take part in attentive discussions, such as reflecting on the life of Dic Penderyn and his role in the Merthyr riots.

Many pupils make effective progress in developing their reading skills. Many of the youngest pupils learn letter sounds quickly and, by Year 2, the progress of many of them is sound. They use a variety of phonic strategies to attempt unfamiliar words. By Year 6, many are competent readers and are well-equipped to tackle a variety of different texts. For example, they research skilfully and discuss the biographies of the activist, Martin Luther King, and the archaeologist, Howard Carter, maturely.

On the whole, many pupils make effective progress in their writing considering their starting points. By Year 2, a majority of pupils begin to write appropriately, using basic punctuation and grammar. As pupils progress from Year 3 to Year 6, many write in a satisfactory manner in different writing styles. For example, Year 5 pupils write interesting monologues about the life of St Dwynwen on Llanddwyn Island. A majority of older pupils edit their work appropriately and use more sophisticated vocabulary and punctuation to improve their final drafts. However, pupils do not extend their writing effectively enough when writing across the curriculum.

By Year 2, many pupils use mathematical principles and concepts effectively. They use numbers confidently and gather and record information and results in simple tables and graphs. They also experiment with volume by filling and emptying different-sized boxes with pebbles, blocks and soil. From Year 3 to Year 6, many pupils show sound mathematical skills. Older pupils develop effective strategies to compare and match fractions and decimals. They use data appropriately and present

it effectively in a variety of forms. For example, many pupils use line graphs purposefully to record weekly data on their progress in tests. However, most pupils do not apply their numeracy skills regularly enough in real-life situations.

Many pupils have good digital skills and use them successfully across the curriculum. For example, many younger pupils program electronic robots to follow the journey of a plant sprouting. Most older pupils handle text effectively, such as creating newspaper articles on the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. They also prepare engaging presentations and animations about heroes and villains and use databases and spreadsheets to record and compare the world records of different athletes.

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, they 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 musical skills, for example when practising Kodaly rhythms.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils feel safe within the school's familial and caring ethos. They believe that they are treated with respect and that their contribution to school life is valued greatly. They know whom to approach for advice if anything is worrying them and are confident that staff respond promptly to any concerns they have.

Most pupils' behaviour in lessons, activities and break times is robustly good. They work conscientiously and harmoniously with their peers. Most are polite, aware of the needs of their peers and treat familiar adults and visitors with obvious respect and care. Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively to presentations and instructions from staff and concentrate well when applying themselves to their tasks. However, across the school, pupils are not always aware of the next steps in their learning.

Most children demonstrate pride in their village and their school and many take pride in the Welsh language and Welsh heritage. This contributes well to pupils' well-being and attitudes to learning and pupils' contributions are at the heart of the school's ethos and vision. For example, they write intelligently about uniqueness and their comments are reflected successfully in the school's well-being displays. This motivates pupils to understand that their relationships are crucial to their development as well-rounded individuals.

Most pupils begin to develop relevant thinking techniques to help them succeed and persevere when solving problems before asking for help. Across the school, pupils begin to develop resilience and confidence when persevering with their work in their classes and when applying themselves to specific duties, such as monitoring the provision of milk and fruit in the youngest classes. Pupils' overall attendance is also good and similar to the national average.

Most pupils contribute well to what they learn and have a positive influence on the class themes. For example, they take advantage of the opportunity to share their interests and aspirations by contributing to mind maps relating to the different terms

themes. As a result, they develop the ability to make decisions and reflect on their learning, such as participating well in their challenges independently.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and understand the beneficial effect of exercise on their health, such as climbing on adventure equipment. They participate enthusiastically in a range of physical activities, which have been designed purposefully to develop healthy and confident individuals. Pupils also have a sound knowledge of what they need to do to be safe online.

Most pupils develop into ethical and informed citizens through their awareness of fairness and equality. Through their research and sensible discussions, they begin to understand that respecting the needs and rights of others is important as part of a diverse society. A good example of this is the way in which the present the history and actions of the headteacher, Betty Campbell, and use this information to consider what contributes to a society that respects equality.

Pupils' well-being and attitudes to learning are sound and contribute well to their clear commitment to developing their creative skills. Most pupils are enthusiastic contributors when developing their artistic skills. For example, the youngest pupils are adventurous when experimenting successfully with a variety of media, such as creating a collage of the landscape of Anglesey and emulating the mountains of Snowdonia with pastels. Most of the older pupils also develop their skills as ambitious and creative contributors effectively. They contribute conscientiously to their efforts to succeed in the business world by creating and selling cards and organising a sale of their goods on the school's site.

Many pupils, including those with ALN, are willing to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities. They play a productive part in the life and work of the school as members of the school council and the eco council. For example, council members encourage pupils to eat fruit on a daily basis and to drink water regularly.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers plan a variety of beneficial experiences in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales, which supports many pupils to make sound progress from their starting points. Teachers provide purposeful learning activities that promote pupils' interest effectively. For example, they visit the local area, such as an archive, to study the history of the Anglesey evacuees and the island's gallery. As a result, pupils are keen to share their experiences with others about the local area, their village and beyond.

Teachers encourage pupils to share their opinions successfully about what they would like to learn. They welcome pupils' ideas at the beginning of, and during, themes intelligently. They listen carefully to pupils' views by planning suitably to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding in different contexts. They use their suggestions effectively when preparing activities; for example, pupils build models of the Titanic after studying the history of the shipwreck of the Royal Charter on the rocks in Moelfre.

The curriculum gives careful consideration to a number of global events. For example, the oldest pupils discuss their ideas sensibly to change the views of others, such as studying the message, resilience and life of Rosa Parks. Teachers plan learning experiences that reflect the cultural heritage of Wales and Welshness sensibly. For example, they provide opportunities to convey the history of Owain Glyndŵr by creating flags and shields based on pupils' personal values. All staff also promote the benefits of learning and speaking Welsh successfully with pupils. Staff encourage pupils to communicate and respond in Welsh regularly.

Pupils are given good experiences to develop their listening, speaking, reading and digital skills. For example, Year 6 pupils offer their opinions on modern day Wales and the future of the Welsh language on film as part of a catchment area project. Teachers ensure that there are suitable arrangements to develop pupils' extended writing and numeracy skills. However, they do not plan jointly wholly effectively and, as a result, pupils do not make enough progress in applying these skills across the curriculum.

On the whole, staff's teaching skills are good. In the most successful sessions, most teachers challenge pupils regularly to achieve highly. Where expectations are high, the pace and fun of activities engage and hold pupils' interest effectively and motivate them to persevere with their work. However, introductions to learning activities are slow at time, which hinders pupils' enthusiasm and desire to engage in their activities promptly.

The working relationship between staff and pupils is robust across the school. Staff know the pupils well. In the best practices, most teachers adapt learning activities effectively to respond to pupils' needs, including pupils 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.

Teachers use appropriate assessment activities and practices to respond to pupils' work during lessons. In the most effective practices, many teachers share oral feedback intelligently to challenge and assess the quality of pupils' learning. Therefore, responses to pupils' work target any indifference or incorrect work promptly. However, the quality of feedback varies too much across the school. Teachers tend to write the same feedback often, without having enough of an effect on pupils' next pieces of work.

The school provides a beneficial and interesting learning environment where specific areas are used purposefully to support pupils' learning inside the building. As a result, staff create useful displays and learning areas to support pupils. This creates good opportunities to motivate pupils to make choices about what and how to learn. For example, staff use the musical equipment and puppet theatres purposefully to provide stimulating learning experiences and to develop pupils' creative and artistic skills effectively. Staff use the outdoor areas that are available appropriately. However, there is lack of stimulating and regular outdoor provision and learning experiences, particularly for the youngest pupils.

Care, support and guidance

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

The positive working relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves is a strong feature of the school. Staff know the pupils, their backgrounds and the local community exceptionally well. They place a priority on pupils' well-being and respond sensitively to their emotional and social needs.

Staff use specific areas and purposeful resources to encourage pupils to relax and calm down before starting to learn. For example, they let pupils use a piano and drums to manage their emotions. Beneficial intervention sessions support pupils' emotional well-being effectively. This contributes skilfully to developing their social skills and satisfaction in learning.

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

Staff work sensibly 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 pupils' well-being and progress. Staff, together with agencies, provide specialist support for parents 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. The extensive playing fields allow staff to organise and provide a range of outdoor activities that contribute appropriately to pupils' learning, well-being and enjoyment. 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 school life. The work of the pupil councils contributes effectively to whole-school improvements. For example, the 'Peace and Well-being Officers' share important messages with their peers about issues such as anti-racism and goodwill. This enriches pupils' leadership experiences and prepares them well to take responsibility for their decisions and to consider the views of others.

Most pupils express an opinion about their learning by planning for their themes. For example, the oldest pupils organise a walk to learn about their '*cynefin*', or local area, and create a fact file about the features of the area.

Staff promote and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and Welsh culture effectively. Pupils are given rich opportunities to develop their expressive skills and embrace the culture and history of Wales effectively. For example, they

study the work of famous Welsh people, such as Bishop William Morgan and Mari Jones, and emulate the work of Welsh authors and artists well. This develops pupils' creative skills and self-confidence successfully and contributes to fostering pupils' respect and pride in their nationality purposefully.

Collective worship arrangements provide meaningful opportunities to support pupils' spiritual and moral development. Children's rights are a regular part of school assemblies. Staff ensure beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect on current affairs and different religions and cultures in activities, such as Ramadan, Eid and Diwali 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 keeping pupils safe and maintaining the school's inclusive ethos. The school's arrangements for safeguarding are appropriate and are not a cause for concern. However, inspectors brought a specific 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 care at the core of her vision. She ensures that the pupils' voice is at the heart of this sensible philosophy. Governors support her commitment and staff act well on leaders' expectations.

The headteacher encourages staff to model robust values. They are based purposefully on a supportive ethos which aims to benefit the school community and the lives of pupils and their families. She encourages pupils to take advantage of the experiences available to them and to play a key part in the school's decisions. Leaders ensure that an inclusive environment permeates the school, which motivates pupils to enjoy their learning.

Leaders create a pleasant atmosphere among staff and pupils. As a result, staff and pupils celebrate the school motto: '*Plant hapus sy'n dysgu*' ('Happy children learn') and act conscientiously on developing a positive mindset across the school. Their clear motivations create an ethos of enthusiastic co-operation, which has a purposeful effect on pupils' attitudes to learning.

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 well organised and based on a wide range of reliable evidence. The efficient systems include scrutiny of pupils' books and regular evaluation of pupils' progress and development. This includes improving practices for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Leaders also gather the views of other stakeholders well to inform their practices. For example, they consider parents' views and act on any findings wisely, such as communicating regularly by using 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 priorities is effective. Leaders use their

findings purposefully and set valid targets to improve the school's practices. Leaders share the school's culture of safeguarding with all staff appropriately, which includes risk assessments and regular checks on equipment.

Leaders keep in close contact with the wider school community. They build on the good relationships with parents and provide them with relevant training, such as cookery courses and parenting sessions. Governors ensure that pupils eat and drink healthily and advise parents on the importance of nutritious food in their lunchboxes.

Leaders encourage staff to make good use of the building and allow pupils to use support areas, such as 'Y Llecyn', effectively. However, shortcomings in provision and the use of resources for pupils in the outdoor areas hinders their learning experiences and opportunities to further enrich their skills.

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 by discussing pupils' work alongside teachers. They are very supportive of the headteacher and work with her and the staff sensibly, questioning the effect 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 use numeracy better in real-life situations and to develop pupils' digital skills further.

Governors monitor the budget carefully. They ensure that spending decisions focus directly on the school's priorities for improvement, such as investments in staff and purposeful training. Leaders use the pupil development grant well to support specific interventions, which provide beneficial support for pupils to improve progress in their learning.

The school shares good practice with schools in the catchment area and this supports the school's ability to improve continuously. It provides valuable opportunities for teachers to compare and share their effectiveness with other professionals. As a result, staff have productive opportunities which develop their professional knowledge and leadership skills. This culture of continuous professional learning creates caring provision which, in turn, leads to pupils who achieve well from their starting points.

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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