



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes
Ffordd Gaergybi
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2UT**

Date of inspection: September 2011

by

Wil Williams

for

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2011: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Context

Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes is a voluntary aided Catholic School situated on the outskirts of the city of Bangor. The school serves the Roman Catholic parishes of Bangor, Bethesda, Menai Bridge and Llangefni with a few pupils travelling significant distances to get to school. The area is described as neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

The school caters for 122 pupils between the ages of three and eleven who are taught in four classes, all of which contain a mixed age range. One class is for 33 Foundation Phase pupils and contains nine part-time nursery children. The number on roll has increased since the last inspection.

The pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and about 10% are entitled to receive free school meals, which is significantly below the national and local authority averages. The intake represents the full ability range. Approximately 11% are identified as requiring additional learning needs support, which is well below the national average; two per cent have a statement of special educational needs. Approximately half the pupils are of Asian, Eastern European or other ethnic origin and speak English as an additional language. No pupils use Welsh as a first language. There are no pupils who are looked after by the local authority.

Since the school was last inspected in November 2005, there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils who learn English as an additional language. There were also staff changes prior to the inspection with the deputy headteacher undertaking the role of acting headteacher.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes for 2011-12 means that the budget is £3,005 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Gwynedd Local Authority is £8,442 and the minimum is £2,717. Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes is 90th out of 103 primary schools in Gwynedd Local Authority in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- standards in speaking, reading and writing are good across the school;
- pupils have a positive attitude towards all school activities and are well motivated;
- the quality of teaching is good; and
- the school gives good value for money.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- performance at key stages 1 and 2 has shown a steady improvement in all core subjects;
- self-evaluation and monitoring procedures are not sufficiently robust;
- staff are not sufficiently challenged by senior managers to achieve excellence and to implement new initiatives; and because
- assessment for learning processes are not fully developed.

Recommendations

In order to make further progress, the school needs to:

R1 address shortcomings in the quality of leadership;

R2 establish more robust self-evaluation processes;

R4 complete updating schemes of work;

R4 ensure that assessment for learning processes are implemented thoroughly; and

R5 make more consistent use of incidental Welsh during lessons.

What happens next?

The school will create an action plan which shows how it is going to address the shortcomings. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The school's performance at key stages 1 and 2 over the last four years has shown a steady improvement in all core subjects and has generally been either similar or better than the national, local and the family of schools' averages. Nearly all pupils, and particularly those who learn English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting point at the school.

In lessons and over time most pupils make sound or better progress in their learning. As they progress through the school, nearly all become confident, independent learners who are able to make choices about their own learning. Their ability to evaluate their own work and to set personal targets for improvement, however, is in the early stages of development.

According to their age and stage of development, nearly all pupils achieve good standards in literacy. Foundation Phase pupils listen with sustained concentration, respond positively to questions and express their ideas clearly. Older pupils apply their phonic skills effectively when reading a variety of texts and demonstrate continuity and progression in their written accounts.

Many key stage 2 pupils discuss aspects of their work intelligently showing good ability to sustain and develop oral contributions. Most show a good understanding of different texts and apply a broad range of appropriate strategies for finding and retrieving information from books and websites. Nearly all express and organise their ideas in written forms confidently and coherently using different sentence structures, paragraphing and punctuation with increasing effectiveness.

Pupils of all ages make good progress in Welsh language development. Many respond positively to greetings and instructions with the more confident using simple learned phrases and sentences purposefully to express their ideas.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils have very good relationships with staff, based on the school's caring ethos. They are happy coming to school and thrive in its atmosphere of mutual respect. They have a positive attitude towards all school activities which affects their social and emotional wellbeing. Most are highly engaged and motivated and display pride and confidence in their work.

Through their involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative, pupils of all ages have acquired a secure understanding of how they can become healthy, both through what they eat and the physical activity they undertake.

Pupils of all ages are considerate and courteous and relate very well to each other and adults, demonstrating good behaviour in lessons and around the school. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, all say they feel safe in school with most believing that other pupils' 's behaviour is good.

Attendance has steadily improved during the past three years and is currently above the median when compared with similar schools. Nearly all pupils are punctual.

As they mature, most pupils very readily undertake responsibilities and, through the school council, the eco-committee and other activities, play an active part in the school and the community. They are confident that through the school council their voice is being heard and taken into account during the school's decision-making processes.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
---	-------------

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant and which meets statutory requirements. Teachers and practitioners collaborate effectively to plan flexible and imaginative activities, which succeed in engaging the interests of the full range of pupils.

Curriculum planning is particularly effective in the Foundation Phase where stimulating learning experiences ensure that children are challenged by relevant experiences both indoors and outdoors, providing continuity and progression in their learning. Very effective learning support programmes for lower ability pupils and also those who learn English as an additional language enable all pupils to take part fully in every activity. Suitably differentiated task are provided for the more able and talented pupils.

Weekly and daily planning for the development of key skills is good and has a very positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. However, short-term plans have not been fully incorporated into the whole-school subject schemes of work. The promotion of thinking skills is its early stages of development in key stage 2.

Provision and planning for Welsh language teaching and learning are well-adapted to pupils' ages and ability. There is adequate provision for developing knowledge and understanding of Welsh heritage and culture.

Out-of-school activities, including visits, sports, clubs and other extra-curricular activities, make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development. The school works very closely with the local Catholic church and also contributes regularly to local events in the parish.

Provision for promoting sustainable development is adequate with the school currently working towards achieving the bronze award. There is appropriate provision for recycling materials and good attention is given to energy conservation.

As a result of the rich diversity within the school, pupils have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities as global citizens. However, there are no formal links with other countries.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, lessons are planned well and all staff have up-to-date subject knowledge.

In nearly all lessons, teachers employ a range of strategies successfully to engage pupils' interests and to stimulate their learning. Support staff are used effectively and make a valuable contribution to learning.

Teaching in the Foundation Phase is of particularly good quality with a good balance maintained between teacher-led and pupil-initiated activities. Both the indoor and outdoor environment is used thoughtfully to enrich learning.

The positive working relationships that are established in all classes create an environment which is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

Assessment, recording and reporting arrangements are generally good and meet statutory requirements. A system for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school is currently being developed in line with local authority guidelines.

All parents who responded to the questionnaires say they are kept well informed about their child's progress. Annual written reports, together with regular meetings with staff, provide parents with detailed and relevant information about their child's achievements and personal development.

Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and is generally of good quality. It is often supplemented by very constructive and helpful oral feedback by teachers.

Assessment for learning strategies, including critical skills and peer and self-evaluation procedures, are in the early stages of development in key stage 2.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The quality of care for pupils is very good. Staff ensure that there is a warm and welcoming atmosphere and that individual needs are well met. Pupils are encouraged to take a full part in the life of the school and their achievements are recognised and celebrated.

Personal and social education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are successfully integrated into the curriculum and daily routines. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities, show respect, reflect on their own beliefs and opinions and develop an understanding of different cultures.

All pupils with additional learning needs have access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life. Good use is made of outside agencies and specialist support

services. Pupils have an appropriate individual education plan, which is reviewed once every term. Statutory procedures are followed and parents are kept fully informed. All strategies enable pupils to make good progress.

Appropriate provision is made for the more able and talented pupils with many benefiting substantially by working within a group of older pupils.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school provides an all-inclusive learning environment, in which all pupils are treated fairly in accordance with its equality policies. The school values and takes very good account of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and fosters a respectful and tolerant attitude amongst its pupils. Close monitoring by staff ensures that all pupils are free from any forms of discrimination or oppressive behaviour. Staff work well to develop a positive ethos for learning and encourage all pupils to participate fully in the life of the school.

Accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and is clean and well maintained. Staff make good use of all available space to provide a stimulating learning environment. Foundation Phase pupils benefit significantly from the outdoor area, which is used imaginatively to provide a stimulating setting for teaching and learning.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
--	-----------------

Leadership: Adequate

The acting head teacher, staff and governors work effectively as a team to sustain current good practice and foster a positive whole-school ethos where pupils feel valued.

Staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities conscientiously. Regular staff meetings are used appropriately to disseminate training and discuss new initiatives. However, staff are not always sufficiently challenged by senior managers to achieve excellence and to implement new initiatives effectively. With appropriate guidance, they have recently begun to use performance data more purposefully to identify areas for further development.

Although the school generally has an appropriate range of policies, there are a few gaps in the documentation, especially in areas of curriculum development.

Performance management is implemented in line with statutory requirements and the arrangements include all members of staff. Training needs are planned appropriately to meet both individual and school priorities. Processes are closely linked to school improvement strategies and these impact positively on standards and provision.

Governors are well informed about the school's performance and the issues that affect it. Guided learning walks through the school provide them with a valuable overview of the school's strengths and help them identify areas requiring further

development. Governors have an appropriate understanding of their role as critical friends to the school.

Local and national priorities are incorporated appropriately into the school's programmes of work. The Foundation Phase is very successfully implemented and has a positive impact on pupils' progress and the quality of learning. Assessment for learning and processes for moderating teacher assessment are in the early stages of development.

Improving quality: Adequate

Well-established self-evaluation procedures are used regularly by the management team to identify the strengths of the school and those aspects which need further attention. Subject co-ordinators play an increasingly active part in the self-evaluation arrangements and share their findings with colleagues and governors.

An appropriate range of first-hand evidence is used, which includes lesson observations that are undertaken by the management team. The outcomes of monitoring, however, are not sufficiently sharp or focused to ensure that new initiatives are implemented effectively.

Recently, assessment data has been used more purposefully to compare the school's performance against that of similar schools and to target support and to identify underperforming groups of pupils. This has proved an effective strategy for improving standards in English.

Ample opportunities are provided for pupils and parents to express their views about various aspects of school life.

The self-evaluation report is a useful document. It is generally evaluative and the judgements are clear, honest and evidence based. However, self-evaluation and monitoring processes are not sufficiently robust to raise standards and bring about improvements.

The school development plan is a purposeful and manageable document which sets a clear direction for future school improvement. However, the priorities for 2011-2013 have not been identified in the self-evaluation report as areas for development. Subsequently, the link between self-evaluation and school improvement is tenuous. Nevertheless, the analytical evaluation of the impact of the 2010-2011 priorities on pupils and teaching and learning is extremely useful.

Arrangements to support the active engagement of all staff in increasing their professional knowledge, understanding and skills, including whole-school professional learning experiences, is a developing feature of the school. The establishment of two professional learning communities has had a direct impact on standards in the Foundation Phase and the older end of key stage 2.

Partnership working: Good

Partnerships with parents, the local community, local schools and educational establishments are generally good and are used effectively to enhance learning opportunities for pupils. The school collaborates well with other schools, especially to standardise and moderate pupils' work, and this contributes beneficially to its own curriculum development initiatives. Partnership working with local authority agencies and local clusters of schools are productive.

Admission and induction arrangements ensure that pupils are well prepared to start school. Transition programmes with the secondary schools are well established and pupils feel happy and secure about their move to secondary education.

Outside agencies provide effective support for pupils with specific needs and improve the quality of provision for these pupils.

Resource management: Good

There is a good range of resources, including outdoor materials and equipment. Support staff are deployed effectively and work well alongside teachers well in the classroom to support pupils' learning.

Teachers make effective use of their planning, preparation and assessment time and arrangements for this are managed well. Staff development is planned effectively in relation to school priorities.

Spending is clearly linked to identified priorities in the school development plan. The management team and governing body have responded positively to a possible budget deficit for the next financial year. The school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Baseline assessment outcomes have fluctuated significantly over the past few years, although results generally show an upward trend when compared with the previous local authority averages.

The school's teacher assessment results for 2011 in key stage 1 were better than national, local and the family of schools in the three core subjects at level 2 or above and at the higher level 3. These results placed key stage 1 in the upper 50% of similar schools in all subjects. Overall, there is a trend of steady improvement over the last four years and there are indications that this progress is currently maintained.

In 2011 the percentage of pupils in key stage 2 attaining level 4 or better in the three core subjects, was higher than national, local and the family of schools. They were generally lower than in the previous year in all subjects with fewer pupils attaining the higher Level 5. There was very little difference in any subject between the school's performance and the family average. These results placed key stage 2 in the lowest 50% of similar schools in all subjects.

Nearly all pupils, whatever their ability or background, make steady progress through the school. Significant progress is made by many of the pupils who speak English as an additional language. Girls and boys perform equally well.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifty parents completed the questionnaire, nearly all of which were positive and supportive of the school. Without exception, parents say:

- they are satisfied with the school;
- that their child likes school, is treated fairly and with respect;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy;
- pupils behave well; and
- are taught well.

Nearly all parents feel that:

- their child was helped to settle down when he or she started at the school and is making good progress;
- the school helps their child to become more mature;
- they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem; and that
- the school is well run.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Fifty-three key stage 2 pupils completed the questionnaires. With very few exceptions, pupils say they feel safe in school and that they are doing well.

Nearly all:

- feel that the school helps them to learn and make progress;
- know who to turn to for help if they find their work hard; and
- believe that the school teaches them how to keep fit and there are lots of chances for them to get regular exercise.

A minority of pupils do not agree that all children behave well at playtime and that the school deals well with bullying.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Wil Williams	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Hazel Hughes	Team Inspector
Mr Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Mrs Sarah T Evans	Peer Inspector
Mrs Kay O'Hanlon	School Nominee

Below text is for maintained school inspection reports only – for other sectors please replace with relevant information concerning background and legislative basis for inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11