



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 Capel Garmon
Capel Garmon
Llanrwst
Conwy
LL26 0RL**

Date of inspection: March 2014

by

**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.

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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

The school is situated in the village of Capel Garmon, approximately five miles from Llanrwst in Conwy, and it serves the village and the surrounding rural area. The school admits pupils at the beginning of the September following their third birthday. Currently, 16 pupils of statutory school age attend the school. This is a significant decrease from the 26 pupils who attended the school during the previous inspection. The pupils are taught by one full-time teacher and two part-time teachers.

Welsh is the school's main language medium and it aims to ensure that pupils are fully bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary sector. Most pupils transfer to Ysgol Uwchradd Dyffryn Conwy in Llanrwst at the end of their time at the school. Seventy six per cent (76%) of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Approximately 12.5% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, and this is lower than the county and national averages. Approximately 38% of pupils receive support for additional learning needs and this is significantly higher than the national figure (21.2%). There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. No permanent or temporary exclusions were recorded during the year prior to the inspection.

There has been a significant change to the school's leadership and teaching staff since the last inspection and, since September 2012, the governors of Capel Garmon and Betws y Coed have been trialling federalisation.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Capel Garmon in 2013-2014 is £8,880. The maximum school budget per pupil in primary schools in Conwy is £14,575 and the minimum is £3,230. Ysgol Capel Garmon is in 3rd place of the 58 primary schools in Conwy in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's performance is good because:

- pupils make sound progress during their time at the school;
- pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work;
- pupils have a very good awareness of the importance of eating and drinking healthily;
- teaching is consistently effective;
- pupils are polite and well behaved; and
- nearly all pupils enjoy school and contribute well in lessons.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a very clear vision for how to develop the school, which is based on raising standards;
- staff and governors share the same vision;
- the self-evaluation process is sound and shows good identification of strengths and areas for development;
- leaders plan for improvement effectively; and
- the school's partnerships are very effective and make an important contribution towards raising standards, enriching provision and supporting pupils' wellbeing.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise the standards of pupils' extended writing in subjects other than Welsh and English
- R2 Ensure opportunities for pupils to respond to written feedback in order to improve their work
- R3 Ensure that learning experiences across subjects reflect schemes of work in full
- R4 Develop the role of the governors as critical friends

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the school to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice that was seen during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Pupils make sound progress during their time at Ysgol Capel Garmon. They develop their speaking, reading, writing and application of number skills effectively across the curriculum, and they are able to recall previous learning effectively. Nearly all pupils concentrate purposefully.

Across the school, pupils' standards of speaking in Welsh are good, and nearly all pupils speak confidently and fluently in a wide range of situations. The oral skills of pupils from non-Welsh speaking homes develop very quickly. Nearly all pupils listen well and respect other pupils' oral contributions. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils discuss fluently and express their ideas clearly in Welsh and English.

Pupils' reading skills are developing well across the school. In the Foundation Phase, nearly all pupils read in line with their age and ability. They use a good range of strategies to read and understand texts. In key stage 2, many pupils read aloud confidently and with meaningful expression in both languages. They are able to discuss their reading books successfully and express their opinion on their favourite authors confidently. Many make particularly good use of their reading skills to research into topics relating to the theme.

Most pupils make appropriate progress when writing intelligibly in the Foundation Phase and most pupils are able to write independent pieces on a variety of topics. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils write confidently across a wide range of topics in both languages and their factual writing is a strength. However, they do not develop their extended writing skills across subjects often enough. As a result, too few pupils achieve higher standards than expected in writing at the end of the key stage.

In the Foundation Phase, many pupils develop their numeracy skills well in lessons and they are confident when applying number in practical situations to solve problems. The number standards of the majority of pupils in key stage 2 in lessons and mathematics books are good. Most pupils in key stage 2 use number skills learnt in mathematics effectively in their theme work, particularly when handling data in scientific investigations.

Many pupils use their thinking skills and research skills purposefully in their theme work.

All pupils with additional learning needs achieve well against their targets.

There are small numbers of pupils in each year group and this can have a significant effect on the school's overall performance in assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2, in comparison with national benchmarks year on year. Due to the small numbers, there are no comments on one year's data.

Pupils' performance at the end of the Foundation Phase is consistently good. One hundred per cent (100%) of pupils have achieved the expected outcome 5 for the last two years in all areas of learning. This performance places the school in the top 25% in comparison with similar schools.

The school's performance at the end of key stage 2 has shown great improvement during the last two years in language. In the previous two years, performance in Welsh and English had generally placed the school in the bottom 25% in comparison with similar schools. Performance in mathematics and science has placed it in the top 25% consistently. Performance now places the school in the top 25% in all subjects.

There is a huge variation in the results in terms of performance at the higher outcome in the Foundation Phase. Although there is progress in the results in terms of achieving the higher level at the end of key stage 2, in general, performance places the school either in the lower half or the bottom 25%.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils behave well across the school. They show respect towards each other, staff and visitors. Most pupils have mature attitudes towards their work and treat others with care and respect.

Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of eating and drinking healthily. The way in which they learn healthy cooking skills each month in the school kitchen is a strength. All pupils enjoy undertaking physical exercise and understand how this helps them to keep healthy. They feel safe at school and know whom to approach for advice or to discuss any concerns they have.

Members of the school council and eco-committee shoulder their responsibilities appropriately. They have suitable methods for consulting with the rest of the pupils and they represent them effectively. All pupils contribute well to community events, such as charity coffee mornings.

Pupils' punctuality is good and, until this year, attendance has placed the school among the upper 50% of similar schools.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a range of exciting learning experiences, which engage pupils well. Joint planning between three small schools is very effective and ensures detailed long-term and medium-term plans. Planning responds appropriately to the requirements of the National Curriculum and the principles of the Foundation Phase. However, in a minority of lessons, learning experiences in classes do not reflect schemes of work in full.

On the whole, planning for developing literacy skills is effective. However, opportunities to write at length across the curriculum in both languages are

inconsistent. The school provides practical opportunities to develop number skills and thinking skills across the curriculum, particularly in science.

The school offers a variety of opportunities to ensure that pupils develop a positive attitude towards the Welsh language. A range of appropriate experiences is provided which promote the Cwricwlwm Cymreig through visits, studies of the local area, and work with local authors and artists such as Angharad Tomos and Andy Birch.

The school provides a valuable range of experiences for pupils to expand their knowledge and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship. In particular, pupils benefit from a project promoting co-operation with a nearby school and other schools in Europe.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good across the school and has a positive effect on standards. By making good use of equipment and learning resources, and demonstrating a range of teaching methods, teachers engage pupils' interest successfully.

Assessment strategies are effective across the school. Staff feedback comments are supportive orally and are clear in pupils' books. In the best practice, there are purposeful comments on how to improve work, which are linked to the success criteria set. However, there are no specific opportunities for pupils to respond to these comments.

All pupils have improvement targets and staff monitor these regularly. Teachers track pupils' progress very rigorously. They use this information effectively to inform their planning work and to target pupils for appropriate intervention programmes. Systems for standardising and moderating assessments are robust, and ensure that assessments are correct.

The school's reports to parents are clear and contain information about pupils' progress, along with the next steps in order to improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community, which fosters good learning.

The school has innovative arrangements for encouraging pupils to be healthy, including the extremely effective arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily. There are suitable procedures for safeguarding pupils and promoting their wellbeing, which encompass aspects such as discrimination and bullying effectively. Learning experiences, in addition to collective worship activities, promote pupils' personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school makes beneficial use of external support to ensure pupils' health and wellbeing, for example the police and the expertise of the local authority.

The school has a thorough system for targeting pupils who need additional support. As a result, the school ensures a high level of support for these pupils. The intervention programme has been developed very well, and the tracking and monitoring system ensures that pupils make good progress against their targets. Parents are aware of the content of individual education plans, and effective co-operation between all members of staff and parents ensures the very best for pupils. The school makes good use of specialist advice.

Learning environment: Good

The school's familial and happy ethos is inclusive and ensures equal opportunities for all pupils. There is a clear emphasis on recognising and respecting individuals' diversity. The personal and social education programme and morning assemblies promote aspects of fairness and diversity well. There are appropriate policies encouraging individuals to foster tolerant attitudes in order to ensure that pupils are free from harassment.

The school makes effective use of the building and resources. It provides a colourful and stimulating learning environment both indoors and outdoors, which enriches pupils' learning experiences and meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase. The building and grounds are adequate for the number of pupils and the activities that the school provides. They are safe and are maintained appropriately.

The school has a suitable range of good quality resources that meet pupils' learning needs effectively.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The headteacher leads the school effectively and has a clear vision for raising standards. As a result, she succeeds in providing a sound strategic direction for the school's life and work. She has succeeded in sharing the vision well with staff, governors and parents.

In a relatively short period of time, the headteacher has succeeded in creating a strong ethos of teamwork in the school, which takes advantage of co-operation between the three schools in her care. This includes sharing experience and expertise, in addition to planning jointly in order to raise standards.

The school addresses national and local priorities appropriately. It focuses appropriately on key aspects such as implementing the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

The governing body, along with the chair and clerk, are relatively new to their duties and their understanding of their role is beginning to develop. They are very supportive of the school and receive regular reports on the implementation of the

school improvement plan. Some members' understanding of standards in the classroom is becoming stronger through monitoring visits, which have begun recently. However, they are over-reliant on information from the headteacher, and their role as critical friends has not yet been embedded.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation processes are robust and include all staff successfully. Data analysis is an integral part of the process and is thorough. Evidence is collected effectively through lesson observations, scrutinising pupils' work, and listening to the opinion of pupils and parents. The self-evaluation report that results from the process is balanced and shows that leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need to be strengthened.

Information from the self-evaluation process is used effectively to set priorities and appropriate targets for improvement. The development plan identifies clearly the necessary headings, focuses on raising standards and gives clear direction to the school. The school improvement plan is beginning to have a positive effect on raising and maintaining standards and improving provision.

Partnership working: Excellent

The school has a wide range of successful partnerships, which make an important contribution to raising standards, enriching provision and supporting the wellbeing of all pupils.

The partnership with parents is a strength. The school works consistently to include them in their children's education. The school offers literacy workshops to parents with a clear focus on how to support reading at home. Through this, parents have a very good understanding of how to support their children's education and, as a result, this has an effect on raising standards of reading.

A partnership between the school and the local community is also one of the school's strengths. The locality supports all of the school's activities and turns them into community events. As a result, the money that is raised enables the school to improve provision for pupils. A beneficial partnership has been established with the committee of the local hall, which enables the school to make weekly use of the hall to conduct physical education lessons regularly and develop gymnastics skills.

One extremely effective partnership is that between the school and the authority's catering service. The school cook contributes significantly to enriching provision and supporting pupils' wellbeing by giving monthly lessons on how to prepare healthy food. This co-operation also includes arranging and serving a monthly lunch for the elderly. Through these opportunities, pupils benefit greatly from opportunities to develop their oral skills in both languages by making presentations based upon their school work, interests or holidays.

The partnership with the two other schools under the leadership of the headteacher is extremely effective. One particular feature of this co-operation is the use of sharing data, information and good practice using an online inbox.

There is also effective co-operation with the primary schools and secondary schools in the catchment area to standardise and moderate teachers' assessments.

Resource management: Good

The headteacher and governors manage resources and staff effectively. The school is staffed appropriately to respond to the requirements of the number of pupils. The school uses support staff successfully to give valuable support to individuals and groups of pupils and to care for them during the day.

The school responds fully to the statutory requirements for teachers' workload. Teachers use their non-contact time effectively for planning, preparation and assessment. Teachers are developed professionally through the purposeful performance management process. Staff who attend training share information effectively with the remainder of the staff.

A useful professional learning community has been established with the secondary school to develop a specific aspect of mathematics. This has not yet had time to develop fully and have an effect on pupils' outcomes.

The governing body and finance sub-committee, with the support of the authority's finance officer, monitor the budget appropriately. There is a clear link between expenditure and the priorities identified in the development plan.

When considering standards and provision, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

There are small numbers of pupils in each year group, and this can have a significant effect on the school's overall performance in assessments at the end of key stages in comparison with national benchmarks year on year. Due to the small numbers, there are no comments on one year's data.

Pupils' performance at the end of the Foundation Phase is consistently good. One hundred per cent (100%) of pupils have achieved the expected outcome 5 for the last two years in all areas of learning. This performance is higher than the average for the family and Wales and places the school in the top 25% in comparison with similar schools. Performance in terms of attaining the higher outcome 6 is not as good, as there is a huge variation in results in terms of benchmarking against similar schools.

The school's performance at the end of key stage 2 has shown great improvement during the last two years in terms of language. In the previous two years, performance in Welsh and English had generally placed the school in the bottom 25% in comparison with similar schools. Performance in mathematics and science has placed the school in the top 25% consistently. Performance now places the school in the top 25% in all subjects.

In general, over the last four years, the school's performance at the end of key stage 2 at the higher level 5 has been below the family and Wales averages. Although performance has improved in all subjects other than English, it remains lower than the family and Wales averages in all subjects. Apart from some exceptions, the school does not compare favourably with similar schools, and performance places it generally in the bottom 25% or lower 50%.

Due to the small number of pupils at the school, it is not possible to compare the achievements of groups of pupils.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark – this is the total of all responses to date since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	
I feel safe in my school.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ysgol.
		98%	2%	
The school deals well with any bullying.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae'r ysgol yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
		92%	8%	
I know who to talk to if I am worried or upset.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod pwy i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw I'n poeni neu'n gofidio.
		97%	3%	
The school teaches me how to keep healthy	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae'r ysgol yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
		98%	2%	
There are lots of chances at school for me to get regular exercise.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae llawer o gyfleoedd yn yr ysgol i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		96%	4%	
I am doing well at school	10	10 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		96%	4%	
The teachers and other adults in the school help me to learn and make progress.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae'r athrawon a'r oedolion eraill yn yr ysgol yn fy helpu i ddysgu a gwneud cynnydd.
		99%	1%	
I know what to do and who to ask if I find my work hard.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod beth I'w wneud a gyda phwy i siarad os ydw I'n gweld fy ngwaith yn anodd.
		98%	2%	
My homework helps me to understand and improve my work in school.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae fy ngwaith cartref yn helpu i mi ddeall a gwella fy ngwaith yn yr ysgol.
		91%	9%	
I have enough books, equipment, and computers to do my work.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
		95%	5%	
Other children behave well and I can get my work done.	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae plant eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
		77%	23%	
Nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time	10	10 100%	0 0%	Mae bron pob un o'r plant yn ymddwyn yn dda amser chwarae ac amser cinio.
		84%	16%	

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fewer than 10 responses were received. No data will be shown.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Maldwyn Pryse	Reporting Inspector
Iwan Roberts	Lay Inspector
Annwen Watkins	Peer Inspector
Iona Hughes	Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language;
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language;
- mathematics; and
- science.

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.