



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 Gymraeg Trelyn
Commercial Street
Pengam
Blackwood
NP12 3ST**

Date of inspection: March 2013

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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Context

Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn is situated in Pengam, Blackwood, in the valleys of south-east Wales and the vast majority of pupils come from the town of Blackwood and the villages of Cefn Fforest and Fleur-de-Lys. Currently, there are 198 pupils on roll, including 23 part-time nursery aged children.

Two per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken by at least one parent.

Eleven point eight (11.8%) per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly lower than the county and national averages, and 16% of pupils are on the special educational needs register.

Following the retirement of the former headteacher during the summer term of 2011, the current headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

The school was last inspected in March 2007.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn in 2012-2013 is £2,805. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Caerphilly is £4,640 and the minimum is £2,620. Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn is 57th out of the 75 primary schools in Caerphilly 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 current performance is good because:

- standards are good across the school;
- almost all pupils make good progress during their time at school;
- almost all pupils develop to become independent and confident learners;
- pupils' behaviour is extremely good; and
- the school is an inclusive community with a caring ethos, where everyone's contribution is valued.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher offers purposeful strategic direction to the school;
- all of the school's stakeholders have a clear focus on raising standards and continuous improvement;
- the self-evaluation process shows clearly that leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses; and
- the school development plan focuses appropriately on raising standards.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise the percentage of pupils who attain the higher levels in mathematics and science
- R2 Develop opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R3 Ensure that reports to parents meet statutory requirements
- R4 Develop the governors' role in the self-evaluation process and in setting challenging targets

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

During their time at school, almost all pupils make good progress in their learning, including pupils on the special needs register.

Pupils across the school recall their previous learning well and learn new concepts effectively.

Pupils throughout the school listen attentively to adults and fellow pupils and respond appropriately to teachers' questions. Many are eager to contribute orally and share ideas. They are able to reason maturely, for example, when discussing their opinions of the most important invention from the Victorian era. Almost all pupils are able to work independently on a variety of tasks across classes. They are able to work effectively in pairs, groups or individually to respond well to a task. Almost all pupils throughout the school are able to use Welsh confidently in both formal and informal situations. The standard of pupils' spoken language is a strength throughout the school. They are able to use robust Welsh vocabulary and syntax. By the end of key stage 2, almost all pupils are confident in both languages.

Most pupils make good progress in their reading skills. They take an interest in books and develop to become independent readers. In the Foundation Phase, most pupils read meaningfully and with expression to a standard that is appropriate for their age and ability. In key stage 2, many pupils read a wide range of texts fluently and meaningfully in Welsh and English. They are able to discuss their favourite authors confidently. They make effective use of dictionaries and a thesaurus.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils write independently in different contexts and with increasing accuracy. The majority of pupils have a firm grasp of Welsh syntax and, in general, they punctuate their work appropriately. In key stage 2, most pupils write maturely and correctly in a variety of forms in both Welsh and English. Older pupils in particular use their extended writing skills effectively in other subjects.

In 2012, except for mathematical development, the percentage of seven year old pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) was higher than the average for the family of similar schools and the average for Wales. Results in mathematical development were lower than the family of schools but higher than the average for Wales. In general, the percentage of pupils who achieved the higher outcome (outcome 6) was higher than the family average and significantly higher in personal and social development. In comparison with the performance of pupils in similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, their performance is among the lowest 50% for mathematical development but among the highest 50% for language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh and mathematical development.

In 2012, the results of 11 year old pupils at the expected level (level 4) were consistently higher than the family of schools and the national figures in all subjects. All subjects show progress over the past three years.

Apart from in English, the percentage of pupils who achieved a higher than expected level (level 5) was generally lower than the family and Wales in mathematics and science. However, there has been progress in all subjects over the past three years. By comparing pupils' outcomes with the performance of pupils in schools which have a similar number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school is generally above average and among the top 25% in English.

There is no significant pattern with reference to any differences between the results of boys and girls over a four-year period, nor between those pupils who are entitled to free school meals and those who are not.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel safe at school. They are able to show a clear understanding of what they need to do to keep healthy and why it is important.

The school's attendance percentage has increased annually over a four-year period and is among the top 50% of schools in comparison with other similar schools in terms of the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. Pupils have a good attitude towards the importance of attendance and punctuality.

Standards of pupils' behaviour at the school are extremely good. All pupils respect and care for each other. They work together very well and support each other's learning in the classroom. They are very polite towards each other, adults and visitors.

The school's oldest pupils have excellent social skills and self-confidence, which are fostered very effectively by working regularly with a centre for adults with special needs. They have a tolerant and respectful attitude towards these adults and enjoy their weekly socialising periods, in addition to performing for them at Christmas.

The school's pupils contribute well towards the process of evaluating and planning the next steps in their education.

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

Learning experiences are planned in detail throughout the school and ensure valuable and comprehensive activities which meet pupils' needs well. Experiences provided by teachers engage pupils' interest, motivate them to learn and address the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the national curriculum and religious education in full. Teachers ensure that pupils are part of the planning process, which means that pupils become more responsible for leading their own learning as they develop from one stage in their education to the next.

All classes throughout the school provide rich, first-hand experiences which have a positive effect on pupils' personal and social skills. Provision throughout the school is effective in terms of developing thinking skills and pupils' ability to learn independently. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills through

cross-curricular studies, with a strong emphasis on developing literacy. However, there is a lack of adequate opportunities to develop numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Good attention is given to the cwricwlwm Cymreig throughout the school, which enables pupils to appreciate their own culture. Provision for developing the Welsh language and Welsh dimension is effective throughout the school. As a result of experiences such as visits to local castles and studies of famous Welsh people, pupils' knowledge and awareness of their Welsh heritage is developing well.

The school promotes a sustainable attitude towards life through a number of activities, for examples, switch officers who are responsible for ensuring that no unnecessary lighting is used in the classroom, and by recycling shoes and batteries. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their understanding of the wider world through interesting programmes of work.

Teaching: Good

The standard of teaching throughout the school is consistently good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use a wide range of teaching methods and suitable resources to aid learning. Lessons are planned rigorously and support staff contribute significantly towards the standard of pupils' learning. All teaching staff, including support staff, are good language models. They make good use of the school's behaviour management strategies to keep almost all pupils on task. Staff establish a good working relationship which fosters learning. Through purposeful intervention and skilful questioning, pupils' learning skills are developed well. In general, teachers have high expectations and lessons flow effectively. Pupils' independent learning skills are promoted through a variety of teaching methods.

Very good examples of purposeful marking can be seen, and pupils are encouraged to seize the opportunity to improve their work by responding to teachers' perceptive comments. In a minority of cases where marking is not as good, only a celebration of effort can be seen. Good procedures are in place to provide pupils with opportunities to evaluate their own work, and that of their peers, effectively and fairly. Moderating systems at school and cluster level ensure consistency in teachers' assessments and clear and effective systems are used to track pupils' progress. These good arrangements ensure that pupils' needs are identified well and also aid in reporting back to parents about their children's progress. However, in key stage 2, reports do not comply fully with the statutory requirements for reporting back to parents.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Pupils are given many opportunities to develop skills which enable them to be healthy through experiences in the classroom and extra-curricular activities. These experiences also nurture pupils' maturity and develop a caring attitude towards their fellow pupils both inside and outside the classroom. The school encourages attendance and punctuality effectively. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet the requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. The school has rigorous arrangements and systems for identifying pupils who need additional support. The learning experiences provided for them in the mainstream and in smaller groups

support them effectively to achieve appropriate standards. The school tracks standardised test results effectively and uses this information well to plan suitable support programmes for pupils. The school's close and beneficial relationship with a number of external agencies is an effective aid in meeting individuals' needs. Close contact with parents is maintained whilst setting and evaluating improvement targets in individual education plans, and good use is made of learning aids to support pupils.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a close-knit, caring and happy community in which pupils contribute to the ethos through the 'Cymar Cŵl' and 'ffrindiau ffyddlon' schemes. Staff consider and appreciate pupils' diverse needs well and ensure equal opportunities for all pupils to access the full range of educational provision. They foster positive attitudes amongst pupils towards equality and diversity issues and the school meets its statutory duties.

Good use is made of all suitable spaces, with colourful displays of subject information and children's work in all classes. The school makes especially good use of the outdoor areas, which promote a wide range of formal and informal learning activities. There are a large number of suitable resources in the classrooms which stimulate pupils and offer them a wide range of experiences.

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

The headteacher, governing body and staff share a clear vision for the school's development. The headteacher gives the school purposeful strategic direction. She has high expectations and leads the school efficiently. The headteacher is supported effectively by an active senior management team and dedicated staff, and there is a clear focus on raising standards and continuous improvement. All staff have up-to-date job descriptions which reflect their roles and responsibilities. Their continuous professional development is supported by an effective performance management system which promotes the school improvement process well.

The governing body is very active and supportive. Members of the governing body are well-informed about the day-to-day running of the school. They receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher about the school's performance, and their understanding is developing well. However, the governing body does not challenge the school sufficiently nor hold it to account for its standards and performance. Annual reports to parents from the governing body, and the school handbook, meet statutory requirements. The school gives appropriate attention to local and national priorities, including planning, in order to raise standards of literacy and numeracy across the school.

Improving quality: Good

The school has an appropriate process for self-evaluating specific aspects of its work. A variety of first-hand evidence is used in this process. All members of teaching staff monitor standards of attainment, teaching and learning effectively. Recently, the school council has contributed to the process by visiting all classes and

writing reports on standards and provision. This is good practice. Performance data is used effectively to monitor progress and plan for improvement. The self-evaluation document is concise and shows clearly that leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

There is a close link between the self-evaluation's findings and the priorities in the development plan. The plan includes a clear and manageable number of targets for improvement and measurable success criteria. Funds are allocated appropriately to meet priorities. Staff responsibilities are identified clearly in the school development plan and everyone understands their role very well in implementing the plan.

The school is a member of a number of professional networks. These include networks for raising standards of numeracy and literacy. The partnership with other schools is having a positive effect of pupils' standards of attainment.

The school has introduced good strategies for raising standards of reading among boys. They have shared their good practice with other schools throughout the local authority.

Partnership working: Good

There is good co-operation between the school and parents. Most parents are very supportive of the school's life and work. This has a positive effect on developing pupils' wellbeing and education. The school has forged good links with the local nursery groups, which helps to ensure that pupils settle well when they transfer.

There are very strong links between the secondary school and all schools in the cluster. As part of the transition activities, the secondary school releases one member of staff to teach pupils in year 6 on a weekly basis. This contributes effectively towards pupils' wellbeing when they transfer to the secondary school.

There are very close and effective links between the school's oldest pupils and Ebenezer chapel, and a group of pupils share a weekly coffee morning with adults who have special needs. During these sessions, a special mutual understanding can be seen between the children and adults. This experience strengthens pupils' social skills and they show a good awareness of the value of everyone in the community.

The school has begun to standardise and moderate the work of pupils in the local cluster.

Resource management: Good

The headteacher and governing body manage the resources allocated to the school effectively. Expenditure is monitored regularly and rigorously in order to ensure that the school has a wide and appropriate range of teaching and learning resources.

The school has plenty of teaching staff and support staff. They work well with each other. Good use is made of staff expertise to improve quality and raise pupils' standards. Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is used appropriately to plan work and monitor pupils' progress.

As a result of the good standards achieved by pupils and the number of strengths in the quality of provision, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In 2012, the percentage of seven year old pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) in language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh, and in personal and social development, was higher than the average of the family of similar schools and the average for Wales. Results in mathematical development were lower than the family of schools but higher than the average for Wales. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher outcome (outcome 6) in language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh was lower than the family and Wales averages, but the percentage was higher in mathematical development and significantly higher in personal and social development.

When pupils leave the Foundation Phase, their performance is among the lowest 50% for mathematical development, but among the top 50% for language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh and mathematical development, when compared with the performance of pupils in schools that have a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.

At the end of key stage 2, the school's performance in relation to the expected level (level 4) in Welsh, English, mathematics and science, for 11 year old pupils (the core subject indicator) has increased from being lower than the results of the family and Wales to being higher than both during the past two years.

All subjects show progress over the past three years.

The percentage of pupils who achieved a higher than expected level (level 5) was higher than the family and Wales averages in English, lower than the family of schools in Welsh and lower than the family and Wales averages in mathematics and science. Progress can be seen in all subjects over the past three years.

By comparing pupils' results at the end of year 6 with the performance of pupils in schools which have a similar number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school is among the lowest 50% in mathematics, among the top 50% in Welsh and science and among the top 25% in English.

There is no obvious pattern between the results of boys and girls over a four-year period, nor between those pupils who are entitled to free school meals and those who are not.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

The questionnaires were completed by 96 pupils in key stage 2. The responses to each question compare favourably with the national picture for primary schools.

All children who completed the questionnaire feel:

- safe at school;
- that the school deals well with any bullying;
- that they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- that there are many opportunities for them to undertake regular exercise;
- that they are doing well at school;
- that adults at the school help them to make progress; and
- that they know what to do if they find their work hard.

Almost all children who completed the questionnaire feel that:

- the school teaches them how to keep healthy;
- their homework helps them to understand and improve their work;
- they have enough resources; and
- behaviour is good in the classroom and on the playground.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Thirty six questionnaires were received from parents/carers. In general, the responses compare favourably with the national picture for primary schools.

Of the 36 responses received, all agree or agree strongly that:

- their child likes this school;
- their child is making good progress at the school;
- pupils behave well in school; and
- their child feels safe at school.

Almost all agree or agree strongly that:

- they are satisfied with the school, overall;
- their child is making good progress at school;
- teaching is good;
- staff expect their child to work hard and do his or her best;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;
- they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem;

- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints;
- the school helps their child to become more mature and shoulder responsibility;
- their child is prepared well for moving on to the next school; and
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits.

Many agree or agree strongly that:

- the homework that is given builds well on what their child learns in school;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- they are kept well informed about their child's progress; and
- the school is well run.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Michael Hayes	Reporting Inspector
Rhian Jones	Team Inspector
Ruth Rhydderch	Lay Inspector
Geraint Wyn Davies	Peer Inspector
Liz Owen	School 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.