



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 Hafodwenog
Trelech
Carmarthen
Carmarthenshire
SA33 6RU**

Date of inspection: November 2012

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.

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

This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English)

© Crown Copyright 2013: 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 material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 25/02/2013

Context

Ysgol Gymunedol Hafodwenog is situated in the village of Trelech, about 14 miles from the town of Carmarthen. It was established as a district school in 1972 to serve the agricultural communities of Alma, Bryn Iwan, Cilrhedyn, Dinas, Gelli-wen, Pandy, Pen-y-bont, Talog and Trelech.

According to evidence presented by the school, the school is not considered to be prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. At present, there are no pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals. This is considerably lower than the national average. There are no pupils of an ethnic minority origin at the school.

At present, there are 41 pupils between the ages of four and 11 at the school. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the term before they reach four years of age, and they receive full-time education from the start. Pupils are taught by two teachers in two mixed-age classes. During recent years, there has been a small decrease in pupil numbers.

Twenty-nine per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register and receive additional support and about 5% of pupils have a statement of additional needs. These figures are higher than national averages.

The school was last inspected in October 2006. There have been considerable changes to staffing since that date, including two teachers, one full-time and one part-time, and a new headteacher who was appointed in September 2010.

Welsh is the school's main medium of education and work. About 53% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main language. The main aim of the school's language policy is to ensure that pupils are bilingual before they transfer to the secondary school.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Gynradd Hafodwenog in 2012-2013 is £4,347. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Carmarthenshire is £25,997 and the minimum is £2,878. Ysgol Gynradd Hafodwenog is in 22nd position of the 108 primary schools in Carmarthenshire in terms of 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:

- nearly all pupils develop to be independent and confident learners who take an interest in their work;
- nearly all pupils are enthusiastic, listen attentively and contribute very well to learning sessions;
- pupils' behaviour at all times is very good;
- outcomes of teachers' assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 at the expected levels show good and consistent progress;
- the school's processes to identify, understand and respond to pupils' needs are strong;
- there are effective links with parents and the local authority; and
- the school's teachers are dedicated and teaching is good.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospect for improvement are good because:

- under the headteacher's guidance, the school has a clear, harmonious vision relating to its strategic direction and values;
- strategic plans have a strong effect on standards, wellbeing and provision across the school;
- the school's standards show progress over the last three years;
- the school improvement plan links clearly to the self-evaluation process, and identifies appropriate priorities for moving the school forward; and
- there is a strong culture of co-operation to ensure high-quality provision and very good levels of achievement.

Recommendations

R1 Expand opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum

R2 Raise standards of presentation and handwriting across the school

R3 Prepare specific plans for ensuring development and continuity in cross-curricular skills

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The majority of pupils start school with skills that are appropriate or lower than expected according to their age. Most of them, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress during their time at the school.

Nearly all pupils in the Foundation Phase make good clear progress in all areas of work, especially in their use of language, literacy and their communication skills in Welsh. Most pupils' reading skills develop effectively. They also show continuous development in terms of early writing skills. Most older pupils in the Foundation Phase write accurately, and within a suitable range of written contexts.

In key stage 2, most pupils are building well on their previous learning experiences. They show good progress in their literacy and communication skills in Welsh and English. They enjoy reading and they have good reading skills in both languages. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils read fluently, with good expression and understanding. They use translanguaging skills confidently when undertaking research work. Most pupils use their writing skills effectively in their work across the curriculum for different purposes and for a wide range of audiences. However, children's presentation of work and handwriting are not always neat. Pupils from non-Welsh speaking homes make very good progress in their language skills. All pupils are completely bilingual by the age of 11.

Across the school, nearly all pupils listen attentively. They speak confidently and correctly in a range of interesting contexts. They nearly all show enthusiasm and perseverance in their work. However, pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum are not developing as well.

Results of teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 at the school must be treated with care because the small numbers of children in a year can have a significant effect on the school's performance from one year to the next.

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

In 2012, results for 11-year-old pupils at the expected level (level 4) were consistently higher than in schools in the family and national averages in every subject.

Over recent years, results have been consistently higher than the family and Wales averages. The percentage of pupils who attained a higher level than expected has also been higher than family and all-Wales averages, in Welsh and English, and placing the school in the top 50% in 2012. Over the last five years, results for 11-year-old pupils who attained a higher level than expected have been uneven but, on the whole, they show progress. The performance of pupils in mathematics and science has not been as good and it varies in comparison with other comparators, placing the school often in the lower 50% of similar schools.

There has been no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys in terms of achieving the expected levels or in the performance of pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals over recent years.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils' standards of behaviour are always particularly good. Across the school, all pupils show respect and care for each other. They all work together very effectively and support each other's learning in the class. Nearly all of the school's pupils take a lively interest in their work, and listen and respond very well in class. They are very courteous towards each other, towards adults and visitors. The school has not had cause to exclude any child during the last three years.

All pupils at Hafodwenog feel healthy and safe at the school. They enjoy regular physical education lessons at school and attend sports clubs after school hours. They all are very aware of the importance of eating healthily. All pupils enjoy a good variety of regular extra-curricular activities, including cookery lessons, dragon sports, gardening, fun club and the Urdd. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are good and there are a number of successful enterprises including the school's labelling company and the fruit shop.

Pupils express an opinion and take part regularly in decisions concerning their school through the work of the School Council, the Eco Council and the Fair Trade Committee. Through these various activities they have an opportunity to work together with members of the wider community and to help them regularly, for example the area's monthly lunch club for the elderly. As a result, they develop confidence and positive attitudes and respect towards other children and adults. This lays a good foundation for them for developing their social and life skills further. They also take part in a wide range of social activities in the area.

The attendance percentage of pupils at the school is high and increasing. In 2011-2012, it was 96.8%, which is higher than the percentage for the local authority and for Wales. This places the school among the top 50% highest schools in Wales in comparison with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals. Pupils' punctuality is also very good.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a wide range of stimulating experiences for its pupils, which respond fully to the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and religious education, in addition to the needs of all pupils at the school.

The school's long-term planning is well organised. Appropriate attention is paid to developing pupils' Welsh language. The school ensures that there is suitable emphasis on the Welsh dimension in the schemes of work. The short-term plans identify the skills to be developed across the curriculum. However, the planning does not identify the developmental stages within the skills in order to measure pupils' progress in the skills carefully enough.

The school includes parents in pupils' learning experiences very effectively by providing 'Learning at Home' activities every week. The tasks that are provided support the work of classes and develop pupils' problem-solving, research and reading and writing skills.

The school offers a variety of extra-curricular activities including cookery, football, gardening and folk-dancing. These activities enrich pupils' learning experiences and nearly all pupils attend more than one activity regularly.

The eco-committee is very active and the school has won the green flag recently. The school places great emphasis on the importance of sustainability and protecting the environment. The school also pays appropriate attention to fair trade and pupils understand the importance of saving energy, recycling and reducing waste. Pupils' understanding of the wider world is developing gradually through studying a foreign country, such as Lesotho.

Teaching: Good

Teachers and assistants have suitable subject knowledge and they use a wide range of strategies to inspire and challenge pupils. Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team.

In most lessons, teachers encourage pupils to develop independent working skills and prepare interesting and challenging activities for them. They encourage pupils to own their learning through planning jointly, and provide appropriate opportunities for developing pupils' skills.

Teachers use a good variety of teaching methods in order to make lessons interesting for pupils. They make good use of information and communication technology resources in order to ensure opportunities for pupils to practise their skills of working on computers, click cameras and floor robots.

Very good examples of purposeful marking can be seen and pupils are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to improve their work by responding to teachers' perceptive comments. The focus on pupils setting targets jointly with teachers is a feature that is now developing successfully.

Pupils' progress is assessed regularly, using formal assessments and teachers' professional judgment. The information is used effectively to identify and support individuals' learning needs.

Parents receive very good information about their children's progress and wellbeing regularly. The quality of reports to parents is good and they meet statutory requirements.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a variety of appropriate opportunities in order to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Nearly all pupils take responsibility for their actions, and understand the importance of values such as honesty and respect in order to work successfully as a community. Various examples can be seen of pupils of all ages offering support and friendship to others.

The school provides very good individual support on pupils' educational, social and personal issues. It works very closely with external agencies and ensures that pupils benefit from the relevant support that is available to them. This includes social services, the counselling service and the psychological service.

A variety of suitable methods are used effectively to identify pupils' particular needs, including reading tests, spelling tests and teachers' professional judgement. There is appropriate support such as intervention groups, support for individuals and support within classes. There is a suitable system for monitoring progress in place and pupils move in and out of intervention groups appropriately as necessary.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school's ethos reflects a welcoming, happy and inclusive atmosphere. A strong feature is the family ethos that is based on respect for others and pupils' rights. The school promotes positive approaches towards equality and diversity through procedures such as collecting money for charities. The school offers equal entitlement to the curriculum and to all extra-curricular activities. Tolerant attitudes are developed well, and ensure that each pupil is free from harassment.

The learning environment is of good quality. There is a sufficient range of appropriate resources that match pupils' needs well. The building and outdoor facilities have been developed very well and are being used to the full by the school's pupils and the local community.

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

Leadership: Good

The headteacher and staff have a clear vision that is owned by all.

The headteacher offers appropriate strategic direction to the life and work of the school. There is appropriate emphasis on improving standards and provision for pupils. The learning team co-operates effectively in order to develop activities and ways of learning and teaching that have a positive influence on achievement. Everyone at the school has a clear focus on raising standards and continuous improvement.

The governing body has a clear awareness of how the school is performing, and governors challenge appropriately and support the school. They develop their expertise further during learning journeys around the school and by using data effectively to compare pupils' performance within the family of similar schools.

All staff have clear responsibilities and job descriptions. Their continuous professional development is supported through an effective system of performance management that promotes the process of improving the school further.

A number of local and national initiatives are developing appropriately and are contributing positively to raising and maintaining standards.

Improving quality: Good

The self-evaluation procedures and processes, the effective strategic planning and the high expectations among teachers and pupils are beginning to have a positive influence on pupils' standards across the school.

The self-evaluation report is of good quality. The school uses a wide range of evidence to support the reports' judgements, including performance data, and the views of parents, governors, pupils and the local community. The development plan is an active document and includes an appropriate number of current priorities, initiatives to be reviewed and long-term initiatives. The plan includes measurable targets and specific sums of funding that are linked to intentions.

The school has implemented all the recommendations of the last inspection report. A small number of them remain in the current development plan in order to extend them further and develop new aspects.

The school benefits greatly from internal and external professional learning communities in relation to the quality of teaching.

Partnership working: Good

There are very effective links with the community and parents. Extensive use is made of the expertise of local people and advantage is taken on every possible opportunity to use them for the benefit of pupils' education and raising standards. Recently, the school has created a stimulating and safe learning environment by building a purpose-built teaching shelter for the Foundation Phase, providing a new cookery room and creating a garden for the gardening club through close co-operation with parents. The information that is shared regularly with parents expands their knowledge of the school's curriculum and activities.

There are robust transition arrangements in place for children who transfer from the cylch meithrin to the primary school and for pupils who are about to transfer to the secondary schools. These arrangements are an appropriate support for the pupils to settle in quickly in their new environment.

The school levels and standardises pupils' work internally and takes part in moderation meetings with local primary and secondary schools in order to ensure consistency.

Resource management: Good

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

Teachers and assistants are located appropriately to make the best possible use of their time, expertise and experience. Teachers make effective use of their time for planning, preparation and assessment.

The school offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Because of factors such as small numbers, the percentage of pupils who have additional learning needs and the pupils' linguistic background, teachers' assessments at the end of both keys stages must be treated with care.

In the 2012 teachers' assessments, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) in terms of language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh, mathematical development, and personal and social development, wellbeing and diversity was higher than the averages for the family of similar schools and Wales.

The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher outcome was higher than the family average in Welsh and in terms of personal and social development but lower in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools across Wales in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals, the percentage of pupils who achieved the Foundation Phase indicator, namely a combination of results, placed the school in the top 50%. The school was in the top 25% in terms of personal and social development, in the top 50% in terms of achieving the higher outcome in Welsh, but only in the bottom 25% in terms of mathematical development.

In key stage 2, results of 11-year-old pupils at the expected level (level 4) over four years has been consistently higher than the schools in the family and the national averages for every subject.

The percentage of pupils who attained a higher level was also higher than the averages for schools in the family and Wales in Welsh and English, placing the school in the upper 50% in 2012. Over time, the percentage of pupils who achieve the higher level, namely level 5, has been uneven but generally higher than the averages for the family of schools, the local authority and Wales in the majority of years, particularly in Welsh and English.

There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys in terms of the percentage of pupils who achieve levels 4 or higher, because of the small numbers of pupils. There is no obvious difference between the results for pupils who are entitled to free school meals and those who are not.

Results for the assessments of 11-year-old pupils' literacy skills are consistently even. Assessments for Welsh oral and reading skills have been consistently higher than the averages for the family and Wales over the last three years. Results in writing for 2012 were lower than the averages for the family and for Wales but they have been higher than the family in three out of the last four years. Assessments of pupils' skills in English are also similar. They have been consistently higher than the averages for the family in oral and reading skills over the last four years, but lower in writing in two out of the last four years.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Thirty key stage 2 pupils completed the questionnaire.

Most of the responses are very positive. In general, the proportion of the positive responses was similar to the average for primary schools in Wales.

All or nearly all pupils say that:

- they feel safe at school;
- they know to whom to talk when they feel worried or anxious;
- they have many opportunities to keep healthy and fit;
- they feel that they are doing well at school;
- they have enough equipment, books and computers to do their work;
- teachers and support staff help them to understand and improve their work; and
- the school deals with any bullying effectively.

A minority of pupils report:

- concern about the behaviour of some other pupils at times in class; and
- that nearly all children behave well at play time and at lunch time.

The positive responses to these two aspects are higher than the national average.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty-three responses were received to the questionnaire for parents or carers.

Overall, nearly all express high levels of satisfaction with the school. The proportion of parents' positive responses is higher than the average for parents in other primary schools in Wales.

All agree that:

- the school is well run;
- their children enjoy school;
- their children settled in well when they joined the school for the first time;
- children's behaviour is good;
- the quality of teaching is good;
- there is a good variety of activities, including trips and visits;
- the school helps their children to become more mature, and to shoulder responsibilities;
- the staff expect their children to work hard and do their best; and
- homework builds well on the work their children do at school.

A very few parents disagree with the statement that:

- their children are making good progress;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- they understand the school's complaints system;
- they receive enough information about their child's progress;
- they feel comfortable about asking the school a question, making a suggestion or identifying a problem; and
- their children receive additional appropriate support in relation to individual needs.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Ann Jones	Reporting Inspector
Margaret Owenna Davies	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Rhian Jones	Peer Inspector
Victoria Hart-Griffiths	School Nominee

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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	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