



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 Llanystumdwy
Llanystumdwy
Criccieth
Gwynedd
LL52 0SP**

Date of inspection: December 2011

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 Llanystumdwy serves the village of Llanystumdwy near Criccieth, Gwynedd and the surrounding rural area. The school is under the control of the Church in Wales.

There are 39 pupils on roll, including five pupils of nursery school age who attend part-time. Sixty-nine per cent of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. There are no pupils from an ethnic minority background.

Two point five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is considerably below the national average. Eighteen per cent of pupils are on the school's additional learning needs register, which is also below the national figure, and one pupil has statement of special educational needs.

The current headteacher has been in post since January 2011. Since September 2011, due to sickness absence, the Foundation Phase class has been taught by a teacher on a temporary contract.

In 2011-2012, the individual school budget for Ysgol Llanystumdwy is £3,397 per pupil. The maximum amount per pupil for primary schools in Gwynedd is £7,732 and the minimum is £2,745. Ysgol Llanystumdwy has the 53rd highest budget per pupil of the 102 primary schools in Gwynedd.

Summary

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

Current performance

Ysgol Llanystumdwy's current performance is good because:

- pupils' achievements at seven and eleven years of age compare favourably over a period with those of similar schools;
- pupils participate fully in lessons and show clear progress in their ability to work as independent learners;
- the teaching is consistently good throughout the school, with effective use being made of classroom assistants;
- there is an appropriate range of learning experiences, which are enriched by a number of educational visits; and
- the school is a happy and caring community that promotes a number of aspects of pupils' wellbeing effectively.

However:

- there are shortcomings in the school's procedures for safeguarding children.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has introduced a number of worthwhile priorities and has given a clear strategic direction for developing the school;
- effective use is made of data in order to measure progress and for providing additional support for pupils as required;
- penetrating self-evaluation systems are in place that have led to a true picture of aspects that need to be improved; and
- the school development plan identifies clear priorities and suitable strategies for their implementation.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 ensure more progress in the work of higher ability pupils in the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2, particularly in writing;
- R2 improve the response to pupils' written work in order to provide specific guidance on what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work;
- R3 increase the contribution of the governing body in the self-evaluation processes and to further develop their role as a critical friend; and
- R4 with immediate effect, address those matters relating to school's policy and procedures for safeguarding.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how the school is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the progress of the school in addressing the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In the Foundation Phase, over the past five years, the proportion of seven-year-old pupils who reach the expected level (level 2), in general, compares favourably with the average of the family of schools. This has often placed the school in the top 25% of schools compared with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals. Very few pupils reached level 3 in any subject during the period although, in 2011, there has been an improvement in Welsh.

In key stage 2, there has been a clear pattern of improvement in the achievements of 11-year-old pupils. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected level (level 4) over the period has generally been near or above the average for the family of schools. In the past two years, results have placed the school in the top 25% when compared with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals. There was a large increase in the number of pupils that reached level 5 in 2011, far above the average for the family of schools. This follows a period of being below the figures for the family of schools in Welsh, mathematics and science. The achievements of girls at level 5 are significantly lower than those of boys, particularly in mathematics and science.

In lessons, pupils work productively and make appropriate progress against the learning aims. They show an increasing ability to work independently. Pupils with additional learning needs make appropriate progress on the basis of their specific learning aims.

On the whole, pupils' oral skills are developing appropriately. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and to each other. They become increasingly confident when talking about their work in both languages in key stage 2, and express themselves clearly and accurately. Pupils show a willingness to respond when questioned by teachers. However, in key stage 2, pupils' ability to provide more extended and spontaneous answers when discussing as a class is not as good as it could be. Most pupils use Welsh naturally when talking with each other, with pupils from non Welsh-speaking homes soon becoming fluent in Welsh.

Most pupils are making appropriate progress in their reading skills. Most pupils are able to read aloud clearly and meaningfully in Welsh and English with appropriate intonation. The reading age of many pupils is either equivalent to or above their chronological age. Pupils who receive additional support to improve their reading skills make appropriate progress.

Pupils gain an interest in books and develop into avid readers. Foundation Phase and key stage 2 pupils can discuss with enthusiasm characters and events in the stories they have read. In key stage 2, pupils use their research skills to acquire information about various matters, using their translingual skills to present information. Following their work with the 'reading journal', key stage 2 pupils are

developing their ability to respond to English fiction. Pupils of higher ability do not develop their ability in full to respond to books by writing reviews.

Many Foundation Phase pupils make appropriate initial progress in their ability to write independently. They use increasing vocabulary and phrases and begin to vary their sentences and use punctuation. In key stage 2, most pupils make progress in their ability to write for an increasing range of purposes in both languages, including expressing opinions on current issues. The work of many pupils shows appropriate standards in terms of language accuracy in Welsh and English, together with the ability to arrange their work into paragraphs and use punctuation. Key stage 2 pupils produce interesting creative work in English that includes good touches in terms of style and vocabulary.

In the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2, there is insufficient progress in terms of the length and quality of the written work of a few pupils who have the ability to achieve higher levels. Key stage 2 pupils do not make sufficient use of redrafting skills in order to improve their initial efforts.

Pupils use their extended writing skills in other subjects, such as history, but this aspect has not been developed fully.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and keeping fit. They are happy and feel safe in the school.

Almost all pupils concentrate in lessons and take an interest in their work. In general, they persevere to complete their tasks with increasing independence. At times, the levels of motivation and perseverance of key stage 2 pupils is not as good in groups when they have been working independently for a period.

Pupils work together well and behave appropriately. They show maturity and care when dealing with younger children. The school's attendance levels compare favourably with those of similar schools.

Pupils play an active role in the life of the school. Members of the school council contribute to decisions on a range of issues, including developing the school garden and the keep fit club, 'Dal i Fynd'.

Through a range of school activities and extra-curricular experiences, pupils are developing a good range of social and life skills. Their contribution to community activities is a strong feature. They have raised money for a number of charities and good causes.

Older pupils learn about the world of work by being responsible for the fruit shop, including producing and selling goods. Pupils of all ages are beginning to develop the skills that are needed to improve their own learning.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

Educational visits and the use that the school makes of the local community enrich pupils' learning experiences. The school's planning systems are thorough and ensure that there are opportunities for all pupils to experience a good range of varied activities. Communication, numeracy, information and communication technology, together with thinking skills are given a prominent position in planning. Although teachers prepare differentiated activities for pupils, this does not always meet the needs of the most able pupils, particularly in extended writing, across the curriculum.

There is appropriate provision for the Welsh language and the Welsh dimension permeates all of the school's work. The school makes extensive use of the National Writers' Centre in Tŷ Newydd and the Lloyd George museum. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to study the local environment, as well as the area's history and folk lore.

Eco, fair trade and gardening activities and the use of local resources to promote children's knowledge of sustainability and the environment are developing well. One of the strengths of the provision is the way in which the range of experiences on the international days that are held each term promote pupils' understanding of citizenship in other countries.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is consistently good in both classes. Teachers use a variety of learning methods which engender pupils' participation and interest. The lessons are well planned, although the expectations in both classes are not sufficiently challenging for older and more able children.

The relationship between teachers and pupils is one that encourages respect and courtesy, and there is a supportive ethos and diligent atmosphere in the classes. The teachers use a range of resources, including information technology, effectively in the lessons. Classroom assistants contribute effectively to learning.

Pupils' progress throughout the school is tracked effectively in order to identify pupils who are underachieving and to provide additional support as necessary. Staff make appropriate use of the information from the assessment systems when planning further work. There are regular opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and each other's work.

Pupils receive constructive oral feedback on their efforts. Pupils' written work is marked regularly but the comments are not sufficiently clear to show pupils what they need to do to improve.

Parents receive good information on a regular basis about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory

The school is a happy and inclusive community that nurtures values such as fair play and respect. Effective arrangements exist to promote pupils' health and wellbeing. The advantages of healthy living are promoted effectively across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities.

The provision for personal and social education is effective. The school gives particular attention to pupils' personal, emotional and educational needs. There is appropriate provision for pupils' spiritual development in joint worship sessions and the school promotes moral and cultural development successfully.

The school works very closely with parents and external agencies to support pupils where this is necessary.

The school does not have an appropriate policy for safeguarding. The procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues have not been developed fully.

There is effective support for special educational needs. Every pupil on the school's special needs register has an appropriate individual educational plan which is reviewed regularly, twice a year. These pupils receive appropriate support from the classroom assistants. The school regularly uses external experts to support individuals.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community in which every pupil has an equal right to all areas of the provision and they are encouraged to contribute fully to the life of the school.

The building provides appropriate classrooms and facilities, and the school makes full use of every part of the building. Although outside areas have been created for foundation phase activities, to date, they have not been developed to their full potential. The school does much to display pupils' written work.

The buildings and grounds are well maintained and they provide an appropriate environment for playing and learning.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and succeeds in conveying that vision successfully to staff, governors and pupils. She knows the school well and provides a clear strategic direction for the life and work of the school. The headteacher, staff and governors work together well to implement new strategies in order to raise pupils' standards.

Every member of staff is aware of their roles and responsibilities and work closely together as a team. The school has succeeded, in a short space of time, to create a

wide range of effective procedures that have already been implemented and are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement and wellbeing.

The governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and they have a good knowledge about the school. They are aware of its strengths and the areas for development, but their role as a critical friend and their role in the school's self-evaluation process have not been developed sufficiently.

The school succeeds in giving due attention to national and local priorities. The Foundation Phase provision was established effectively with a good range of suitable resources and stimulating experiences. The school is developing the attention given to pupils' opinions in all aspects of the life of the school. Constructive and regular links have been established with other local schools to plan together and to share good practice.

Improving quality: Good

The school's self-evaluation arrangements are thorough. They include staff discussions, examining and updating school documentation, monitoring teaching and learning through classroom observation and analysing and levelling children's work. As a result, the school identifies the areas that need to be developed clearly. The school listens to the opinions of governors, parents and pupils effectively. The self-evaluation report is comprehensive and provides a clear and evaluative picture of the school's strengths. However, it does not make sufficient reference to those aspects that need to be developed further.

The school development plan is of good quality. It records the priorities for developing the school effectively. The plan also includes targets for implementation, a timetable for implementation as well as success criteria.

The school holds internal meetings to plan the curriculum and to share the latest teaching practices, such as developing thinking skills, assessment for learning and tracking pupils' progress. It is part of professional learning communities with other local schools that are working to improve extended written work and which is examining assessment for learning. These partnerships are having a positive influence on planning and the effective development of the latest teaching practices.

Partnership working: Good

The school works extensively with other schools in the cluster in order to share good practice, plan jointly and moderate and standardise work. There is a strong partnership with parents and the use of volunteers for reading plans and helping to develop oral skills in English have had a positive effect on standards. Pupils have also benefitted from the expert contributions of volunteers when developing the garden.

The school makes regular use of the community and community resources, such as the hall and the church. Members of the community are invited to the school to work with pupils and to extend their knowledge in a variety of subjects. There is a close

partnership between the school and the church which promotes pupils' spiritual development. There are strong links between the Cylch Meithrin and the school.

Resource management: Good

All members of staff work together well and share their expertise for the benefit of the pupils. The teamwork amongst staff permeates all the school's work and has led to obvious improvements in the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2. The support staff are a strength in the school and they have a positive effect on the achievement and wellbeing of pupils of all ages and ability.

Extensive opportunities are provided for the professional development of all members of staff and there is a close link between training and the priorities in the school development plan. The school has an appropriate performance monitoring procedure and members of staff have appropriate opportunities for continuous professional development.

The school has an extensive supply of learning resources, although what is available for outdoor learning is comparatively limited.

The school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Comments on performance data

Performance data

In key stage 1, almost all seven-year-old pupils have reached the expected level (level 2) in Welsh, mathematics and science combined in three of the past five years. With the exception of science in 2009 and Welsh in 2010, every pupil has reached level 2 in every subject individually over the past five years. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

This performance over a period compares favourably with that of the other members of the family of schools. Compared with performance levels in similar schools nationally in terms of entitlement to free school meals, the school's performance, in general, has been in the top 25% of schools.

The percentage of seven-year-old pupils who reached level 3 in Welsh was above that of the family in 2011 but it had been substantially below the family average in previous years. In 2011, no pupil reached level 3 in reading or writing. Almost without exception, no pupil has reached level 3 in mathematics and science during the past five years. This compares unfavourably with similar schools.

Every 11-year-old pupil has reached the expected level (level 4) at the end of key stage 2 in Welsh, English, mathematics and science combined in three of the past five years. This compares favourably over the period with the national figures and figures for the family of schools and it has placed the school in the top 25% of schools in terms of schools with similar entitlement to free school meals in the past two years. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

There was a substantial increase in achievements at level 5 in 2011, particularly in Welsh, English and mathematics which placed the school in the top 25% of similar schools nationally. This followed a downward trend in previous years when achievements, in general, compared unfavourably with others in the family of schools and similar schools, nationally. In general, a fewer number of girls than boys reach the higher level. The gap in mathematics and science is significantly greater than in other schools in the family of schools.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

All pupils in key stage 2 completed the learner questionnaire.

The responses provide a positive picture which is either close to or above the national averages in all aspects for primary schools.

Almost all pupils feel that they are doing well in school and that the school helps them to become more mature and to shoulder responsibility. All pupils feel safe and almost all state that the school deals well with any cases of bullying and provides additional support as required. Everyone knows who to turn to if they are worried or if they want advice, and they say that the school teaches them how to stay healthy.

Responses to parent/carers questionnaires

A total of 19 questionnaires were completed by parents/carers.

The responses are positive and are either close to or above the national averages.

Every parent either agrees or strongly agrees that their children are making good progress and that they receive regular information about their children's progress. Every parent states that their children feel safe in school and that they are encouraged to keep healthy. Almost all parents note that the standards of behaviour are good. Every parent is of the opinion that the teaching is good and that staff treat every child fairly and with respect. Every parent indicated that that they understand the school's complaints procedure and almost all parents state that they are comfortable about raising any matter with the school. Every parent either agrees or strongly agrees that the school is well run.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Iolo Dafydd	Reporting Inspector
Glyn Roberts	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
April Wiggins	Peer Inspector
Cathryn Davey (headteacher)	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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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