



*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

**Report of visit**  
**Level of follow-up: Significant improvement**

**Ysgol Santes Helen**  
**Twtil**  
**Caernarfon**  
**Gwynedd**  
**LL55 1PF**

**Date of visit: December 2012**

**by**

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



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**The monitoring team**

Ann Jones	Reporting Inspector
Dyfrig Ellis	Team Inspector

## **Outcome of visit**

It is judged that Ysgol Santes Helen has made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in September 2011.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from any follow-up activity.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards of writing in Welsh and English**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Across the school, all pupils use a good range of written forms including a number of examples of extended writing in cross-curricular contexts. Most pupils' standard of writing is good.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase make good progress in their writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, most of them produce pieces for various purposes and in a range of interesting situations. On the whole, they write accurately and make appropriate use of basic punctuation. More able pupils write at length. The standard of presentation of written work is developing well. The results of teachers' assessments for outcome 5 in 2012 in language, literature and communication in Welsh are strong and better than the results for the family of similar schools and Wales.

Most pupils across key stage 2 make good progress in their writing skills in both languages. They make good use of paragraphs and punctuate their work correctly. Pupils' translanguageing skills are developing well. They have a strong awareness of the features of various written forms and they spell increasingly accurately in both languages. Handwriting and presentation of work are neat on the whole. By the end of the key stage, the most able pupils are writing accurately and at length in a variety of forms in both languages. Prospects for 2013 show continuity in this progress.

During the year, the school has developed writing portfolios in Welsh and English and this has improved teachers' understanding of the progress that pupils make. Systems for moderating and standardising written work have also improved. The school has refined the method of recording the progress of individual pupils in both languages in order to raise standards further.

### **Recommendation 2: Raise standards in information and communication technology**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The standards and progress that most pupils make across the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 are good. Most pupils are confident and intelligent in recalling and discussing their previous work. Many pupils apply their information and communication technology skills across a variety of curriculum areas but this is not consistent across the school.

The use of control technology in the Foundation Phase is good. The majority of older pupils in the Foundation Phase plan and carry out complex orders for controlling toys. The creative play areas in the Foundation Phase offer valuable experiences for developing information and communication technology skills. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can handle data well.

Communication elements in key stage 2 are developing well. The majority of pupils can present information effectively, using a range of appropriate software. A few pupils are aware of the strengths and suitability of word processing packages and they make independent choices based on the nature of the task. However, database and modelling skills have not been developed sufficiently and the same kinds of graphs are used by pupils from year to year.

Many pupils in key stage 2 use the web confidently in order to research information and most select facts from a range of sources. However, only a few children consider the relevance, credibility and accuracy of these facts. Most key stage 2 pupils place their work neatly on the screen, varying the form and size of titles and attaching photographs and pictures as needed. The computer drawing skills of many children have not been developed sufficiently and they do not have enough opportunities to present their own graphic work in word processing packages or presentation packages.

Opportunities for developing pupils' information and communication skills have been identified appropriately in the long-term and medium-term plans. However, they are not highlighted in enough detail in the short-term plans.

### **Recommendation 3: Ensure a firm vision and a strategic operational system that is far more analytical**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The headteacher has a robust vision that focuses on raising standards. She has a good knowledge of the school and offers clear strategic direction to the school's life and work. She shares the vision with pupils, all school staff and the governing body. They all work together successfully to ensure that the school raises its standards and that effective monitoring systems are in place. The school's aims and objectives are clear and are a firm foundation for all its activities.

Members of the governing body shoulder their responsibilities effectively and understand their roles and responsibilities well. Under the headteacher's guidance, the body is now more aware of the school's performance and contributes better to the self-evaluation process and planning for improvement. The School Development Group, a sub-committee of the governing body, interprets an appropriate range of data and visits classes regularly.

The school has established effective arrangements for collecting the views of parents and pupils through questionnaires and they respond to their aspirations and suggestions appropriately. Members of the school council are enthusiastic and pupils' viewpoints and ideas are considered seriously and are included in the school's strategic plans. Regular and comprehensive use is made of the 'Bocs Siarad', which is an effective medium for pupils to voice their opinions.

**Recommendation 4: Ensure that the school’s self-evaluation process is far more evaluative and that the school development plan is a far more purposeful document, which includes quantitative targets**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school’s self-evaluation report is comprehensive and reflects strengths and areas to be developed effectively. The headteacher and staff and the School Development Group produced the report jointly before sharing it fully with the governing body.

The school has developed a detailed and comprehensive procedure for self-evaluation that collects stakeholders’ views and observes learning and teaching. The school makes good use of performance data in order to analyse outcomes and trends and to plan strategically for improvement. The headteacher ensures that all staff, parents, pupils and governors are included in the self-evaluation process.

Because of this close co-operation, the majority of the school’s priorities for improvement link clearly with the school development plan. For example, raising the standards of reading and numeracy across the curriculum have been identified as two of the current priorities. There are suitable strategies to ensure that improvements are identified and these include quantitative success indicators, specific timetables as well as staff responsibilities.

**Recommendation 5: Improve the governing body’s understanding of benchmarking data in order to hold the school to account better**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Under the guidance of the new Chair, the governors take a more active part in school life. They are supportive and have a better awareness of the life and work of the school. A few governors have attended specific training courses for governors during the year and this has ensured that they have a better awareness of their role. They are now making an effective contribution to strategic planning through the sub-committees of the full body.

The governors established a sub-group, the School Development Group, in order to scrutinise the school’s performance in more detail soon after the inspection. During the year, they have shared responsibility for setting priorities for the post-inspection improvement plan, developing the school on the basis of funding, performance and monitoring findings and evaluating school assessments.

Governors now receive detailed reports for the school’s performance data, including analyses of core data sets. They have a better awareness of the school’s performance in comparison with that of other schools in the family. They are also more aware of the specific factors that have an effect on statistics, for example the numbers who are in the groups, latecomers and special education. They monitor the progress of the priorities of the post-inspection improvement plan and the school development plan in every meeting.

Despite this progress, governors are not all knowledgeable enough in terms of operating as effective critical friends of the school.

**Recommendation 6: Ensure that the school has appropriate safeguarding procedures in place**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Following the inspection, the school has ensured that the child protection policy is implemented thoroughly. All members of staff have an appropriate current child protection qualification and two members of the governing body have attended child protection courses.

All staff are aware of the child protection arrangements, the names of the governors and the designated member of staff. All members of staff and governors have undergone a current Criminal Records Bureau check.

**Recommendation 7: Ensure that the governing body responds fully to statutory requirements**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Following advice by the access officer of Gwynedd local authority, the school's accessibility plan has been adapted and adopted by the governing body, in order to undertake a survey of the school and to suggest alterations to the site and ensure accessibility. The governors have received adaptations to the plan and have adopted them. The plan was published on the school's website and there is specific reference to it in the school prospectus. The school has also made minor improvements to the buildings in order to ensure better accessibility.

<b>Recommendations</b>
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The school should continue to pay attention to the recommendations that it has not yet addressed in full.