



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Ysgol Goronwy Owen
Benllech
Anglesey
LL74 8SG**

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by

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

About Ysgol Goronwy Owen

Ysgol Goronwy Owen is situated in the village of Benllech on the Isle of Anglesey. It serves the village and the surrounding area. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work, and English is introduced in key stage 2. There are 135 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 16 part-time nursery age pupils. Around 7% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes.

Over a three-year-period, around 10% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is lower than the national percentage of 18%. The school has identified around 13% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is lower than the national percentage of 21%.

The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2013 and the school was last inspected in January 2014.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The school is a caring community with a happy and inclusive ethos, in which a sound emphasis is placed on providing purposeful support for all individuals.

The headteacher provides the school with robust leadership, which ensures that it has an effective strategic direction. All staff have a strong commitment to developing and promoting continuous and sustainable improvements. The governing body knows the school well. It is knowledgeable about the school's performance and uses this knowledge very thoughtfully to challenge the school and hold it to account.

Staff establish an excellent working relationship with pupils, which fosters successful learning. The system for planning activities, which is based on interesting themes and learning activities, ensures that pupils achieve good standards. All pupils' wellbeing is given a prominent place in the school's provision, and staff provide them with effective care, support and guidance. Pupils take full advantage of the valuable opportunities that are provided for them to express their views and contribute to important aspects of the school's work. As a result, nearly all pupils make sound and consistent progress, and achieve well by Year 6.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Improve information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the school
- R2 Improve attendance
- R3 Ensure that the priorities in the development plan are based more specifically on improving pupils' attainment

What happens next

The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Standards: Good

During their time at the school, nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and achieve well by Year 6. Most pupils across the school are developing as conscientious and confident learners with good independent working skills. This is a notable strength.

Most pupils' oracy skills are developing well across the school. They listen attentively and use an increasing range of appropriate vocabulary when talking to each other and adults. By the end of the foundation phase, most speak confidently about their work, use varied language and vocabulary and express their views sensibly. Most pupils in key stage 2 answer questions intelligently and knowledgeably, for example when discussing a trip to the Roman museum. They reach a good standard of bilingualism and change freely from one language to the other when discussing their work.

Most foundation phase pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. They enjoy reading aloud and do so with increasing confidence. By the end of the phase, many read with a good level of accuracy, fluency and meaning. In key stage 2, most read fluently and meaningfully in Welsh and English with effective expression. They develop their skills well when gathering information in their investigative work, for example when using different sources in their study on the witches of Llanddona.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their writing skills purposefully and vary their sentences skilfully by Year 2. Many write portrayals and stories independently. For example, they use adjectives and interesting vocabulary confidently to enrich their stories about superheroes. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils write skilfully in Welsh and English in effective and varied genres, for example when writing a piece that provides information about an infectious disease. The presentation of work and handwriting of a minority of pupils in key stage 2 has a tendency to be untidy.

Most pupils across the school develop their numeracy skills effectively in their mathematics focus tasks. In the foundation phase, they have a good understanding of number patterns and place value, and use this information skilfully to solve problems. They handle different measurements purposefully, for example when testing which insulators keep water warm the longest. They are able to tell the time correctly in analogue and digital format. They have a good understanding of the properties of regular shapes and recognise the properties of 3D shapes well.

In key stage 2, most pupils use the four mathematical operations purposefully, for example when calculating the prices of different foods in the supermarket. They calculate perimeter and area correctly when studying different sports pitches around the world. Many analyse data in relation to time, money, temperature and distance skilfully. Most use a good range of mental calculation strategies to solve increasingly difficult number problems.

Overall, most pupils' ICT skills are developing appropriately across the school. In the foundation phase, many use software to create pictures and simple animations when re-telling the story of Tedi going to the moon. They create graphs suitably, for example when calculating the different types of houses in Benllech. Many pupils have developed their word-processing skills to an appropriate level when creating a short story, for example when describing their adventures in an imaginary castle.

In key stage 2, many pupils combine text and pictures to produce presentations effectively when researching the Second World War. Most have developed their word-processing skills to an appropriate level, for example when producing an information leaflet on Penrhyn Castle. However, pupils' skills are often limited to the communication strand, and most pupils' skills in using spreadsheets and databases have not been developed sufficiently.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils' behaviour is excellent as they move around the school, during leisure time, assemblies and in lessons. They are very polite as they greet each other, staff and visitors. They are welcoming, polite and treat adults and visitors with respect.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily, and take part in daily exercise activities, for example running a mile a day. They feel safe at school and are aware of who to approach if they have any concerns. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of staying safe online and outline the dangers that can arise as a result of unsuitable use of the internet.

Most pupils work confidently and very skilfully independently, and this is one of the school's strengths. Nearly all pupils show positive attitudes towards their work; they are enthusiastic and willing to support each other effectively in lessons. They treat each other with respect and tolerance. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have a very sound understanding of what they need to do to improve their work and contribute purposefully towards supporting and improving each other's learning.

Nearly all pupils take full advantage of the valuable opportunities that are provided for them to express their views about important aspects of the school's work and contribute to their own wellbeing and that of their peers. They do this effectively through the various councils. The eco council is proactive in planting trees on the school grounds, and the school council has developed a system to reward good behaviour. Digital leaders are enthusiastic in their roles in supporting the youngest pupils with digital aspects.

Many pupils take full advantage of the opportunity to develop as conscientious citizens. They raise money for good causes and take pride in the success of their efforts to establish a house and a water well in Kenya. A majority of pupils benefit from extra-curricular experiences, such as sports, and enjoy residential trips with the Urdd in Glan-Ilyn and Llangrannog.

Most pupils are very aware of the importance of attending school regularly and punctually. However, attendance over the last three years has been low in comparison with similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Staff established an excellent working relationship with pupils, which fosters learning successfully. Teachers have high expectations and all pupils understand this.

The system for planning the curriculum, which is based on interesting themes and learning experiences, ensures that pupils achieve good standards. A successful feature across the school is the role that pupils have in providing suggestions and ideas about what they would like to study at the beginning of every theme. This engages pupils' interest and curiosity towards learning skilfully and strengthens their commitment to their work.

The principles of the foundation phase have been embedded very firmly. Staff provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and ability to work independently, and this is an obvious strength. For example, many pupils show clear confidence in choosing their own activities and move maturely from one to another.

Provision for skills includes valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh and English literacy skills and numeracy skills in various areas of the curriculum. However, planning to develop pupils' ICT skills is not as effective. As a result, opportunities for them to work with spreadsheets and databases are limited.

Teachers use a good range of teaching methods, which engage pupils' participation and interest successfully. They explain new ideas in a meaningful and relevant way, and extend learning creatively through practical experiences. Tasks are planned carefully for the range of age and ability in the classes. Staff ask probing questions in order to expand pupils' understanding well and encourage them to use their thinking skills throughout lessons.

Teachers and assistants work highly effectively as a team. Support staff make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. All staff take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' language, which contributes successfully towards their oracy skills.

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies skilfully. They provide useful oral feedback during lessons. There are good examples of purposeful written feedback, and teachers' comments respond to individual targets and often refer to improving pupils' skills. Pupils are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to improve their work by responding to teachers' comments. There are good examples of this in language. There are regular opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and that of other pupils. This ensures that pupils, at a very early stage, understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community with a happy and inclusive ethos, in which there is a sound emphasis on providing purposeful support for all individuals. Pupils' wellbeing is given a prominent place in the school's provision, and staff provide them with effective care, support and guidance. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe at school and behave very well. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development successfully. Staff encourage pupils skilfully to develop as responsible citizens who are willing to help others. Respecting multiculturalism, promoting aspects of diversity and developing fairness and equal opportunities are strong elements of the school's culture. Acts of collective worship are valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider the needs of others in a spiritual environment. This is reinforced further by inviting visitors to the school, such as the local rector.

The school has a strong partnership with parents. The school implements an open-door policy successfully and communicates effectively with parents to ensure that they are aware of the school's events and work. Reports for parents are purposeful and useful. They outline clearly how pupils are achieving and provide targets for what they need to do in order to improve.

Teachers use progress-tracking procedures appropriately to identify quickly the pupils who are in need of challenge or specific support. Intervention programmes and support within the classrooms meet pupils' needs well. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are purposeful and include quantitative targets to meet their needs. Plans are reviewed rigorously and regularly in consultation with pupils and their parents. As a result, nearly all pupils make sound progress from their starting points.

Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school's work by being members of various committees and when planning learning activities by suggesting what they would like to study in their theme work. These opportunities develop pupils' leadership skills effectively and have a good influence on school life.

The school has effective procedures to encourage pupils to eat and drink healthily, and staff promote their understanding of the importance of keeping fit successfully. There are regular opportunities for pupils to join in with 'dal i fynd' (keep moving) sessions, which include running around the playground, which contribute well towards improving their fitness. Visits by individuals, such as the community police officer, raise pupils' awareness well of the dangers of substance misuse and the dangers of using the internet. As a result, nearly all pupils understand the importance of taking care of their health and staying safe online.

Leaders provide parents with comprehensive information about the importance of attending school regularly, and work closely with the welfare officer to improve the situation. Despite the school's efforts, there has not been an improvement in attendance over time.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides the school with robust leadership, which ensures an effective strategic direction and a culture that promotes continuous improvement. She has a clear vision, which is based on ensuring that pupils and staff play a central part in the school's work and that there is a strong focus on encouraging learners to reach their full potential. She conveys this vision very successfully to staff, pupils, parents and governors. As a result, everyone has high expectations of themselves, each other and of pupils' standards of achievement.

A strong feature is the way in which responsibilities are distributed effectively. This is part of the school's strategy to develop staff's skills and promote co-operation and share good practice. As a result, there are clear communication procedures between all staff. They work together highly effectively as a team and meet regularly to monitor and evaluate progress against the school's priorities. All staff have a strong commitment to developing and promoting continuous and sustainable improvements. A good example of this is the successful way in which the school enriches provision to develop pupils' independent skills and their ability to improve their own work.

The school's priorities for improvement are based on a good range of first-hand evidence, and staff's understanding of them is sound. The improvement plan refers effectively to the actions to be taken, success criteria, timing and responsibility, monitoring arrangements and budgeting. However, although monitoring reports focus on teaching, learning and provision, they are too general. As a result, priorities are not specific or quantitative enough to improve pupils' attainment.

The governing body knows the school well. It is knowledgeable about the school's performance and uses this knowledge very thoughtfully to challenge the school and hold it to account.

One of the strongest features of the school's leadership is the rich opportunities that are provided for staff to develop professionally. It has robust performance management procedures, which enrich staff's professional development successfully and have a positive effect on standards. A notable example of these procedures is the way in which foundation phase provision has been established effectively.

Expenditure links well with the school's objectives, targets and improvement plans. The headteacher and governors monitor and manage expenditure carefully and ensure that financial resources are used fully to support priorities for improvement. Following difficult problems in the past, there is a comprehensive plan in place to resolve the situation in terms of over-expenditure. Effective use of the pupil development grant to support the very few pupils who are eligible for free school meals has led to an increase in pupils' standards, particularly in improving their reading skills and self-confidence.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

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

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses 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:

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