



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 Ffwrnes
Furnace
Llanelli
SA15 4HT**

Date of inspection: 16 January 2012

by

Dorothy Morris

for

**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 Ffwrnes is a Welsh medium primary school located on the outskirts of the town of Llanelli. It is maintained by Carmarthenshire local authority. According to the school, the catchment overall is neither prosperous nor disadvantaged, although there are some areas that are economically disadvantaged. Nine per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a figure that is lower than the local authority and national averages.

Currently, there are 213 pupils between 4 and 11 years of age on the school's roll. There has been considerable growth in pupil numbers since the previous inspection. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main language spoken. At the moment, there are no pupils of ethnic minority background at the school.

Twenty-four per cent of the pupils have been identified as having additional learning needs; a figure that is higher than the local authority and national averages. Three pupils hold statements for special educational needs and there are a very small number of pupils who are cared for by the local authority.

The headteacher has been in post since January 2000.

In 2011-2012, the individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffwrnes is £3,189 per pupil. The maximum budget per pupil for primary schools in Carmarthenshire is £18,947 and the minimum is £3,114. Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffwrnes has the 94th highest individual school budget per pupil of the 110 primary schools in Carmarthenshire.

Summary

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

Current performance

Main judgement

The school's current performance is adequate:

The strengths include:

- most pupils make appropriate progress during their period at the school;
- pupils are offered a good range of learning experiences within and outside the school;
- there is a caring learning environment which promotes pupil's wellbeing effectively;
- pupils' behaviour is very good;

However,

- pupils' results at the end of key stage 1 and girls' results at the end of key stage 2 are generally lower than those of the family of similar schools;
- the results of more able pupils vary greatly in comparison with similar schools;
- the quality of the teaching and learning is inconsistent throughout the school; and
- evaluation procedures do not focus sufficiently on outcomes.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision for developing the school further, based on a secure understanding of its current needs;
- recent initiatives, which include a system for tracking and targeting groups of pupils, are leading to measurable improvements;
- in end of key stage 2 assessments over the last two years, there is evidence of substantial improvement in pupils' standards of achievement; and
- the governing body provides sound strategic direction and undertakes its responsibilities effectively.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 raise pupils' standards of achievement at the end of the Foundation Phase, and improve further the achievement of girls in key stage 2 and of more able pupils in both key stages;
- R2 extend pupils' learning skills, especially in oracy and writing skills in Welsh, in both key stages;
- R3 strengthen aspects of the teaching and learning throughout the school;
- R4 improve the quality of the written feedback offered to pupils, and develop assessment for learning strategies further;
- R5 ensure consistency in implementing self- evaluation processes and strengthen the focus on pupils' outcomes.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan that will show how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

During their period at the school, most pupils make appropriate progress in their learning.

Over the last four years, the results of seven year old pupils are consistently lower than those of the family of similar schools. The results fluctuate in comparison with the local authority and all Wales outcomes but are lower in most years. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' results fluctuate but demonstrate an improvement in the last two years. Overall, they demonstrate an upward trend and are generally above the family, the local authority and all Wales outcomes. Standards in Welsh are more uneven.

The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels, that is level 3 at the end of key stage 1 and level 5 in key stage 2, is uneven. In key stage 1, it is generally lower than the family, the local authority and all Wales averages. There is no consistent difference in the results of boys and girls in key stage 1. In key stage 2, boys' results overall are better than the girls. The percentage of girls achieving the expected levels is lower than the family averages in most subjects.

The results of pupils entitled to free school meals are similar to the family averages in key stage 1. They vary from year to year in key stage 2. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress in relation to their age and ability.

Apart from writing, pupils of all ages make suitable progress in their Welsh literacy and communication skills. They listen well. Most respond appropriately orally and use Welsh naturally in discussions during lessons. Even so, responses are generally brief. Pupils read clearly, with appropriate expression, but their evaluation skills in discussing their reading material are not developing consistently. Generally, pupils do not write sufficiently in an extended manner and the quality of the content is more inconsistent.

By the end of key stage 2, standards in literacy skills in English are good. The majority of pupils discuss their work effectively. They read clearly and can discuss the contents of their books confidently. Most pupils make consistent progress in their ability to write for a range of purposes and with appropriate accuracy.

Pupils' information and communications technology skills are developing appropriately. Groups of pupils, especially in key stage 2, are confident and skilful users of a range of skills and use them effectively in several areas of the curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils make suitable use of their numeracy skills to support their work in other subjects.

Most pupils acquire a range of wider learning skills. In best practice, pupils make effective use of their thinking skills and their self assessment skills in their work. Pupils do not develop these skills consistently across the school. Their ability to work more independently also develops unevenly across the classes.

Wellbeing: Good

The school is progressive in promoting all aspects of keeping healthy and safe and as a result pupils are very knowledgeable about healthy eating and nurturing good personal habits. Most pupils show clear interest and motivation in their learning.

Behaviour during lessons and play times is very good and pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They enjoy being in school and attendance rates are consistently around 93%, which compares favourably with national and local averages.

Pupils make a good contribution to local community life and there is a strong link with a number of organisations, agencies, businesses and individuals. They benefit from these links and experiences and are developing a good range of social skills, which prepare them effectively for life outside the school.

The general contribution and voice of the pupils has a prominent place in the school in aspects such as social activities, promoting sustainability, fair trade arrangements and global citizenship. Pupils' contribution to the school's Fruit and Vegetable Company is a strong feature. The voice of the School Council has not developed as effectively.

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

The school plans learning experiences that kindle pupils' interest effectively. The principles of the Foundation Phase are developing within the classes. Overall, the curriculum in key stage 2 has been thoroughly planned and builds on pupils' previous experiences. Even so, the planning is not yet a tool for extending and challenging the more able pupils. Educational visits and the wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities enrich pupils' experiences.

There is appropriate provision to develop pupils' skills. There is purposeful planning to promote learning skills but its implementation is uneven throughout both key stages.

Pupils' bilingualism is constantly developing. The school provides varied and interesting opportunities to nurture their identity. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig has been successfully integrated into various aspects of the curriculum. As a result, pupils' knowledge and awareness of their immediate location, the locality and Wales is developing well.

The activities of the eco and fair trade committees promote pupils' knowledge of sustainability and the environment and make an important contribution to school life. Approximately 25 pupils regularly contribute to running the Fruit and Vegetable Company which successfully promotes the participation and decision making skills of the pupils involved. Pupils' understanding of global citizenship is promoted very effectively through the school's links with a number of European countries.

Teaching: Adequate

Most lessons are planned appropriately with clear objectives. Where the teaching is effective, good use is made of a range of learning methods and appropriate

resources to support the teaching and learning. There is a good focus on building on previous work, purposeful questioning, and activities that are suitably differentiated to support the less able learner. Support staff are used well within classes and in a range of other activities throughout the school.

Where the teaching is less effective, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to fully contribute orally and more demanding work is not provided consistently enough to challenge the more able pupils. In addition, in the Foundation Phase and in some subjects in key stage 2, there is an overdependence on worksheets.

There are appropriate assessment procedures in place, including a system for tracking pupils' progress throughout the school. Suitable use is made of the data produced to monitor pupils' progress.

Pupils' work is marked regularly. In best practice, feedback is given orally or in writing, which helps pupils to improve the quality of their work. Appropriate periods are planned for pupils to respond to the feedback given, together with opportunities to assess their own work and that of their peers. However, the written feedback overall is not consistent enough to support pupils in addressing those aspects in need of attention. Assessment for learning strategies have not been sufficiently embedded in all classes to have a positive impact on pupils' attainments.

Parents are provided with information on their children's achievements and progress through three meetings during the year and a written report. The reports are clear and offer targets for improvement.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a very caring and organised community where everyone feels valued. The benefits of healthy living are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities.

Provision for personal and social education is good. The school pays particular attention to pupils' personal, emotional and educational needs and there is a very effective working relationship with external agencies and specialist services. The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

There is good provision for pupils with additional learning needs which promotes full access to the curriculum for each pupil. The school is proactive in identifying pupils' needs at an early stage, and tracks pupils' progress very thoroughly through operating an effective mapping system. Support is carefully planned and provides a wide range of intervention programmes in order to move the learning forward. The school succeeds in targeting cohorts of pupils effectively which has led to measurable progress in reading standards. The individual educational plans are practical documents and the individual profiles are effective tools to include the pupils and their parents in the process of drawing up support programmes.

Learning environment: Good

The school's inclusive ethos promotes equal opportunities and appreciates diversity. The racial equality policy and strategies are in place and satisfy statutory requirements. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils, and appropriate procedures ensure that behaviour is very good throughout the school.

The accommodation offers a range of classes located in the main building and in six cabins on the school's site. The school makes the best possible use of the space available. Even so, the site and buildings do not offer the necessary range of learning facilities. The hall, which is also used as a canteen, is insufficient in size for whole school collective worship sessions and physical education lessons.

There is a variety of resources that supports the teaching and learning effectively. In best practice, pupils' work and displays are used effectively to enrich the environment. Good use is made of sporting facilities in the area to augment the opportunities provided in the school.

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

Leadership: Good

The headteacher's leadership has a positive effect on the school's development. Her vision in raising pupils' linguistic standards is shared effectively with parents, governors and staff. She has identified appropriate development priorities to move the school forward and leads successful plans that are raising standards, particularly in key stage 2.

The school has a range of management and curricular policies which are implemented effectively. Overall, staff share the same values about teaching, behaviour, relationships and equal opportunities. The school has effective and established procedures with regard to performance management and teachers' training.

Governors are very supportive of the school and take their responsibilities seriously. They have individual responsibilities for learning areas and visit the school regularly to monitor the provision. They analyse performance data effectively and challenge the school meaningfully. They contribute purposefully to the self-evaluation process.

Appropriate attention is given to national and local priorities. The school undertakes a number of literacy development strategies, including developing skills in reporting and storytelling, to raise pupils' standards. The school has sound links with several other countries through the Comenius project and is researching into entrepreneurship and sustainability. Pupils' social skills are developing well through the school's personal and social education plan which focuses effectively on the social and emotional aspects of learning.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school's self-evaluation procedures are established and identify relevant priorities for development. They include a range of suitable evaluation processes including data analysis, lesson observations and evaluating different aspects of the areas of learning. The school seeks the opinions of pupils, staff and parents conscientiously.

In best practice, evaluation processes give effective attention to evaluating standards, and the actions undertaken lead to improvements in pupils' achievements. In general, the processes are not implemented sufficiently consistently to raise standards and improve the quality of provision across the subjects.

The school's self-evaluation report gives a balanced picture of the school. There is a clear link between the self-evaluation report and the priorities in the school's development plan. Even so, the success criteria do not focus sufficiently on pupil outcomes.

Recently, under the leadership of the headteacher, data has been used appropriately to target specific support for groups of pupils. This strategy contributes successfully to improving the learning of cohorts of pupils.

The school works well in reinforcing its commitment to professional networks with schools within the catchment and the local secondary school. The staff are involved in a range of training and professional development opportunities and this is reflected in aspects of provision such as the focus on improving pupils' writing skills.

Partnership working: Good

The school has very positive links with parents and carers. Most are supportive of the school's work and contribute towards it in practical ways.

The school works effectively with the local secondary school to prepare pupils well for transferring to the next stage in their education. The school also works well with other primary schools in the area to ensure consistency in assessing pupils' work. A sound partnership has been established with the Furnace nursery group which is held on the school's site.

There are strong partnerships with the local authority and Coleg Sir Gâr. The school has developed a very useful relationship with business communities in the area and with Menter Llanelli. The partnership with local rugby, squash and tennis clubs and with a skills development project has a positive effect on pupils' physical and social development. Activities such as concerts and services are arranged regularly in the community.

Resource management: Adequate

School leaders and governors make effective use of funds. They ensure an appropriate level of staffing and suitably qualified teachers to present the curriculum. They manage the school's budget and resources effectively and review expenditure appropriately.

The provision for planning, preparation and assessment time, and the workload agreement have been arranged well. Teachers benefit effectively from these opportunities. In addition, they receive regular training from the additional learning needs co-ordinator in order to provide work at a level that provides the relevant challenge for pupils with special educational needs.

Expenditure in the school's development plans are carefully planned and recorded. In considering the school's performance, especially at the end of the Foundation Phase, and other aspects of provision, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Over the last four years in key stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining the core subject indicator (level 2 in a combination of the core subjects namely Welsh, mathematics and science) is lower than the family of schools. It is lower than the local authority and all Wales averages in three of the last four years. The percentage of pupils achieving level 2 in Welsh, mathematics and science separately has fluctuated. In 2011, results in Welsh are higher than the family and similar to the local authority and all Wales averages. Results in mathematics and science are lower than the family, local authority and all Wales averages.

In 2011, when comparing with similar schools across Wales in relation to the percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, the results in mathematics and science are in the lowest 25% and the results in Welsh in the lowest 50%. For four years, the core subject indicator has placed the school in the lowest 25% in each year. In science and mathematics, the results fluctuate between the lower 25% and 50%. In Welsh they are in the lower 50% in three out of four years.

Over the four years, the percentage of pupils attaining level 3 fluctuates and in 2011 it is substantially lower than that of the family, the local authority and all Wales averages in all three subjects. In the last two years, the percentage of boys attaining level 5 in English, Welsh and science compares favourably. There is no consistent pattern in the difference between the results for boys and girls in mathematics and science. Girls' results are better than those of the boys in Welsh.

At the end of key stage 2, the results of teacher assessments have fluctuated but show a substantial improvement in the last two years. In the 2011 assessments, the percentage of pupils attaining the core subject indicator (level 4 in a combination of the core subjects, namely English or Welsh, mathematics and science) is higher than that of the family, the local authority and Wales. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 in English, mathematics and science separately is higher than the family, local authority and Wales averages. In Welsh the results are similar to the local authority averages but lower than the family and all Wales averages.

In comparison with similar schools across Wales over the last four years with regard to the percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, results in mathematics are in the highest 25%, English in the highest 50% and Welsh and science in the lowest 50%. Over four years, the core subject indicator fluctuates between the lowest 25% and the highest 50%. In mathematics and science, the results fluctuate between the lowest 25% and the highest 25%. In English they fluctuate between the lowest 25% and the highest 50%. In Welsh, they are in the lowest 50% over four years.

In key stage 2, the trend in the percentage of pupils achieving level five fluctuates significantly from year to year. There is an upward trend in the percentage that has attained level 5 in English and is higher than results for the authority and Wales and similar to results of the family. The results in mathematics vary from year to year but are higher than those for the family, local authority and Wales in two of the last four years. Results in science are lower than the family in most years and fluctuate when compared with the local authority and all Wales results. Results in Welsh are lower than the family and local authority in the four years and are lower than the all Wales

averages in three of the four years. In the last two years, the percentage of boys attaining level 5 in English, Welsh and science compares favourably with results for the family, the local authority and Wales.

Overall, boys' results are better than the girls' results. With regard to achieving level 4, boys achieve better than the girls in English, Welsh and science. In mathematics, there is no difference in the results. With regard to achieving level 5, boys achieve better than the girls in all subjects. The percentage of girls' achieving level 4 is lower than the family of schools in most subjects.

In teachers' assessments at the end of key stage 1 in 2011, the percentage attaining the expected level in Welsh speaking and reading is higher than the family averages. Standards in writing are lower. In key stage 2, standards in speaking and reading Welsh are higher than the family but are substantially lower in writing. In key stage 2, standards in speaking and reading English are improving and are higher than those of the family. Standards in writing are lower.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Parents completed 24 questionnaires. Most parents are satisfied with the school. All say that their child likes school and has settled in well. They say that teachers expect their children to work hard and to give of their best. Most parents feel that their child is safe at the school, behaves well and is making good progress. They say that the quality of teaching is good. Many are of the opinion that staff treat their child fairly and with respect and that the school provides appropriate additional support in relation to any specific individual needs. They feel that the homework given builds well on what their child is taught in school. They say that the school prepares their child for the next stage of education. Most feel that their child is encouraged to be healthy and to undertake regular physical exercise. The majority of parents state that they receive regular information on their child's progress. Many note that they feel comfortable enough in going to the school with any questions, suggestions or problems. Approximately half are clear about the school's procedures for dealing with complaints. Each parent states that the school helps their child to mature and to undertake responsibilities. Most are of the opinion that there is a good variety of activities, including trips and visits. Many of the parents feel that the school is well run.

Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and two pupils completed the questionnaire. Most state that they feel safe at school and know who to speak to if they are concerned about anything. Many state that the school deals well with bullying. All pupils note that they are taught to be healthy, and most say that there are many opportunities for them to undertake regular physical exercise. Most think that they are doing well in the school and nearly all agree that the teachers help them to learn and make progress. Many pupils feel that homework helps them to understand and improve their school work, and that they have sufficient books and equipment to do their work. Many pupils are of the opinion that pupils behave well during play time and during lunch time. About half of them agree that pupils behave well during lessons.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Dorothy Morris	Reporting Inspector
Rhiannon Harris	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Robert Huw Jenkins	Peer Inspector
Catherine Lloyd Jenkins	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. FPYear 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.