

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

Report on

Ysgol Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog Llangollen Wrexham LL20 7LB

Date of inspection: September 2014

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

The school is situated in the village of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, which is at the top end of the valley and in the care of Wrexham local authority. There are 23 pupils aged between 3 and 11 on roll, including 4 part-time nursery children. They are arranged into two mixed-age classes.

About a quarter of pupils come from homes in which Welsh is spoken as a first language. Very few pupils are from an ethnic minority background. There are a few pupils who have additional learning needs and not one has a statutory statement of special educational needs. A few pupils are entitled to free school meals.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog in 2013-2014 is \pounds 7,403. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Wrexham is \pounds 9,653 and the minimum is \pounds 2,876. Ysgol Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog is in 2nd position of the 60 primary schools in Wrexham in terms of the school budget per pupil.

Since September 2012, the school, along with two other schools, has been part of the Dyffryn Ceiriog Federation under the leadership of one headteacher.

The school was last inspected by Estyn during November 2008.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's performance is good because:

- most pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are good;
- pupils from the whole age and ability range make good progress in their learning;
- pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep healthy;
- pupils are diligent and enthusiastic and work together harmoniously;
- pupils have a strong attachment to the school and they behave responsibly;
- good teaching ensures every individual's commitment to his or her learning;
- learning experiences meet the needs of the full range of pupils; and
- the school's safe environment and friendly ethos ensures all pupils' health and wellbeing.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher's clear vision is based on enabling pupils to attain their full potential;
- the school identifies its strengths and the areas that it needs to improve thoroughly;
- self-evaluation has led to visible improvements in standards and provision;
- members of the governing body have suitable knowledge of the school's performance;
- a range of partnerships promote pupils' learning and wellbeing effectively;
- the school is developing well as a learning community; and
- the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

- R1 Provide more challenging literacy tasks for more able pupils in the Foundation Phase
- R2 Ensure a more active role for the governing body in the self-evaluation process

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good

Standards: Good

Considering their starting point, pupils from the whole age and ability range make progress in their learning. They strive diligently in lessons, recall previous learning quickly, and apply it successfully in new situations.

The literacy skills of pupils of all ages are good. When presenting information, expressing an opinion or contributing to role-playing activities, most pupils in the Foundation Phase listen to other pupils' contributions with increasing attention and express themselves comprehensibly in Welsh and English. By the end of the phase, all of them contribute to group discussions confidently. They read a wider range of suitable texts in their first language and use various techniques in order to tackle unfamiliar words. Many pupils write text that makes sense, they use capital letters and full stops with suitable accuracy and the older pupils organise a short piece of writing appropriately.

Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 listen attentively to other pupils' presentations and contribute purposefully to group discussions.

Most pupils in key stage 2 read confidently in Welsh and English. They make effective use of various strategies to understand the meaning of words and cope confidently with unfamiliar words. Nearly all pupils enjoy reading and show a good understanding of the main points and significant details in texts such as fiction and factual books. By the top end of key stage 2, they use a variety of sources, such as books, pamphlets and websites, effectively in order to glean information. Throughout the key stage, many pupils use information collected from English reference books very skilfully to support their work in Welsh.

Most pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress in their ability to produce various types of written pieces such as stories and portraits of characters from Greek legends. They use a number of techniques, for example mind maps, when planning written work and use the full range of punctuation. By the top end of key stage 2, many pupils produce interesting pieces of writing across the curriculum.

A strong feature at the school is the significant progress that Welsh learners make in their ability to speak, read and write the language during their time at the school.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase use their number and measuring skills with increasing accuracy, especially when undertaking practical tasks. By the end of the phase, nearly all of them have a firm grasp of the processes of addition and subtraction, they handle money correctly and use standard measures of length and mass purposefully.

The ability of key stage 2 pupils to use number facts and to undertake mental calculations is good. At the top end of the school, nearly all pupils handle five digit numbers and percentages confidently and use a number of strategies in order to check their answers. When solving a money problem that arises from everyday life, most pupils reason numerically and use their number skills very effectively in other subjects. Most are skilful in identifying patterns and trends in data and use a range of graphs to present appropriate information in other subjects.

In recent years, there were only a few pupils in the year groups to be assessed at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. As a result, information that is collected from data is not reliable enough to be able to report fairly on it.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at the school and are confident that staff would deal effectively with any threats to their health and wellbeing. Pupils of all ages have a sound understanding of how to stay healthy and they appreciate that healthy foods and regular physical exercise have a beneficial effect on their health and development.

All pupils' social and life skills are good. As they co-operate on tasks or move around the school, they all behave responsibly and show respect and care towards each other and towards visitors. They are diligent and enthusiastic learners who co-operate harmoniously and keep on task well over extended periods. By the end of key stage 2, most of them have a clear idea of their strengths and what they need to do to improve.

From an early age, many pupils are confident when making choices about their learning. They address problem-solving tasks skilfully. A good example of this is the way in which pupils in key stage 2 work together with a partner in order to plan a party.

Pupils have a strong attachment to the school and staff, and as they mature, they are prepared to shoulder additional responsibilities effectively. For example, following a visit to two other schools in the Federation, a group of key stage 2 pupils discussed their findings with pupils from their school in a mature manner. Members of the school council and the eco group undertake their work conscientiously and are an influential voice in school life. In addition, pupils of all ages contribute well to the content of the school curriculum.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance rates are consistently high, and have placed the school among the top 25% of similar schools over the last two years.

The practice of taking part in a variety of activities in the village strengthens pupils' involvement in their local community considerably.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a wide range of stimulating learning experiences, which, on the whole, meet the needs of the full range of pupils successfully. Planning in the Foundation Phase is based firmly on the six areas of learning and on giving pupils an active role in their learning. The key stage 2 curriculum has been planned thoroughly and systematically and ensures that there is progression and continuity in their learning.

Provision for ensuring that pupils of all ages acquire literacy and numeracy skills is effective. The requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework are embedded firmly in the termly and weekly plans for both classes.

Visits, guest speakers and opportunities to contribute to activities in the local community, such as eisteddfodau, enrich pupils' learning experiences considerably. A particularly good example of this was the pupils' visit to the mayor's chamber in Wrexham, which helped them to understand how the council responds to the requirements of the community.

The Welsh language is very visible in the school environment and there is a strong emphasis in the curriculum on pupils' understanding of the cultural, environmental and historical characteristics of Wales. This element is reinforced by studying Welsh legends, such as Gelert, and taking part in school and Urdd eisteddfodau.

The wide range of additional experiences, which include educational visits to museums, along with opportunities to take part in community activities, enrich pupils' experiences considerably. The school has effective provision to help pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship. For example, the school has been co-operating with other European countries to create Christmas cards and, through the 'World Cup' project, pupils have been learning more about some of the small countries that took part in the competition.

Teaching: Good

The close working relationship between adults and pupils leads to effective teaching and learning. Teachers are proficient in their work and use their knowledge and expertise effectively to plan stimulating learning experiences that have clear learning objectives. Pupils of all ages and abilities are challenged to achieve well and through staff's purposeful intervention and skilful questioning, they are encouraged to strive hard and take an active part in lessons.

By using a wide range of teaching methods, teachers succeed well in ensuring all pupils' commitment to their learning. Teachers and pupils receive strong support from support staff who contribute significantly to teaching and learning. The strong emphasis that is placed on developing thinking and problem-solving skills contributes strongly towards promoting pupils' learning skills. However, a few of the literacy activities that are planned in the Foundation Phase lack challenge in order to extend the skills of more able pupils.

The school's assessment and recording arrangements are comprehensive and enable teachers to monitor and track all pupils' progress regularly. Pupils' work, especially in key stage 2, is marked regularly and oral feedback, along with written comments, give them clear guidance on what they have achieved and what they need to do next to improve. The practice of setting individual targets for pupils of all ages leads to progress in learning and motivation.

Annual reports to parents provide beneficial information to them about their children's development and progress. The opportunities that pupils have to produce their personal report about their attainment and progress contribute significantly to their development as learners.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is an inclusive community in which a high priority is given to pupils' wellbeing and safety. Staff ensure that the environment is caring and welcoming and that the needs of all individuals are met effectively. There are appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking. The variety of regular extracurricular activities provides valuable experiences to promote all pupils' wellbeing and fitness. The school's procedures have contributed very effectively to ensuring a high attendance percentage at the school.

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded firmly in the curriculum and the school's day-to-day procedures. The regular opportunities that are available for pupils to take part in community activities and to work jointly with pupils at other schools in the Federation, have a positive effect on the development of their social skills. The school promotes high values which help pupils to differentiate between what is right and wrong and encourages them to take responsibility for their actions.

Stimulating joint worship sessions contribute well to pupils' spiritual and personal development.

The effective use that the school makes of the specialisms of a range of agencies, charities and the local authority's support and educational services enables it to support pupils' wellbeing and learning successfully.

There are thorough and effective arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils who have additional learning needs, and the designated co-ordinator gives clear guidance to teachers. A notable example of this is the educational pack that has been produced in co-operation with other schools in the Federation, to improve provision for pupils who have specific learning needs. Through early intervention and careful planning, the school provides strong and timely support for pupils who need additional support, including more able pupils. This enables almost all pupils to make good progress and to cope successfully with the requirements of the curriculum.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive, caring and happy community that celebrates diversity and appreciates all learners. It ensures equal opportunities in all activities for all pupils. It has a positive learning environment that contributes effectively to supporting learning and teaching.

There is a wide range of suitable equipment and resources in the learning rooms that are used purposefully by teachers to promote and enrich pupils' learning experiences. The building meets all learners' requirements. There is a variety of displays throughout the school that contribute significantly to the ethos and motivates the children. There is plenty of room in the rooms and the building is well-maintained. The yard is of a suitable size and the school has access to a playing field. An outdoor area for the Foundation Phase is used imaginatively to provide an interesting and exciting learning environment.

Key Question 3: How goo	d are leadership and management?	Good

Leadership: Good

The headteacher leads the school effectively and has established clear communication systems and a strong sense of team work among all staff. This contributes well towards setting a strategic direction and a self-critical school that is developing continuously. The headteacher is supported well by staff who share the same vision and values and support efforts to improve standards and the quality of teaching.

The senior management team analyses relevant data in detail and uses the information effectively to identify the achievements of individual pupils along with specific groups. This enables them to plan suitable provision that meets the needs of pupils from the whole ability range effectively.

The school's willingness to undertake new initiatives such as assessment for learning, and to pay attention to the requirements of local and national priorities, ensures that they develop continuously and improve learning and teaching.

The governing body supports the school well. Governors have an increasing understanding of pupils' standards and achievements. They also have suitable information about the school's priorities and performance and they observe teaching sessions through occasional visits to classes. They are willing to challenge the school on standards and teaching methods. However, although governors understand and fulfil their statutory duties appropriately; they do not have an active enough role in the self-evaluation arrangements in order to give them detailed information about the school's recent developments. This affects their ability to challenge and support the school to drive necessary improvements.

Improving quality: Good

The school identifies its strengths and the areas that it needs to improve, thoroughly. It has effective self-evaluation procedures that have led to visible improvements in

aspects such as handwriting and extended writing. The senior management team uses a wide range of evidence to contribute to the self-evaluation process, including the views of parents, staff and pupils. Teachers and members of the governing body monitor standards and provision in detail by analysing data, scrutinising books and observing lessons. Monitoring reports are of a high quality and balance strengths with recommendations for improvement appropriately. As a result, monitoring by leaders has a positive effect on the quality of provision and on pupils' standards of attainment.

The self-evaluation report provides a balanced and accurate picture of the school. There is an obvious link between the findings of the self-evaluation process and priorities in the improvement plan. Teachers have definite roles in creating and implementing specific aspects of the plan.

The improvement plan includes measurable targets and earmarks specific sums of money in order to address priorities. The headteacher monitors and reviews the progress of priorities and reports on them effectively in governing body meetings. This ensures that members of the governing body have a reasonably appropriate understanding of the progress made by the school.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership activities contribute strongly to improving pupils' standards and wellbeing. Productive co-operation with other schools in the Dyffryn Ceiriog Schools Federation has a very positive effect on pupils' standards and the quality of provision. The practice of planning jointly and sharing teachers' expertise has contributed significantly towards strengthening the quality of teaching and ensured better consistency and accuracy in teachers' assessments.

Parents support the school well and, through the active parent teacher association, contribute considerably to improving resources. The effect of this can be seen in the resources in the Foundation Phase outdoor area, which contribute well to improving pupils' standards in the area.

The active links with the local community enrich pupils' learning experiences considerably. A particular example of this is the entrepreneurship project that was developed jointly between the school and a local hotel and which provided especially good opportunities for pupils to develop business skills.

The school works effectively with agencies and the local authority's support services, which enable staff to improve pupils' outcomes and wellbeing

Transition arrangements to both secondary schools are comprehensive and effective and prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Resource management: Good

Staff are managed and deployed effectively to support and improve learning. The close networking and co-operation that exists within the Dyffryn Ceiriog Primary Schools Federation enables staff to develop and share their professional knowledge effectively. The school deploys the Federation's teaching staff and support staff appropriately in order to address all aspects of the school curriculum effectively.

Arrangements for planning, preparation and assessment periods are appropriate and contribute well to ensuring consistency in assessment procedures and more detailed planning for implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.

The school pays due attention to the whole staff's continuous professional development and performance management processes support this appropriately.

The effect of resources on teaching and learning is reviewed regularly by managers and appropriate planning is undertaken for future needs.

Managers manage finances effectively and the school's expenditure decisions link well to priorities for improving pupils' outcomes and wellbeing. The school has not received any funding to support pupils who are entitled to free school meals during the last two years.

Considering the prudent use that is made of funding, along with pupils' good outcomes, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1: Commentary on performance data

There are many very small cohorts in many of the years of performance data for the Foundation Phase in this school. In such a case, we do not include a performance data table.

There are many very small cohorts in many of the years of performance data for key stage 2 in this school. In such a case, we do not include a performance data table.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to the learner questionnaire

Fewer than 10 responses were received. No data will be shown.

Response to the parent questionnaire Denotes the benchmark – this is a total of all responses to date since September 2010.

		Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion		Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod						
Overall I am satisfied with the school.		11		10 91%	1 9%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r ysgol yn gyffredinol.					
301001.				63%	33%	3%	1%		gymeanol.					
		11		11	0	0	0	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn hoffi'r ysgol					
My child likes this school.				100%	0%	0%	0%		hon.					
				73%	26%	1%	0%							
My child was helped to settle			11		11	0	0	0	0	Cafodd fy mhlentyn gymorth i				
in well when he or she started at the school.				100%	0%	0%	0%		ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn yr ysgol.					
	_		_	72%	26%	1%	0%							
My child is making good		11		7	4	0	0	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn gwneud					
progress at school.				64% 61%	36% 34%	0% 3%	0% 1%		cynnydd da yn yr ysgol.					
	T			11	0	0	0							
Pupils behave well in school.		11		100%	0%	0%	0%	0	Mae disgyblion yn ymddwyn yn dda yn yr ysgol.					
				45%	46%	4%	1%		uua yii yi ysgoi.					
		11		11	0	0	0	0						
Teaching is good.		11	11	11	11	11	11	11	100%	0%	0%	0%	0	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
				60%	35%	2%	0%							
Staff expect my child to work		11		9	2	0	0	0	Mae'r staff yn disgwyl i fy					
hard and do his or her best.	-			82%	18%	0%	0%		mhlentyn weithio'n galed ac i wneud ei orau.					
				63%	33%	1%	0%							

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
The homework that is given builds well on what my child learns in school.	11	7 64%	3 27%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r gwaith cartref sy'n cael ei roi yn adeiladu'n dda ar yr hyn mae fy mhlentyn yn ei ddysgu yn yr ysgol.
Staff treat all children fairly	11	47% 10 91%	40% 1 9%	6% 0 0%	<u>1%</u> 0 0%	0	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn
and with respect.		58%	33%	4%	1%		deg a gyda pharch.
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	11	11 100%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
My child is safe at school.	11	59% 10 91%	36% 1 9%	2% 0 0%	<u>0%</u> 0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn yr ysgol.
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation	10	<u>66%</u> 5	31% 5	1% 0	<u>0%</u> 0	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn
to any particular individual needs'.		50% 50%	50% 34%	0% 4%	0% 1%	-	perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	11	8 73%	3 27%	0	0	0	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a	11	49% 9 82%	40% 2 18%	8% 0 0%	2% 0 0%	0	Rwy'n teimlo'n esmwyth ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r ysgol, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
problem. I understand the school's procedure for dealing with	11	62% 7 64%	31% 3 27%	4% 0 0%	2% 0 0%	1	Rwy'n deall trefn yr ysgol ar gyfer
complaints.		44%	39% 3	7% 0	2% 0		delio â chwynion. Mae'r ysgol yn helpu fy mhlentyn i
become more mature and take on responsibility.	11	73% 56%	27% 39%	0% 2%	<u>0%</u> 0%	0	ddod yn fwy aeddfed ac i ysgwyddo cyfrifoldeb.
My child is well prepared for moving on to the next school or college or work.	10	7 70%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol nesaf neu goleg neu waith.
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	10	42% 10 100%	<u>33%</u> 0 0%	4% 0 0%	1% 0 0%	0	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
The school is well run.	11	53% 8 73%	38% 3 27%	5% 0 0%	1% 0 0%	0	Mae'r ysgol yn cael ei rhedeg yn dda.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

William Williams	Reporting Inspector
Jeremy Turner	Lay Inspector
Alan Jones	Peer Inspector
Olwen Corben	Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (<u>www.estyn.gov.uk</u>)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	Ν	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language