



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 Gymuned Penisarwaun
Penisarwaun
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL55 3BW**

Date of inspection: June 2013

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 centre of the village of Penisarwaun in a rural area not far from the foot of Snowdon. Pupils come from the village and the nearby rural area, which is described by the school as one that is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged in any way. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is significantly lower than county and national averages.

There are 44 pupils aged between three and 11 years on roll, including six part-time nursery children and they are arranged into three classes of mixed ages. The school admits pupils to the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Eighty-two per cent of pupils come from homes in which Welsh is spoken as a first language. Welsh is the main medium of teaching. At present, there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Sixteen per cent of pupils have additional learning needs, which is a little lower than the national percentage. A small number of pupils have a statutory statement.

The school was last inspected during the summer term 2007.

The current headteacher has been in post since January 2012. The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Penisarwaun in 2012-2013 is £4,774. The maximum per pupil for primary schools in Gwynedd is £9,577 and the minimum is £2,839. Ysgol Penisarwaun is in 27th place out of the 102 primary schools in Gwynedd in terms of the school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- nearly all pupils give of their best and make good progress in their learning;
- the literacy skills of pupils of all ages are good;
- all pupils feel safe at school;
- learning experiences meet pupils' needs;
- teachers succeed in extending pupils' knowledge and understanding and in developing their learning skills effectively;
- the ability of Year 6 pupils to plan and present some lessons is excellent; and
- the school is a happy and inclusive community.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because of:

- the headteacher's clear and purposeful leadership;
- governors' significant contribution to the school's development;
- the strong effect of self-evaluation on the school's development;
- the headteacher's ability to use performance data to plan improvements;
- the positive effect of partnerships on pupils' standards and learning; and
- the fact that the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that pupils do not have access to the car park during school hours
- R2 Raise pupils' awareness of their role as global citizens
- R3 Give more opportunities for pupils to influence the school's development
- R4 Provide better opportunities for teachers to observe and share good practice with other schools

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

Nearly all pupils give of their best in lessons and make good progress in their learning. Most co-operate diligently on tasks, concentrate well and are alert to being questioned and asking questions. When tackling problem-solving tasks, for example building a model raft that can float when carrying a light load, most pupils make effective use of their thinking skills. Pupils of all ages recall previous learning well and apply it successfully in new situations.

The literacy skills of pupils of all ages are good. Nearly all pupils in the Foundation Phase listen attentively during collective sessions and express their ideas confidently and correctly. They have an interest in books and most of them choose books independently and use a wide range of ways to enable them to read unfamiliar words. By the end of the Phase, all pupils are able to write legibly and use words, phrases and sentences effectively to communicate their ideas.

In key stage 2, nearly all pupils listen attentively during lessons and contribute purposefully in group and class discussions. Most are confident readers and, by the end of the key stage, they glean information in an organised way from various sources, such as books and websites. Throughout the key stage, many pupils are very skilled in using information that they have collected from reference books in English to support their work in Welsh. By Year 5, many pupils write skilfully for a number of purposes and display increasing fluency and accuracy in their work.

Across the school, most pupils apply their problem-solving skills effectively by undertaking investigative tasks, such as designing and building a bridge.

The proportion of pupils who attained the expected outcome (outcome 5) or higher at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 in language, literacy and communication and in mathematical development, was a little lower than the average for the schools in the family. Performance in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity was significantly higher than the average for schools in the family. The school's performance in the three areas was higher than the national averages. However, in comparison with other schools that have a similar proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school's performance placed it in the lower 50% for all learning areas except for personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity, for which it was placed in the top 25%.

Except for mathematical development, the proportion who achieved the higher outcome (outcome 6) in the two other areas was higher than the national average and the average for the family.

As 2012 was the first year for publishing performance data for the Foundation Phase, historical trends in performance cannot be reported on.

In three of the last five years, results for key stage 2 in Welsh and English have placed the school mainly among the top 50% of schools that have a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. Results in mathematics and science have mainly placed the school among the lower 50% during the period.

There is no data report for key stage 2 pupils as the number of pupils who were assessed in 2012 was too small to report on without identifying pupils.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel safe at school and free from any physical or verbal abuse. They have a strong understanding of how to stay healthy and appreciate opportunities to have healthy foods and to develop fitness.

Most 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 for each other. Most of them are industrious and enthusiastic learners who work together harmoniously and keep diligently to the task over extended periods.

From an early age, pupils are very confident when making choices about their learning. They tackle open-ended tasks skilfully, for example when deciding whether they are for or against fox-hunting. Most of them make good progress in their ability to improve their learning.

Pupils have a strong commitment to the school and as they mature, they are very willing to shoulder additional responsibilities in the classroom. A good example of this is their willingness to lead discussion groups. The school council and the eco committee play an important role in the school's social life. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to influence the content of the curriculum and the life and work of the school in general.

Attendance rates are consistently good and during the last five years have been higher than the rates for the whole of Wales. The school is in the top 50% in comparison with similar schools.

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

The school provides a wide range of stimulating learning experiences, which meet the needs of the full range of pupils successfully. Planning in the Foundation Phase is based firmly on the six learning areas and on giving an active role to pupils in their learning. The curriculum at the beginning of key stage 2 builds systematically on pupils' current knowledge and understanding and ensures progression and continuity in their learning. The beneficial range of additional experiences, including educational visits and opportunities to compete and perform in eisteddfodau, enriches pupils' experiences significantly.

Opportunities for pupils to develop key skills, and particularly literacy skills, are planned well. Intervention programmes for pupils who have lower literacy skills

enable these pupils to acquire the necessary skills and to make good progress in their learning.

By studying historical heroes such as Owain Glyndŵr, and visiting the nearby Slate Museum, pupils have valuable opportunities to develop their awareness of Welsh heritage and culture.

The school operates sustainably and pupils play an active part in the recycling arrangements. The 'Tîm Ynni' (Energy Team) works conscientiously to try to reduce energy use. Although the school takes part in a number of humanitarian campaigns, there are very few links with foreign countries. As a result, pupils' awareness of their role as global citizens is limited.

Teaching: Good

Teachers in all classes use an effective range of teaching strategies and present lessons in a lively and enthusiastic manner. Most activities that are provided are challenging and offer good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their investigative skills. Through purposeful intervention and skilful questioning, teachers and practitioners extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and develop their learning skills effectively. The practice of encouraging pupils regularly to evaluate their learning, to express an opinion and to suggest improvements to their work lead to significant improvements in standards and progress.

The practice in key stage 2 of putting the responsibility for planning and presenting a few mathematics lessons in the hands of Year 6 pupils is an excellent feature of the teaching.

Robust arrangements have been established for assessing learning and also assessment for learning. Through purposeful marking, especially at the top end of key stage 2, pupils are given useful guidance on the standard of their work and what they need to do to improve it. The practice of setting improvement targets for all individuals, and of including the pupils themselves in the discussion, promotes good learning outcomes. Each pupil's progress is recorded regularly and assessment information is used skilfully to identify the next steps in learning.

Annual reports to parents are of good quality and give beneficial information to them about their children's progress and wellbeing.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community in which pupils' wellbeing is given a high priority. Staff ensure that the environment is warm and welcoming and that the needs of every individual are met. The school encourages pupils to eat healthily and through physical activities such as running around the school track, and after-school clubs, there is a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to increase their levels of fitness and health.

Pupils' personal, moral, social and cultural development is embedded firmly in the curriculum and the school's day-to-day procedures. The regular opportunities that pupils have to take part in community activities have a positive effect on developing their social skills. The school promotes high values and this helps pupils to differentiate between right and wrong and encourages them to take responsibility for their actions.

Provision for pupils who have additional learning needs is good. Pupils' needs are identified early and, through regular assessments, teachers record their progress and set suitable and attainable improvement targets for them. Pupils and their parents play an active role in arrangements and the school co-operates well with specialist external agencies.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school is a happy and inclusive community in which pupils have an equal right to all educational and social provision. A strong emphasis is placed upon showing respect for all and creating an ethos that fosters care and tolerance. A feeling of contentment and happiness is apparent within the school community. The school applies itself actively to raising money for charities such as Save the Children, and this increases pupils' awareness of equality.

There is enough room in the classrooms and the building is maintained well. There is an extensive supply of purposeful resources that are of good quality in classes, including computer equipment, which is used very effectively by pupils and teachers to support learning and teaching. The school benefits considerably from using the community centre's resources and rooms.

There is a large playground and field that have enough room in them for pupils to play. The area outside the Foundation Phase is used imaginatively to provide an interesting and exciting learning environment. However, there is no gate at the side of the building to prevent pupils from wandering into the car park in front of the school.

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

The headteacher gives clear and purposeful leadership which has a positive effect on the school's development. He has shared his vision with staff and governors. As a result, there is a strong commitment across the school to developing and promoting improvements that strengthen provision and improve standards.

Staff support the headteacher well and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They co-operate closely with each other to create a homely ethos for pupils.

Governors have a probing understanding of the school's strengths and of areas that need to be developed further. They are very comfortable in their role as critical friends to the school. The 'standards groups' that have been established recently have deepened governors' knowledge and have enabled them to contribute significantly to the school's development. This is excellent practice which has enabled the governing body to contribute more effectively to the process of producing a self-evaluation report and creating a school development plan. Governors fulfil their statutory duties fully.

The school is making good progress in introducing local and national initiatives and priorities. Implementing assessment for learning methods in addition to adopting literacy and numeracy strategies are already having a positive effect on pupils' standards and achievement.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation has been established firmly and effectively in the school's procedures. It is based on a wide range of direct evidence such as lesson observations, scrutinising pupils' work, subject reports and the opinions of pupils and parents. The headteacher's ability to analyse performance data in order to identify strengths and improvement needs is a strength. The self-evaluation report is of good quality and gives an accurate picture of the school's current situation.

The school development plan is a comprehensive document that prioritises improvement needs effectively, and there is an appropriate focus on raising pupils' standards.

The school's recent involvement with a professional learning network has improved teachers' understanding of science teaching strategies and has led to improving pupils' research skills. However, there are few similar opportunities for staff to develop and share good practice with other schools.

The school has made appropriate progress in addressing the recommendations that were made in the last inspection report.

Partnership working: Good

The school has good partnerships that have a positive effect on pupils' standards and on learning and teaching practices. Links with the community are very successful and offer valuable experiences.

The relationship with parents and friends of the school is strong and they contribute significantly to ensuring resources and equipment for the benefit of pupils. The school seeks parents' opinion on various aspects of its work. This has strengthened the partnership between the home and the school and has involved parents in the process of maintaining and improving standards.

Strong links with the pre-school organisation ensure that pupils transfer effectively to the nursery class. The school also has a successful partnership with local secondary schools and effective transition arrangements ensure smooth transfer.

Successful standardisation and moderation activities between the secondary school and its cluster of schools help teachers to understand better the expected standards at the end of key stages.

Resource management: Good

The school has thorough budgetary arrangements and expenditure is linked well to the school's objectives, targets and plans. The headteacher and governors monitor and manage expenditure carefully. Staff and financial resources are used effectively to support priorities for development.

Teachers make purposeful use of their planning, preparation and assessment time, and arrangements are managed well. Assistants offer good support and have a positive influence on pupils' attainment. Appropriate arrangements are in place for managing teachers' performance but there are no formal arrangements for support staff. Across the school, all staff benefit from training opportunities that support their continuous professional development and that help to raise standards throughout the school.

A good range of learning resources are managed carefully to ensure that they are suitable for all pupils' needs. Staff training is planned carefully in relation to the school's priorities.

The school provides good value for money in terms of pupils' outcomes, provision and quality of experiences.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The proportion of pupils who attained the expected outcome (outcome 5) or higher at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 in language, literacy and communication and in mathematical development was a little lower than the average for the schools in the family. Performance in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity was significantly higher than the average for the schools in the family. The school's performance in the three areas was higher than national averages. However, in comparison with other schools that have a similar proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school's performance placed it in the lower 50% for all learning areas except personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity, for which it was placed in the top 25%.

Except for mathematical development, the proportion that achieved the higher outcome (outcome 6) in the other two areas was higher than the national average and the average for the family.

As 2012 was the first year for publishing performance data for the Foundation Phase, it is not possible to report on historical trends in performance.

In three of the last five years, key stage 2 results in Welsh and English have placed the school mostly among the top 50% of schools that have a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. Results in mathematics and science placed the school mostly among the lower 50% over the period.

There is no pattern of differences between the sexes from one year to the next. The school's internal data, along with performance at the end of key stage 2, shows that many pupils who have additional learning needs or who receive free school meals, make significant progress in Welsh, English and mathematics during their school career.

There is no data report for key stage 2 pupils as the number of pupils that were assessed in 2012 was too small to report on without identifying pupils.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

All of the 24 learner questionnaires that were completed expressed positive attitudes towards the school and this is much higher than national averages.

All pupils say that:

- they feel safe at school and receive help from teachers and adults to learn and make progress, and the school deals well with any bullying;
- homework helps them to make progress; and
- they know to whom to turn if they find the work difficult.

Most pupils say that:

- there are enough books, equipment and computers to do their work and they are doing well at school;
- other pupils behave well at play time and lunch time; and
- there are many opportunities at the school for them to stay healthy.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifteen parents completed the pre-inspection questionnaire, which is about half of the families at the school. Many questionnaires expressed satisfaction with the school and this compares favourably with national averages.

All parents say that:

- they are satisfied with the school in general, and their child likes school and is making good progress;
- their child had good support to settle in well when he or she started at the school;
- all children are treated fairly and pupils behave well;
- teaching is good and teachers expect children to work hard;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and is helped to become more mature and shoulder responsibilities, and he or she is safe at school;
- they feel comfortable in asking a question at school or raising a problem; and
- the school is well run.

A few parents say that they do not receive regular information about their children's progress and that they do not understand the school's system for dealing with complaints.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

William Williams	Reporting Inspector
Hazel Hughes	Team Inspector
Jeremy Turner	Lay Inspector
Delyth Mainwaring	Peer Inspector
Llŷr Rees	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

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	N	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.