



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

A report on
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bryniago

**Lower James Street
Pontarddulais
Swansea
SA4 8JA**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

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

This inspection was undertaken as part of trialling our new inspection arrangements. As a result, this report may be slightly different in format to other published reports for providers in the sector.

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bryniago

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bryniago
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	Welsh
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	197
Pupils of statutory school age	137
Number in nursery classes	34
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.7%)</i>	12.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 13.2%)</i>	14.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	43.1%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language (categories A-C)	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2011
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	May 2016
Start date of inspection	17/06/2024

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school

Summary

Ysgol Gynradd Bryniago is a hard-working and happy community where all pupils have the opportunity to achieve well. The headteacher has established robust leadership and provides clear direction across the school. She has very high expectations of herself and others. Together, the headteacher, governors and senior leaders identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. Their thorough knowledge of the provision is a strength.

Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress. Teachers plan the curriculum effectively and provide interesting and purposeful learning experiences for pupils. Most pupils are competent mathematicians, write maturely for a range of purposes and achieve high standards in their scientific skills. Staff promote the Welsh language successfully and, as a result, most pupils speak Welsh confidently and develop a strong awareness of their local area and of the history, culture and people of Wales.

Overall, teachers plan learning activities that build well on pupils' previous learning and set high expectations in terms of what they achieve. Most pupils arrive at school ready to enjoy and immerse themselves in their learning. However, staff have a tendency to over-direct learning, which often limits pupils' ability to develop their independent learning skills. By the top of the school, pupils take good ownership of their learning. On the whole, teachers identify pupils' strengths valuably and support them successfully to identify the next steps in their learning.

Nearly all pupils are polite and treat others with mature respect. They interact with each other in a caring and supportive manner, for example through the school councils. Staff provide a stimulating environment which ensures that pupils' well-being is supported well.

Recommendations

We have made 2 recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Provide regular opportunities for pupils across the school to respond to teachers' feedback and identify the next steps in their learning
- R2 Develop the youngest pupils' independent learning skills

What happens next

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

Main findings

The headteacher of Ysgol Bryniago has a strong vision for providing interesting learning experiences and effective teaching. She is passionate about fostering pupils' appreciation of the Welsh language and Welsh history and culture. She has high expectations of herself and staff, which influences successfully on the respect, courtesy and achievement given to pupils. The headteacher, leaders and all staff work together effectively to create a caring and interesting learning environment. The school's shared vision is based firmly on developing well-being and having high aspirations for the whole school community. As a result, most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their school and their '*cynefin*', or local area.

Staff uphold a positive culture which fosters the principles of the school's motto well, which is '*Dim ond ein gorau glas sy'n ddigon da*' ('Only our very best is good enough'). Members of the senior leadership team have clear responsibilities and implement their roles purposefully, for example by working with the local authority to introduce behaviour management methods. However, the role of middle leaders has not been developed fully, which limits their ability to fulfil their wider responsibilities increasingly effectively.

The school has established comprehensive and robust self-evaluation processes for monitoring and improving provision and pupils' achievement. Leaders gather information from various sources and use this information efficiently to identify areas for improvement. As a result, the school's improvement priorities focus firmly on developing pupils' skills and raising their standards. Leaders link professional learning to school and national priorities and the individual needs of staff valuably. Leaders monitor the effect of these activities on provision and, as a result, staff develop their teaching methods to be more consistent across the school. Recently, staff have focused on strengthening reading provision in both languages to support pupils to make progress in their skills. Staff professional learning has had a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and enjoyment of reading across the school. For example, Year 2 pupils show a good understanding of Welsh poems and discuss their content confidently.

Staff provide a relevant curriculum that covers the areas of learning and experience appropriately and challenges pupils to make good progress. 'Bryniago Mawr' teachers encourage pupils to contribute to their learning and include their suggestions when planning a 'menu' for new themes. This engages pupils' interest and provides them with an opportunity to choose what they would like to learn. Staff provide valuable opportunities for older pupils to influence the wider life of the school by contributing to the 'pupil's voice' and participating in projects that have a direct impact on the school. For example, the school council worked in partnership with the county's catering department to adapt the school lunch menu across the county. Most pupils' oral skills develop effectively across the school, for example when discussing the importance of healthy eating. The Criw Cymreictod has also created a video with the Gŵyr cluster of schools to create a channel on social media that promotes aspects that are of interest to young people in Wales in Welsh.

Teachers plan rich opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. The youngest pupils are given opportunities to write in interesting

contexts and use, for example, their shopping lists purposefully to buy different coloured flowers in the garden centre. By Year 2, most pupils write extended pieces well, such as when presenting interesting information about famous Welsh people, such as O.M. Edwards. In 'Bryniago Mawr', teachers provide interesting opportunities that prompt pupils to write skilfully in both languages, for example by producing a newspaper article about a volcano and a report on the history of Pontarddulais.

By the time they reach the top of the school, pupils demonstrate mature thinking skills, for example when investigating the question 'Does the distance of a meteorite affect the width of the crater?' An excellent feature of provision is the way in which teachers provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their scientific skills. This, in turn, fosters pupils' interest and motivation in this area extremely effectively.

Teachers ensure meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop good mathematical skills and apply them in purposeful contexts across the curriculum. The youngest pupils show an early understanding of number, for example when playing a game of catching fish. By Year 2, many read a digital and an analogue clock, using relevant vocabulary correctly. At the top of the school, most pupils develop effective digital skills and use them masterfully to collect data and create graphs based on scientific investigations.

Most of the youngest pupils self-register independently in the morning and understand what they need to achieve in activities organised by staff. As they develop through 'Bryniago Bach', many build appropriately on their personal skills. However, staff have a tendency to provide pupils with too much guidance, which limits their ability to make decisions about their learning. 'Bryniago Mawr' teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills and encourage them to make decisions about the method of recording and presenting their work. As a result, they show infectious enthusiasm and a secure understanding of their learning. Their knowledge of well-known and influential locations in the area is a good example of this.

Teachers across the school plan activities to meet pupils' needs successfully. In the best practice, teachers use a range of purposeful teaching methods that support pupils to identify the strengths and areas for improvement in their learning. They use suitable methods to provide feedback and set improvement targets for pupils; however, this is not implemented consistently across the school. Arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are robust and, as a result, teachers have a good understanding of pupils' achievement. The school works closely with schools in the cluster to share effective teaching and learning practices. This co-operation allows teachers to develop a shared understanding of pupils' progress, by helping them to ensure a consistent and robust method of assessment across the curriculum.

The school provides purposeful, high-quality support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Relevant leaders identify pupils' individual needs at an early stage and ensure that support is tailored to their personal needs. Individual learning plans outline pupils' learning needs clearly, which contributes to teachers' ability to support and plan purposefully for them. As a result, nearly all make good progress against their targets.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' physical and emotional well-being. Activities such as '*milltir meddwl*' ('thinking mile') and specific physical sessions promote positive attitudes to well-being and support pupils to develop good methods to manage their emotions. Staff provide valuable and rich opportunities for pupils to reflect on important ethical issues. They celebrate differences in society during weekly assemblies and daily reflection sessions extremely effectively. This is a strong feature of the school's provision.

Pupils behave well. Teachers and support staff have high expectations in terms of respect and manners. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff and treat their peers, staff and visitors with kindness and courtesy. They have good attitudes to learning and listen conscientiously to staff's instructions while respecting each other's contributions.

The governing body is knowledgeable and hard-working in its role of monitoring and improving the school's performance. It uses relevant methods to evaluate and set priorities effectively, which also ensures that it manages the school's funding effectively.

Additional information

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

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's funding appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

The school's arrangements for the safety of the site are not a cause for concern.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer questionnaires and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers, staff and the governing body/members of the management committee through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- 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' well-being, 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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report refers to different quantities and proportions, e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

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

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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This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).