



*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 Hafod Lon**

**Y Ffôr  
Pwllheli  
Gwynedd  
LL53 6US**

**Date of inspection: 7 December 2010**

**by**

**Mr Glyn Griffiths**

**Under Contract 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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court  
Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

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## Context

Ysgol Hafod Lon is a special day school for learners between three and 19 years of age. All learners hold statements of special educational needs.

There are 38 learners on the register, 25 boys and 13 girls, 34% of them with profound and multiple needs.

The school is situated at Y Ffôr near Pwllheli, Gwynedd. Learners at the school come from the Meirion and Dwyfor areas.

Ninety-five per cent of the learners are of British origin with 38% coming from homes where Welsh is spoken. The child is taught through the medium of the home language and according to his/her needs in a bilingual society.

Two learners are registered in the school but receive their education at Ty Meirion, Dolgellau at the request of the local education authority (LEA).

Seven per cent receive free school meals.

The school has received Healthy Schools, Green Schools and Quality Mark awards.

The school's aims are to educate each learner to their full potential through contributing to their daily lives in their community and supporting their transition from the school to a relevant life within the community.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Hafod Lon for 2010-2011 is £12789, which compares with a national average of £16993 for all special schools in Wales.

The school's last inspection was undertaken in November 2005.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

Hafod Lon is a good school because of the:

- headteacher's vision and sound leadership;
- good progress being achieved by the learners;
- good quality of the teaching, together with effective collaboration between the teachers and assistants;
- learners' good behaviour; and
- high quality of the care and support.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because of the:

- headteacher's leadership and high expectations;
- effectiveness of working in partnership with support services and agencies, and the
- supportive atmosphere that instils confidence in the learners and fosters learning.

## Recommendations

In order to improve, staff and governors at the school need to:

- R1 ensure more challenging provision and opportunities for the more able learners;
- R2 continue to work with the LEA to realise the plans for improving the suitability and quality of the building; and
- R3 strengthen the relationship between the findings of the self evaluation process and the priorities in the school's development plan.

### ***What happens next?***

*The school will prepare an action plan which will show how it will address the recommendations.*

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Standards: Good**

Almost each of the learners, in all key stages, achieves well and makes good progress in relation to their abilities and their targets within the core subjects.

Almost all show outstanding behaviour and make good progress in their skills with very good progress within the skills of language and communications.

They listen intently and respond enthusiastically as they concentrate continually on their tasks and show perseverance.

Learners are proud of their attainments and the more able learners recognise their achievements within their targets. Less able learners use equipment effectively to communicate and to express themselves to others.

Throughout the school, most learners achieve good standards when considering their learning needs. They respond well to individual teaching programmes.

Each learner makes good progress against their previous achievements, and this is noted in their reports and their individual educational plans (IEPs).

More able learners receive opportunities to attend local schools and colleges, as well as receiving experience in the world of work. They show good and relevant application of skills in these situations, and show that they can adapt their relationship, behaviour and personal skills to match different situations.

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Most learners can handle money well and they also have a good understanding of how to use information technology as well as knowing why and how to keep fit and well. They have a good understanding of sustainable issues such as gardening and these experiences show that many of the learners can make decisions, and work effectively with others.

Learners from different groups achieve well against their targets, especially those with autism.

There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls and those who receive free school meals. Almost all learners are proud of their achievements and recognise their progress within their targets.

It is not appropriate to compare the standards learners achieve with national averages or to analyse performance trends over time due to the wide range of special needs.

Almost all learners make good progress in their communication skills. The more able learners show a good range of vocabulary within a specific context and they write simple sentences to express themselves. Older learners answer questions in writing, clearly and concisely.

Learners who have more profound needs make effective use of communications equipment and resources to express themselves.

Almost all the learners, in line with their ability, show a good understanding of English and Welsh and use them effectively, within their abilities, in a variety of situations.

More able learners take advantage of opportunities to attend local schools and colleges and show good and relevant application of key skills.

Almost all the learners throughout the school show good progress in thinking skills, with the older learners showing skills in implementing and making decisions independently.

Many make good use of mathematical skills and handle data well, with the older ones showing independence when shopping or visiting a café.

Almost all learners within the senior section of the school attain recognised qualifications. Results of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Award (ASDAN), show that learners in key stage 4 and post-16 make good progress.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Learners' wellbeing is good.

All learners feel secure and a good number of them state that they receive good support from the staff. They enjoy coming to the school and are eager to learn.

The behaviour of almost all learners is very good, both within and outside the school. Learners' attendance over the last three terms is 94.3%, which is very good when considering the complex needs of some of them.

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The school has gained the First Step of the Health Schools scheme and through the activities of the school council and also curricular activities, learners are very aware of healthy eating and nurturing personal practices such as keeping fit.

Learners play a comprehensive role in the life and activities of the local community. They show outstanding self-discipline skills in making decisions for themselves. They support each other constantly in a variety of activities and show respect for each other and for staff at the school.

Older learners show a good understanding of the skills needed to move forward to the next stage in their development.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

The curriculum has been carefully arranged to respond to learners' personal targets and to statutory requirements, and to offer a broad and balanced range of valuable experiences.

Teachers work together well to present flexible programmes that offer opportunities to improve skills and to use them throughout all the schools activities.

Detailed records are kept of each learner's attainments, and this information is used effectively in planning.

There is effective provision for communicating in Welsh and English, ensuring the inclusion of learners of different abilities.

The provision for enriching learners' understanding and experience of Welsh matters is good.

The school has close links with the community and with employers which helps the learners to develop socially and raises their awareness of citizenship and sustainable issues.

In key stage 4, a variety of experiences can be seen in response to the requirements of the 14-19 Framework with beneficial links with a number of external agencies that help the learners to recognise and to choose their educational path for the future.

The school is a Green School and has received the silver award for its work in aspects of sustainable development. Learners' understanding of environmental matters is good.

Global citizenship is promoted well within the curriculum, nurturing and extending learners' understanding of the importance of respecting different cultures.

**Teaching: Good**

The quality of teaching is good.

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There are effective adaptations to ensure that learners understand the subject and what to do. An outstanding relationship by teachers and assistants instils confidence in the learners and establishes a supportive atmosphere which fosters learning.

Lessons are planned skilfully and a good range of teaching methods are used giving consideration to learners' specific needs. The aims are clear and suitable resources are provided and used effectively. Teachers work together well with external specialists to extend the quality of teaching. Even so, there are some examples where more able learners are not challenged to the utmost.

All teachers make effective use of information technology.

Assessment is effectively implemented and the detailed analysis of data undertaken ensures that staff set suitable targets for each learner.

The system for tracking progress within the core subjects and within the IEPs is robust and the information is used to intervene according to need and to plan for improvement.

The majority of learners have a good understanding of how to assess their work and identify their progress, in line with their cognitive ability. Recording through visual methods also helps them to identify progress against their individual targets.

The expertise of external agencies is used to extend the assessment procedures and this contributes well towards the identification of achievement and areas that can be prepared for improvement.

Annual reports and reviews meet the statutory requirements.

**Care, support and guidance: Excellent**

The school offers excellent care, support and guidance.

The school is good in developing learners' understanding of healthy living and keeping fit.

Extremely effective use is made of expertise and support services to meet the wide range of learners' additional needs.

The school has very effective systems to ensure that any learners with additional learning needs receive care and supportive guidance.

The strategy for improving behaviour and also to meet the needs of learners with autism is extremely effective, with learners being actively involved in the process. The provision for them has been soundly established within the Foundation Phase, and is extended as good practice to the other key stages. The use of external expertise in this context, which is shared with other schools, is excellent and leads the sector.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.



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There is an active school council that provides learners with valuable experiences to develop their communication skills and to make decisions.

The provision for promoting learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

**Learning environment: Good**

The school's exceptional ethos is inclusive and fosters equality and respect towards all learners. Each learner is fully included in all aspects of the school's activities.

The school has a good policy to ensure that each learner and member of staff is free from harassment. There are sound procedures in place to ensure safety. The happy and secure atmosphere in the school is based on inter-relationship and respect between each member of staff and learners.

The size of, and facilities at, the school are no longer sufficient for the number of learners.

The school is well maintained with improvements that include new toilets, a ramp and front door having been implemented.

There are sufficient suitable resources in the school to meet the needs of learners. The appropriate resources and positive environment at the school support the learning well.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Leadership: Good**

Leadership and management of the school are good.

The headteacher has a sound understanding of the school's needs. The management team work closely together to establish clear expectations, within a happy and supportive climate, to improve the provision and standards. They use relevant management information to set clear aims and targets for strategic planning.

Team working is encouraged and appreciated and high expectations and common values that focus on creating the best possible conditions for each individual to develop and flourish are shared. They are reflected well in the school's work and ethos. Specific responsibilities are shared amongst the teachers and assistants and they all make a valuable contribution to the school's development. Good use is made of staff expertise.

Governors undertake their roles and responsibilities conscientiously and show a good awareness of the school's arrangements and the efforts made to improve standards. They take their responsibilities as a critical friend seriously but they are not yet fully involved in setting the school's strategic direction.

Policies and initiatives, including those that satisfy local and national priorities, are constantly implemented. The school has established the Foundation Phase and revised the curriculum in key stage 2 in order to successfully respond to the 2008 requirements. The 14-19 Learning Pathways receives good attention.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement are good.

Arrangements are comprehensive and based on direct evidence from a number of sources. There is a sound culture of self-evaluation. The headteacher, management team and governors show a good understanding of the school's strengths but there is insufficient acknowledgement in the self-evaluation report of matters in need of improvement.

The school carefully considers the opinions of staff, governors, learners and outside groups, including parents and representatives from the local community and specialist agencies, before deciding on priorities.

Arrangements for planning for improvement are good. The school development plan is a useful document that gives clear direction which is likely to lead to further improvement. Even so, there is no obvious link between the findings of the self-evaluation process and the priorities agreed.

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. It has actively taken appropriate steps in response to the key issues. The steps taken have had a positive effect on learners' standards of achievement.

The school is a professional learning community which enables staff to share information and expertise. There are effective networks for working with other schools and partners.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The partnerships with parents, carers, the community and others are good.

Arrangements to enrich these partnerships through supportive procedures are very effective. The formal and informal communication is extremely comprehensive and a clear strength.

Induction arrangements for learners starting at the school are extremely thorough. As a result, learners settle in quickly and the staff create a happy and sound environment for them. There are strong links with local mainstream schools and colleges. There is an innovative development in hand between the school and Bangor University in the behaviour/autism field. Members of staff concentrate well on planning and providing joint resources as well as building capacity for continuous improvement.

The school is undertaking a prominent role to develop collaborative practices with a vast number of welfare and social agencies and services to ensure the best possible opportunities for the more vulnerable learners to attain their potential. These

partnerships contribute significantly towards joint quality assurance and in extending the range of activities available to the learners.

**Resource management: Good**

Management of resources is good.

Staffing and financial resources are managed and used effectively to support and improve the learning and welfare of all learners. The school uses teaching and support staff well and they have the knowledge and expertise to deal with all aspects of the school's curriculum. Teachers use their planning, preparation and assessment time effectively and the arrangements for this are managed well.

Throughout the whole school, there is a good range of resources and good use is made of them. The effect of resources on teaching and learning is regularly reviewed and there is planning for the school's priorities. The school's spending decisions link well with the priorities for improvement and learners' wellbeing. The school gives good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

A minority of parents or carers completed the questionnaire. Almost all expressed support for the school, confirming that their children liked being in the school and made good progress. There was praise from each one for the staff's work, with support, guidance and safety being praised by almost all. All parents or carers believe that the school is helping their children to become more mature and to shoulder responsibilities. Very few believed that learners didn't behave well.

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

Seven learners completed the questionnaire, all of them in key stages 3, 4 or post-16. All learners feel secure, and feel they can speak to someone if they have any concerns. They all feel that they receive enough opportunities for physical exercise, and are of the opinion that they are making good progress in their work. They feel that the teachers are helping them to develop and that there is sufficient equipment available to them. Even so, a few feel that the school does not listen sufficiently to their opinions, educate them sufficiently on how to live healthily, nor encourage them to do things for themselves and shoulder responsibilities.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Mr Glyn Griffiths	Reporting Inspector
Mr Mervyn Lloyd Jones	Team Inspector
Mr Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Mrs Iorville Aubrey	Peer Inspector
Mrs Donna Rees Roberts	School Nominee

Contractor:

EPPC/Severn Crossing Ltd, Suite F2A, Britannic House, Britannic Way, Llandarcy,  
Neath SA10 6JQ

## Copies of the report

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## 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' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 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	R	Y1	Y2	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:

Key stage 1	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