



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 Y Faenol
John's Drive
Bodelwyddan
Nr Rhyl
Sir Ddinbych
LL18 5TG**

Date of inspection: May 2012

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

Ysgol Y Faenol is in the village of Bodelwyddan, about four miles east of Abergele. Most pupils live in the village and its outlying area. A few pupils live outside the school's traditional catchment area. Within the village there are areas of privately owned homes and areas of social housing. Families frequently move into and out of the area.

Currently, 122 pupils attend the school, including 15 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Pupil numbers have remained stable over the past few years. The school is organised into five mixed age classes. Very few pupils speak Welsh as their first language and 13% receive support for English as an additional language. Eleven per cent of pupils come from an ethnic-minority community.

Twenty-nine per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the local authority and all-Wales averages. The school has identified 19% of pupils as having additional learning needs which is close to the local authority average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher has been in post since January 2008.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Y Faenol in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,744 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Denbighshire is £9,248 and the minimum is £2,719. Ysgol Y Faenol is 36th out of the 52 primary schools in Denbighshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils achieve good standards in many aspects of their work;
- the overall quality of teaching is good;
- pupils are well behaved, relate well to others and have an enthusiasm for learning;
- the curriculum is well planned and offers a good range of interesting learning experiences;
- there is a very caring ethos within the school, with all staff providing good support and guidance for pupils; and
- there is effective support for pupils with additional learning needs.

Prospects for improvement

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

- the headteacher is a very effective leader who has established a culture that focuses clearly on improvement;
- the headteacher is well supported by a committed team of teaching and support staff;
- self-evaluation procedures identify strengths and areas for improvement accurately; and
- the school has a good track record in addressing areas identified for improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 improve pupils' use of punctuation, spelling and handwriting;
- R2 develop pupils' knowledge of their role as global citizens and their knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage;
- R3 ensure that lessons provide a good level of challenge for more able pupils;
- R4 raise standards through the consistent use of marking and assessment strategies; and
- R5 strengthen the strategic role of the governing body.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how the school is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The detailed monitoring within the school shows that most pupils make good progress from their starting points.

The achievement and progress of most pupils in lessons are good. They have a sound recall of previous learning and apply their learning confidently in new situations.

Pupils' communication skills develop well across the school. In the Foundation Phase, pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. As they move through the school, pupils develop the ability to listen carefully and attentively to staff and each other. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils speak very confidently. Many provide thoughtful and often lengthy responses, using suitable terms and vocabulary.

Many pupils in the Foundation Phase talk enthusiastically about books and their favourite stories. They handle books well and the more able read simple texts accurately. They make good use of their knowledge of sounds to help them read words they encounter for the first time.

By the end of key stage 2, many pupils are self-motivated and confident readers. They use a wide range of reading strategies. Many read with fluency and expression, paying good attention to punctuation. All talk knowledgeably about a range of authors and the types of books which they have read.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils' writing develops well and by the end of Year 2 many pupils write independently with increasing fluency. Most pupils make steady progress in developing their handwriting and use of basic punctuation. They make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to spell simple words correctly.

Pupils in key stage 2 make very good progress in developing the content of their writing. They organise and present imaginative and factual writing in different ways. All ability groups produce lively and thoughtful work. Pupils' use of interesting vocabulary and their good development of ideas are strong features of their work. However, the presentation of pupils' work, including their handwriting, spelling and use of punctuation, does not develop as well as it should.

All pupils use their literacy skills well to support their work across the curriculum. Most have developed good thinking skills and these are having a positive impact on their learning and the standards they achieve.

Pupils identified with additional learning needs achieve well against the targets in their individual education plans. The individual tracking of pupils' progress shows that boys and girls achieve equally well, relative to their starting points. Nearly all pupils entitled to free school meals achieve well. A few more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.

Across the school, nearly all pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills in Welsh. Most pupils can follow a range of instructions and respond appropriately to questions. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils speak confidently to convey personal information and achieve good standards when writing a range of simple sentences in Welsh. Older pupils read simple texts confidently in Welsh, with good pronunciation and understanding.

Over the past four years, results at the end of key stage 1 have remained relatively stable. Overall, the school has performed well in attaining the expected level (level 2) at the end of the Foundation Phase. The school's performance is above the family and all-Wales averages, except in 2009 when results were weaker overall.

In 2011, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher than expected level (level 3) in English was close to the family average, but in mathematics and science results were below the family average.

At the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has shown continuous improvement over the past four years. Results in 2011 were well above the family average. At the higher than expected level (level 5), results in English have fallen over the past four years and in 2011 were below the family average.

When compared with those of schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school's outcomes at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 have improved over the last four years. In 2011, the school's outcomes placed it in the higher 50% of schools for nearly all subjects.

In many years, the school's results are adversely affected by pupils transferring into the school towards the end of key stage 2 as families move into and out of the area.

Wellbeing: Good

As they move through the school, all pupils develop a secure understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Behaviour is almost always good. All pupils show courtesy and respect to each other, staff and visitors. Pupils feel safe in school and say that instances of poor behaviour are rare. Where such instances do arise, pupils know whom to approach for support.

All pupils clearly enjoy school and have a very positive attitude to learning. They focus well on tasks and work well with others. All pupils develop the skills to improve their own learning and their ability to solve problems. At the start of each topic, many pupils make a valuable contribution towards what they want to learn.

Attendance at about 94% is slightly above the national average and has shown a continuing upward trend over the last four years. The overall attendance rate compares well with that of similar schools. Nearly all pupils arrive at school punctually.

As pupils move through the school they develop good social and life skills. Pupils are well represented by their school council. Members of the school council are

actively involved in making decisions about what happens in the school. Pupils are proud of their school and work well with others within the school as a community. All pupils take increasing responsibility as they move through the school. They have a good awareness of their local community and the world of work.

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

The school meets the needs of learners well through a wide range of stimulating and innovative learning experiences. The curriculum develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills systematically as they move through the school.

All staff work well together to plan imaginative learning experiences for the pupils. Teachers use visitors to school and visits into the community and beyond well to enhance the curriculum. They give pupils appropriate opportunities to contribute their ideas within the planning of their learning.

Many pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide variety of sporting, creative and other extra-curricular activities that enrich their learning. Teachers use homework well to support pupils' learning in a range of subjects.

The school identifies specific groups of pupils who need additional support. Withdrawal groups and very effective learning programmes meet the needs of these individuals well.

Provision for more able pupils is enhanced through structured programmes in school and through partnership work with other pupils of similar ability from neighbouring schools. However, in a few classes, teachers do not plan activities to challenge more able pupils enough.

Planning for the development of pupils' skills in communication, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum is systematic and thorough.

Provision for developing pupils' knowledge of the Welsh language is good. However, the curriculum does not contribute well enough to developing pupils' knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage.

The school provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to learn about sustainability, but is less effective in promoting global citizenship.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good in nearly all lessons. All teachers have established good working relationships with pupils and have high expectations in terms of pupils' behaviour. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Planned activities are interesting and innovative. Teachers ensure that work is appropriate for pupils who are less able. Many lessons provide a good level of challenge for more able pupils, but this is not consistent across the school.

Teachers and support staff work well together in all classes. Teaching assistants support individuals and groups of pupils well. Their work is planned effectively and it makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly in all classes. Records are clear and manageable. Teachers make good use of the information to track the progress of individuals and to plan for future learning.

The school has introduced a range of assessment strategies to increase pupils' involvement in assessing their work. However, teachers do not use these consistently across all classes.

The process of setting targets for individual pupils is well established and has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. Staff give pupils good oral feedback in lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but not all marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve.

Reports to parents are clear and informative. Parents feel well informed about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils. Pupils and parents value the school's safe and caring environment. There are good arrangements in place to support pupils' wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. Pupils learn how to keep safe and there are effective strategies to encourage good behaviour.

Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school encourages pupils to work well with each other and to show respect, care and concern for others. The school's liaison arrangements with a range of external and support services are good. These links provide access to useful information and guidance for pupils and parents. The provision within the breakfast club is highly imaginative and demonstrates the school's commitment to the development of pupils' wellbeing.

The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is very good. Effective systems are in place to identify additional needs early. There are clear, detailed targets for improvement in pupils' individual education plans. Targets are regularly reviewed and updated. Teachers encourage pupils to set their own targets and parents are kept well informed about pupils' progress. Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils with additional needs.

The school has procedures and has an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school is inclusive and offers equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. The school promotes the importance of diversity well. It has a caring ethos and there is an effective, supportive atmosphere in the school, with very good working relations between staff and pupils. There are very effective systems in place to support pupils who may be at a disadvantage.

Accommodation is of good quality and is sufficient for the number of pupils. It is well maintained and provides an environment that promotes learning successfully. The school has a good range of resources that are well matched to pupils' needs. Wall displays are attractive and enhance the supportive atmosphere within the school. The school's outdoor areas and facilities are particularly good.

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

The headteacher has engaged effectively all members of the school community in establishing and promoting a clear direction and vision for the school.

All members of staff work well together and effective teamwork is a strong feature. Staff have clearly defined responsibilities within their teams. They meet regularly to plan lessons, evaluate progress and identify ways in which they can be more effective.

The headteacher implements a planned programme of rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Through appropriate performance management arrangements, she sets staff appropriate objectives for development and monitors their work effectively.

The headteacher and senior staff analyse performance data carefully and use it well to monitor the performance of the school. They evaluate the attainment of groups of pupils within the school and compare it with similar schools across Wales.

The headteacher's reports to the governing body are very thorough. They ensure that the governing body is very well informed about the school's life and work. Governors are very supportive of the school. However, governors do not yet offer sufficient constructive challenge and their role in holding the school to account is not developed enough.

The school is very effective in addressing national and local priorities. The Foundation Phase is well established and the school has used the School Effectiveness Framework to support improvements. The school has established a number of working links with other local schools that focus on improving provision and standards in both literacy and numeracy.

Improving quality: Good

The school's procedures for evaluating the impact of teaching and learning are good. All members of staff contribute to self-assessment reviews. The views of pupils, parents and governors are sought and taken into account. The findings of the self-assessment procedures are firmly based on first-hand evidence. The self-evaluation report is very thorough and it identifies areas for improvement accurately.

The outcomes of self-evaluation inform the priorities in the school development plan well. The school development plan identifies responsibilities, costs and timescales appropriately. Work on implementing the priorities in the school development plan has had a positive impact on the standards pupils' achieve.

Progress towards meeting nearly all recommendations of the last inspection has been good. However, there is still a need to improve the monitoring role of the governing body.

All staff undertake relevant training regularly and much of this has led to the development of innovative approaches to teaching and learning. The effective team work within the school enables staff to share ideas and reflect on their own practice. The school is involved in several training initiatives with other schools. These are having a positive impact on provision for literacy and numeracy and for more able and talented pupils.

Partnership working: Good

The school has effective links with a range of agencies that make a positive contribution to improving outcomes for pupils. The partnership with parents is good. Parents feel welcome in school and are kept well informed, particularly through regular newsletters and a back-to-school programme.

There are beneficial links with the pre-school playgroup, which shares the school building. Detailed transition plans and joint activities support pupils' smooth transition to the secondary school. Partnerships with the local secondary school and the cluster of local primary schools have ensured consistency of teachers' assessments in the core subjects.

The school liaises well with many external support agencies within the local authority, health and social services. Good links with the community and local employers have a positive impact on pupils' knowledge of the local community and the world of work.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its financial resources well, with planned spending allocated to school priorities. The school provides a good standard of accommodation and level of learning resources within the budget available.

There are sufficient well-qualified staff to teach the curriculum effectively. All staff are deployed well to make best use of their time, expertise and experience. There are suitable, well-established arrangements to support the professional development of all staff.

The headteacher and the governing body's finance committee monitor the school's budget carefully and strive to achieve good value for the money it spends. Given the good progress that most pupils make, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Over the past four years results at the end of key stage 1 have remained relatively stable, except for 2009. In the core subject indicator, the school has performed well in comparison with the family and all-Wales averages, except for 2009. At level 2 and above in English, mathematics and science the school has consistently performed in line with or above the family averages for three of the last four years. In 2009 all results were below both the all-Wales and family averages.

When compared with the relative results of similar schools on the basis of proportions of free school meals, the school's results in all of the core subjects rose from the lowest 25% in 2009 to the highest 25% in 2010. In 2011, results for English and mathematics were in the higher 50% and results in science were in the lower 50%.

In 2009, no pupil achieved the higher than expected level (level 3) in English or science, while results in mathematics were close to the family average. In 2011, the percentage of pupils achieving level 3 in English was close to the family average but in mathematics and science results were below the family average.

In key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator was well below the family and all-Wales averages in 2008. However, results have shown continuous improvement over the past four years and in 2011 were well above the family and all-Wales averages.

At level 4 and above, results in English and mathematics followed a similar pattern of improvement to the core subject indicator, although results for 2011 were slightly lower than those for 2010. Results in science have risen steadily. In English, mathematics and science, results have been close to or above the family average.

When compared with the relative results of similar schools on the basis of the proportion entitled to free school meals, results at level 4 and above for each of the core subjects have risen over the last four years to be in the higher 50%.

At the higher than expected level (level 5), results in English have fallen over the past four years and in 2011 were below the family average. In mathematics and science results fell from 2008 to 2010, but rose to close to the family average in 2011.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

Fifty-seven pupils answered the questionnaires.

All pupils feel safe and think school deals well with bullying. They feel they are helped by adults to learn and make progress and they think they are doing well at school. Nearly all pupils say they know what to do and whom to ask if they find their work hard.

Nearly all pupils say they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset. They feel that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work. They agree that there are lots of chances to take regular exercise and that the school teaches them to keep healthy.

Many pupils feel that homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school. They agree that nearly all children behave well at playtimes and lunch times. A quarter of the pupils do not agree with the statement that other children behave well and they can get on with their work.

Overall, learners in Ysgol Y Faenol are more positive in their responses than learners in other schools across Wales.

Parent questionnaires

Twenty parents completed the questionnaires.

All parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed overall satisfaction with the school. They think that their child was helped to settle in well when they started school and they say that their child likes school. They agree that all staff treat children fairly and with respect. They feel that all staff expect the children to work hard and do their best. They think that teaching is good and feel their children are making good progress.

All parents feel their child is safe in school. They all agree that their children are encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise. All parents feel the school is well run and provides a good range of activities, including trips and visits.

All parents think that pupils behave well in school. They agree that the school helps the children to become more mature and responsible. They feel that their children receive appropriate additional support in relation to any particular needs. All parents understand the procedures for dealing with complaints and would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

Nearly all parents feel they are kept well informed about their child's progress. They feel that homework builds well on what their children learn in school and that the children are well prepared for moving on to the next school.

Overall, parents in Ysgol Y Faenol are more positive in their responses about the school than parents in other schools across Wales.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Jane Williams	Reporting Inspector
Chris Dolby	Team Inspector
Peter Haworth	Lay Inspector
Heulwen Burke	Peer Inspector
Rhian Jones (Headteacher)	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

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

Core subject indicator in all key stages

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

All-Wales Core Data sets

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