



*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

## Report of special measures

**Ysgol Yr Esgob  
Lon-yr-ysgol  
Caerwys  
Mold  
Flintshire  
CH7 5AD**

**Date of visit: December 2012**

**by**

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



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**The monitoring team**

Owen Glyn Roberts	Reporting Inspector
Dyfrig Wyn Ellis	Team Inspector
Claire Homard	Local authority representative

## **Outcome of monitoring visit**

Ysgol Yr Esgob is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in May 2011.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from any further follow-up activity.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards, especially in Welsh and science**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

In 2012, all pupils achieved the expected outcomes at the end of the Foundation Phase. The end of key stage 2 results for 2012 show an improvement in the school's performance in all subjects, although the school remains in the bottom 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals. However, the school's rigorous internal tracking system shows that pupils have made significant progress since September 2012. This improvement is reflected clearly in pupils' books. The school has an effective and well organised process for ensuring the validity of end of Foundation Phase and key stage 2 teacher assessment. The Welsh language has an increasingly high profile in the school. There is very good use of incidental Welsh throughout the school. This has resulted in most pupils using Welsh well and developing a good vocabulary. Many pupils have good listening skills and respond appropriately to questions. Nearly all pupils respond to instructions in Welsh. Pupils now read Welsh regularly and, as a result, reading and comprehension skills are beginning to improve. Many pupils can write simple short pieces within limited contexts. Most pupils demonstrate good progression in reading and writing skills, making good use of prior knowledge and understanding. Overall, pupils have made good progress in developing their understanding of scientific principles and their practical skills. At the upper end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils make useful observations and use their numerical skills well to construct tally and bar charts. They also interpret graphical data well. They record their findings systematically and are beginning to draw conclusions and write these at length.

Older key stage 2 pupils complete a wide range of scientific investigations and have developed appropriate skills in predictions and deduction. They use their knowledge of fair testing well in designing experiments. They make relevant conclusions when working in groups. Most pupils show good observational skills and take care to evaluate their findings. They have made further progress in their scientific understanding.

### **Recommendation 2: Improve pupils' key skills in writing, reading and numeracy in key stage 2**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

There has been an effective focus on improving pupils' reading skills. Grouping pupils by ability for guided reading and intervention has impacted well on standards

in reading. Regular reading assessment records are used well to record pupils' progress. Reading books have been catalogued according to their general level of difficulty and pupils use guidelines to help them select books that are appropriate to their reading ability.

Focused reading activities during daily basic skills lessons have also had an impact on raising standards in reading. Higher order reading skills are developing well as teachers in most classes plan effectively for opportunities to develop these skills within lessons across the curriculum.

The majority of pupils are producing extended pieces of writing of a good standard. Most pupils are developing their ability to consistently plan and draft their writing for a range of purposes. Many pupils make good progress in using grammar, spelling and punctuation correctly in their writing in English. There are good examples of imaginative and lively writing. Pupils use their writing skills for a wide range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum. The majority of pupils' work shows improvements in handwriting and presentation. Overall, pupils have developed good skills in using numeracy in different contexts, especially in science. Pupils in upper Foundation Phase and throughout key stage 2 make use of a wide range of numeracy skills in science to collect, record, analyse and interpret data. Older key stage 2 pupils have developed useful skills in interpreting graphical information to make valid predictions.

### **Recommendation 3: Develop effective planning and teaching strategies to provide appropriate challenge for all pupils**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Teachers' planning files show that an interesting and engaging range of tasks is planned for all classes. Teachers' use of differentiation to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities is developing well.

The use of clearly worded learning objectives and success criteria to communicate expectations to pupils has been established and is having a positive effect on their progress. All pupils have personal targets, which are referred to regularly to measure pupils' progress in most classes.

Teachers' and assistants' evaluation of lessons includes useful comments on the progress made in pupils' learning and successfully informs future planning to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.

Assessment in the Foundation Phase class is thorough, ensuring that pupils make appropriate progress in their learning. Learning support assistants contribute well.

In key stage 2, assessment for learning strategies are now being implemented more consistently than in the past, and are beginning to impact positively in raising the standards of pupils' work.

Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, indicating what pupils have achieved and what they need to do next to improve their work. In most cases, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to respond to the feedback they receive.

**Recommendation 4: Improve strategic leadership so that leaders and managers at all levels rigorously challenge underperformance**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The newly appointed headteacher has sustained and further improved on the progress previously made by the school.

There is now a clear vision for improvement based on an effective evaluation of performance data and a revised self-evaluation reporting structure for standards. There is also a new school development plan which focuses sharply on raising standards and addressing all the outstanding recommendations. This has been developed in partnership with staff and governors.

Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work together closely as a team. This has resulted in a whole school approach to implementing strategies and in successfully driving forward change.

Governors visit the school regularly and provide useful reports to the whole governing body. They are very well informed about the school's progress and are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to make further improvements. Many governors now take an active role in monitoring progress and effectively challenge any aspects of underperformance. A comprehensive training programme is in place for newly recruited governors.

**Recommendation 5: Establish a rigorous system of self-evaluation for both learning and teaching that draws on regular quality assurance processes**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has made good progress in establishing an appropriate range of quality assurance processes for self-evaluation. Effective subject monitoring has enabled staff to set realistic targets for improvement as part of the school's development planning. School managers and governors have drawn on a wide range of appropriate evidence to inform the school's most recent effective self-evaluation report. The school is now making good use of standardised tests to gather robust data on pupils' performance in literacy and numeracy. They effectively track pupil attainment using an electronic tracking system.

Staff have worked closely with nearby schools in moderating samples of work and this has helped to inform accurate judgements about standards and provision, and what needs to be done to make further improvements.

Performance management arrangements are now fully embedded and all staff know their targets for improvement well. These processes are having a positive impact on provision and on standards.

**Recommendation 6: Improve the moderation and accuracy of end-of- key stage assessments**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

In the Foundation Phase class, pupils' assessment portfolios are well established and give a clear and accurate picture of pupils' achievements in all areas of learning. The school has strengthened its assessment practices for key stage 2 pupils. There is now a greater amount of evidence from children's work to support teacher assessment judgements at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

In key stage 2, termly assessments in the core subjects are carried out diligently. Pupils' work is assessed and annotated to show what they have achieved. As a result, teachers' confidence and ability in assessing pupils' work has improved. Work samples have also been moderated with partner schools and other schools as part of the local consortium. Teachers have started collecting and levelling samples of pupils' work in the core subjects in portfolios that enable them to focus in detail on standards and skills.

Standardised assessment is now established and teachers are making better use of this to track and support pupils' progress. The school is rigorous in its analysis and interpretation of data, which is effectively used to group pupils and to target underachievement.

<b>Recommendations</b>
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In order that further progress can be made the school should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.