



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 Pont y Gof
Botwnnog
Pwllheli
Gwynedd
LL53 8RA**

Date of inspection: April 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

Ysgol Gynradd Pont y Gof is a Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School. The school is situated in the small village of Botwnnog on the Llŷn Peninsula. The school serves the villages of Sarn Mellteyrn, Llaniestyn and Garn Fadryn. It comes under the charge of Gwynedd local authority.

There are 104 pupils on roll, which includes 12 part-time nursery age pupils. Pupils are divided into four classes. At present, about 7% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly lower than the average for Wales. Eighty-eight per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. In line with the local authority's policy, Welsh is used as a teaching medium in the Foundation Phase; in key stage 2, pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh and English, with the aim of ensuring that pupils are bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary school at 11 years old. About 27% of pupils are on the additional learning needs register and they receive support within the school, including a very small number who have a statement of special educational needs.

The school was last inspected in May 2007. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2005.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Pont y Gof in 2012-2013 is £3,348. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Gwynedd is £9,577 and the minimum is £2,839. Ysgol Pont y Gof is in 93rd place of the 102 primary schools in Gwynedd in terms of 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:

- almost all pupils make strong progress in their learning during their time there;
- it is a homely, caring, safe and orderly community that promotes and supports pupils' wellbeing effectively;
- nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school, are very courteous, participate conscientiously in lessons and are very enthusiastic about their learning;
- it provides a wide and rich curriculum for pupils;
- teachers are dedicated and teaching is consistently sound; and
- staff at all levels have very high expectations of themselves and of pupils.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher leads by example in a very effective way;
- the headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and he conveys it successfully to all stakeholders;
- the headteacher is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and staff;
- the effect of leadership on the school's homely ethos is a very strong element;
- there is a strong feeling of operating as a team;
- members of the governing body undertake their roles responsibly;
- the self-evaluation process is thorough, and
- the school has established effective and constructive partnerships with various organisations to benefit pupils' development.

Recommendations

R1 Ensure that results of teachers' assessments at the end of key stages always recognise the high attainments of the most able pupils

R2 Ensure that all outdoor areas for the Foundation Phase are developed appropriately

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the school to prepare a written case study, which describes the excellent practice that was seen during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Judgement

Nearly all pupils make sound progress in their learning during their period at the school.

Welsh is the natural language of most pupils. Nearly all use polished Welsh confidently in all activities. Foundation Phase pupils make sound progress in their language, literature and communication skills. The majority have a fine vocabulary and they use natural syntax when expressing an opinion and describing what they are doing. They are able to read meaningfully to a standard that is at least appropriate to their age and ability. By the end of the Foundation Phase, the majority are able to write independently in a range of contexts across the curriculum, and they spell and punctuate fairly accurately.

Nearly all key stage 2 pupils are able to converse maturely in Welsh, using idioms and expressions naturally in their conversations and presentations. The majority are able to express an opinion in a very mature way on a range of texts and themes. Nearly all are able to read meaningfully, and express an opinion on books and their favourite authors confidently. They write at length for a range of purposes, and punctuate accurately and convey humour and feeling successfully.

All pupils at the top end of the school are completely bilingual.

Most pupils in key stage 2 develop their oral skills increasingly confidently in English. They are able to read to a standard that at least corresponds with their age, and they vary their intonation appropriately in order to convey meaning. By the end of key stage 2, most of them are able to write at length to a high standard in a range of contexts across the curriculum.

Pupils who have additional learning needs make sound progress and more able pupils achieve very well.

In 2012, 94% of pupils in the Foundation Phase achieve the expected level in relation to their development in language, mathematics and personal skills (the Foundation Phase indicator). This is considerably higher in comparison with the average for the family of schools and Wales. The proportion of pupils who achieve higher than the expected level is inconsistent across learning areas, in comparison with the family of similar schools and Wales averages.

When comparing the school's results with those of similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school performed in the top 50% for the Foundation Phase indicator for 2012.

In key stage 2, 93% of pupils achieve the expected level or higher in Welsh or English, mathematics and science in combination (the core subject indicator) in 2012.

This is higher than the average for the family of similar schools and Wales. However, the trend is uneven over the last four years. The percentage who achieve higher than the expected level is lower than the average for the family and Wales in both languages, mathematics and science.

When comparing the school's results for the percentage who achieves the expected level with similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school performed in the top 50% for the core subject indicator in 2012.

Over a period of four years, there is no obvious pattern of difference between boys' performance in comparison with that of girls, nor when comparing pupils who are entitled to free school meals with the remainder.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school, participate conscientiously in lessons and are very enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils' behaviour and courtesy are excellent in formal and informal sessions. This is a strong feature.

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know to whom to turn for advice or to discuss any concerns that they have. All pupils understand the importance of keeping healthy and take advantage of regular opportunities such as 'Clwb Dal i Fynd', in which they jog or walk for fixed periods in order to keep fit. This contributes well towards their wellbeing and increases their confidence. Nearly all understand the need to eat healthily and older pupils have an understanding of factors that are likely to affect their health. They understand the effect of smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs.

Pupils' attendance percentage is over 96% and shows an upward trend. This places the school in the top 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. Pupils' punctuality is good.

Older pupils respond positively to responsibilities that are given to them, for example looking after the younger children on the yard. They take mature responsibility for their work and show respect and care for others. Pupils take good advantage of appropriate opportunities to express an opinion through their contribution to the activities of the school council, the Fair Trade council and the healthy eating council.

Most pupils in key stage 2 take part in commercial enterprises such as publishing a newspaper and making jam and chutney to sell for profit. They also contribute extensively to the school's charitable work by raising money and taking part in social events in the community. This develops their social skills and life skills very effectively.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

A wide and rich curriculum is provided for pupils, which meet fully the requirements of the Foundation Phase and the National Curriculum. Teachers and assistants work effectively to plan detailed and imaginative tasks that gain pupils' interest. This includes educational visits, extra-curricular activities and regular events in the community. These rich experiences have a positive effect on pupils' standards.

Staff plan purposefully for developing key skills in every learning area, and ensure continuity and progression for all pupils. The range of experiences enables pupils to make comprehensive progress in language, number, information and communication technology and thinking skills. This is a good feature that permeates the school fully.

The school places a strong focus on developing pupils' awareness of Welsh history, geography and culture. This is a strong feature. Older pupils in key stage 2 have studied the history of the Welsh language recently. This has raised their awareness of the language along with national milestones that have sought to maintain and promote use of the language through the ages. Welsh permeates all the school's work and idioms and proverbs receive specific attention in order to enrich pupils' standard of language.

By promoting green school and Fair Trade schemes successfully, the school reinforces pupils' awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship well.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers have very high expectations and they use an appropriate range of methods to motivate all pupils to attain their potential, including pupils with additional learning needs and more able and talented pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum, they explain clearly and motivate pupils effectively. The pace of lessons, probing questioning and teachers' enthusiasm contribute very successfully to developing independent learners.

Learning sessions have been planned thoroughly and the contribution of support staff is considerable. School resources are used effectively to support learning. There is an enthusiastic learning atmosphere in every lesson and there is a particularly good relationship between teachers and pupils. Teachers place good emphasis on meeting the needs of specific groups of pupils. They use a range of procedures that ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The school's arrangements for marking and providing oral feedback contribute considerably to this aim. There are effective opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their fellow pupils and they are all aware of their targets for improvement. Assessment for learning strategies are very robust throughout the school and are a natural part of every lesson.

The school has effective procedures for assessing, tracking and monitoring progress and achievement. Teachers analyse assessment data in detail, and there is a

specific focus on the progress of specific individuals and groups. As a result, the school identifies underachievement quickly and responds very effectively. Staff identify opportunities clearly to extend more able and talented pupils. However, teachers' assessments at the end of key stages do not always give appropriate recognition to more able pupils' high attainments. Reports to parents are clear and comprehensive.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a homely, caring, safe and orderly community that promotes and supports pupils' wellbeing well. It is a very happy place in which pupils feel completely safe. Pupils' health and fitness are promoted very well by sports clubs and other extra-curricular activities. The school is a very important part of the community and provides rich opportunities for pupils to support local cultural and social events.

Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well by planning a wide range of experiences. Useful information is available for pupils and parents about school life through the handbook and the 'Y Gof' newsletter that is provided regularly.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and they are not a cause for concern.

The school identifies pupils who have additional learning needs early through staff discussions and tracking progress. Additional support is provided regularly for specific groups of pupils with a specialist teacher. These arrangements ensure that pupils make sound progress against their targets. More able and talented pupils are challenged in order to achieve high standards. Effective use is made of support from external specialist services, including the service of an educational psychologist and a language therapist. The school complies with the Code of Practice in full.

Learning environment: Good

Ysgol Pont y Gof's ethos is very inclusive. The school is a close and welcoming community and there is a warm and natural atmosphere between staff, pupils, governors and parents. All show a desire to help and support one another's work and equal opportunities are given to everyone. Pupils are encouraged to show respect and concern for others and to help those who are from diverse backgrounds. Pupils show maturity in their dealings with others and, as a result, they are prepared well for the next steps in their education and their life.

Policies, plans and procedures are in place to ensure equal opportunities for all and they promote social equality and diversity. These are known to all stakeholders.

Purposeful use is made of the school's grounds and building for play and learning, based on ideas and recommendations that are made by pupils. Classrooms are colourful and there are adequate resources for the purposes of the curriculum. Polished displays of pupils' work and successes can be seen across the school and these stimulate learning. The school's building and grounds are maintained well and

the various gardens ensure a colourful and welcoming environment. However, not all of the Foundation Phase's outdoor areas have been developed fully to date.

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

The headteacher leads the school by example in a very effective way. Pupils, staff, governors and parents respect him as a leader and as a teacher. He has a very clear vision for the school and he conveys this successfully to all stakeholders. The headteacher is supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher and the management team. Pupils' happiness, progress and high standards are central to all the school's activities and permeate all its activities. All members of staff are committed fully to these principles and act very effectively on them. The effect of the leadership on the school's homely ethos and smooth running is an excellent element.

The school's communication procedures are clear to all who are involved with it. There is a very strong feeling of acting as a team, and members of staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities very conscientiously. They have very high expectations of themselves and of pupils. Staff meetings have a specific structure, which ensure opportunities to discuss key issues regularly, and to focus on standards and progress against strategic priorities. This has a very positive effect on pupils' standards.

Members of the governing body undertake their roles in a responsible and conscientious way. They know the school very well and they have an increasing understanding of the way the school performs. They visit the school regularly to monitor learning and teaching and hold meetings with co-ordinators to discuss developments in specific areas. They act effectively as critical friends and challenge the school as necessary.

The school has addressed a number of national and local priorities very well, and this again has had a positive effect on learning outcomes. The Foundation Phase has been embedded firmly, specific attention is paid to developing pupils' key skills, and to encouraging them to live healthily. The school has committed recently to the 'Gwynedd Language Charter', in order to receive accreditation for its contribution to safeguarding the Welsh language. This has had a very positive effect on pupils' understanding of the history of the language in its context. Staff have developed a number of effective professional learning communities with nearby schools. These involve areas such as the Foundation Phase, mathematics, management and additional learning needs and they have had a positive effect on pupils' standards.

Improving quality: Good

The self-evaluation report is a detailed and appropriate document that is based on the findings of its continuous evaluation procedures. The school uses a wide range of procedures to evaluate its work, and gives good consideration to the opinions of parents, staff and pupils. Leaders and staff respect pupils' opinions and often adopt their ideas, including their contribution to choosing new members of staff.

The self-evaluation process is thorough, valid and based firmly on evidence from monitoring learning and teaching and from analysing a wide range of attainment data of various groups of pupils. As a result, the process and its outcomes identify the school's strengths well so that leaders and managers have an accurate picture and understanding of strengths and issues to be developed.

The school development plan identifies specific and appropriate objectives. These have been chosen as the most prominent objectives following the self-evaluation process. The plan has been costed and includes realistic timescales and appropriate success criteria. Staff and managers review the progress of the priorities regularly, in order to measure their influence on progress and standards.

Staff have very good opportunities to expand their professional knowledge and skills by shouldering responsibilities and through continuous professional development. Performance management arrangements are effective and result in meeting staff's professional training needs. Specific targets for development are based on the needs of individuals, as well as whole-school priorities for improvement.

There are already good examples of strong co-operation and effective sharing of learning practices within the school and with other schools in the catchment area through using the internet and through regular meetings. Foundation Phase staff have contributed extensively to this co-operation, and have benefited greatly when developing their teaching methods in order to meet requirements. Similarly, co-operation on assessment methods and on policies and plans has been beneficial in reducing leaders' and teachers' workload and in ensuring consistency across the school in terms of improving quality and raising standards.

Partnership working: Good

The school has established effective and constructive partnerships with various organisations to benefit pupils' development. It has very strong links with parents and carers and it has benefitted financially and practically from their support. There are very effective partnerships with the community and this has a positive effect on pupils' participation. The school works very successfully with other primary schools in the catchment area. They meet every month to share and promote good practice. Links with an appropriate range of supportive agencies have led to ensuring very good support for pupils' wellbeing.

The school works closely with the secondary school to moderate and standardise work in the core subjects and present joint projects. There is close co-operation between the three local primary schools to share experiences in terms of developing staff and assistants, and to share ideas, successes and presentation methods for various subjects, such as mathematics. This has had a strong influence on raising standards.

There is a close link between the school and the nursery groups that feed it. This has resulted in very good transfer arrangements for pupils who start at the school. Similarly, there is a comprehensive programme of activities and visits for pupils who are about to transfer to the local secondary school. This ensures that pupils settle quickly at their new school.

Resource management: Good

Leaders manage resources that are allocated to the school very effectively to enrich the curriculum, including its learning resources, and its staff's expertise and experience.

Members of staff have good levels of knowledge and expertise in order to meet pupils' needs. They co-operate very effectively and efficiently together. Teachers make very good use of their planning, preparation and assessment time. The way in which this time is managed contributes effectively to maintaining the continuous improvement in pupils' wellbeing and attainments, especially in the creative aspects of the curriculum.

Leaders allocate funding effectively in order to meet the priorities of the school development plan. Expenditure is noted carefully, especially for staffing and other necessary resources. The headteacher audits the budget regularly, and the governing body's finance committee meets regularly to review the situation.

Considering pupils' standards, the ethos and care, the quality of teaching and the strong links with partners, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Ysgol Gynradd Pont y Gof is the eighth school in terms of challenge in the family of similar schools.

In 2012, 94% of Foundation Phase pupils achieved the expected level in relation to their development in language, mathematics and personal skills (the Foundation Phase indicator). This is significantly higher in comparison with the average for the family of similar schools, where 83% achieved the core subject indicator, and the average for Wales, where the average was 80%. The proportion of pupils who achieved higher than the expected level in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity was higher than the average for the family and Wales. The proportion of pupils who achieved higher than the expected level in mathematical development and language, literacy and communication in Welsh was lower than the average for the family and Wales.

When comparing the school's results with those of similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school performed in the top 25% for personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. It performed in the top 50% in terms of language skills, and in the lower 50% in terms of mathematics skills.

In key stage 2, 93% of pupils achieved the expected level or higher in Welsh or English, mathematics or science in combination (the core subject indicator) in 2012. This was higher than the average for the family of similar schools, where 89% achieved the core subject indicator and the average for Wales, where the average was 83%. The trend is uneven over the last four years. The percentage who achieve higher than the expected level is lower than the average for the family and Wales in both languages, mathematics and science.

When comparing the school's results for the percentage who achieve the expected level with those of similar schools in terms of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school performed in the top 25% for Welsh, in the lower 50% for mathematics and science and in the bottom 25% in English.

Over a period of four years, there is no obvious pattern of difference between boys' performance in comparison with that of girls, nor when comparing pupils who are entitled to free school meals with the remainder.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Pupil questionnaires

Fifty-one responses were received from pupils.

All are of the opinion that:

- they feel safe at school;
- the school deals well with any bullying;
- they know to whom to speak if they are worried or anxious;
- the school teaches them how to stay healthy;
- there are many opportunities at school for them to do physical exercise;
- they are doing well at school;
- teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress;
- they know what to do and to whom to speak if they find their work difficult;
- their homework helps them to understand and improve their school work;
- there are enough books, equipment and computers for them to do their work;
and
- other children behave well and that they are able to do their work.

Nearly all are of the opinion that:

- nearly all children behave well at play time and lunch time.

The responses of pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Pont y Gof compare positively with the average responses of pupils across Wales in every statement.

Parent questionnaires

Of the 39 responses that were received from parents:

All were of the opinion that:

- they are satisfied with the school in general;
- their child likes this school;
- their child received support to settle well when he/she started at the school;
- their child is making good progress at school;
- teaching is good;
- staff expect their child to work hard and do their best;
- homework that is given builds well on what children are learning at school;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to do physical exercise regularly;
- their children feel safe at school;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any specific individual needs;
- they receive regular information about their child's progress;

- they feel comfortable about asking the school a question, making suggestions or raising a problem;
- they understand the system for dealing with complaints;
- the school helps their child to become more mature and to shoulder responsibility;
- their child has been prepared well for moving on to the next school; and
- the school is well-run

Nearly all were of the opinion that:

- pupils behave well at school;
- staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect; and
- there is a good variety of activities available, including trips or visits.

Ysgol Gynradd Pont y Gof's parents' responses compare positively with the average responses of parents across Wales in all statements.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Huw Watkins	Reporting Inspector
Buddug Bates	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins	Peer Inspector
Euros Wyn Davies	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.