



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

A report on

Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon

**Trefeglwys
Newtown
Powys
SY17 5PH**

Date of inspection: July 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon

Name of provider	Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon
Local authority	Powys County Council
Language of the provider	Bilingual
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	131
Pupils of statutory school age	96
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	26
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 21.3%)</i>	6.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 22.2%)</i>	15.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	32.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	30/04/2013
Additional information	

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

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

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

Overview

Pupils at Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon enjoy learning and are enthusiastic during lessons and in activities around the school. They have strong attitudes to learning due to the positive working relationship with their teachers and assistants. As a result, a contented and inclusive environment permeates the school and the Welsh and English stream work successfully with each other.

The school environment promotes beneficial learning opportunities and most pupils learn productively and delight in their lessons. Teaching is sound and, although consistency needs to be ensured in practices when responding to pupils' work, the teachers' passion towards making improvements meets pupils' needs effectively. This helps most pupils to make purposeful progress in developing their skills and understanding and they achieve well from their starting points. Planning is detailed and includes an interesting range of learning experiences that are provided for pupils. However, planning does not support effective and consistent progression in pupils' skills as they move through the school.

All staff promote a positive ethos of support and care for pupils in all areas of the school. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own wellbeing and behaviour well. As a result, their self-discipline contributes to their positive attitudes to learning and their resilience to persevere with tasks. Staff motivate pupils to gain confidence in themselves as individuals, in addition to developing respect and sensitivity towards the feelings of others.

Pupils' speaking and listening skills are a strength across the school and they make swift progress in their reading in digital skills as they move through the school. As a result, most pupils use these skills successfully across all areas of the curriculum. However, a minority of pupils do not develop their extended writing skills and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum wholly effectively.

Leaders evaluate the school's work thoroughly in planning for improvements. The headteacher provides robust and purposeful leadership and is determined to succeed for the benefit of pupils and the local area. The senior management team and governors share her purposeful vision and work well together to ensure that the school succeeds.

The headteacher shares responsibilities effectively among the staff and provides meaningful opportunities for their professional learning. This contributes to a thriving whole-school ethos where, on the whole, staff and particularly pupils, feel that they are valued for their contributions to school life.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' skills and raise their standards of extended writing
- R2 Ensure that pupils apply their numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum
- R3 Plan effective progression in pupils' skills as they move through the school
- R4 Ensure consistency in practices when responding to pupils' work across the school

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

On entry to the school, many pupils' basic skills correspond to, or are lower than, what is expected for their age. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress in their learning. As a result, they achieve effectively in line with their knowledge and understanding across the Welsh and English streams.

Most pupils listen exceptionally well to adults and each other and respond confidently to presentations. For example, they respond conscientiously to the teacher's detailed instructions when learning vocalising techniques and singing 'Over the Rainbow' as part of their theme. The oral skills of the school's youngest pupils are developing successfully. By Year 2, they speak enthusiastically about how the colours of the rainbow are formed. Most of the school's older pupils develop polished oral skills in Welsh and English. They communicate effectively and contribute purposefully to class discussions, expressing their views clearly and maturely. Most pupils take pride in the Welsh language and use it naturally when talking to each other in their classes and around the school. Pupils in the English stream also develop positive oral Welsh skills.

Many pupils' reading skills are developing well. The youngest pupils use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words correctly. By Year 2, they use their reading skills confidently and explain the content. Many older pupils read intelligently in various contexts. They vary their tone of voice and use punctuation purposefully to show their understanding. They also develop their higher-order reading skills purposefully to gather information from different sources. For example, when finding information about Nelson Mandela as part of the theme work, they deepen their understanding of fairness, justice and the rights of others.

Many pupils' early writing skills are developing well. By Year 2, many write in an appropriate range of contexts for different audiences, such as collating a fact file about the Arctic fox. Many of the school's older pupils build on their writing skills successfully and show a sound grasp of familiar spelling patterns, paragraphs and punctuation. They adapt the style and structure effectively for different topics. For example, they write a formal letter to apply for an imaginary job as an animator and write a biography of Williams Shakespeare purposefully. However, the standard of a few pupils' extended writing does not build on the skills that have been introduced to them in language lessons.

In the school's youngest years, most pupils make good progress in their mathematical development. In the reception class, pupils have a sound grasp of number facts up to 20 and, by the end of Year 2, they count numbers up to 100 confidently. They also succeed in describing the characteristics and properties of three-dimensional shapes correctly when building the giant's castle in the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. By the top of the school, most pupils develop their mathematical knowledge effectively. For example, they draw acute and obtuse angles confidently and use data collection programs successfully when comparing the temperature of the hottest and coldest places on earth. However, although most

pupils have a sound understanding of mathematical concepts, a few do not apply their numeracy skills to the same standard when applying their skills across the curriculum.

Most pupils apply their digital skills skilfully. They log in to digital platforms confidently to access their work. Many Year 2 pupils make good use of appropriate software, such as drawing pictures on a screen to explain the lifecycle of a butterfly in the correct order. Many older pupils make mature choices about the most effective equipment and software to use for different purposes. They use a range of programs to present information skilfully, such as inserting sound clips, text, graphics and video clips to create a presentation on the Mount Nyiragongo volcano in Japan.

Nearly all pupils' physical skills are developing soundly though a variety of stimulating experiences and activities. For example, the youngest pupils apply themselves enthusiastically to balancing and travelling along adventure trails outdoors and folk dancing. The oldest pupils also develop their physical skills well by taking part in activities such as creative dance, yoga and swimming.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils feel safe within the school's caring and familial ethos. They know whom to approach for advice if anything is worrying them and are confident that staff respond immediately to any concerns they have. Most pupils believe that they are treated with respect and that their contribution to school life is valued and conveyed purposefully in the school motto: *'Pawb o bwys yn ein hysgol ni'* ('Everyone matters in our school').

Most pupils show pride in their local area and their school and take pride in the Welsh language and their heritage. This contributes robustly to pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning and their contributions are at the heart of the school's ethos and vision. For example, all pupils have succeeded in crystallising their principles for learning and their pride in the school by composing words for the new school anthem led by members of a contemporary band from the surrounding area. This contributes successfully to pupils' wellbeing as it motivates them to understand that their local area is very important to their future.

Nearly all pupils' behaviour in lessons, activities and during break times is commendable and praiseworthy. They are polite and considerate of others and treat familiar adults, peers and visitors with obvious respect and care. Across the school, most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively to presentations and instructions from adults and concentrate for extended periods while applying themselves to their tasks. Most work conscientiously and harmoniously with their peers, for example when working with a partner to plan healthy food recipes.

Most pupils contribute purposefully to what they learn and succeed in having a positive influence on class themes. For example, they take advantage of the opportunity to share their interests and aspirations when contributing to mind maps at the beginning of the termly theme. As a result, they develop the ability to make decisions and reflect on their learning, such as participating with curiosity in their challenges independently.

Most pupils are beginning to develop relevant thinking techniques to help them to succeed and persevere when solving problems before seeking support. For example, pupils use strategies such as *'Meddwl, Mêt, Tria Eto a Miss'* ('Think, Friend, Try Again and Miss') effectively to progress with their tasks. As a result, pupils across the school develop resilience and confidence when persevering with their work in their classes and when engaging in adventurous tasks outdoors.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and understand the beneficial effect of physical exercise on their health. They participate enthusiastically in a range of physical activities, such as '10 a day', which is planned purposefully by the school's bronze ambassadors to develop healthy and confident individuals. Pupils have a sound knowledge of what they need to do to stay safe online.

Many pupils develop as ethical and knowledgeable citizens through their awareness of fairness and equality. They respect the needs and rights of others as part of a diverse society. A good example of this is the way in which they research the history and life of the leader, Martin Luther King, and consider what contributes to a society that respects human rights.

Pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning are sound because of their enthusiastic involvement in developing their creative skills. Most pupils across the school are willing contributors in developing their artistic skills. For example, the youngest pupils are adventurous when experimenting successfully with a variety of media, such as using watercolours skilfully to paint a live bean plant. Most older pupils also develop their skills as ambitious and creative participants effectively. They contribute eagerly to their theme on the roles of specific workers in their rural area, such as the vet.

Many pupils, including those with ALN, are willing to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities. They play a productive part in the school's life and work as members of the school council and other various committees. Representatives undertake their work enthusiastically through a variety of activities and, by doing so, make a valuable contribution to the school's life and work. For example, members of the eco committee collect crisp packets to be recycled to create blankets for homeless people.

Following the pandemic, inspectors are not reporting on pupil attendance rates during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. However, the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance is reported on as part of inspection area 4.

Teaching and learning experiences

The professional relationship between staff and pupils is sound. Staff know the pupils well and tailor activities purposefully to meet pupils' needs, including those who need support with their work. Assistants provide these pupils with diligent support and know when to intervene and when to allow them to complete their work independently. The lively pace of many lessons engages pupils' interest skilfully and motivates them to persevere and succeed. However, at times, introductions to lessons are long and, as a result, a few pupils lose interest in their learning.

Teachers' and assistants' teaching is sound and pupils receive a range of experiences to develop their skills across the curriculum. For example, Year 3 and 4 teachers provide challenging opportunities for pupils to compose and present songs with musical symbols. As a result, they sing with movement and meaning while following 'mezzo forte' and 'mezzo piano' instructions intelligently. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 also write letters and make films to persuade politicians to stop using plastic as part of their campaign to try to save the world's oceans.

Teachers plan a variety of engaging experiences, in line with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales, which motivate most pupils to make good progress from their starting points. For example, teachers provide stimulating activities that promote pupils' interest in their local area when studying Trefeglwys by creating a mural of the village in the school foyer with support from a famous artist. The youngest pupils also use moral vocabulary and concepts by attending an imaginary Christening for 'Blodyn the doll' at the local church. However, although a host of experiences is provided to support pupils to make progress in their skills, planning does not build systematically on these skills wholly effectively from one year to the next. As a result, a minority of pupils do not make enough progress in applying their extended writing skills and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Teachers encourage pupils to contribute their views about what they would like to learn well by completing mind maps together at the beginning of a theme. They pay good attention to pupils' suggestions when planning activities across the curriculum. They welcome their views and use them effectively when preparing activities. For example, following pupils' suggestions, the oldest pupils went to the local shop to create bilingual signs for the owner. As a result, pupils are keen to share their experiences with others in the local area and beyond.

Provision for personal and social education develops pupils' understanding of their wellbeing and identity successfully. The curriculum gives good consideration to global events and the diversity of the world. Teachers also plan activities that reflect the cultural heritage of Wales successfully and all staff promote the advantages of learning Welsh effectively.

Teachers use assessment activities and appropriate practices when responding to pupils' work during lessons. In the most effective practice, teachers share feedback skilfully orally to challenge and assess the quality of pupils' learning and target any needs promptly. Pupils' also have valuable opportunities to respond to their teachers' feedback and written comments. However, practices to respond to pupils' work are not consistent across the school. As a result, this hinders the understanding of a minority of pupils of what they need to do to improve their work and progress to the next step in their learning. At the end of the year, parents and carers receive comprehensive annual reports on their child's progress.

The school provides a calm and interesting learning environment where all areas are used purposefully to support pupils' learning. Staff across the school create attractive displays and learning areas inside the building to stimulate pupils. Staff use the outdoor areas that are available well, where opportunities are planned purposefully for pupils to make choices about what and how they choose to learn. This includes making cakes in the mud kitchen and building castles in the reception class and role-

playing on the stage in Years 1 and 2. This provides valuable opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in practical situations.

Care, support and guidance

The close relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils lead to a caring community with a friendly and warm ethos. Teachers and assistants know the pupils well and respond purposefully to their emotional and social needs. Staff's attitudes and the positive atmosphere in all classes support pupils to settle easily and contribute well to school life. This reinforces their satisfaction and wellbeing and encourages pupils to foster resilient attitudes to learning.

Teachers follow established systems to gather information about pupils' progress and achievements as they move through the school. These include formal assessments and informal records, which intertwine to create a comprehensive picture of the individual. As a result, teachers and assistants assess pupils' achievements and wellbeing in detail, which means that staff develop a sound understanding of the needs of all pupils. For example, if staff identify areas for improvement, they work with the ALN co-ordinator to provide purposeful support programmes to improve pupils' learning and their personal and social skills.

Support programmes to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and wellbeing are structured and effective and most pupils enjoy taking part in these activities. As a result, nearly all pupils who are targeted make good progress from their individual starting points. Support sessions that focus on pupils' wellbeing are effective and support a few pupils to 'check in' and 'check out' at the beginning and end of the day to discuss their feelings. This enriches their self-respect and social skills and enables them to share their feelings with others successfully.

The school works effectively with external agencies to provide specialist support for pupils. They support pupils with educational, emotional and social needs skilfully. For example, the ALN co-ordinator has worked closely with local schools through their co-ordinators' group. This leads to valuable support for staff to understand their changing roles when supporting pupils with additional needs. As a result, pupils receive caring and inclusive support.

The school places a strong emphasis on providing a range of trips and visits to support the curriculum. Although the pandemic has hindered these experiences, the oldest pupils have recently been on a residential trip to the Elan Valley. Pupils have also visited local country parks and chicken farms, which engage and maintain their interest in learning successfully. Discussions about global disasters, such as the war in Ukraine, also promote pupils' understanding of the importance of values such as tolerance and the right to be free from harassment. These activities make a positive contribution to pupils' social skills and cultural understanding. Purposeful opportunities are also provided to celebrate Welsh heritage and culture, including local stories such as the tragedy of Siôn y Gof ('Siôn the Blacksmith') in Dylife and the legend of Sabrina and her life in a bottle in the River Severn.

The school introduces sensible activities that investigate human rights and make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. These structured approaches in personal and social education lessons include opportunities for pupils

to investigate issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion from all around the world. A positive element of lessons is that they encourage intelligent discussions by pupils, which develop their thinking and communication skills successfully. For example, older pupils compare Christian and Jewish beliefs and consider the glory and tragedy surrounding the lives of international heroes.

The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of keeping safe. For example, the school uses agencies, such as the police, to draw pupils' attention to the dangers of substance misuse and teach them about the rules of online safety. Any persistent absences are also monitored thoroughly and the school addresses any cases of alleged bullying well.

All staff understand their roles and responsibilities in contributing robustly to pupils' safety and wellbeing. They ensure that pupils' wellbeing and safety are prominent elements of school life. Leaders have embedded a culture of meaningful safeguarding among all staff and practices are an integral part of their daily responsibilities. As a result, the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management

The headteacher places the wellbeing of pupils and ensuring progress in their learning at the heart of her vision. Governors support her philosophy and, on the whole, staff act diligently on leaders' expectations. Leaders strive to create and embed a caring and inclusive ethos among all staff and pupils. As a result, staff and pupils take pride in the school anthem and act thoughtfully on lines such as '*A phawb yn parchu ti a fi*' ('And everyone respects you and me'). This positive mindset and the effort by leaders to create an ethos of co-operation has a purposeful effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and their care towards each other.

Arrangements to distribute leadership roles and hold staff to account for the quality and effect of their work are developing well and derive from sophisticated performance management practices. Leaders focus on refining the quality of teaching and embedding a common understanding of professional values among the staff. As a result, by creating better consistency in the school's practices over recent years, leaders have ensured that staff's actions are consistent and focus on providing agreed processes for the benefit of pupils. For example, planning for the Curriculum for Wales is developing effectively and starts with the local area as a prompt, which includes interesting stories about the Clywedog reservoir.

Leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. There is a robust link between self-evaluation activities and improvement planning. As a result, leaders prioritise their findings effectively and set reliable targets to move the school forward, such as improving pupils' oracy and reading skills after the pandemic. Leaders also share the school's culture of safeguarding with all staff.

Leaders' processes to evaluate the effectiveness of provision are well-established and based on a wide range of first-hand evidence. Quality improvement systems include holding discussions with pupils about their work, monitoring teaching as part of staff performance management arrangements and analysing data that measures pupils' progress. Leaders gather the views of other partners effectively, consider the

views of parents and act sensibly on any findings. For example, they use an app successfully to show parents pupils' daily experiences regularly.

Leaders ensure that relevant learning opportunities are available to staff to support their professional development, which link closely with the school's priorities for improvement. One of the positive features of the process is that staff develop skills that they use effectively to improve pupils' outcomes. For example, leaders organise training to develop planning further in response to national expectations and ensure linguistic progress across the school by using a useful oracy scheme.

The school visits the cluster schools and schools across Powys to experience their effective practices and this supports the school's ability to improve continuously. This strategy provides valuable opportunities for teachers to compare and share their effectiveness with other professionals. As a result, staff are given productive opportunities that develop their professional knowledge, their teaching and their leadership skills. This culture of professional learning improves the practice and teaching of all staff in the classroom and outdoors.

Leaders ensure that staff make the best use of the building and grounds. This includes interesting outdoor areas, such as a woodland, planting areas and adventure trails. Leaders allocate resources effectively and use the pupil development grant sensibly to provide specific support programmes and training across the school. As a result, assistants provide beneficial support to move pupils forward in their learning.

The input of governors through sub-committees and the full governing body creates systematic improvements across the school. The current governors are supportive of the headteacher and hold her to account as critical friends. The headteacher informs governors intelligently about pupils' learning and they act well on improving provision, such as installing a canopy and outdoor equipment to develop outdoor activities. Governors promote effective practices to ensure that pupils eat and drink healthily and leaders advise parents on the importance of nutritious food in their lunchboxes.

Governors take advantage of developing a first-hand understanding of the school's activities, which is beneficial in making improvements. For example, they conduct learning walks and discuss work with pupils online to measure pupils' understanding of their work. This allows governors to develop a valuable awareness of the school's current practices. Governors monitor funding regularly and ensure that decisions on expenditure align with the school's priorities for improvement, such as investing in additional staff to develop the Welsh language across the school.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

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

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

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

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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