



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Deganwy  
Park Drive  
Deganwy  
Conwy  
LL31 9YB**

**Date of inspection: February 2020**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Deganwy

Ysgol Deganwy is situated in the seaside town of Deganwy in Conwy local authority. It is categorised as a predominantly English medium primary school but with significant use of Welsh. Around a quarter of the curriculum is taught through the medium of Welsh in key stage 2. There are 330 pupils on roll between the ages of 3 and 11, including 41 pupils in the nursery who attend on a part-time basis. Pupils are taught in 13 mixed-age classes.

The three year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 11%, which is below the national average of 18%. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school identifies that 18% of pupils have special educational needs. This is slightly below the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special education needs. A very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds or learn English as an additional language.

The last inspection of the school was in October 2012 and the headteacher was appointed in September 2013.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

The school is a highly successful learning community that meets the needs of all learners including those with special educational needs and vulnerable pupils who are experiencing temporary or longer term emotional and social challenges. The support provided by the skilled staff has a positive effect on the achievements of pupils with special educational needs and their eagerness to engage positively with their learning. An exceptionally good feature of school life is the courtesy and respect that nearly all pupils show towards their peers, staff and visitors.

One of the school's exceptional strengths is the masterful way in which leaders have developed a natural Welsh ethos and include the culture of Wales as a focus across its curriculum. This is having a positive effect on pupils' skills and enthusiasm towards the language and its heritage.

Leaders have high expectations to ensure the wellbeing and progress of all pupils and in developing them as independent learners from a very young age. Teachers plan stimulating and interesting activities for pupils, which develop them as ambitious, confident and knowledgeable individuals. They provide them with rich and challenging learning experiences within a stimulating learning environment. This contributes effectively towards the creative learning environment that exists, in which pupils are encouraged to succeed.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Address the health and safety issue identified during the inspection
- R2 Ensure that teachers provide pupils with opportunities to learn about all the aspects of religious education as described in the agreed syllabus
- R3 Improve the skills of all leaders further in evaluating the school's work

## **What happens next**

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare case studies on its work in relation to developing Welsh effectively in a predominantly English medium school and its effective planning and support that meets the learners with special educational needs for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Excellent

Around a half of the pupils start school with literacy and numeracy skills at or above the level expected for their age. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress towards their individual targets. Most pupils who receive additional support for aspects of literacy, make very good progress and meet their challenging and aspirational personal targets successfully. Across the school, most pupils develop well as competent, independent and resilient learners. They develop highly effective thinking skills and problem-solving skills and apply them successfully in a wide range of creative activities.

Overall, the standard of oracy across the school is exceptionally high. Most pupils listen attentively to adults and peers. Most are confident speakers and articulate themselves well in a wide range of situations. In the early years, many talk confidently in the role play area where they describe Fireman Sam's rescue operation as part of their topic. Most pupils in key stage 2 develop their speaking and listening skills extremely well. By the end of the phase, most pupils use high order reasoning skills confidently when discussing their scientific investigation on the effects of air resistance on parachutes of various areas, for example.

Many pupils in the foundation phase enjoy reading. From a young age, most make good progress in recognising an appropriate range of letters and sounds and use this knowledge well to read simple words. As they move through the school, most make strong progress in their reading skills. They read with accuracy and fluency and use a wide range of strategies effectively when faced with unfamiliar words. In key stage 2, most express their preferences for different authors and types of books confidently. Nearly all use high order reading skills successfully to skim and scan text, such as when discussing the characters and plot in a story.

In the foundation phase, many pupils write appropriately for a range of purposes. In year 2, many use a wide range of vocabulary and adjectives to good effect, for example when writing a diary about the best day of their life. In key stage 2, most pupils make sound progress in their writing skills. Most write successfully for a range of different purposes. They use imaginative language and rich vocabulary to create impact such as a persuasive piece of text to encourage shoppers to buy certain items in the local toy shop. Most pupils organise their ideas into paragraphs and apply their knowledge of more complex sentence structures successfully. Across the school, pupils use their literacy skills effectively across the curriculum.

One of the notable strengths of the school is the way it has successfully developed a strong Welsh ethos where nearly all pupils have a positive attitude to learning and using the language. In the early years, most pupils respond well to Welsh Nursery rhymes and songs. They are confident to answer and follow bilingual instructions and commands. Many pupils use appropriate phrases such as 'Mae hi'n oer heddiw' and 'tydy hi ddim yn yr ysgol heddiw' confidently during registration sessions. Pupils develop their Welsh language skills successfully as they progress to key stage 2. By the end of the phase, many speak Welsh confidently using language patterns they

have learnt, for example when talking about Owain Glyndwr as part of their history work. Across the school, pupils are eager to engage in Welsh conversations outside of designated Welsh lessons. By the end of the foundation phase, many write short descriptions of themselves by using a structured framework with ease. As pupils progress through key stage 2, few more able pupils vary sentence structure and develop their writing well. These skills are developed effectively when writing a Fact File about one of the castles in Wales.

Throughout the foundation phase, nearly all pupils develop a strong understanding of number, measures and data. Many younger pupils in the foundation phase count successfully up to 10 and beyond and use addition strategies well to work out simple calculations. Most pupils apply their numeracy skills well in a range of topics and during outdoor learning activities. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils calculate the time that frozen dinosaur eggs will melt in three different locations, such as on the windowsill, a radiator and outside. Most apply their reasoning skills successfully in a range of problem solving activities. Across key stage 2, most pupils apply their skills effectively in a thematic context and work methodically and to a high standard in a range of mathematical and numeracy activities. For example, most Year 4 pupils use scale on maps effectively to measure the distance between various hill forts in Wales. More able Year 6 pupils decipher open ended contextual questions and use a variety of number skills effectively when comparing and contrasting 'Traffic Survey' reports incorporating numbers to two decimal points.

Most pupils in the foundation phase develop a good range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills and apply them well across the areas of learning. For example, many pupils in the reception classes take photographs of their work and give a programmable toy correct commands to take rubbish to a specific bin whilst sorting recycling materials. In key stage 2, most pupils build well on their previous ICT skills. They use a word processing program confidently and change the font and colour of letters effectively and use a branching database successfully to classify different rocks based on their properties. Most upper key stage 2 pupils are beginning to use a spreadsheet purposefully during a science lesson and use an appropriate formula to work out the mean. They create a searchable database based on online game characters or football teams successfully and have a developing understanding of how to set the fields to simple yes and no options.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent**

Almost all pupils are extremely well-mannered and courteous. Pupils encourage each other to adhere to the school's values and display a caring, considerate and respectful attitude towards one another. Most pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary. They feel safe and secure at school and have a firm understanding of the support available to them. Most pupils have strong social skills and interact confidently and maturely with each other, staff and visitors. They are eager to share their experiences in the classroom and do so extremely effectively. The older pupils discuss the importance of resilience very well and know when to involve others as they face challenges. With carefully planned support, most pupils who experience social, emotional and behavioural difficulties develop effective strategies to manage their own behaviour. Where necessary, they develop skills to self-regulate quickly which has a very positive effect on creating a calm and tranquil learning environment.

Most pupils have a sound awareness and understanding of keeping fit and healthy. For example, the work of 'BoB's ( Bwyd o Bwys) healthy food group' consolidates this aspect of healthy eating successfully.

Notably, pupils share their understanding of the importance of keeping a positive mental attitude in their approach to school and have a thorough understanding of on-line safety. Members of the school council and eco council perform their duties diligently and impact positively upon the school experience for all pupils, in particular by raising money for a wide variety of local and national charities in often very creative ways. For example, they organised a 'Deganwy Marathon' where the whole school collectively ran or walked the distance of the London Marathon. However at times, a few of these pupil groups tend to rely too much on adults to operate. Other pupil groups are highly motivated and also work diligently to reinforce pupils' knowledge and skills. For example, members of the 'Cryw Cymraeg' are successful in encouraging their peers to use the Welsh language in and around the classroom and in influencing strongly on their attitudes to learning Welsh. This is a notable strength of the school.

Nearly all pupils develop the skills and qualities needed to become highly effective independent learners. They display a thirst for knowledge, an eagerness to please and a desire to further their understanding. At the upper end of key stage 2, most refer to specific steps they can take to identify characteristics of success, to improve standards and to solve any problems that they might face. Most sustain their concentration for extensive periods and display resilience and pride in their work. In the early years, the ability of almost all pupils to respond to directions and instructions is well above expectation. Most pupils work very effectively as individuals, in talking partners and in groups. As a result, pupils' ability to move effortlessly from one style of working and learning to the next is a particular strength. For example, pupils can measure and name angles individually moving swiftly to a 'snowballing' activity whereby four pupils come together to compare answers and support each other in their learning.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Teachers and support staff nurture very strong working relationships with pupils that are based on mutual respect and which promote a happy and positive learning environment. Teachers encourage pupils to endeavour in their efforts and perform to the best of their ability enabling them to become more resilient when faced with any challenges.

On the whole, teaching approaches are consistent across the school. Nearly all teachers set clear learning objectives for pupils and give them precise instructions at the beginning of lessons that enable them to settle quickly to the task in hand. They use a range of resources effectively to inspire and engage the pupils' interests. In most classes, teachers have high expectations of each pupil and use questioning techniques successfully to gauge their understanding and to encourage them to extend their responses. Most teachers target the needs of groups of learners effectively and provide them with tasks that meet their needs. This ensures that almost all pupils make firm progress in their learning. In the best practice, teachers ensure that lessons have good pace by using 'pit-stops' to check pupils' progress. Through effective use of constructive comments, pupils identify themselves, how to

move their learning forward. Through purposeful intervention programmes, teaching assistants provide individuals and target groups with effective and valuable support. Their expertise and valued provision ensure that most pupils make sound progress in their learning.

Teachers use specific success criteria to good effect, which allows pupils to understand what is required of them to complete tasks successfully. In upper key stage 2, teachers provide pupils with beneficial opportunities to devise their own success criteria using examples of models that give them access to work towards the desired outcome independently. Teachers provide pupils with ample opportunities to evaluate their work and the work of others. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate oral and written feedback and generally, almost all make the necessary amendments to grammar, punctuation and spellings. Pupils set their own individual targets independently and self-monitor their progress, which promotes ownership of learning processes.

Teachers and support staff in the foundation phase develop pupils' skills successfully. They plan a wide range of interesting and exciting activities for pupils which enable them to investigate, build and practice their literacy, numeracy and social skill appropriately. Most staff have a good awareness of the principles of the foundation phase and include pupils well in planning activities and challenges such as building a boat for a superhero using standard units in Years 1 and 2. In most classes, the principles of enhanced provision impact positively on pupil engagement and the standards they achieve. Pupils are given purposeful and engaging opportunities to partake in outdoor activities. However, regular use of the outdoor learning area is not always a natural extension of the indoor classroom. Across key stage 2, teachers provide pupils with purposeful activities, which motivates and engages their enthusiasm for learning. Teachers use local attractions as stimuli to enhance pupils' vocabulary and apply empathy in their creative writing.

The school follows the national frameworks and statutory requirements to plan exciting and stimulating tasks for all pupils. Teachers develop literacy, numeracy and ICT progressively through a range of stimulating and engaging activities across the curriculum. Teachers use collaborative and flexible approaches when planning the curriculum and are beginning to adapt the provision in preparation for the new Curriculum for Wales. Although teachers do plan opportunities to teach religious Education, these plans are not fully implemented across the school. This means that all pupils do not have access to all the components of the statutory curriculum.

One of the strengths of the school is the way that teachers and staff act as excellent role models for the Welsh language. This in turn has significantly improved pupils' ability to pronounce and communicate basic Welsh phrases on a daily basis. Teachers plan well-structured Welsh lessons. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use prior knowledge of sentence patterns to describe characters from a Welsh myth, such as Branwen, Bendigeidfran and Efnisien. Teachers plan valuable opportunities for pupils to attend local events, which captures their interest and enthusiasm to learn about the language, the culture and heritage of Wales.

## **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school is a highly successful inclusive learning community that cares and nurtures its pupils well and supports their welfare exceptionally successfully. Personal and social education lessons are thoroughly planned, their content is relevant and they meet the needs of all pupils. This helps pupils to engage well in their learning and develop as confident learners.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is highly effective. Teachers know their pupils well, identify those who need support early, and provide them with purposeful interventions. The school engages well with parents. They are fully involved in the process of setting targets for their children and in evaluating their progress during review meetings and in less formal 'drop-in' sessions. The school makes effective use of specialist support services such as behaviour officers and specialists for advice on strategies to use for pupils who need specific and more intensive support. This includes very worthwhile support for vulnerable pupils who are experiencing temporary or longer term emotional and social challenges. These well-planned intervention programs, delivered consistently by learning assistants in the school, have a very good effect on pupils' standards of wellbeing. Staff track the progress of these pupils effectively against targets in their individual plans, ensuring that they make strong progress. As a result, the support provided by skilled staff has a positive effect on the achievements of pupils with special educational needs and their eagerness to engage positively with their learning. This is a particular strength of the school.

The tracking systems used by senior leaders monitor pupils' standards effectively and ensure that the targets set by teachers are ambitious but achievable. All teachers assess pupils' progress continually and hold purposeful professional discussions to consider whether or not they would benefit from additional targeted interventions. Effective tracking of attendance and the subsequent protocol to encourage and support improvement have resulted in raising attendance rates. The school monitors pupils' behaviour very well and works effectively alongside specialist outside agencies. This has resulted in a very positive approach to managing pupils' behaviour and securing a strong anti-bullying culture.

The school has developed effective working partnerships that have enriched the provision for pupils and raised their outcomes. For example, foundation phase pupils have showcased their topic work on 'Water' with local schools. This allows pupils valuable opportunities to compare interpretations and encourage further collaboration between teachers and schools.

There are useful opportunities for parents to develop their knowledge and understanding of the school's work, especially so in the foundation phase. Many of the specific sessions offered to them are very well attended and are effective in ensuring that parents work with the school to support their children's progress.

The school has appropriate arrangements for healthy eating and drinking. Initiatives to encourage healthy living are well embedded into the school's culture. A notable example of good practice is the collaboration between pupils and staff towards common welfare goals in their 'Five Ways To Wellbeing'. Teachers evaluate pupil questionnaires effectively to identify areas of their wellbeing and internet safety that need attention or further reinforcement. These are beneficial to pupils' personal development and wellbeing.

Pupils develop their understanding of their place in the wider world successfully. For example, schools' 'Learning Together Week' allows pupils the opportunity to decide upon the direction of their learning whilst developing a deep knowledge of countries around the world. Teachers' plans ensure that all pupils' understanding of global citizenship and their sense of equality, diversity and tolerance is very well developed. The school ensures that pupils' moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately in all aspects of school life, in classes and in whole school assemblies.

The school provides pupils with extensive opportunities to participate in a wide range of after-school clubs including creative clubs a wide range of sporting activities and school orchestra.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. However, a concern relating to a specific health and safety issue was raised with school leaders during the inspection.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher and staff have established a clear vision for the school that meets the needs of all learners successfully. This vision focuses well on setting high expectations for the academic, social, emotional and wellbeing of all pupils in a caring and inclusive learning community. Leaders have created a supportive ethos which enables all staff to work collaboratively and effectively in order for pupils to achieve their potential in a happy, secure, and caring environment. As a result, pupils and staff feel valued and respected. The implementation of the vision by all staff has a very positive effect on pupils' experiences and outcomes.

Leaders ensure that the school responds well to national priorities. A notable example of this is the highly successful focus on developing pupils' Welsh language skills. Leaders focus purposefully on enriching the teaching and learning experiences for pupils. This contributes effectively to the success of most teachers in engaging pupils' enthusiasm and imagination. The school is making a conscious effort to address the principles of the new curriculum for Wales, and teachers are forming clear plans that focus clearly on developing pupils as high achieving learners.

The headteacher has restructured the leadership team sensibly to form an enthusiastic team of individuals who have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The relatively new senior leadership team and middle leaders are developing a focus on the strategic management of the school and work consciously to raise standards and introduce initiatives to enhance teaching. They are developing their monitoring skills appropriately and, while focusing well on standards and provision in their areas of responsibility, their conclusions are often too descriptive and are not always evaluative enough.

Leaders consider a range of direct evidence appropriately to evaluate the school's practice. These include scrutinising pupils' work, undertaking lesson observations, analysing end of key stage data and discussing their work with learners. However, at times, the monitoring processes are not rigorous enough. As a result, leaders do not always have a clear enough understanding of where there are gaps in provision, such as in religious education. Improvement plans define relevant and measurable

actions for improvement well. A good example of this is the target set to improve attendance so that the school compares well with similar schools. Leaders evaluate progress made against many of the targets of the previous development plan well. The school has a strong record of making improvements, and leaders have responded purposefully to recommendations from previous inspections. A notable example of this is the improvement in Welsh and the use of numeracy across the curriculum.

The governors know the school well and provide it with effective support. They understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities, and promote the school's ethos and values successfully. Many governors undertake visits to the school that gives them valuable first-hand understanding of standards and the impact of recent pedagogical developments. They have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and play an active role in agreeing school policies and priorities. Their role as critical friends is developing beneficially. This is evident as they challenge, for instance the performance of girls in mathematics at the end of key stage 2.

Performance management procedures for teachers are generally effective and contribute well to establish consistency in the teaching and the provision. Leaders use staff specialism successfully to develop specific curricular areas such as science. Leaders have been successful in promoting a rich culture that promotes highly effective professional learning opportunities for all staff. They do so by providing teachers with regular opportunities to research best practice and to implement an improvement in provision. Leaders provide support staff with regular professional learning opportunities. These are organised well and support the staff to meet their own specific professional learning needs and in developing their role in achieving the school's improvement priorities. Staff share their new skills effectively with other practitioners. They share outcomes of their professional learning effectively with staff both within the school and in other schools across the consortia, particularly in aspects such as assessment of pupils with special educational needs.

Leaders ensure that the school has an appropriate level of staffing and learning resources to deliver an interesting curriculum for pupils. Decisions on expenditure link appropriately with the school's priorities for improvement and leaders use grants effectively to support learning for pupils. A specific example of this is the effective way in which is the school uses the pupil development grant to support vulnerable learners.

## 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 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 and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read 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 classes, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- 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' wellbeing, 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 ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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:

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