



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 Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf
Bridge Road
Llandaff North
Cardiff
CF14 2JL**

Date of inspection: May 2011

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 Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf is a designated Welsh-medium comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-18, that is maintained by Cardiff local authority. The number of pupils has risen significantly since the last inspection; there are 1,302 pupils at the school at present, including 253 in the sixth form.

The school is situated near the River Taff in Llandaff and the pupils come from the eastern area of Cardiff. This year 11% of the pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals, which is lower than the national average of 17.1%. Nineteen per cent (19%) of the pupils live in areas that are among the 20% most disadvantaged in Wales.

The school admits pupils from the full range of ability. No pupils receive support to learn English as an additional language. One per cent (1%) of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. One point three per cent (1.3%) of pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is lower than the national average. In addition, 43 pupils (3%) are on the stages of School Action plus. Twenty-three per cent (23%) of the pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main language. The local authority looks after one pupil on the school register.

The present headteacher started in the post in September 2010. The rest of the members of the senior leadership team were in post during the last inspection.

The individual school budget for 2010-2011 per pupil for Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf is £4,224, which compares with a maximum of £4,823 and a minimum of £3,807 for secondary schools in Cardiff. The school has the 11th highest budget per pupil of the 20 secondary schools in Cardiff.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's performance is good because:

- most of the pupils make good progress during their period at the school and show a positive attitude towards their learning;
- almost all the pupils are happy and feel safe at school;
- the health and welfare of the pupils is promoted very well; and
- there is a wide range of activities available in the school and a high degree of participation by the pupils.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher and the senior leadership team have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas to be developed;
- there is now a stronger focus on a departmental and whole-school level on analysing data and comparing the school's performance with that of similar schools; and
- the school has taken beneficial steps to ensure better effectiveness in its budget and the school staffing situation is now more sustainable.

Recommendations

To ensure improvement, the staff and governors of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf should:

- R1 continue to raise standards in key stage 3 and key stage 4;
- R2 strengthen the quality of teachers' feedback on how to improve and ensure the consistency of use of assessment for learning strategies throughout the school;
- R3 further strengthen the role of line managers to ensure consistency in standards and quality;
- R4 strengthen the pupils' voice through the school council and year councils; and
- R5 ensure that the school complies with the statutory requirements for collective worship and co-opting pupil governors.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In key stage 3 and key stage 4 for each one of the main indicators, the school's performance is above the average figures for Wales and higher than the family averages. Over the last three years, for most of the indicators in key stage 4, the school's performance has been consistently good.

In 2009 and 2010 in key stage 3, performance in mathematics, science and the core subject indicator (the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum) was higher than the family average and the average for Wales, but among the lower 50% in comparison with that of similar schools nationally in terms of the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. During the last three years, the performance in Welsh in key stage 3 has stayed consistently above the family average and in the highest 25% in comparison with that of similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. In 2010, performance in English fell a little and was among the lower 50% in comparison with similar schools but higher than the national and family average. In 2010, performance at level 6 or higher was better than the family average in Welsh, science and mathematics and close to the family average in English.

In key stage 4, since 2008, the results of the level 2 threshold (equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C), and the level 2 threshold including Welsh or English and mathematics, has been higher than the average figures for Wales and the family average. For the two indicators, the school has been among the upper 50% of similar schools. During the same period, the results of the core subject indicator and the level 1 threshold (equivalent to five GCSEs at grade D to G) have been significantly higher than the average figures for Wales and the family. The results for 2010 placed the school in the upper 50% of similar schools in the core subject indicator and, for the first time, among the highest 25% for the level 1 threshold. The average points score (comprising all externally approved qualifications at age 16) has increased gradually during the last three years and has been consistently higher than the family average and the average figures for Wales.

The pupils make good progress in general on the basis of their previous achievements in key stage 2 and key stage 3.

In key stage 4, the gap between the performance of boys and girls in the level 2 threshold is higher than the family average and the average figure for Wales. Other groups of pupils, including pupils who receive free school meals and pupils with special educational needs, make appropriate progress.

During the last two years, no pupils have left the school without at least one recognised qualification and most continue in education, training or employment. This is better than the local and national averages.

In the sixth form, the school's performance in the level 3 threshold (equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E) and the average wider points score (comprising all externally approved qualifications at age 18) is higher than the average figures for Wales and the local authority.

Most pupils make good progress in lessons. They build on what they have learned in previous lessons, and develop new knowledge, skills and understanding effectively. The pupils show motivation and respond enthusiastically to appropriate tasks. In a very few lessons where there is not enough of a challenge, pupils' progress is inadequate.

In many of the lessons, pupils work together skilfully in small groups or pairs and make effective use of their time. Most pupils listen carefully and many are prepared to contribute orally, however, a minority of pupils offer extended answers verbally. Many read confidently in Welsh and English and pupils who receive additional support through the Welsh reading scheme make very good progress. Many of the pupils make effective use of subject vocabulary and write accurately for a range of different purposes. However, there are spelling and grammar mistakes in the written work of a few pupils.

This year approximately half of the pupils in Year 9 have gained a level 2 qualification in communication.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils understand the importance of physical activities and eating healthily, and the relationship between these and living healthily. Most of them take part in activities outside the classroom that have been arranged either by the school staff or as part of the 5x60 provision. Nearly all of the pupils feel safe at school and many are confident that the school, through the 'Seren' scheme, deals appropriately with the small number of bullying cases that arise.

Pupils' attendance rates are very good, and they have improved during the last four years. In 2010, they placed the school among the highest 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of free school meals. The rates of temporary exclusions and permanent exclusions are lower than local and national averages.

The behaviour of most of the pupils in lessons and outside the classroom is very good. Nearly all arrive at lessons punctually and settle quickly to work. They show respect and courtesy towards their fellow pupils and adults. They concentrate well in lessons, with many showing obvious enthusiasm for their work.

Decisions by the school council have had a positive effect on some aspects of the organisation of the school, and the role and effectiveness of the council are developing. Members who are in the sixth form have recently attended one meeting of the governing body. However, not every year committee meets regularly and a minority of pupils feel that the school does not always listen and act upon their comments.

Most of the pupils have the skills to prepare them for life beyond school or the next stage of their learning.

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

The school provides an appropriate curriculum that satisfies the needs of most of the pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the effective co-operation with local providers extends the vocational options that are available and shows appropriate development of Learning Pathways 14-19. An excellent feature is the breadth and frequency of extra-curricular, charity and community activities, and the high degree of pupil involvement in them. The provision for work-related education has a prominent place in the curriculum.

The comprehensive transition strategy and effective co-operation between the school and its partner primary schools ensure that the key stage 3 curriculum builds appropriately on previous knowledge, understanding and skills.

In key stage 3, there is a very co-ordinated and comprehensive provision for communication skills in Welsh, and a beneficial support strategy for pupils who do not reach the expected reading levels. The contribution of other departments towards assessing oracy is a particular strength. The work of promoting numeracy skills is developing satisfactorily with co-ordinated opportunities planned in the majority of departments. The opportunities for pupils to develop the full range of information and communication technology skills are less developed.

There is very creative provision by departments of opportunities to promote the Welsh language and awareness of the Welsh dimension. Pupils' understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Wales is promoted excellently through the medium of assemblies, displays, the comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities and whole-school activities. Welsh is the school's main medium of teaching. The plans that are in place to promote the pupils' social use of Welsh around the site, such as 'Radio Taf', have a positive effect.

The school provides an appropriate range of opportunities for promoting global citizenship and the work of promoting sustainable development is increasing gradually.

Teaching: Good

The teachers have very good subject knowledge. Most of them plan their lessons thoroughly and set clear objectives that are shared with the pupils. They prepare activities that succeed in capturing the pupils' interest and promoting good standards. In almost every lesson the relationship between teachers and pupils is very good and the teachers ensure high standards of behaviour. Most teachers use an appropriate range of teaching methods and make good use of resources, with a minority using information technology resources effectively.

Many of the lessons succeed in satisfying the needs of all of the pupils. At times, however, the work does not provide enough of a challenge for some members of the class, for example the most able pupils. The majority of teachers question skilfully to check pupils' understanding and to facilitate the development of their communication skills. At the end of a minority of lessons, opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to a review of the learning, but this is not yet regular practice throughout the school. A minority of departments encourage the development of the pupils' thinking skills effectively.

Teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly and the pupils sometimes assess their own work or the work of their peers. Most teachers give appropriate verbal feedback to pupils during lessons and mark written work regularly. The written feedback from many of the teachers is constructive, but the comments of a minority of teachers are too general to assist pupils in improving the standard of their work.

All teachers record the results of standard assessments appropriately by using the school's electronic system. The school tracks pupils' progress effectively and makes suitable arrangements to address any underachievement. Once a term pupils discuss their progress with a personal mentor and agree on targets for improvement. This is a good feature. The arrangements for reporting back to parents comply with statutory requirements. Most reports include detailed comments and appropriate targets but in a few examples the targets are too general to give definite guidance to pupils.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school promotes its pupils' health and wellbeing very successfully. These aspects are co-ordinated through a comprehensive personal and social education strategy that develops self-awareness and self-respect effectively. The school gives good opportunities for pupils to discuss current issues that are relevant to their lives, and they do this with maturity and understanding. The school fosters robust moral values such as honesty, fairness and respect towards others. Although provision for spiritual development is appropriate through religious education lessons, the statutory arrangements for daily collective worship are inadequate at times.

Beneficial links with the primary schools that feed the school ensure that pupils settle quickly in Year 7. Many of the pupils in Year 9 and Year 11 receive impartial and effective support and the quality of guidance for pupils' choices is appropriate. The school provides individual support on educational issues and other issues effectively, by using specialist agencies such as the psychological service when appropriate.

Pupils with additional learning needs receive appropriate care. The school enables them to take advantage of a balanced curriculum that also meets their personal requirements. Annual reviews are held in line with the statutory requirements, and appropriate individual education schemes are provided that are incorporated into the pupil profile form of the learning support section. However, the part played by parents, as important stakeholders, is not prominent enough in developing and evaluating pupils' progress within these schemes.

The school has suitable procedures and policies for safeguarding children.

Learning environment: Good

The school's family ethos respects the rights of every individual. The school ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their academic and social skills fully.

Although the school is full, on the whole the buildings and rooms are adequate for presenting all aspects of the curriculum. They have improved significantly during recent years with a new multipurpose physical education centre and science block. The new extension for September includes better facilities for the sixth form, which at present are inadequate for the number of pupils.

In places, good, stimulating displays of the pupils' work contribute effectively to the motivating and positive environment for learning. The school buildings and grounds are well maintained. The boys' toilets and changing facilities are good but the girls' toilets are in an unsuitable condition.

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

The headteacher, with the support of the senior leadership team, has set a clear strategic direction for the school's development. This is based on a detailed analysis of performance to challenge underachievement and identify priorities. The findings were shared with governors, staff and middle leaders and there is an agreed understanding of the main priorities for improvement. At the root of the intentions, there are the important aspects of capacity and raising standards, along with developing the role of middle managers, especially in their use of data. There is clear evidence of an initial effect on the quality of systems and on the significant decrease in the number of temporary exclusions this year. For example, middle managers have begun to make appropriate use of the core data sets to compare performance with that of similar schools and identify areas for improvement.

Senior managers have a clear understanding of their role and their responsibilities in terms of the school's strategic objectives. The responsibilities of liaison managers with subject departments have been clearly defined. However, there is too much variation in the frequency of liaison meetings and in agreement on priorities and subsequent steps for reviewing progress.

This year, the eight new cross-school working groups are making a significant contribution to developing leadership at the level of middle managers and other members of staff. The areas for the working groups were determined in consultation with staff and this has produced a strong feeling of ownership. There are clear expectations that the working groups should complete their work within a specific period.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to manage staff performance and identify training needs.

Presentations by the headteacher, together with other members of staff on issues such as the 14-19 curriculum and numeracy, contribute well to the governing body's

understanding of the school's priorities. The governors' understanding of the school's performance in comparison with that of similar schools has strengthened recently. Beneficial arrangements have been introduced to develop the governors' strategic and monitoring role in terms of their specific link with the members of the senior leadership team. Contrary to statutory requirements, the governing body does not include pupils who have been co-opted by the school council.

Local and national priorities have been incorporated into the objectives of the school development plan. The links with primary schools through the transition scheme and co-operating with other providers to expand the options for learners between 14 and 19 years of age are strong aspects of the provision.

Improving quality: Good

The school is developing an effective self-evaluation structure that is planned on a whole-school and departmental level. There is an obvious and appropriate link between whole-school self-evaluation procedures and planning for improvement. There is an obvious and detailed focus on analysing achievement in order to improve standards and provision. On the whole, the self-evaluation report is comprehensive and thoughtful. However, a few of the evaluations are too generous.

The process of departmental self-evaluation uses direct evidence, including evidence from monitoring books and lessons, but in a minority of departments the process is not thorough enough. Departments have begun to use a wider range of external and internal data. As a result, there is a clearer picture from leaders of the national standards and benchmarking information that assist them in seeing the achievement of pupils in a more meaningful context. However, the school recognises that it needs to ensure better consistency in the way that each department sets targets based on detailed and thorough analysis of data. Staff and governors provide suitable input to the self-evaluation report but the voice of pupils and of parents or carers is not sufficiently well developed.

The school knows the professional development needs of all the staff through the comprehensive performance management procedures. The school staff are members of external working groups and visit other schools in order to share good practice. Recently, the school introduced a new level of professional working parties by setting up eight internal groups who focus on aspects of welfare, the curriculum and learning and teaching. Early indicators suggest that their development as effective groups to share good practice is promising. However, it is too early to see the effect of this work on standards.

Partnership working: Good

There is a strong partnership between Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf and the local schools that feed it. Beneficial moderation is now underway with a portfolio of pupils' work in each of the core subjects. The school has also worked closely with the primary schools to produce a portfolio that gives examples of work relevant to the Skills Framework. There has been an extensive programme of visits by the teachers at the school to the primary schools to hold learning sessions in the core subjects and to meet with the primary subject co-ordinators. This is a significant contribution

towards ensuring curricular progression and continuity between key stage 2 and key stage 3.

The school has a strong commitment to developing links with other secondary schools as learning communities. An effective partnership has been developed with a local school and colleges to expand the vocational options for learners between 14 and 19 years of age. An increasing number of pupils take advantage of these courses and complete their final assessments through the medium of Welsh on each one of these courses.

The quality assurance arrangements on the co-operative courses are developing well. They include exchanging information on aspects of individual pupils' progress and attendance. The 14-19 co-ordinator at the school visits lessons in the colleges to monitor the quality of the provision. However, there is no such arrangement for visiting other schools in the partnership.

Most of the parents indicate that the school is prepared to listen and shows a willingness to respond to any requests from them. However, in a few cases, the parents do not receive enough information about issues concerning their children and about the school's arrangements and activities.

Resource management: Good

The school is staffed appropriately in order to teach the curriculum effectively. The support staff are an effective part of the team and make a valuable contribution to the work of the school.

There is firm management of the budget by the headteacher, the finance committee and the bursar, and careful consideration is given to the cost-effectiveness of every aspect of the school's provision. Recent changes have led to more sustainable staffing costs in order to ensure that funds are available to meet school and departmental priorities. There is now a close relationship between the use of resources and the areas of the school that have been designated for development.

The standards and quality of teaching offer good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Three hundred and thirty-one (331) pupils chosen at random throughout the school responded to the questionnaire. This sample represents a quarter of all the pupils at the school.

Nearly all the pupils feel safe at the school. Many feel that the school deals well with any bullying and most feel that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. The majority of pupils feel that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and many of the pupils indicate that there are enough opportunities in the school to do physical exercise regularly. Most of the pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 feel that there is enough equipment at the school but a minority of pupils in the sixth form disagree.

Most of the pupils feel that they are doing well and that the teachers help them to learn and make progress. A minority feel that the homework that is set does not build well upon what they are learning. In general, many pupils feel that others behave well, but in key stage 3 only the majority of pupils feel that others behave well. Many feel that the teachers help them to understand and improve their school work and that staff treat all pupils fairly and show them respect. However, only approximately half of the pupils feel that the school listens to their opinion. Most of the pupils indicate that the school encourages them to take responsibility. Many feel that the school helps them to be ready for the next school, college or work life. Many pupils in key stage 4 and the sixth form feel that they have received good advice on choosing courses.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Estyn received 287 questionnaires from the parents and most of them are satisfied or very satisfied with the school in general.

Parents say that their children like school, and that they are happy and feel safe there. Many believe that the pupils' behaviour is good, that the pupils are respected and treated fairly, and that they develop to be more mature and to shoulder responsibilities. Most also feel that the teaching is good and that their children are making good progress at school. Many parents feel that they receive good information about their child's progress and that the school prepares them well for moving on to the next school or college or work. A few of the parents feel that the homework that is set builds well on what the pupils learn at school. A few parents also state that there is not a good variety of activities, including trips or visits. Many of the parents are of the opinion that the school is well run.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Catherine Evans	Reporting Inspector
Iolo Dafydd	Team Inspector
Alun Morgan	Team Inspector
Kevin Adams	Additional Inspector
Gareth Wyn Jones	Additional Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Graham Daniels	Peer Inspector
Gareth Williams	School Nominee

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Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

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

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	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