



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Ysgol Rhosnesni
Rhosnesni Lane
Wrexham
LL13 9ET**

Date of visit: December 2015

by

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

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The monitoring team

Sue Halliwell	Reporting Inspector
Robert Davies	Team Inspector
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Outcome of monitoring

Ysgol Rhosnesni is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2013.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing Ysgol Rhosnesni from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals and boys across the school

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection in March 2013 the performance of boys and pupils eligible for free school meals has improved. However, at key stage 4 both groups still perform less well than the same pupils in their family of similar schools and nationally.

At key stage 3, boys still perform less well than girls but are closing the gap on boys in the family of similar schools and in Wales in most subjects apart from English. The oracy and reading skills of boys are significantly below those of girls in the school and just below that of boys in the family of similar schools and in Wales. Their writing is not as good as that of girls but standards are better than those achieved by boys in the family and similar to boys in Wales.

At key stage 4, boys continue to perform less well than girls in all indicators apart from mathematics. However, the gap in performance is now similar to that in its family of similar schools and in Wales. Boys and girls do less well than boys and girls in the family of similar schools and nationally in nearly all indicators.

In key stage 3, the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals has improved significantly in all key indicators since the time of the core inspection. The trend of improvement in the core subject indicator is greater than for pupils not eligible for free school meals but the gap is closing. In 2015, performance is close to the family average.

Over the last three years, at key stage 4, the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals has improved in the majority of indicators. The gap between the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not remains greater than that in its family and in Wales in nearly all indicators. However, in 2015 the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals continued the upward trend in the key performance indicators that include English and mathematics and the separate core subjects. Performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics is 16 percentage points higher than at the time of the core inspection. Performance in English at level 2 is 19 percentage points higher. This represents considerable progress. Despite this, pupils eligible for free schools meals perform less well than those in their family of similar schools in all indicators.

Many pupils behave well and display positive attitudes to learning. A majority of pupils make sound progress in lessons. This is a significant improvement since the time of the core inspection. They are engaged and enthusiastic, working well independently, in pairs and in groups. A majority are confident to speak in class. Around half read well and write extended responses with confidence. However, a majority of pupils do not write accurately and apart from the most able do not organise their writing well. This applies to all groups of pupils.

A minority of pupils lack confidence to speak and give short undeveloped responses when questioned. A very few are less diligent and show little interest in their work.

Recommendation 2: Improve standards of literacy and bilingualism across the school

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection the school has strengthened its provision for developing pupils' literacy skills. Important improvements have been made in key aspects such as promoting literacy across the curriculum and supporting pupils with weak functional literacy skills. Strategies and interventions are beginning to be applied consistently on improving pupils' standards of literacy in the school.

In the lessons observed many pupils demonstrate good listening skills and are able to follow instructions well. Around half of pupils demonstrate effective reading and writing skills. These pupils work well with a range of different texts to identify key information and infer meaning. They also write well at length for different purposes, using appropriate structure and with technical accuracy. This represents a significant improvement from the time of the core inspection. However, the literacy skills of a significant minority of pupils remain adequate at best. In particular, their work contains spelling and grammatical errors that detract from the quality of their written work.

Standards in GCSE Welsh second language remain poor and well below the family and national averages. Few pupils are entered for the full course. Although pupils begin the course in Year 9 the provision in key stage 4 does not provide sufficient opportunities for many pupils to develop their Welsh language skills to a high enough level.

Since the core inspection the school has continued to provide useful guidance for subject departments about how to produce Welsh language resources. Signage around the school buildings is generally of a good quality. In a few lessons, teachers promote pupils' understanding and use of Welsh. However the use of the language is limited to answering the register in most instances. Planning for this aspect remains at a very early stage of development.

Recommendation 3: Improve behaviour across the school, address bullying more effectively and reduce fixed term exclusion rates

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has taken robust action to improve behaviour, address bullying and reduce the number of fixed term exclusions.

There is a strong emphasis on establishing a whole-school approach to challenging and managing unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. The school has clarified its expectations regarding standards of behaviour and the consequences if pupils do not meet these expectations. This has had a positive impact on the ethos of the school. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good and demonstrates an improvement since the time of the core inspection.

Pupils are now able to report incidents of bullying electronically. The school appropriately records the categories of any bullying incidents that occur and respond to resolve issues in a timely way. Incidents have decreased significantly over the past 12 months.

The school has suitable arrangements to support pupils at risk of exclusion. Since the core inspection, the number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced significantly. This is in part due to the Tegfan facility. This facility provides appropriate intervention strategies for those pupils at risk of exclusion. These strategies include providing tailored support and nurture programmes to help these pupils remain in school. The exclusion rates are significantly lower than at the time of the core inspection but remain higher than the local and Wales rates.

Recommendation 4: Improve attendance rates and punctuality

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection in March 2013, attendance rates have risen consistently each year. Pupils' attendance is now 2.4 percentage points higher than at the time of the core inspection. Attendance has been above modelled outcomes and in the upper half of schools based on eligibility for free school meals for the last two years. The difference between the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals and those not eligible has reduced by two percentage points in the last three years. The gender gap in attendance has reduced although girls' attendance remains generally weaker than that of boys.

The school has strengthened its arrangements for dealing with lateness. It applies a range of 'stepped' sanctions and consequences for pupils who are late for school or to lessons. Pupils understand the school's expectations and staff challenge pupils consistently if they are late. Most arrive punctually to lessons and many are punctual to registration.

The attendance strategy group takes a lead role in improving pupils' attendance and punctuality. The group meets regularly and uses an appropriate range of data to inform managers about whole-school performance against agreed targets. The group tracks and monitors the attendance of different groups and individuals well and coordinates a beneficial range of support for those pupils whose attendance is or is becoming a cause for concern. The strategy group communicates well with staff about the attendance of individuals and groups.

Recommendation 5: Improve the quality of teaching, learning and the effectiveness of assessment across the school

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the time of the core inspection there has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching and assessment. The leadership team have implemented a range of effective strategies to improve teaching and assessment.

In a majority of lessons, teachers provide clear learning objectives and have high expectations of pupil attitudes and work rate. They plan effectively for progress. At the time of the core inspection this was the case in only a few lessons. In the majority of lessons, teachers maintain an appropriate pace, check progress and make sure pupils understand before moving on. They establish and maintain good relationships managing the learning and behaviour effectively. These teachers provide a useful range of learning strategies and activities. They also make suitable use of learning support assistants to meet the needs of individual pupils.

In a minority of lessons, teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop as independent learners. Their expectations are not high enough and consequently they set low challenge and low demand tasks.

A very few teachers have low expectations of the standards and behaviour of pupils and, as a result, few pupils make any more than limited progress in these lessons.

The consistency and quality of marking and assessment have improved. Nearly all marking is regular and up to date. Many teachers provide useful comments and targets for improvement. There is an appropriate focus on identifying errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. Many teachers ensure that pupils respond to requests to correct the accuracy of their work. However, marking is yet to have a significant impact on the overall quality of pupils' written work.

Recommendation 6: Improve the accountability of staff across the school through rigorous and clear line management processes and evaluate its impact on standards, behaviour and the wellbeing of pupils

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has made consistent progress to improve the accountability of staff across the school. The senior leadership team has a clear focus on raising the standards of teaching and learning and has increased the rigour with which middle leaders and classroom teachers are held to account.

The headteacher monitors the line management work of the senior leadership team closely. Line management meetings have a consistent focus on standards and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Meetings between senior and middle leaders all follow a common agenda in order that progress across the school can be monitored effectively.

The school has considerably strengthened its focus on improving teaching and learning. A key feature of this has been to raise teachers' expectations of the progress and achievement of pupils. This has played an important part in recent improvements in the quality of teaching at the school and, to a lesser extent, the standards achieved by pupils.

However, there has been insufficient focus to date on the impact of teachers' written feedback on the standard of work produced by pupils in their books.

Recommendation 7: Ensure that senior and middle leaders are clear about their responsibility for improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection senior and middle leaders have increased well their focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Importantly, monitoring and evaluation processes have a much tighter focus on pupils' outcomes and on improving teaching and assessment than at the time of the core inspection. In addition, first hand evidence gathered from lessons and work scrutiny is used more effectively to inform plans for improvement at school and departmental level. As a result, leaders and teachers have a much clearer picture of what needs to be done to improve teaching, learning and assessment. These improvements have brought about a strong improvement in the quality of teaching and greater consistency in the use of assessment across the school.

Nevertheless, despite these improvements, information gathered from the school's scrutiny of pupils' work generally focuses too specifically on teachers' compliance with assessment processes rather than the overall quality of pupils' work. In addition, overall, the school's lesson observations generally provide an overly optimistic view on the quality of teaching and learning across the school which is currently not matched by pupils' outcomes or by pupils' work in books.

Recommendation 8: Ensure that performance management processes are effective in improving standards, quality of teaching and learning and behaviour across the school

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the time of the core inspection, the school has significantly improved its performance management process. This process is linked well to the key school improvement priorities. The school reviews well the progress teachers are making against their performance objectives. These clear objectives contain whole school and personal improvement targets. Reviews are based on teaching observations, the standards pupils achieve and book scrutiny. The headteacher routinely reviews the content of performance reviews. This results in targets being modified and strengthened and individual training needs being closely matched to the school's priorities. Although improving, these reviews do not currently effectively evaluate the impact of improvement strategies on pupils' standards.

Performance management processes have placed a clear responsibility on all staff to improve pupils' attendance and behaviour. This has had a positive impact, improving attendance and reducing exclusions.

Senior leaders have established a clear procedure to support and challenge underperforming teachers. This is beginning to have a beneficial impact on improving the quality of teaching.

Recommendation 9: Ensure that there is a more positive ethos and culture across the school to support learning and improve behaviour

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has given a high priority to developing a positive ethos and culture in order to support learning and improve behaviour. As a result, pupils feel safe and happier around the school.

Pupils' increasing participation in community arts and media projects has strengthened the positive ethos and culture of learning. Stronger links with parents are developing through the school's social media sites and through initiatives which promote involvement in their children's education.

Recommendation 10: Develop the role of the governing body to ensure that they have a better understanding of school performance, particularly in relation to standards and behaviour

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the time of the core inspection governors have developed and established a clear strategic vision for the school and demonstrate a strong desire to secure further improvement. They have a robust focus on improving provision and standards.

The chair of governors provides challenging leadership and gives senior and middle leaders good levels of support and robust challenge. Governors have a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They routinely use a wide range of data regarding pupil performance and evidence relating to the quality of teaching, attendance and behaviour. They use this information well to monitor the school's progress against its inspection recommendations.

Governors have strengthened their link roles to departments. When undertaking meetings with middle leaders and teachers they provide good levels of support and operate effectively as a critical friend.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.