



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

A report on

Treffos School

**Llansadwrn
Nr Menai Bridge
LL59 5SD**

Date of inspection: October 2022

by

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

About Treffos School

Name of provider	Treffos School
Proprietor	Dr S Humphreys Mrs J Humphreys
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Independent primary school
Residential provision?	No
Number of pupils on roll	74
Pupils of statutory school age	68
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	12/08/2014
Start date of inspection	03/10/2022
*	

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

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

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

Overview

Treffos School is a nurturing environment and instils its pupils with a love of learning. Its rural location complements its vision to bond learning with the real-world through a thematic curriculum and extensive opportunities for learning outdoors. It is a strong community which unites pupils, parents and staff.

Nearly all pupils at the school are confident and inquisitive. They feel both happy and safe. Nearly all pupils make strong progress from their starting points, particularly in developing their literacy, numeracy and speaking skills. Pupils know they will be listened to and that they are valued. They are excited to learn and demonstrate a strong sense of independence and responsibility. The 'Treffos Values' are embedded into the pupils' culture and their behaviour is mostly exemplary.

Teachers model a curiosity about the world well and work passionately to create an environment where every pupil can thrive. Teachers promote learning through a wide range of interesting activities and in many different locations both on and off site. All staff know the pupils extremely well and the provision for each individual pupil is regularly reviewed and adjusted accordingly.

Leaders at the school are passionate, capable, and highly accessible. They are ambitious for all pupils and have high expectations of their staff. They took decisive steps when the pandemic arrived ensuring that their pupils continued to receive the same high standard of education and care. Leaders collaborate suitably to operate the school and have taken steps to introduce greater strategic oversight of policy, practice and the curriculum through the appointment of a critical friend.

Treffos School meets all the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, needed to maintain registration.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

The quality of education provided by the school

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The provision of information

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that school policies are updated regularly to have regard to the latest Welsh Government guidance and that staff practice reflects policy
- R2 Strengthen and embed the school's quality assurance processes
- R3 Clarify the responsibilities and priorities of leaders across the school

What happens next

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what actions the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents/carers at the school.

Estyn will invite Treffos School to prepare a case study on its work in relation to learning in an outdoor setting for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Learning

During their time at school, nearly all pupils make strong progress from their starting points, particularly in developing their literacy and mathematical and numeracy skills. They develop their knowledge and understanding of different areas of the curriculum in contexts that encourage them to have enthusiasm for their learning.

Across the school, most pupils have highly developed communication skills. Most pupils are articulate and confident when speaking, both in class and to visitors. Nearly all pupils listen respectfully to their teachers and each other. Most pupils speak enthusiastically with an extensive range of vocabulary. For example, pupils contributed well whilst discussing the class book 'Escape from Pompeii'. In addition, older pupils progressively expand on their vocabulary whilst confidently making connections between their scientific findings on forces.

Nearly all pupils across the school read confidently and most are very competent readers. The enjoyment of reading is very apparent amongst the pupils of the school. The younger pupils learn phonics quickly and they use this knowledge well to help them build words and begin to read texts accurately. Nearly all pupils use their reading skills for a range of purposes and are able to comprehend a wide range of genres. In the best practice, higher level readers are able to read questions and deduce answers, including simple logic problems and converting from present to past tense confidently.

The standard of writing of most pupils across the school is strong. Many pupils develop their writing skills extensively as they progress through the school. By the end of Year 2, most pupils effectively use a range of sentence structures to make their writing interesting whilst recalling the story of Gelert. In Year 4, most pupils thoroughly analyse different genres by being 'text detectives'. By Year 6, most pupils write confidently and at length in a variety of styles, for example when producing a biography of a person connected with the Titanic. Most pupils purposefully use their writing skills across themes and whilst considering topical national news items. For example, the upper pupils actively wrote to the local MP following allegations of misconduct of ministers in parliament. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to re-draft and improve their work, and most pupils have neat handwriting and present their work to a high standard.

Across the school, most pupils develop a range of strong mathematical skills. Overall, they consistently apply their number skills in relevant learning activities, including while learning outdoors. Most of the younger pupils successfully recall their knowledge of number bonds to 5. As the pupils progress, they have a solid grasp of various number bonds to 10, 100 and 1000. Older pupils confidently identify the next numbers in increasingly complex sequences. Most pupils across the school have secure numeracy skills that they apply successfully across the curriculum. For example, the older pupils develop highly effective orienteering skills in the local environment.

Many pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop appropriately as they move through the school. They use ICT to support their learning in other subjects regularly.

Most pupils' physical skills are developing soundly through a variety of beneficial experiences and activities. The youngest pupils develop their fine motor skills successfully, for example by using clay to create letters and numbers. Pupils develop their physical skills by taking part in regular activities in the outdoor area and older pupils become increasingly confident in swimming and playing tennis..

As pupils progress through the school nearly all demonstrate outstanding creative and artistic skills and apply them exceptionally well. Younger pupils for example develop their role-playing skills by going on a bear hunt in the school grounds to enhance their understanding of the story. Year 3 pupils use their knowledge and understanding of different styles of art to draw a volcano. Overall pupils develop their dance and music well and apply them skilfully, through incidental dramas and singing in assembly.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils feel happy and safe in a school that places pupil well-being at the heart of all it does. Pupils know that they are valued by all staff and that the school cares about them and their family. This contributes to the whole school community's extremely strong sense of well-being.

Nearly all pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards their learning and strong working relationships with staff. Pupils are excited to learn and most are confident to share their ideas. In lessons, nearly all pupils are enthusiastic and highly engaged. They settle quickly to activities and often work collaboratively with their peers and offer each other support as they learn. In addition, nearly all pupils can work independently effectively, and they maintain engagement with activities for extended periods of time.

Nearly all pupils understand and value the school reward system and the feedback they receive from teachers. As they progress through the school, older pupils in particular respond to the thorough and supportive feedback from teachers and peers and use this to help them take their learning forward.

Across the school day, the behaviour of nearly all pupils is good and most exhibit exemplary standards of behaviour. They are polite and respectful to each other, staff and visitors to the school. At break and lunchtime, nearly all pupils co-operate and play together very well across age groups. There are well established routines that are well understood by all pupils

Pupils are very positive about their experiences at the school and explain that they are kind to each other and there is no bullying. They are confident that if they had any concerns these would be dealt with promptly by staff. Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of being physically active and they enjoy the many opportunities to learn in the outdoors.

Pupils of all ages have roles of responsibility either within their classroom or across the school. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 take great pride in their leadership responsibilities. They feel that they can influence both the curriculum content in the

school and request additional resources such as playground equipment and additional reading resources. The school council co-ordinates the school's activities to raise money for a range of national charities across the school year.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers across the school know their pupils' abilities, needs and interests very well and build strong and nurturing relationships with their classes. They use this knowledge, and feedback from pupils, to plan a range of stimulating learning activities, generally well-matched to pupils' needs.

Teachers subject knowledge is secure and they explain tasks clearly, with appropriate tone and complexity. They use questioning well to begin discussions, check understanding and extend learning. Staff model curiosity about the world well and work passionately to successfully create an environment where pupils learn with enthusiasm and are not afraid to ask questions and learn from their mistakes.

Overall, lessons are well-planned and well-paced and use a range of stimulating resources. On a few occasions, teachers miss opportunities to stretch more able learners as learning activities are not always matched well enough to pupils' abilities.. For example, pupils complete the core planned tasks very easily and quickly, but then have insufficient time to complete extension activities that may be better matched to their abilities.

Teachers use a range of ongoing assessment strategies to understand pupils' progress. They use assessment information well to provide helpful, regular feedback to pupils about their progress. Pupils also have regular opportunities to provide meaningful feedback to their peers and help them improve their work. Individual pupil targets are reviewed and updated regularly and discussed with parents each term. The school provides clear and informative reports to parents annually.

Overall, the school uses assessment information well to identify areas for improvement across the school and takes action to address these, for example through having a whole-school focus on problem-solving.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum and meets the requirement for the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. Teachers hold valuable curriculum discussions with parents each term to outline the planned activities.

The school uses an exciting variety of topics to plan learning activities for each of the six areas of learning experiences in the Curriculum for Wales. Overall, the range of activities across the curriculum supports strong progress in pupils' skills, confidence and creativity. Although staff collaborate well to share and reflectively develop their curriculum planning, there are limited opportunities to quality assure and review the delivery of each of the individual areas of learning experiences across the school. The school liaises well with the school nurses to deliver aspects of their health and well-being provision.

The school focuses strongly on using the outdoor environment as a resource to stimulate learning. They have invested well in the school grounds and manage the use of the various outdoor areas exceptionally well. A wide range of learning happens outside including problem-solving activities such as bridge building,

orienteering and recreating the solar system. Pupils are motivated and excited through learning in the outdoors, and activities such as growing vegetables in the garden or preparing dough to bake outdoors contribute positively to pupils' well-being.

Teachers make regular use of trips to local forests and beaches and nearby facilities such as a local athletics track. They plan purposeful trips to local landmarks such as Tryweryn and use these well as a stimulus for further discussion and learning back in school. Events such as the World Bee Day, British Science Week and Chinese New Year are used well to plan a range of stimulating activities as part of the programme of topics.

The school has very strong partnerships with parents. Staff draw well on these relationships to use parents' experiences and specialist knowledge to enhance pupils' curriculum experiences. For example, parents facilitated a tour of a local micro hydro-electric plant and also joined an evening of star-gazing. Homework is used particularly well to build on pupils' work in school and challenge them to use a wide range of approaches to record their work.

Care, support and guidance

Staff place an extremely high priority on the well-being of all pupils and this has been a particular focus both during and since the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff know their pupils very well and meet their well-being needs highly effectively. This strong focus on pupil well-being is a particular strength of the school.

The school promotes a strong sense of community, including through promoting the 'Treffos values' of determination, responsibility, kindness, honesty, resilience and respect. These values are well understood by both pupils and parents, and pupils are rewarded for exhibiting them. The school encourages pupils to support national charities. This gives pupils a sense of the importance of local and national issues and the impact that these have on different members of society.

The school uses the local community effectively to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. For example, a local minister visits to hold a service for harvest festival, local artists work with the pupils and the local police officer visits the school to lead sessions, including about 'stranger danger' and 'how to stay safe online'.

The school has extensive outdoor areas that are used very well to develop pupils understanding of their environment and the importance of both a healthy body and a healthy mind.

The school offers bespoke provision for the few pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). In response to the identified need in class support, one-to-one support or the services of an external agency are provided. The progress of each individual is monitored closely and the additional provision adapted as required. As a result, these pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

The school celebrates its Welsh identity successfully, developing pupils' understanding of their identity and heritage. Pupils study a variety of topics highlighting the history of the area and have written poetry about Eryri. In addition, there is a school trip to Ynys Llanddwyn and the annual school Eisteddfod.

Across the school, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning environment as well as holding formal positions of responsibility. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 can apply for roles such as the chair of the school council, eco committee or house captain. These roles support the development of their self-confidence. Teachers ensure that nearly all pupils regularly have the opportunity to influence what and how they learn, and this supports pupils' strong engagement with all learning activities.

Leaders are working to embed a culture of safeguarding. There is an established system to report safeguarding concerns regarding pupils and the school makes timely referrals to outside agencies when appropriate. The school has thorough safer recruitment procedures and all staff complete regular safeguarding update training. However, a few staff, are not aware of who to report to if they have concerns about the headteacher / proprietor.

Leadership and management

The headteachers, who are also the proprietors, have a clear child-centred vision for the school built upon developing enthusiastic, independent, and resilient learners in harmony with nature and the real-world. Over their many years of leadership they have successfully established a nurturing culture where every pupil is recognised and celebrated for the unique contribution they make to school life. The headteachers are well-respected, highly visible, accessible, and lead the school by example with sensitivity and compassion. They are ambitious for all pupils and have high expectations of their staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenging period for the school and its wider community. During this time, the proprietors took swift and decisive actions to help ensure the continuity of provision to support pupils' learning and well-being. Supported by a resilient and cohesive staff team, the school adapted quickly to learn to use new IT platforms and develop ways of teaching and nurturing remotely.

Leaders have built and maintain outstanding relationships with parents, who see Treffos as an extended family as much as they do a school. There are regular curriculum workshops for parents, written reports are individualised and detailed, and both formal and informal lines of communication between the parents and the school are effective. As a result, parents complement the work of the school and therefore have the capacity to support their children with their learning and well-being at home.

The senior leadership team are experienced and highly committed. They have established strong and effective relationships and communicate effectively with staff. However, their individual roles and priorities are not defined clearly enough. Senior leaders, including the headteachers, regularly informally share many of their responsibilities and strategic responsibilities. As a result, the strategic oversight of important areas of the school's work, for example, reviewing school policies and aspects of the curriculum are underdeveloped.

Leaders encourage staff to be reflective about their practices, however following the pandemic, leaders are yet to re-establish their previously full range of worthwhile quality assurance activities to effectively monitor the school's work. For example, the regular cycle of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Consequently, leaders' have not identified the very few areas of teaching that may benefit from development. Leaders have helpfully identified an external professional to act as a

critical friend to support their ongoing self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.

Leaders robustly analyse pupil assessment data and work collegiately with staff to develop an annual improvement plan. For example, the school identified that pupil's mathematical reasoning skills could be even stronger and are subsequently trialling a new curriculum tool to support this development.

Improvement plans contain suitable priorities and have helped the school to successfully address most of the recommendations from the last inspection.

Leaders provide staff with worthwhile opportunities to engage in professional learning which are closely linked to school improvement priorities, for example outdoor learning training and, how to use a new communication tool. Newly appointed staff benefit from a supportive induction programme. However, professional learning is not aligned strongly enough to individual staff development needs as these are not routinely identified during the appraisal system for staff.

The school meets all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and support staff through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors/proprietor(s), 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 lessons and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning
- 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 had 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 (where appropriate), 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 ([Estyn Website](#))

The report was produced in accordance with section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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