



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

A report on

Ysgol Rhos Helyg

**Rhosesmor
Mold
Flintshire
CH7 6PJ**

Date of inspection: November 2024

by

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

About Ysgol Rhos Helyg

Name of provider	Ysgol Rhos Helyg
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	104
Pupils of statutory school age	82
Number in nursery classes	13
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 22.9%)	7.4%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	26.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	08/01/2007
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/05/2017
Start date of inspection	25/11/2024

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.

Summary

The headteacher at Rhos Helyg Primary School prioritises pupils' well-being. Staff foster a nurturing, inclusive environment where all pupils feel safe and valued. They maintain strong relationships with pupils and their families, ensuring a supportive community that contributes to pupils' confidence and eagerness to learn. Pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour and respect for others. Leaders and staff provide effective support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), working closely with external agencies and using targeted strategies to ensure progress. This approach helps pupils with ALN to make good progress academically and socially.

The school emphasises the development of pupils' speaking, listening, reading, and mathematical skills. Most pupils show strong progress in their communication skills, with older pupils engaging confidently in class discussions. The school's focus on reading fosters a love of books, and pupils develop a solid understanding of mathematical concepts. However, opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills across subjects are limited. The provision for the development of digital skills is inconsistent, particularly for older pupils, hindering their progress in this area.

The curriculum reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community, offering varied opportunities for pupils to explore different religions and values. Pupils also have opportunities for leadership roles, contributing meaningfully to school life, such as selecting playground toys through the school council. Most pupils work collaboratively and show perseverance when problem-solving. However, opportunities for independent learning are occasionally restricted by staff over-directing activities.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and use a range of self-evaluation tools well to facilitate school improvement. For example, their recent work to improve provision for reading has been effective. However, they do not always ensure there is a sharp enough focus on important areas for improvement, such as the lack of challenge and pace in lessons. As a result, older pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

Governors support the school effectively, ensuring resources are well deployed to support learning and well-being. They monitor pupil development grant expenditure closely and use it to enrich pupils' experiences.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Use monitoring processes more effectively to identify opportunities to improve aspects of teaching and learning
- R2 Continue to develop older pupils' digital and independent learning skills

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Pupils' well-being is at the heart of Rhos Helyg Primary school. Staff work diligently to create a nurturing, inclusive community where all pupils feel valued and safe. The care, support and guidance they provide underpins the school's vision and ensures that pupils are confident and keen to learn. Staff know the pupils and their families well and have sound working relationships with the community. This effective partnership working ensures positive outcomes in learning and well-being and pupils feel part of a caring supportive family. Pupils are courteous and respectful to each other, staff and visitors and nearly all pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) receive effective and targeted support. They work purposefully with external agencies to address individual needs. Effective use of grant funding supports staff to develop the skills they need to support pupils appropriately to overcome barriers to learning. Skilled teaching and support staff use an extensive range of strategies effectively to support pupils' well-being, social, communication and numeracy skills. Staff know the pupils extremely well and provide them with thoughtful and sensitive support, which greatly enhances their well-being. As a result, pupils with ALN make good progress towards their individual targets. There is a beneficial nurture room, which helps pupils reflect on their emotions and skilled support staff provide considerate, timely interventions for well-being which supports pupils to make progress.

In most cases, teachers use skilful questioning to elicit understanding, develop pupils' thinking and clarify misconceptions. They provide regular, purposeful feedback which pupils use to move their learning forward. This helps engage and motivate pupils and supports them to make valuable progress. From a young age, most pupils make strong progress in their speaking and listening skills. Older pupils confidently discuss their learning and make reasoned and thoughtful suggestions during class discussions, for example when they discuss how we are all different. The school's focus on developing a culture of reading is successful in supporting most pupils to have effective reading skills and fosters a love of reading. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across the curriculum. As a result, many pupils can organise and extend ideas in their writing in line with their ability. For example, in Year 4 pupils write engaging diary extracts from the perspective of Boudica, following on from their work about the Celts.

Pupils develop a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts although opportunities to use their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum are less well developed. Nearly all teachers are positive role models in their use of Welsh. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh Language skills through formal teaching situations and most pupils make suitable progress from their starting points. Nearly all pupils show positive attitudes towards hearing and

speaking the Welsh language and are confident when doing so. Pupils enjoy using digital devices. For example, younger pupils upload their work to a digital platform and use a range of programmes independently. However, provision for older pupils to apply their digital skills across the curriculum to support their learning is inconsistent. As a result, most older pupils do not make as much progress as they could with their digital skills.

Most pupils work collaboratively with their peers in pairs and in groups. In the younger classes, pupils persevere or look for solutions when faced with a new challenge. For example, pupils in Year 2 work out how to transfer water from one point to another using drainpipes. However, at times staff over-direct activities and this limits the opportunities for older pupils to develop their independent learning skills.

The school has developed a suitably broad curriculum that successfully reflects the cultural, linguistic and diverse nature of the local community and Wales. Learning experiences are also beginning to support pupils appropriately to learn about the wider world. Pupils have opportunities to study a range of religions and values through worthwhile lessons and assemblies.

The school values the views of pupils and nearly all pupils, including those with ALN, have suitable opportunities to take on leadership roles. These roles ensure that pupils make purposeful and authentic contributions to school life. For example, the school council work with their classes to select and purchase equipment for use on the playground.

Leaders involve staff in a range of self-evaluation activities as part of a continuous improvement cycle and identify and generally address areas for development successfully. For example, the school's arrangements to develop pupils' reading skills are effective and, as a result, most pupils use their reading skills confidently to access work across the curriculum and many older pupils enjoy reading for pleasure. However, leaders do not always ensure that there is a sharp enough focus on important areas for improvement, such as the lack of challenge and pace in a few lessons for older pupils. As a result, a minority of older pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

Governors fulfil the role of critical friend purposefully. They have a strong understanding of the school's context, its strengths and important areas for development, such as improving pupils' attendance and reading. Governors understand national priorities well and strike a good balance between support and challenge. Leaders and governors deploy the school's resources appropriately to support pupils' learning and well-being. Governors monitor expenditure of the pupil development grant closely, to ensure that pupils benefit from the additional learning support the school provides. In addition, leaders ensure that grant funding enriches pupils' lives and develops a broad range of skills, by providing them with learning experiences they might not otherwise have, such as going on a trip to London to visit the Houses of Parliament and taking part in residential trips to Glan Llyn.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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/carers 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' 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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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

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

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