



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

A report on

**Ysgol Crug Glas
Croft Street
SA1 1QA**

Date of inspection: December 2016

by

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

Summary

Most pupils attending Ysgol Crug Glas make good progress over time in line with their needs and abilities. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have a very positive attitude to learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to support pupils' learning. However, teachers' planning across the school does not identify sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their wider skills, for example working with others and thinking skills. The school provides a high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and provides strong direction for all staff. However, the role of other members of the senior leadership team is underdeveloped.

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve planning for progression in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum
- R2 Ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to develop their wider skills
- R3 Ensure that all leaders contribute effectively to self-evaluation, improvement planning and quality assurance activities
- R4 Develop the role of the governors, so that they provide effective support and challenge to the school
- R5 Provide staff with regular opportunities to observe good practice in order to improve standards and provision at the school

Main findings

1: Standards

Good

Most pupils attending Ysgol Crug Glas make good progress over time in line with their needs and abilities. They make strong progress in achieving the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) which are closely linked to the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) and the Routes for Learning assessment materials.

There is no notable difference in the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils who are looked after by the local authority or between boys and girls. It is not appropriate to compare the standards pupils achieve against national benchmarks due to the very specific and complex health needs of many of the pupils at the school.

A few pupils who are more able recall prior learning well. In rebound therapy sessions, pupils know their routines and can anticipate activities and initiate movements learnt in previous sessions.

Most pupils make good progress in developing communication skills and are able to make their needs and feelings known. For example, in the Foundation Phase, many pupils express their enjoyment of activities by responding vocally to videos and photographs.

Pupils use a range of appropriate aided and unaided individualised systems, for example voice output communication aids, sign, gesture and visual picture exchange vocabulary. A few pupils make very good progress in their use of eye-gaze technology and are able to initiate conversations and express a wish for a specific preference of snack.

Most pupils make appropriate progress in developing their numeracy and literacy skills. They apply these skills effectively across all areas of learning. For example, more able pupils read unfamiliar text as part of the morning greeting routine. Most pupils make appropriate progress in developing information and communication technology (ICT) skills and a few make good progress in developing these skills to promote independence. For example, one pupil uses a mobility platform and switch to move around the corridors.

Nearly all pupils in key stage 4 and 5 develop their independent living skills and social skills through a range of activities within the community. They apply these skills while developing a successful enterprise project.

Over the last three years, a majority of school leavers have moved on to day service provision. A minority have progressed to the local college of further education.

Most pupils make appropriate progress in developing an understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales through the use of Welsh language in daily routines, songs, and sensory stories.

2: Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Good

Pupils at Ysgol Crug Glas enjoy coming to school and have a very positive attitude to learning. They build strong relationships with members of staff and follow the instructions of staff carefully.

Nearly all pupils behave well throughout the school day. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and make suitable progress with their learning. In lessons, many pupils settle quickly to tasks and a majority concentrate well for extended periods of time. Many pupils learn to follow routines and assist staff well when moving between pieces of equipment or when changing activities.

Most pupils learn to co-operate well with their peers. During whole class activities, they listen to each other and wait patiently for their turn to contribute. During playtimes, they play safely with each other and share equipment. Pupils are welcoming and polite to visitors. Many pupils develop their confidence and social skills through regular planned activities in the local community.

Many pupils improve their health through taking part enthusiastically in a wide range of effective therapeutic interventions such as music therapy, rebound and hydrotherapy. Pupils have many opportunities during the school day to provide their views and make choices.

Many pupils participate with enthusiasm in physical activities and have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They benefit from regular exercise during the daily sensory circuit sessions in the school hall. Nearly all pupils choose healthy options at lunch.

A very few pupils who are more able develop the ability to work independently and take responsibility for doing jobs around the school. For example, they collect materials for recycling and collect class registers from the office at the start of the school day.

3: Teaching and learning experiences

Adequate, needs improvement

The school provides an appropriate range of learning experiences that meet the needs of most pupils. Well-planned interventions support pupils' access to the curriculum. These include input from specialist medical and therapeutic staff and planned opportunities within the curriculum, for example music therapy, sensory circuits and dance massage.

The Foundation Phase curriculum caters appropriately for the needs of pupils and includes a suitable range of carefully planned activities that engage pupils well. However, outdoor areas do not support the delivery of the Foundation Phase well enough.

The school offers appropriate opportunities for pupils to visit places of interest, for example a museum, theatre and farm. At key stage 4 and 5, the school provides pupils with relevant opportunities to develop their engagement with the community. However, opportunities for pupils to take part in work-related experiences are limited.

The school provides useful opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of Welsh language and culture in line with their needs and abilities.

Overall, the quality of teaching is adequate and needs improvement. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to support pupils' learning and behaviour. They know their pupils well. They build positive relationships with pupils and ensure that pupils feel safe and are ready to learn. Teaching assistants manage pupils' personal care and therapeutic needs sensitively and effectively so that they can continue their learning with minimal interruption.

Most teachers plan their lessons appropriately to include a range of activities and resources that engage pupils successfully. In most lessons, teachers have clear objectives for learning that build on pupils' prior learning and link well to targets on pupils' individual education plans (IEPs). However, in a minority of lessons, activities are not matched well enough to individual pupils' needs and abilities. In a minority of lessons, the pace of lessons is too slow and pupils do not make sufficient progress.

Teachers plan schemes of work that contain suitable activities tailored to the interests of pupils. Within many lessons there are useful opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. However, planning to develop these skills consistently across all classes and key stages to ensure progression is underdeveloped. Overall, teachers' planning does not address pupils' wider skills, for example working with others and thinking skills. As a result, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' learning in important skills that they will need in future life.

In nearly all lessons, staff provide useful verbal feedback to pupils which helps them to maintain their focus and reflect on their learning. In a few lessons, teachers make effective use of ICT to record pupils' learning and develop their ability to assess their own performance.

4: Care, support and guidance	Good
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Ysgol Crug Glas has a highly positive and inclusive ethos, which promotes diversity well. It is a nurturing community in which pupils are highly valued and respected.

The school provides a high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils. Staff know the needs of the pupils well. They produce detailed person-centred plans that summarise clearly each pupil's individual learning and wellbeing needs. As a result, staff provide support that matches the identified needs and abilities of each pupil well. Staff track pupil progress carefully and use this information appropriately to inform IEP targets.

Staff work well with nurses and therapists to ensure that the health needs of pupils are met well. For example, teachers and teaching assistants deliver programmes set by therapists for individual pupils. These include the use of an appropriate range of communication aids and specialist equipment such as standing frames and seating adapted to the specific needs of individual pupils.

The school has effective policies and procedures to promote healthy lifestyles. These include an appropriate emphasis in personal and social education (PSE) lessons on making healthy food choices and the importance of taking regular exercise. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activity. These include daily sensory circuits in the hall and grounds, regular hydrotherapy sessions and rebound therapy. The PSE programme provides pupils with valuable age and needs-appropriate information about a range of important issues, including sex and relationships.

The school promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development effectively through the curriculum, assemblies and creative arts events. These include interesting activities for pupils to explore the music, food and cultural traditions of South America and valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in music and drama performances with pupils from local mainstream schools.

Where appropriate, pupils have individual behaviour plans (IBPs). These identify suitable targets and strategies that help staff to manage pupil behaviour well. As a result, over the last year, there have been only a very few incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Over the last three years, there have been no days lost to exclusion.

Parents receive a wide range of information about their child's experiences at school. These include daily home school diaries, audio visual presentations, end of key stage records of achievement and informative written reports. However, generally, written reports do not provide enough information about the progress that pupils make. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

5: Leadership and management	Adequate, needs improvement
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The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and provides strong direction for all staff. She has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, which are reflected accurately in the detailed self-evaluation report and school improvement plan. She has addressed important issues promptly, for example health and safety issues, the recording of attendance and procedures for dealing with staff absence. These improvements have had a positive impact on the wellbeing of pupils and staff.

However, the role of other members of the senior leadership team as strategic leaders and managers is underdeveloped. They do not contribute effectively to self-evaluation, improvement planning and quality assurance activities. This has had a significant impact on the ability of the headteacher to move the school forward in a timely way.

Appropriately, the school has adopted a new staffing structure which enables staff at different levels to take on leadership responsibilities. This is helping the school to address key priorities, for example literacy, numeracy and ICT. Staff with responsibility for these areas are beginning to develop their strategic role.

There are well-established systems in place for the performance management of teachers. Objectives link well to the priorities of the school development plan.

Lesson observations have a clear focus on teaching and learning. The headteacher has recently introduced appropriate systems for monitoring the performance of teaching assistants.

The school has an appropriate range of suitable and clear policies that are clear and well understood. These are reviewed regularly by the headteacher and the governing body.

The headteacher works well with the local authority and governing body finance committee to ensure that the school budget is managed effectively. The school makes effective use of the resources it has, and has taken steps to improve the learning environment. Grants are used appropriately to support targeted pupils.

The governing body meets regularly. Governors provide useful support for the headteacher through the finance and staffing sub-committees. However, overall, governors do not provide robust challenge to the school. They receive limited information on pupil attainment, attendance and behaviour. This means that they do not have the information they need to contribute to the school's self-evaluation process.

The school deploys staff effectively. Teachers, teaching assistants and health staff work extremely well together to address the needs of individual pupils. The school provides relevant training for staff, for example in behaviour management, manual handling, safeguarding and the management of medical conditions.

The school has developed beneficial partnerships which have a positive impact on the learning experiences of pupils. Regular visits to specialist teaching facilities within local mainstream schools enable a very few pupils to develop their social skills and confidence. Pupils benefit from the school's involvement with a national scheme to promote creative thinking. Recently, staff have had useful opportunities to visit other schools. This has helped them develop strategies for supporting the communication needs of pupils. However, overall, staff do not have a clear enough understanding of good practice within the sector.

About the school

Ysgol Crug Glas is a special school for pupils aged 3 to 19 who have multiple or severe and complex learning difficulties. Many have associated communication, behavioural or sensory difficulties, and a significant number have very specific health care requirements. Over the past three years, there has been an increase in pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD).

There are currently 57 pupils on roll. Most pupils come from the Swansea area and a few come from other local authorities. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN). Currently around 14% of pupils are looked after by the local authority. Around 30% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A few pupils have families for whom English is an additional language. However, due to their needs, the language used at home with these pupils is English.

The current headteacher started in her role in January 2016.

The school is currently a pioneer school and is working with Welsh Government and other schools to take forward developments relating to the curriculum.

Appendix 1: Summary table of inspection areas

Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate, needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate, needs improvement

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

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

Copies of the report

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

We used this inspection to pilot developments to the common inspection framework, the inspection process and the inspection report format. We will review these arrangements and make any changes required before introducing them nationally in September 2017.

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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