

School

About the school

According to my placement school's Estyn report (2018) the capacity of the school was 297 pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. The school has 10 classes including four single-age classes, five mixed-age classes, and a nursery class. The school has a learning resource base and identifies 24% of pupils as having ALN, and an average of 30% of pupils eligible for free school meals. The statistics suggest that the school is based in a deprived area.

Parental engagement links

The school model's strong parental engagement links in order to promote better learning opportunities.

As seen in the school's equal opportunities policy (2018) the school aims to promote within the school equality of opportunity for pupils, staff, governors and parents.

The school makes a conscious effort to sustain a high level of communication between parents and stake holders of the school. This is achieved via the school website, twitter and letters sent home on a regular basis.

"It is also a good idea to reach out to families as early as possible in the school year. Let them know that they are active and valued partners in their child's education" (Welsh government 2016).

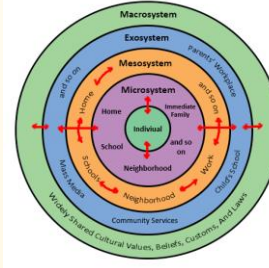
The school has invested in a programme called Impact Maths. This programme allows teachers to show parents how maths has evolved and how it is being taught in school. The workshop aims to inform parents on how to support their child's education in an innovative way.

"Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning, and levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with better academic outcomes" (EEF 2018).

The schools Estyn Report (2018) suggests that the school is in a deprived area. However, the school has been highly innovative with regards to parental links. To overcome funding issues, parents have often volunteered to help with renewing the school garden, digging out for a sand pit and donating any old resources, toys and uniform that deem appropriate. This partnership has created a strong sense of community in the school.

"The school has a caring and highly inclusive ethos within a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment."

ECAD4009 Start at your feet



The Learner



"According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, children typically find themselves enmeshed in various ecosystems, from the most intimate home ecological system to the larger school system, and then to the most expansive system which includes society and culture. Each of these ecological systems inevitably interact with and influence each other in all aspects of the children's lives" (The Psychology notes HQ, 2019).

The school has created a positive and inclusive learning environment for pupils which is of high importance for their development in foundation phase. As noted by the UNCRC (2019):

Article 28: You have the right to learn and go to school.

The school has achieved a bronze Rights of the Child award and are currently aiming for silver. The rights are displayed clearly throughout the school and the children have completed topic work, homework and assemblies on the subject. This award has allowed the children to explore becoming ethically informed citizens.

The school has a learning resource base for the aid of children with ALN. The learning resource base has developed a system that not only provides effective learning for specific needs but integrates the ALN children into the classroom to establish consistency across all areas of learning and promotes inclusivity.

"The school's arrangements to integrate pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective. They have full access to the same broad and balanced curriculum as other pupils" Estyn (2018).

The pupils have attended trips that link with topic work such as St Fagan's, Big Pitt and local farms. This has allowed to keep the topic work relevant and keep the children engaged with real life experiences and build on existing knowledge.

"Children need to have control over learning-learning how to find out and constructing knowledge for themselves" (Pound L ,P38, 2005).

Community

Community involvement

According to Welsh Government (2009) "Schools not only provide education for pupils and create a community spirit amongst parents, but they also have the opportunity and often the facilities to reach out to the whole community".

The school maintains a strong link within the local community. Due to the socioeconomic status of the catchment area, the Flying Start programme is available to the community. The school works closely with Flying Start to aid with transition of pre-school children and their development.

"Research shows that early years intervention is important for child development, particularly amongst children from a disadvantaged home environment and can be successful in fostering social and language skills" (Welsh Government, 2013).

The pupils of the school have attended several visits to local churches, community centres and libraries for the children to gain an understanding and adopt respect for their local community. The brand-new local community centre has invited the school to use the building at their leisure to hold school concerts and fundraisers etc. The relationship the school have with the community is highly beneficial to the pupils.

"While Piaget believed that knowledge comes from personal experience, Vygotsky emphasised the importance of families, communities and other children" (Pound L, p.40, 2005).

The pupils have attended care homes in their Easter bonnets and preformed songs for the residents. This has allowed the children to create a bond with older generations. The local community annually receive an extended invitation to fundraisers and fates. As noted by Welsh Government (2014)

" Other community partners can play an important role in the school's family engagement activities, and they can also become partners in the children's education in their own right. Through them schools can tap into a great source of support which can strengthen their school".

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