

Best practice

Ysgol y Foryd

Number of pupils: **237**

Age range: **3 - 7 years**

Date of Estyn inspection: **December 2013**



Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales



Area of sector-leading practice which has been identified during inspection and relates to a particular quality indicator:

Key Question: 1. Outcomes

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Standards

Aspect: 1.1.2 standards of groups of learners

Context and background to sector-leading practice:

Ysgol y Foryd is situated in Kinmel Bay in Conwy and caters for pupils aged from 3 to 7 years. The school currently has 237 pupils on role arranged into eight classes. These include 59 part time nursery pupils. Approximately 42% are eligible for free school meals and 49% are on the register of pupils with additional learning needs. A majority of pupils on entry have speech difficulties or other developmental needs and challenges. Size of cohorts and level of transience (typically 25% per year of school population) means that close communication with parents and other agencies is imperative to enable early support for families and appropriate interventions for pupils. During the past two years many nursery pupils have not attained Outcome 1 by mid-Autumn term and therefore a small steps assessment tool has been implemented. This has quantified that

on entry over half of our pupils are at a lower level of development than would normally be expected.

Developing the partnership with parents; its impact on pupil standards and tackling disadvantage.

During the term following the inspection of 2007, over 25% of the large and transient Year 2 cohort displayed challenging behaviours. In February 2008, a behaviour class was implemented. The key to its success was developing a close partnership with parents. The strategy was instrumental in guiding the development of nurture work and family liaison. These initiatives have raised pupils' standards significantly.

Nature of strategy or activity identified as sector-leading practice:

- In 2011, a community School Vision Day was held involving parents and the school motto and vision was generated: Dreaming, Believing, Succeeding, Together; to raise pupils' aspirations.
- Foryd Values, invented by pupils and staff, reinforce the behaviour and work of everyone in school. Staff use these with parents to assist with approaches at home. Because they are communicated in ways that the pupils understand, nearly all pupils know them by rote and share them.
- Assessment Profiles and intervention packages for the new nursery pupils are initiated before pupils begin school through linking with health visitors, playgroups and parents. Home visits prior to admission have

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been effective in assessing and planning for pupils' requirements.

- Approximately 20% of our pupils each year are identified for Nurture intervention and are managed in class groups by nurture leaders who liaise closely with parents. Nurture plans address potential barriers to learning such as pupils' personal, social and emotional needs.
- Parents are encouraged to take part in school life. A Parents' Forum has been established that has encouraged parents to lead and support many aspects of School Improvement. 'Parent Reps' encourage other parents. A range of extra-curricular activities including Relax Kids, Information Technology, Pyramid and Cookery Clubs have also involved parents.
- Family courses, some of which are college accredited, are available. Around half of parents involved have progressed to access other courses. Seven current members of school staff started their 'return to education' experiences as parents attending our courses.
- The school's full time Family Liaison Officer works with parents to improve attendance and to reduce pupils' potential barriers to learning. Her role enables and encourages links between parents and other agencies. She has developed behaviour programmes for parents at home and has encouraged parents' involvement in school. Her presence on the yard at the start of the day has been effective in enabling children to settle well on arrival at school regardless of external circumstances and to engage in lessons or nurture activities appropriately.

Impact on provision and learners' standards:

- During the past three years nearly all pupils gained at least four outcomes of progress during their time in school. Expected end of Foundation Phase outcomes are achieved by nearly all pupils and there is no significant attainment gap between pupils in receipt of free school meals and those not in receipt of free school meals. Even though the past four years has seen a steady rise

in deprivation at our school, standards have improved regarding pupils' attainment and wellbeing.

- Nearly all pupils who have attended parents' courses have improved self-esteem and this has been evident from a range of relevant assessments. Nearly all parents' questionnaires demonstrate increased enjoyment and confidence in supporting their children.

School cluster group working has enabled the sharing of good practice regarding parental partnerships. Our school has recently initiated the Family Liaison Forum, hosted half-termly by our Family Liaison Officer. Staff in similar roles from other areas and senior leaders from at least ten schools have visited our school to see and discuss the initiatives we have implemented. All have said that they have been able to use some of the good practice shared, including attendance strategies, multi-agency working and the Relax Kids programme in their own settings.