

Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain - The Welsh School, London

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	304/6065
Unique Reference Number	101573
Inspection number	330426
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Mike Best

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended. The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain (The Welsh School, London) is an independent school for boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 years. It was established in 1958 and moved to its present location at Stonebridge Primary school in Brent in 2004. The school is run by a board of directors (the proprietorial body) on behalf of The Welsh School Trust. The school's principal aim is to 'provide bilingual Welsh education outside of Wales'. There are currently 20 full-time pupils on roll and a further six pupils attend each Friday. There are two full-time teachers with parents and other volunteers undertaking lunchtime duties and supporting children in lessons or on visits. Most children join the reception class from the pre-school group that meets on the same site: this is run by a separate provider and was not included in this inspection. Since the previous Ofsted inspection in 2005, there have been a number of changes in staff. The headteacher was appointed to the substantive post in September 2008 after being acting headteacher during the summer term 2008.

Evaluation of the school

Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain is a friendly and welcoming school that provides a good quality of education for its pupils. It meets its principal aim and ensures that pupils benefit from a good curriculum that meets their individual needs and enables them to make good progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their personal development and well-being, are good and their behaviour is outstanding. However, pupils' welfare, health and safety are inadequate because regulations relating to the suitability of the proprietorial body, staff and volunteers are not met; these include regulations not met at the time of the last inspection. As a direct result of these shortcomings, and despite good provision for children's learning and development, the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is also inadequate.

Quality of education

The overall quality of education is good. The school provides a good curriculum which is based on the Welsh Foundation Phase areas of learning for children in the reception year and the Welsh National Curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In Reception and Key Stage 1, the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh. English is taught as a subject in Key Stage 2, with mathematics

and science delivered through the medium of English. Other subjects are delivered through the medium of Welsh. Information and communication technology is delivered bilingually, using a good range of resources. Use is made of nearby playing fields for physical education lessons. The school makes good use of its location to visit places of interest in central London such as art galleries and concert halls, and older pupils visit Cardiff to take part in a young people's Eisteddfod. The timetable is suitably organised to provide pupils attending for Fridays only with a meaningful experience of learning through the medium of Welsh.

Teaching and assessment are good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to plan interesting lessons that engage and enthuse pupils. The strong focus on speaking and listening mostly ensures that pupils have the opportunity to ask and answer questions, discuss the meaning of what they are learning and share their ideas and opinions. As a result, pupils are confident in settling down to work individually or in small groups and apply themselves industriously. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. Teachers employ a good range of teaching styles and suitably adjust work for those with additional learning needs. Teachers' planning ensures the clear development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in small but steady steps that provide a suitable level of challenge.

Pupils make good progress in lessons, and scrutiny of their previous work indicates that the pace of progress has improved during the course of this school year. Parents have also commented positively about this in their responses to the inspection questionnaire. Pupils are increasingly confident in applying the skills from one subject in another, for example, when writing victory speeches for King George VI and Winston Churchill at the close of the Second World War. The school has a good stock of learning resources, with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books available in both Welsh and English. Pupils' reading skills develop well, with pupils becoming fluent in both Welsh and English by the end of Key Stage 2. They are familiar with stories from different world cultures and, in particular, those with Welsh connections. Similarly, pupils' writing skills develop effectively in both languages. The overall quality of pupils' presentation of their work is satisfactory. Handwriting is generally correctly formed but the accuracy of calculations in mathematics is sometimes compromised by untidy presentation.

Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of individual pupils and use this effectively in their lesson planning. The school has recently introduced a new approach to using the information about what pupils know and can do to involve them and their parents more effectively in planning the way forward in learning. Individual pupils have discussed their work with their teachers and agreed targets. Teachers' comments when marking pupils' work are increasingly linked to these targets and provide pupils with constructive advice about their next step in learning.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The staff value each child as an individual and successfully promote their confidence and self-knowledge. Pupils quickly settle into school routines and rapidly become confident, articulate and willing learners who enthusiastically enjoy aspects of school life. Pupils' attitudes to learning are first-class and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and have excellent relationships with each other and with adults. Pupils' care for each other and their behaviour throughout the school day are outstanding. Attendance is good overall, with regular absences closely monitored. Moral and social aspects are addressed through both formal and informal discussions. Pupils effectively contribute to the school community by taking on roles around the school, helping others and showing visitors around. Pupils' hard work in the school garden last year resulted in a good crop of vegetables which they sold to raise funds for the school.

Pupils learn to respect and value public institutions through visits from the emergency services and a recent visit to the Houses of Parliament where they sang on St David's day. They consider the spiritual and cultural aspects of life through visits to art galleries, folk dancing and taking part in public speaking, poetry reading and musical events. Through discussions and their learning across the curriculum, pupils develop a sound understanding of different faiths and beliefs to enable them to be tolerant towards, and respectful of, other cultural traditions.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Although the school meets most of the regulations relating to the welfare, health and safety of its pupils, this aspect is inadequate because of important shortcomings in the procedures for checking the suitability of the proprietorial body, staff and volunteers.

There is a good level of staffing and pupils are carefully supervised in school and on visits. Risk assessments are undertaken for off-site visits and the safety of the site is checked daily. Electrical and fire appliances are tested annually and the school has recently re-established regular fire alarm tests and evacuations. The school's first aid arrangements comply with the latest guidance. Teaching staff have recently completed an appropriate level of training in safeguarding pupils but volunteers are not regularly briefed about the school's procedures. The school's child protection policy has recently been updated but the school has not prepared and implemented all the required written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

In discussion, pupils of all ages say they are happy and secure in the school's caring school environment. One parent commented that the atmosphere is 'just like that in a village school'. Teachers know their pupils and their needs well and make good provision for them. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at both Key Stages 1 and 2 have a good understanding of keeping safe. They say they know who to turn to if they are worried or concerned about anything, and indicate that any behavioural issues are dealt with effectively. The consistent application of the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies successfully promotes and maintains a calm environment for pupils to learn and play together. Pupils move around the school very sensibly and have high regard for the needs, safety and enjoyment of others.

Any pupils with learning or other difficulties are promptly identified and effective arrangements made to support them. Pupils appreciate the importance of taking part in regular exercise and eating healthily. They greatly enjoy the school's new fixed playground equipment and are very enthusiastic about growing flowers, herbs and vegetables in the school gardens.

Attendance registers meet requirements but the admission register omits a number of items of required information. The school does not meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (2002). It has not undertaken an audit of its provision or drawn up a three year action plan based on this, as required by the last inspection report in 2005.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The required checks on the suitability of staff, parents and other voluntary helpers are incomplete. Checks have not been made on members of the proprietorial body as required by the regulations. The proprietorial body does not maintain a written register showing the outcomes of the checks on staff, volunteers or its members, together with the date on which these were completed. Undertaking checks on the suitability of parents and other voluntary helpers was one of the requirements for compliance in the 2005 inspection report. The school's leadership has not acted with sufficient rigour to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

School's premises and accommodation

The school's premises and accommodation are suitable for the number of pupils on roll and enable them to learn effectively, safely and securely. The single storey accommodation is bright and welcoming, and good use is made of the available indoor space to provide a computer suite, library and classrooms. Additional space is available in an adjoining building when the pre-school group is not in session. The outside area has recently been refurbished to a high standard. Complete with multi-purpose play equipment, sturdy sheltered tables and seating, and all-weather

surface, it provides an excellent resource which is well used by pupils. The secure canopied area provides ideal wet-weather accommodation to support pupils' outdoor learning. A newly-created herb garden complements the vegetable and flower garden pupils helped to construct last year.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides all the required information for parents and prospective parents in both English and Welsh on the notice board in the entrance foyer, including the specific policies and other details that it will provide on request. The school website and prospectus are not currently available as they are being updated. Parents receive a detailed annual written report on their child's progress but targets for improvement are not always clear enough. Parents have been well informed about the introduction of new systems for assessment that involve pupils in checking their progress and agreeing targets for improvement with teachers. Most parents say they are very pleased with the school and their children's progress but a small minority are concerned that the high turnover of staff has adversely affected pupils' progress.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school's procedures for handling complaints meet all of the regulations.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start in the reception class, children's skills and experiences are broadly average. Children make good progress and achieve well in all the areas of learning. The rich curriculum, based on the Welsh Early Years Foundation Phase guidelines, is delivered through the medium of Welsh. In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, the school successfully supports children's development of their communication, language and literacy skills in English.

Experienced staff provide children with a warm and welcoming learning environment where they quickly become engrossed in learning and play activities. Children's personal development and well-being are good. They demonstrate good levels of self-esteem and confidence in their day-to-day activities. Easy access to the outside area, with its excellent range of equipment, provides children with good opportunities to make choices and solve problems independently of adults. A good mix of adult-led and child-chosen activities effectively underpins children's development of basic skills, especially in speaking and listening.

Teachers regularly check how well children are making progress and use this information well to plan the next steps in learning. However, the school has yet to implement the required statutory procedures for assessing children against the Early

Years Foundation Stage early learning goals. Staff take very good care of the children in their charge and the partnership with parents is excellent; this is clearly reflected in the children's happiness, friendliness and outstanding behaviour.

The provision for children's learning and personal development is well managed. However, the overall provision for children's care, health and safety is inadequate because the proprietorial body's arrangements for making the required checks on its members and those working with children do not meet statutory requirements. As a direct result of this, and despite good features in other areas of provision, the quality of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations"), with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (2007) (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- maintain an admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff (including volunteers), carry out appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in the United Kingdom, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references and take such information into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- ensure that an enhanced criminal record check been made by the proprietor in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school and that the enhanced criminal record certificate which is the subject of the application is obtained before or as soon as was practicable after his/her appointment (paragraph 4(2)(b))

- ensure that the chairperson has checked the other members of the proprietorial body to confirm their identity, right to work in the UK, enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, or where appropriate confirmation that he/she does not contravene section 142 of the 2002 Act(a) (paragraph 4B(4) and (5))
- ensure that in relation to each member of staff in post on or after 1 August 2007, the register shows checks made (and certificates obtained where relevant) of: his/her identity; qualifications (where required); whether an enhanced CRB check was obtained, or where appropriate, that he/she is not working in contravention of section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (List 99); the right to work in the UK and, where relevant for those who have lived outside the UK, suitability to work in a school; and that the register includes the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained (paragraph 4C(2 and 3))
- ensure that in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 August 2007, the register shows whether a check was made of: his/her identity; right to work in the United Kingdom; and whether an enhanced CRB check was carried out and certificate obtained, or where appropriate, confirmation that he/she is not barred from working in school under section 142 of the Education Act 2002; and that the register also shows the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraph 4C(6 and 7)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 as amended (DDA) the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- put in place arrangements for assessing and recording children's progress against the early learning goals in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that proprietorial body makes the required safeguarding checks on its members, staff and volunteers.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				✓
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		✓		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		✓		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		✓		
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?				✓
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?				✓
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?				✓

School details

Name of school	Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain The Welsh School, London		
DCSF number	304/6065		
Unique reference number	101573		
Type of school	Primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1958		
Age range of pupils	4–11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 9	Girls: 11	Total: 20
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2400		
Address of school	c/o Stonebridge Primary School Shakespeare Avenue London NW10 8NG		
Telephone number	020 8965 3585		
Fax number	020 8965 3585		
Email address	headlondonwelsh@hotmail.co.uk		
Headteacher	Miss Aeronwy Davies		
Proprietor	The London Welsh School Trust Limited		
Reporting inspector	Mike Best		
Dates of inspection	12–13 March 2009		