

Gwobr Ansawdd Genedlaethol
Rhwydwaith Cynlluniau Ysgolion Iach Cymru



Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes
National Quality Award

National Quality Award Report
of the visit to Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy

Date

June 9th and 10th 2016

Section I

Leadership and Communication

Leadership

This aspect is strong and robust in school. Everyone we had the privilege of meeting, understood the aims and objectives of the scheme, including the staff, students, governors and parents. The health and welfare of the students is given high priority at the school and this is reflected in the behaviour of the students and the status given to support staff and to the school nurse and counsellor. The Headteacher shows a clear commitment to the healthy schools project and its objectives and receives very good support from the senior management team, which also sees the importance of the project to students and the school in general. The in-school co-ordinator is very experienced with the work and as she also works in the physical education department and is the health education co-ordinator for the school, she has been able to provide a whole school approach to the work. Pupil participation is particularly strong in the school and we found a mature approach from all the students that gave presentations to us or from those we had the opportunity to speak to. The contribution of each of the groups of students, the Bobs, the school council, the eco-group, the sports ambassadors, etc., showed a clear commitment to improving the school and to promoting the aims and ethos of the healthy schools project.

Communication

The school website is especially good, with specific sections for staff, parents, governors, the community and students; colourful and full of very useful information. The staff meet every morning to share any concerns or welfare updates, so that everyone knows what is happening within the school and its community. The prospectus is also colourful and well-presented and useful to parents. The annual magazine, Y Bont, is an excellent record of events and achievements each year. Electronic tools are used to contact and connect with parents and to share the good news by texting, tweeting, etc. Pupil voice is very strong in the school with a very effective school council and sports council.

Curriculum

The schemes of work within PSE are good, with a combination of specific timetabled lessons and tutor led lessons, combining to ensure that this aspect is given due attention at a time when there is considerable time pressure on the curriculum. The lessons presented by the form tutors have been prepared thoroughly with clear guidance in the lesson packages. It was good to see also that the school does not just depend on the work submitted by the police liaison officer through the scheme All Wales School Liaison Core Programme, but follows up with specific lessons. It was encouraging also to see that cross-curricular aspects are

highlighted through the work of the science department and the English department has, for instance, presented work on healthy eating. Pupils are strongly encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities, with a good selection of clubs available to them at lunchtimes and after school.

Ethos and Environment

Ethos

Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy has developed their healthy schools approach over many years and this has firmly rooted the work in the ethos of the school. The scheme is important to the school and is well supported by the staff. The behaviour of all students is particularly good, with courtesy highlighted throughout the school. The students we had an opportunity to talk with were extremely happy to share their opinions with confidence and were extremely proud of the good work of the school. The teaching staff also showed enthusiasm for the schemes' objectives. It was also useful to meet the welfare and support staff who were equally enthusiastic about the school's work. The words that arose in many of the conversations that we had was "holistic" and "inclusive" and these two words reflects the school's approach to the students. Words that one parent use has remained in my memory - "Every student in the school is treated as an individual. All are equally important to the staff".

Environment

The school building and grounds are very well-kept and clean and it is an attractive site with very good facilities. The fact that the leisure centre is attached to the school offers even more facilities to promote the aspect of physical activities. The company that is responsible for the commercial cleaning, maintenance and providing the food, etc., to the school ensures that the toilets are clean throughout the day and collect any litter regularly.

Family and Community Involvement

The discussions we had with parents and representatives of the governing body reflected the high regard which the stakeholders have towards the school's good work on health promotion and they strongly highlighted the care given to each student. Although the catchment area of the school is a particularly wide and rural community, the school has a strong community ethos and those involved are extremely proud of the good work of the school. Strong links have developed with local sports clubs and the skill of local experts are used to enhance the students' education. The BOBs group (Food Matters) present workshops in Llanrwst Food Festival and have developed good links with the feeder schools, with students and staff visiting to deliver activities and to promote primary/secondary transfer.

General comments

The staff were all very welcoming and eager to share their experiences with us. Students' contributions were invaluable, including the presentations we were given and their knowledge on aspects of school life and health is very good. All students were courteous and the respect they show for each other, to staff and members of the wider school community was good.

A comprehensive range of evidence was presented during the visit that highlights the great efforts that the school has made to apply for this award. It showed very clearly that the healthy schools ethos is an integral part of the school's work. Special thanks must be given to the co-ordinator who has put so much work into ensuring that all the evidence was available. With the retirement of the current hard working co-ordinator approaching, I would hope that you, as a school, make sure that very soon you will appoint a person to carry this good work forward. Thank you very much for your hospitality and all the hard work during the visit and over the years.

Section 2

Food and Fitness

The school has given priority to ensuring that everyone in the school benefits from healthy eating and keeping fit. A comprehensive policy on food and fitness is in place and the BOB's team are working successfully in school. A productive dialogue has been established with the commercial company responsible for providing the food, through the school council and BOB's. A close relationship was evident between the curriculum presented, the provision of food, the encouragement of physical activity and the food and fitness policy. The work of the department of physical education is excellent, with so many opportunities for students to take part in various extra-curricular activities. Although the school is very successful in competitions and tournaments, the most important aspect for the PE department is inclusivity and the fact that the numbers of those joining in the extra-curricular physical activities has increased so much, reflects this.

Food and Drink Provision – Minimum standards

All minimum standards are adhered to within the school.

Food provision is in line with Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations 2013.

Food

Particular strengths:

- Lunchtime arrangements that ensure a highly civilized and pleasant environment for students and staff. The dining facilities are of a high standard, with plenty of choice of healthy and interesting food.
- The work of the BOB's, especially the idea of having mentors from the BOB's group of the previous year and the work they have done with the primary schools in the local food festival.

The areas for development:

You may wish to consider:

- Ensure that more water coolers are available within the school building, with one perhaps being placed in Year 12 and 13's block.
- If staffing allows during the next year, reinstate the extra-curricular cooking club, which was so successful.

Fitness

Particular strengths:

- The excellent work of the sports Council and the sports ambassadors. The idea of having a sport ambassador, to lead one specific sporting aspect, has been particularly

good and very successful in encouraging students to join in a wide variety of activities.

- The wide choice of extra-curricular physical activities available.
- The close relationships developed with local sports clubs, that provide a further route to any students who have experienced and enjoyed any aspect of sports.
- The excellent facilities available for use by the school to deliver this aspect.
- The success of individuals and school sports teams and in a wide range of interesting sports as well.
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award is popular and successful.
- The Aml Gamp scheme in Year 10 that allows students to receive the Sports Leader qualification and the fact that they go in to primary schools to deliver sports sessions. This is a very positive aspect and also supports the primary / secondary transition.
- The enthusiasm, vision and commitment of the PE department within the school.

The areas for development:

- Maintain current practice

Mental and Emotional Health and Well-being

Mental and Emotional Health and Well-being is central to everything that happens in Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy and the support, care and guidance which is given to students and staff is excellent. All policies and procedures are in place, following local and national guidelines and are regularly reviewed. The senior management team, the learning support staff, school nurse and counsellor are all very effective in their roles and work together with the rest of the staff to ensure the welfare of all students, allowing them to learn effectively.

Particular strengths:

- The breakfast club, which not only offers breakfast but a safe and friendly haven at the start of the school day.
- The school's PSE scheme of work is organised, interesting and easy to follow.
- Student participation across the age range of the school and the mature way these groups deal with their work.
- The use of peer education i.e. the Sex Education buddies, the Mêts Mwg (Anti-smoking buddies) last year, Aml Gamp which supports the primary / secondary transition process, the 6th form teams that support maths, reading and Welsh, etc.
- The behaviour and courtesy of students.
- The work of the Pyramid Club, not only within the school but in the local primary

school as well. This also promotes the transition process.

- The excellent annual 'Activities Week' that continues while many schools have cut down on this.
- The very well organised and successful school council.
- The use of strategies such as PASS (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School) to gather information on the needs of the pupil and the evidence seen, which indicates the success of these strategies.
- The work of the school counsellor and nurse.

The areas for development:

- Maintain current practice

Personal Development and Relationships

Policies for Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), safeguarding and child protection and internet security are in place and follow local and national guidelines. These policies are also available to the parents via the school website. The curriculum and resources are appropriate to students' ages and are current. The school gives high priority to this aspect and provides a comprehensive work programme, that includes values and behaviour, as well as knowledge.

Particular strengths:

- The work of the Sex Education buddies, who are pupils from Year 12 is particularly good. They deliver lessons to each class in Year 9 including contraception. It was a privilege to chat with two of the students during the visit.
- The manner in which the school will adapt the curriculum to respond to local needs that have arisen, i.e. specific lessons were included on "sexting" following rumours that this has happened locally.
- The school nurse provides a confidential weekly drop in clinic to students in school every Monday and this includes an enhanced provision.

The areas for development:

- Maintain current practice

Substance Use and Misuse

The school's substance misuse policy contains clear procedures to be followed in the event of any incident. It refers to other policies which are important e.g. health and safety policy, the school's behaviour policy and includes referral and incident recording forms. A version suitable for the students is also available. Good working relations have developed with the police liaison officer.

Substance Use and Misuse – Minimum Standards

All minimum standards are adhered to within the school.

Particular strengths:

- The All Wales School Liaison Core Programme is delivered by the school police liaison officer, but is also followed up by a detailed and interesting substances education programme within the school's PSE scheme.
- The school nurse and counsellor, as well as outside agencies such as social services and the youth service, are effectively used by the school to support the work of the staff.
- The work of the Mêts Mwg, a peer education scheme that was in operation at the school last year.

The areas for development:

You may wish to consider:

- Seek funding for the Mêts Mwg scheme so it can restart within the school.
- Adding a presentation on new and emerging drugs and the recent legislative changes to the drugs law, at the same time as the evening on e-safety you are planning for parents this term.

Environment

The school participates in the Eco-Schools scheme and has received the silver level award. The building and school grounds are tidy, attractive and well maintained. The school has a sustainability policy.

Particular strengths:

- The BOB's group has delivered Fairtrade workshops.
- During activities week last year workshops were held on creating fashion from recycled materials.

- Recycling occurs regularly and recently the eco-group has developed a plastic recycling scheme for the staff room, with the plastic to be used in CDT lessons.
- The eco-group has gone into Year 10 lessons to promote an interest in their environmental work.

The areas for development:

You may wish to consider:

- Provide a copy of the school's Eco Code in every classroom to raise the profile of the environmental work.
- As the students within in the school are not responsible for litter collection, because this is part of the commercial company's contract, you may be able to work with Keep Wales Tidy to work out in the community on this aspect.
- Develop gardens at the school, with input from the students, so that the school can develop this aspect within the Eco Schools project. This will then become part of the work needed to move forward to obtain the Green Flag.

Safety

The Governing Body has a health and safety committee that monitors health and safety every term with a designated governor in place. There is good co-operation between Sodexo and the school, with clear organisation of rules and responsibilities. The school puts trust in its students to be responsible adults as shown by its e-safety policy, that emphasises the entitlement that young people should have safe internet access at all times, but in return they are expected to be responsible users.

Particular strengths:

- The schools provide relevant curriculum lessons, that affects their community and their lives. Good use of PC Meirion, the school police liaison officer.
- The school gives high priority to internet safety and have received training in school on "sexting".
- Continuation of training on Heartstart in the school.
- Students have created posters regarding promoting/informing about safety – sun safety and smoking etc.
- All the staff in the canteen complete a Food Safety Passport every year.

The areas for development:

You may wish to consider:

- Having a copy of the illness incubation period in your prospectus or in parent section of the school website

Hygiene

Excellent toilet policy, which shows that the school recognises that well maintained toilet facilities where students feel comfortable and safe and have open access throughout the school day are essential for good health, wellbeing and learning. The school has 2 water coolers, which are serviced by Chemisol and cleaned by the canteen. Students are allowed to drink water at any time throughout the day, while the students are responsible for cleaning their own bottles.

Hygiene - Minimum Standard

All minimum standards are adhered to.

The school has been assessed for the Food Standards Agency's Food Hygiene Rating and awarded a 5 for the school kitchen.

Particular strengths:

- 'How to wash your hands' posters are displayed in the toilets.
- During matches and tournaments, the school has water bottles, which are cleaned and filled by the PE staff, while the PE kit is washed by the PE staff after every match.
- The school is part of the immunisation programme and the school nurse, as well as being in charge of the programme, is also available to provide advice regarding illness, infection control and medication training.
- Good relationship exists between the school council and Sodexo and the members of the school council have met with representatives of Sodexo to discuss minor problems with the environment, school dinner and toilets. Sodexo have responded favourably.
- The staff room is clean and tidy with staff rotas in place to ensure high levels of hygiene are maintained in the kitchen area and fridge.

The areas for development:

- Maintain current practice

Feedback to Students

I would like to thank you for the opportunity I received to discuss your participation in the healthy schools' scheme. The information shared by all the students that we had a chance to talk to was particularly useful. Your answers to questions about your school showed a mature approach and good knowledge of the issues we were discussing. You were enthusiastic in your discussions about the school and the many different opportunities that are offered to you to improve your learning and development and especially your fitness.

You were very welcoming and open in your discussions and the behaviour of all students was outstanding - polite, cheerful and welcoming. A calm and happy atmosphere at Dyffryn Conwy is indicative I believe, of the fact that the students feel happy and safe at school.

Student participation in school is particularly high and it is good to see young people who are so willing to share their time, skills and maturity with others to help them live healthier and safer lives. The work of the Sex Education Buddies, the Sports Ambassadors, the school council, the BOB's and 6th form teams was extremely good. Well done all of you.

The tour we had around the school was very interesting and I thank the students who took us around who shared so much useful information with us, particularly at such a busy time in school.

Your school is definitely a healthy school and very good at promoting your health. You understand the importance of good health, especially for the future when you grow to be conscientious members of your community. I would like to express my gratitude to you for help with the achievement visit and I congratulate you on the work you have been involved in, making your school a health promoting school, and wish you well with your plans for the future.

Best wishes and thanks to all for making our visit a pleasant and a very interesting one.

Eurwen Hulmston

