

REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT VISIT YMWELIAD ADOLYGU a DATBLYGU

School/Ysgol: Ty Coch Special School

Adviser/ Ymgynghorydd: Alvine Westerland

Date/Dyddiad: 23rd & 25th November
2009

Reason for visit: Review and Development Programme - Thematic
Rheswm dros yr ymweliad: Rhaglen Adolygu a Datblygu - Thematig

People seen/Gwelwyd: English Language Development co-ordinator and staff members with responsibilities for English at all Key Stages.

Agreed focus/foci/ Ffocws cytûn ar gyfer arsylwi:

English across the school curriculum

Evidence/ Tystiolaeth:

- Lesson observations
- Discussion with English language co-ordinator and other teachers
- Discussions with Head Teacher
- Perusal of documentation
- Scrutiny of pupils' work

Observations/ Sylwadau:

The whole school policies regarding Communication across the school show that pupil involvement is at the heart of planning.

Schemes of work and the resources within them are varied, in an attempt to meet the very wide range of abilities and needs within the school, and the imagination and dedication given to the production and adaptation of these is an outstanding feature of the school:

- The "Equals" scheme of work, comprising language and Communication, English Speaking and Listening and Literacy, based on P scales is used throughout the primary and the secondary classes
- Multi sensory resources, for example the Sensory Autumn Umbrella, Story Sacks and Story Boxes, both professionally and in-house produced, as well Big Books are a strong feature of attempts to engage learners.

Assessment is thorough, both rigorous and pupil centred.

- Instep underpins assessment across the board. In addition, Salford Reading test, Reading Records and Oxford Reading Tree are used.
- My reading Skills is a personal, individual assessment chart, developed in-house and showing progression in phonics, is a recent addition, with pupils colouring in a chart as they achieve specific reading goals. This is an inventive approach to self assessment, which allows children to be actively involved in measuring their own progress, with appropriate support.

Self assessment is a strength throughout the school.

- An innovative approach has been adopted as a result of whole school evaluation of data in the summer term of 2009. IEPs are constructed, with close personal involvement of the pupils. Colour coding from green to pink, symbolising growth, make these documents attractive and meaningful for the children, and also link with the school marking policy. The use of data to inform the progress and targets of individuals is excellent.
- Records of Achievement exemplify work in English, Maths and Science. An exemplar file exists for the whole school, and this is a thorough, clear document.
- Staff have been on training courses, and the aim is now to change to a skills based programme, once staff have had the opportunities to come together to share ideas, in particular, how to show progression

The dedication of staff at all key stages, and the close way they work together and support each other is a real strength.

Alison Humphreys plans the Alternative Augmentative Communication provision for the school.

A range of aids are available to compensate for certain pupils' lack of verbal output due to, for example, physical disabilities, or severe Dyspraxia:

- Springboard Lite
- Boardmaker
- Story Box

The individual, highly focussed differentiation of the curriculum for such pupils, and the close working relationships between Alison and the rest of the staff is a real strength of the school

At KS3, Julia Render plans English provision, and the curriculum map is a clear and detailed document.

- The move to a more thematic approach which is more explicitly skills based is in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's Skills agenda, and the exemplar shown on World War 2 Evacuees clearly addresses this.
- Creative and motivating approaches are in abundance, for example the use of music to engage and focus learners. Highly kinaesthetic storytelling approaches, for example on the Roald Dahl novel "The Twits", are a real strength of English provision.

At KS4,

Jo Tiley plans English provision, including Entry Level English and OCN awards.

- The English portfolio for KS4 is an impressive document which shows evidence of drafting and very varied work.
- Literature is well served at KS4 with two powerful texts, Macbeth and Private Peaceful.
- Drama at KS4 is a powerful motivator for language, with pupils who are usually non-speakers feeling confident enough to take on a role where speaking is involved.
- Some Step Up units are completed in Year 9.
- A focus on spelling, handwriting (The Best Handwriting scheme) and on comprehension activities are an excellent feature of provision, with 15+ files of activities provided by Lyn Shone so that teachers can access work easily and readily according to individual pupils' needs.

At KS5 Maria Rees plans English provision, where the school's aim for its older students is to provide a tiered structure of accreditation.

- The focus here is on literacy and numeracy, delivered in a thoughtful, integrated way with pupils following an individual pathway identified at KS4. The aim is for all pupils to leave with an award or accreditation, and it is a real strength here that appropriate accreditation is matched to each pupil.
- ASDAN and Entry Level courses are taught, and high quality literature is provided, for example "Romeo & Juliet" and "Stone Cold".
- The emphasis on independence, self confidence, hearing their own voice and having and expressing opinions is a real strength here, with the curriculum based around Vocational Skills and Life Skills, which provide real life opportunities for pupils to practise a wide range of essential skills for independence and self esteem.
- It is also a fantastic achievement for the school that KS5 pupils recently won the area finals for Young Enterprise Public Speaking.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn outside of school are in abundance, for example, with accreditation in sports and leisure taking place at a local leisure centre.
- The enrichment provided for pupils is evident throughout the school, and it is wonderful that at KS5, in addition to the real practicalities of encouraging good, useable IT skills, such thought is given to the joy of such occasions as a Leavers' Prom with other schools, which will be an unforgettable occasion for pupils, their families and staff.
- The whole school policy on self assessment and individual target setting is continued at KS5, with pupils and staff designing their own targets, which are on display. The involvement of staff here, showing that learning is life long, is commendable, e.g. a staff member training to achieve a hairdressing qualification, which will then be used in her teaching at the school's salon.

To conclude, the attention to pupils' needs, the nurturing of them and the rigorous focus on developing their communication, social and literacy skills is outstanding. The strategies for involving pupils with appropriate responsibility for setting their own targets and working towards them are an outstanding feature.

The department are to be commended for the high quality English and Communication provision at all key stages, and in particular the hard work and dedication of all staff, in particular Lyn Shone, English and Language Development co-ordinator for the school.

**Recommendations
Argymhellion**

- Continue to support, monitor and develop staff in maintaining high standards of teaching and learning;
- Continue to implement a skills based programme of study, which ensures progression

C R I S

C - celebrate- consistently good features some outstanding (Grade1)

**Copies: Headteacher, ESIS/LEA, Link Adviser
Copiau: Pennaeth, ESIS/AALL, Ymgynghorydd Cyswllt**