



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gynradd Abererch**

**Abererch  
Pwllheli  
Gwynedd  
LL53 6YU**

**Date of inspection: September 2024**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for  
Education and Training in Wales**

**This report is also available in Welsh.**

## About Ysgol Gynradd Abererch

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Abererch
Local authority	Cyngor Gwynedd
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	71
Pupils of statutory school age	63
Number in nursery classes	5
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year <i>average</i> ( <i>The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 22.9%</i> )	17.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) ( <i>The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 11.1%</i> )	14.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	62.5%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/03/2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/02/2018
Start date of inspection	30/09/2024

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:  
[mylocalschool.gov.wales](http://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school

## Summary

Pupils, staff and parents take pride in the school's friendly, inclusive and familial ethos. As a result, pupils build positive working relationships with members of staff, which contributes successfully to the beneficial and organised learning environment. Pupils' attitudes to learning are a notable strength and their behaviour is good.

A strong feature of the school is the friendly and happy nature of the pupils. They are thoughtful towards others, speak to each other and adults completely naturally in Welsh and show an interest and curiosity in the world around them. Pupils take pride in their school and their local heritage. They show pride in the school's successes, for example as the *'Dreigiau Bach'* present their work at a conference.

Staff provide a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils. Teachers plan a range of rich experiences and interesting activities that reflect the nature and local context of the school. They provide stimulating learning experiences that motivate pupils to learn successfully. However, pupils are not always given an opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills constructively enough across the curriculum.

The headteacher shares her vision: *'Cyfle i bawb lwyddo'* ('An opportunity for everyone to succeed'), clearly and the school community works diligently to realise it. The school is led effectively by a skilful team that identifies the strengths and areas for improvement. The governing body is supportive of all of the school's work and has a sound understanding of the next steps for improvement.

## Recommendations

We have made 1 recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Provide a curriculum that supports all pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills constructively across the curriculum

## What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

## Main evaluation

Ysgol Gynradd Abererch is a caring learning community that supports pupils' well-being and provides them with robust support and guidance successfully. The headteacher's passionate and robust leadership sets a clear strategic direction for the development of the school and fosters a culture that promotes continuous improvement successfully. With the support of skilful staff, the headteacher adopts a positive culture which embodies the principles of the school motto well, namely: '*Cyfle i bawb lwyddo*' ('An opportunity for everyone to succeed'). A strong sense of family is embedded in the school and the supportive and friendly working relationship between staff and pupils is a strong feature of the school's life and work.

Almost without exception, pupils are happy and feel safe at the school. The caring nature of the school promotes good behaviour among pupils and encourages them to care for and respect each other. As a result, nearly all pupils are polite towards each other, staff and visitors and support their peers in a supportive manner. For example, the oldest pupils give careful consideration to the needs of the youngest pupils on the playground, ensuring that they return safely to their class after break times.

Leaders have established comprehensive and thorough self-evaluation procedures for monitoring and improving provision and pupils' achievement. They gather information from various sources and use this information skilfully to identify areas for improvement. As a result, the school's priorities for improvement focus firmly on developing pupils' skills and raising their standards. Leaders monitor the effect of these activities on provision and, as a result, staff develop their teaching methods to be more consistent across the school. Recently, staff have focused on developing activities that promote pupils' resilience to support them to be more independent learners. Training has had a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and enjoyment of problem-solving across the areas of learning. For example, the oldest pupils calculate the interest on savings at 'Berch Bank' skilfully.

Teachers and assistants use polished language consistently to encourage pupils to use the Welsh language naturally in their learning and play. Most pupils listen well to adults and to the contributions of their peers. As a result, many of the youngest pupils respond with increasing confidence when responding to instructions and questions by using a good range of vocabulary and patterns when proposing ideas. Pupils are proud to communicate in Welsh and the '*Dreigiau Bach*' encourage their peers to speak and use the language spontaneously.

Most of the youngest pupils develop positive attitudes to reading and are familiar with the purpose and content of books. They develop their early reading skills well and many are confident when presenting information aloud and when discussing familiar stories. The oldest pupils read a good range of texts and show an interest in books, discussing the content maturely, for example as they propose ideas about the content of a blurb in a well-known author's new book.

By undertaking a good range of purposeful learning experiences that are available to them, most of the youngest pupils' early writing skills develop soundly. They practise and develop their fine motor skills effectively through a range of beneficial activities, including using a real hammer to hit nails into pieces of wood in the 'woodshed'. By

Year 1, a few pupils write sentences confidently about their visit to the local seaside. Most of the oldest pupils write confidently in a range of different genres and show maturity and humour in their work when selecting words and phrases skilfully.

Teachers provide a purposeful curriculum that is based firmly in the pupils' locality. They work closely with parents and members of the community to develop pupils' awareness of their '*cynefin*', or local area, and their heritage. Beneficial opportunities are provided for pupils to visit local beaches regularly to develop their awareness of nature, in addition to the history and geography of the area. Staff provide pupils with valuable opportunities to influence what they would like to learn within their termly themes. This fosters interest and their strong attitudes towards their activities and encourages them to take ownership of their learning. Overall, the school's curriculum provides beneficial and extensive experiences for all pupils. Teachers use information about pupils' progress appropriately to support them in identifying the next steps in their learning. However, pupils are not always given an opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills constructively across the curriculum.

The school provides purposeful and high-quality support for pupils with additional learning needs. The school's arrangements identify pupils' individual needs at an early stage and ensure that support is tailored skilfully to their personal needs. Individual learning plans outline pupils' learning needs clearly, which makes a valuable contribution to teachers' ability to support and plan purposefully for them. As a result, nearly all pupils make good progress against their targets.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' physical and emotional well-being. Activities such as '*dal i fynd*' ('keep moving') and specific physical sessions promote positive attitudes towards well-being and support pupils to develop good methods for managing their emotions. Staff provide valuable and rich opportunities for pupils to reflect on important ethical issues. They celebrate differences in society effectively during weekly assemblies and daily reflection.

The headteacher communicates effectively with parents and shares relevant information about the school's news and events in a timely manner. A significant effort is made to seek parents' views about the school's activities, which makes a valuable contribution towards ensuring a productive working relationship which is a core part of its success. For example, staff act on input suggested by parents as staff develop relevant information about pupils' progress and experiences.

The governing body is knowledgeable and hardworking in its role in monitoring and developing the school's performance further. Together with leaders, they use relevant methods to evaluate and set priorities for improvement effectively to support staff in developing provision. This, in turn, supports pupils to make consistent progress in their skills.

## **Additional information**

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are not a cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for the safety of the site are not a cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's funding appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer questionnaires and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers, staff and the governing body/members of the management committee through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report refers to different quantities and proportions, e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%



## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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**This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).**