

**A report on**  
**Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth**

**Plasrug Avenue  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 1HL**

**Date of inspection: March 2025**

**by**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## About Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth

Name of provider	Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth
Local authority	Ceredigion County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Welsh-medium primary school
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	365
Pupils of statutory school age	292
Number in nursery classes	64
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> )	5%
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> )	6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	65.4%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/05/2023

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	26/11/2016
Start date of inspection	17/03/2025

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

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

Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth is a caring community that celebrates Welshness, respect and pupils' achievements well. It encourages pupils to be happy, to enjoy their learning and to take pride in their community and Wales. As a result, most pupils are happy to attend school and feel safe there. The school's various voice committees provide regular opportunities for pupils to undertake responsibilities and develop their leadership skills effectively.

Teachers consider pupils' ideas when planning the curriculum. Most plan stimulating activities that engage pupils' interest and ensure progress in their understanding and knowledge effectively. Many teachers have high expectations and provide learning activities that challenge pupils and enable them to make the best progress in their learning. However, at times, a few teachers do not provide learning activities that challenge pupils sufficiently.

Many teachers and other staff develop pupils' skills successfully. They ensure that most pupils make sound progress in their literacy, numeracy and digital skills, along with a range of other skills in various areas of learning. One of the school's strengths is the way in which pupils develop their creative skills through rich learning experiences.

Staff across the school provide pupils with useful oral feedback and support to pupils when responding to their work. However, this feedback does not always help pupils to improve their work and begin to take responsibility for their learning.

Leaders use a range of suitable self-evaluation processes to identify the school's strengths. However, the evaluations are not always incisive enough to identify what needs to be done to improve provision and pupils' progress. The acting headteacher and staff have a positive relationship and effective communication arrangements with parents. As a result, parents have the confidence to raise any issues that may affect their children's well-being and learning.

## **Recommendations**

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve

- R1. Ensure consistency in effective teaching practices across the school and raise staff's expectations to challenge all pupils consistently
- R2. Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements so that leaders evaluate the school's work according to its effect on pupils' progress and achievement

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

The school is a caring, inclusive and happy community. There is a strong sense of belonging to a family which realises the school's aspiration to develop an effective learning community that prioritises 'Welshness, respecting each other and trying our very best'. Nearly all pupils enjoy being a member of the school and appreciate the valuable opportunities that staff provide for them. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, enjoy their tasks and apply themselves to them enthusiastically.

The acting headteacher is dedicated to the school and his leadership sets a purposeful strategic direction for developing the school. He has high expectations of himself and others and is supported enthusiastically by the senior leadership team. Staff are committed and uphold professional values and behaviour that contribute firmly to developing pupils' well-being and skills.

Across the school, staff work together effectively to create a welcoming and Welsh learning environment. This contributes successfully to the sense of inclusion which is an integral part of the fabric of provision. The outdoor area's purposeful and stimulating learning environment is used effectively to enrich and reinforce pupils' learning. However, the environment within the classrooms is not interactive enough to equip pupils to learn independently.

Many teachers use a variety of teaching methods effectively to support learning and ensure that activities move at a suitable pace. In many lessons where teaching is at its best, teachers have high expectations of pupils and activities challenge pupils appropriately. They question pupils skilfully and often use questioning techniques that extend and deepen pupils' understanding and build on their ability to think critically. This means that pupils are motivated to take part and make sound progress in their learning, but this practice is not consistent across the school.

Most staff are effective language models. Most teachers provide pupils with valuable oral feedback during activities to support and extend their learning. This is appreciated by pupils and support them to make timely improvements to their work. However, feedback does not always help pupils to improve their work effectively enough.

The curriculum provided covers the areas of learning and experience appropriately. Pupils develop and apply their understanding of spiritual, moral and cultural awareness regularly through a range of interesting topics. Teachers consider pupils' ideas regularly when planning activities. This engages their interest successfully and their sense of ownership over what they would like to learn. Learning experiences are enriched further by inviting visitors to the school and organising educational visits which enable all pupils to develop an understanding of their local area, Wales and the wider world.

Many teachers develop pupils' skills systematically and gradually during learning activities and over time. This ensures that most pupils develop their knowledge and understanding and make sound progress in their literacy, numeracy and digital skills, along with a range of other skills in various areas of learning. This include pupils who are affected by poverty and those with additional learning needs (ALN).

A notable aspect of provision is the way in which pupils' creative skills are developed through regular dance, music and design activities:

**Spotlight: Developing and celebrating pupils' creative skills through learning experiences in the classroom**

The school uses staff's expertise skilfully to provide dance, music and art sessions as part of class learning experiences. Nearly all pupils demonstrate an innate enjoyment and pride in these activities. By the end of their time at the school, they develop mature skills which enable them to create intricate and impressive pieces of artwork and perform a variety of creative dances confidently that coincide with the class themes.

The school encourages pupils to influence the school's life and work and develop their leadership skills effectively. Pupils across the school feel that staff listen to them and that they develop their roles as citizens who have a real impact on the life of the school, particularly through the various voice committees.

Leaders plan and present appropriate and useful professional learning opportunities for staff, which have a positive effect on pupils' learning and well-being. For example, staff have attended training on promoting positive behaviour to respond to the needs of the few pupils who experience behavioural difficulties. These strategies are now an integral part of provision in all classes and nurture pupils to be respectful citizens who care for each other.

The acting headteacher and staff have established suitable self-evaluation arrangements to monitor provision and plan for improvement. They use an appropriate range of first-hand evidence to identify strengths and areas for development. The governors are supportive of the school's work and, on the whole, have a good knowledge of its strengths. Staff work together effectively to scrutinise each other's books and conduct teaching and learning walks and talk to pupils, along with individual governors, where appropriate. This approach ensures that all members of staff are aware of the school's strengths. However, monitoring activities are not incisive enough and do not always focus sharply enough on evaluating the effect the school's actions have on improving teaching and learning. Governors also do not challenge the way in which they carry out this work.

The productive relationship between the school and parents is an obvious strength. The acting headteacher communicates effectively with parents and shares relevant information about school news and events in a timely manner. They state that staff listen to them and respond positively to suggestions. They appreciate being included in school life by suggesting ideas for themes and contributing to their children's learning.

### **Additional information**

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for the management of the site are a cause for concern and have been brought to the attention of the local authority.

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

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



## **Evidence base of the report**

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers 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 ([www.estyn.gov.wales](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).**