

A report on

Ysgol Bryn Clwyd

**Ysgol Bryn Clwyd
Llandyrnog
Denbighshire
LL16 4HG**

Date of inspection: June 2025

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Bryn Clwyd

Name of provider	Ysgol Bryn Clwyd
Local authority	Denbighshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	48
Pupils of statutory school age	39
Number in nursery classes	*
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 22.9%)	23.5%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	12.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2023

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/02/2017
Start date of inspection	23/06/2025

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

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

Summary

Ysgol Bryn Clwyd is a warm, friendly and inclusive school where pupils feel happy, safe and valued. Nearly all pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they show commendable respect for each other and for adults. They enjoy learning and take pride in their school.

The school is federated with Ysgol Gellifor, which is located nearby. This means that they share a governing body and a headteacher. Staff at all levels work closely together, for example to plan engaging learning activities and to develop the learning environment.

The headteacher provides compassionate and effective leadership. He has a clear vision for the school, which he shares effectively across the school's community. Leaders use a range of evidence to evaluate the school's work and have a robust record of making effective improvements. Governors know the school well and provide purposeful support and challenge.

A particular strength of the school is its nurturing provision, which supports pupils' emotional well-being very effectively. Staff create calm, safe environments and provide personalised support that helps pupils to feel secure and ready to learn.

Teachers plan engaging learning experiences, including purposeful use of the outdoors, that develop pupils' skills and interests well. Pupils respond enthusiastically and benefit from these varied opportunities. The school promotes a strong reading culture, and most pupils make good progress in their English speaking, reading and writing skills. The majority of pupils' ability to use Welsh in everyday situations is limited, and provision to support pupils' Welsh language development is still at an early stage.

Most pupils develop their numeracy skills appropriately over time, but opportunities to apply these skills across the curriculum and in authentic contexts are limited. Teachers' feedback, at times, supports pupils to improve their work suitably. However, it does not always focus well enough on specific aspects of the pupils' work that require improving.

Recommendations

We have made three recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Ensure that feedback from teachers supports pupils to improve their work consistently
- R2. Ensure consistent and purposeful opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R3. Continue to develop pupils' Welsh speaking skills

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ysgol Bryn Clwyd is characterised by its welcoming and friendly environment where everyone supports and cares for each other. There is a distinct feeling of being part of one, happy family. Nearly all pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and they feel happy and safe at school. They treat their peers and adults with respect and courtesy and, almost without exception, their attitudes towards all aspects of school life are positive.

The headteacher is a compassionate and committed leader who has a clear vision for the school embedded in the principle of supporting pupils to develop roots to grow and wings to fly. He has high expectations of himself and others. Leadership responsibilities have been allocated purposefully to staff, and they work diligently to address local and national priorities, such as promoting pupils' regular attendance at school. Leaders use a good range of first-hand evidence to evaluate the school's provision. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and the school's improvement planning addresses these areas suitably. Leaders have a strong record of bringing about lasting change that has a positive effect on pupil well-being and progress.

There is a strong culture of professional learning at the school. Staff share effective practice across the federation regularly, such as discussing the provision of enriching and engaging learning experiences. Governors are strong advocates for the school. They contribute meaningfully to evaluations of the school's provision and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement.

A particular strength of the school is how pupils' well-being is supported effectively within a highly-nurturing environment. Staff have high aspirations for pupils and work diligently to ensure that pupils' well-being is an aspect that is given a consistently high priority.

Spotlight: Establishing a culture of nurture that promotes positive learning behaviours

Staff collaborate well across the school. They work closely with pupils and parents to evaluate the provision for pupil well-being and, as a result, staff have a strong understanding of pupils' emotional and well-being needs. Leaders ensure that all staff access a wide range of effective professional learning activities that develop their ability to support pupils and their colleagues. Staff arrange highly effective support programmes that include individual sessions and purposeful group activities that promote pupils' ability to reflect on their thoughts and feelings. The learning environment indoors has been redesigned skilfully to promote the use of safe spaces where calming colours, tactile resources and 'mood lighting' create an ambience that supports pupils' well-being successfully. Pupils feel cared for and ready to learn and thrive.

Teachers collaborate purposefully across the school and federation to plan interesting and engaging learning experiences that spark most pupils' curiosity and fire their imaginations successfully. The curriculum considers the local context well and meets the needs of most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), appropriately. The curriculum provides a wide breadth of opportunities that support the development of pupils social, moral, spiritual and cultural needs successfully. Teachers make effective use of the school's expansive outdoor areas to promote development of pupils' skills and well-being.

Spotlight: Developing holistic skills in the outdoor environment

Pupils and staff have collaborated closely to design and develop the school's stimulating and attractive outdoor environment. Valuable physical skills are honed as pupils climb, dig and forage in the forest and garden areas whilst participating in a wide range of enriching learning experiences that support the progression of their literacy, numeracy and creative skills effectively. Pupils are excited about the outdoor learning opportunities they receive and value the positive effect the areas have on their spiritual and mental well-being when they require a quiet moment to reflect.

Teachers establish strong working relationships with pupils that are based on mutual respect and trust. They know their pupils well and support their learning and pastoral needs purposefully. Teachers model language well such as when they introduce and encourage the use of subject specific vocabulary effectively. Nearly all staff use a suitable range of questioning techniques to recall pupils' prior learning and confirm understanding purposefully. At its most effective, questioning by teachers supports pupils to think critically, to expand on their answers and to justify their opinions. At times, feedback from teachers supports pupils to make appropriate improvements to their work. However, feedback is too often focused on spelling and grammar and doesn't consistently highlight important genre-specific aspects of pupils' work that could be improved.

Staff promote a culture of reading successfully. Most pupils have a love for reading and engage with written material enthusiastically. They particularly enjoy choosing new books from the book vending machine. Most pupils make good progress in their reading skills and, by the time they reach Years 5 and 6, they make insightful observations and judgements about a wide range of texts. Most pupils make good progress in their speaking and writing skills, especially in English. Provision to develop pupils' use of the Welsh language is at an early stage of development. Although a minority of pupils make suitable progress from their starting points, their use of Welsh is often limited to simple vocabulary and a few basic phrases.

Most pupils make appropriate progress in developing their numeracy skills over time. Opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum and in authentic contexts are

limited. Over time, most pupils make suitable progress in the development of their digital skills. They have a suitable understanding of how to stay safe when working online and apply their digital skills confidently in their work across the curriculum.

Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to lead on important aspects of the school's work. Pupils take their roles and responsibilities seriously and develop important skills such as communication, planning and budgeting. They develop an increasing awareness of the business world such as when they collaborate to develop a fragrance made from flowers grown in the school garden that is then sold in the village shop.

The school works highly effectively with parents and with the local community. Leaders use accessible digital communication methods to keep parents regularly informed of school events. The school has developed strong working relationships with community groups and local businesses. For example, staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to participate annually in the local eisteddfod and village flower shows. The school is federated with Ysgol Gellifor, which is located nearby. This means that they share a governing body and a headteacher.

Additional information

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

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern.

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 and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body 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 and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read 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 classes, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- 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 makes references 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)

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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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