Dros ddysgwyr, dros Gymru
For learners, for Wales

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd

Bettws Road
Bettws
Bridgend
CF32 8TB

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 Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd
Local authority	Bridgend County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Welsh-medium school Category 3
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	n/a
Number of pupils on roll	193
Pupils of statutory school age	147
Number in nursery classes	20
Percentage of statutory school age 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 the primary sector is 22.9%)*	24.0%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) *(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 11.1%)*	9.5%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	6.1%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2021

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	04/03/2019
Start date of inspection	09/06/2025

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

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

Summary

The headteacher and other leaders lead the school effectively and encourage staff and pupils to give of their best at all times. They always focus on improving the well-being and learning of all pupils. Over the past few years, they have improved pupils' behaviour, attendance and mindset so that they are in a good place to learn. This has had a very positive effect on most pupils' attitudes towards coming to school, being ready to learn while they are there, and making good progress. Dosbarth Pabi, which is the learning resource centre for pupils on the autistic spectrum, is a core part of the school's life. The adults who work there are very caring towards the pupils and help them to make sound progress, particularly in their social and educational skills.

Most pupils behave well and are proud to be part of the school. Almost everyone feels safe there and consider that they are respected and treated fairly by adults.

The curriculum is interesting, considers pupils' ideas about what they want to learn and helps them to learn about their local area, Wales and the wider world. Teachers and assistants have a healthy learning relationship with pupils, which enables them to make sound progress from their starting points, particularly in speaking Welsh. They respond effectively to pupils' work, which helps them to understand what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve their work. As a result, most pupils make strong progress in almost every aspect of the curriculum. However, only a few write correctly in Welsh, especially at the top of the school, and only a minority take pride in the presentation of their work and record neatly.

Recommendations

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

R1 Improve the accuracy of pupils' Welsh writing, particularly at the top of the school

R2 Ensure that pupils present their work neatly

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The headteacher and other leaders lead the school effectively and set and communicate high expectations for staff, pupils and themselves. They set an effective and robust strategic direction for the school by developing a supportive culture, and a homely and inclusive ethos, that focuses successfully on improving the wellbeing and learning of all pupils.

One of the school's best features is the way in which leaders have improved pupils' behaviour, attendance and mindset so that they are in a good place to learn. They have established successful procedures to support vulnerable individuals who have difficulty coming to school on a daily basis and help them to settle in their classes.

Spotlight: Effective support to promote pupils' well-being and willingness to attend school regularly and to be ready to learn

Vulnerable pupils are given the opportunity to attend Hwb Hafan at the beginning of the day. This is a safe and welcoming room that enables them to settle down and prepare mentally for the day's activities. In addition, staff are available throughout the day to support and re-engage with these pupils to ensure that they are happy and ready to continue with their learning.

The school's procedures to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and promptly are very successful. As a result, pupils' attendance rate has risen significantly over the last two years. This has also had a positive effect on most pupils' attitudes towards learning and enabled them to make good progress in literacy, numeracy and digital competence. This includes those affected adversely by poverty and those with additional learning needs (ALN) in the mainstream, and in Dosbarth Pabi, the learning resource centre for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder.

Leaders created values for the school in partnership with pupils, staff, governors and parents. These values are clear and based on the principle of: 'Everyone counts, everyone achieves', in an inspiring and inclusive Welsh environment. Most pupils respect these and also comply consistently with the school's rules, which are: 'Be prepared, be safe, be respectful.' As a result, most pupils behave well, take pride in their school and respond appropriately to the high expectations that staff have of them in terms of behaviour, wellbeing and learning. Almost all feel safe at school and consider that they are respected and treated fairly.

Pupils undertake responsibilities on a number of pupil's voice committees conscientiously. This enables them to have a direct influence on the life and work of the school. However, they tend to rely too much on adults to lead these committees.

By tracking their progress regularly, teachers know pupils' needs well, including those with ALN. They work with teaching assistants to ensure that they offer the best additional support to those who need it to challenge them consistently to make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants play a key role in supporting pupils' learning by fostering their positive attitudes towards learning further. As a result, most pupils persevere well to complete tasks and gain confidence as independent learners.

Pupils and staff at Dosbarth Pabi are a core part of the school's life. Staff in this unit provide high quality education to all pupils in their care. They are fully aware of their needs and tailor their teaching strategies to individual purposes successfully. All pupils make sound progress during their time in the class, particularly in their communication, numeracy and social skills.

Teachers and teaching assistants work together successfully to develop positive working relationships with pupils by creating an exciting learning ethos, which supports pupils to make sound progress from their starting points, particularly in acquiring the Welsh language. They ensure that pupils are ready for the next steps in their learning by organising robust and effective transition activities for them when they transfer between classes or learning periods.

Teachers deliver a comprehensive and interesting curriculum to all pupils, including those who attend Dosbarth Pabi. The activities are planned in an organised way to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills, successfully over time. There are interesting opportunities for pupils to learn about the history, cultural and linguistic heritage of their local area, Wales, and the wider world. For example, pupils at the top of the school compare their life to that of indigenous people in Patagonia. Regular and specific attention is given to activities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and creative awareness successfully through various activities.

Teachers respond purposefully to pupils' work and adapt provision accordingly. This helps them to understand their own strengths and the areas that they need to improve, and helps them effectively to develop positive attitudes to learning. As a result, most pupils make sound progress from their starting points.

Most teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to develop enjoyment and sound attitudes towards reading. By the time they reach the top of the school, most are not only confident readers in both languages, but also enjoy reading, and use their skills to find information from different sources. Most pupils' English writing skills are developing well. However, only a few write with appropriate accuracy in Welsh, particularly at the top of the school, and only a minority take pride in the presentation of their work and record neatly. Teachers plan a range of mathematical and digital activities that address pupils' needs well. As a result, most have a sound understanding of mathematical and digital concepts

and apply them appropriately in various aspects of the curriculum. Through the wide range of rich opportunities they receive, many pupils make sound progress in their musical, creative and artistic skills.

By using effective monitoring procedures, leaders identify the school's strengths and the areas that need to be improved and consider the outcomes of these to set priorities for improvement. They plan useful professional learning opportunities for staff, which are linked to the improvement priorities and have a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and learning. For example, leaders have recently focused on training staff to use various methods to teach mathematics and reading. This has had a positive effect on pupils' skills in these areas. Leaders also promote national priorities such as improving teaching, reforming ALN, celebrating Welshness, and tackling the effect of poverty extremely effectively.

Governors have a sound understanding of their roles as critical friends. They have a clear awareness of what the school is doing well and the issues that need to be improved. They manage the school's resources conscientiously to ensure the best effect on pupils.

Additional information

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

The school's arrangements for the management 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. However, it is assumed that the school will have a financial deficit at the end of this year and they are working with local authority officials to try and reduce it.

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, 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 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.

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