

A report on
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontybrenin

**Loughor Road
Gorseinon
SA4 6AU**

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 Pontybrenin

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontybrenin
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Category 3
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	N/A
Number of pupils on roll	570
Pupils of statutory school age	418
Number in nursery classes	88
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%)	6.9%
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%)	20.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	30.4%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.2%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/05/2017

Start date of inspection	30/06/2025
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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 Gymraeg Pontybrenin is an inclusive community that places a strong emphasis on pupils' well-being and progress. The headteacher has a clear and sensible vision which ensures that pupils have engaging learning experiences in interesting and caring learning environments. This contributes purposefully to positive behaviour and a willingness to learn among pupils. This purposeful vision, which includes beneficial contributions from staff and the wider community, supports the school's improvement practices effectively.

Teachers and assistants work well together to ensure broad and balanced curricular provision. They are skilful language models and concentrate effectively on promoting pupils' care and learning. Staff work diligently with parents and external agencies and identify pupils' needs well, including those with additional learning needs (ALN).

On the whole, the pace of teaching sessions matches pupils' learning well and teachers' feedback to pupils to improve their work is suitable. However, the quality of teachers' teaching and the challenge they pose to pupils is not consistent across the school. At times, staff tend to over-direct learning, which limits pupils' ability to make independent choices about their learning.

Teachers provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their skills across the areas of learning. This leads to good progress in pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills considering their starting points. However, pupils are not given enough challenging opportunities to apply their skills at appropriate learning levels across the curriculum.

Staff and pupils forge close and loyal working relationships. Staff encourage pupils to work together and share ideas and feelings successfully, which develops their respect for other people intelligently. Staff ensure that pupils develop beneficial personal, social and creative skills, which create a good awareness of their *cynefin*, or local area, and a strong cultural appreciation.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Ensure consistency in effective teaching practices and provide beneficial feedback to challenge the learning of all pupils
- R2. Increase opportunities for pupils to apply their skills at appropriate learning levels across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The school is a happy, inclusive and supportive learning community. The headteacher sets a purposeful strategic direction for the school and has high expectations of himself, staff and pupils. He works diligently with the leadership team, staff and governors to ensure interesting and relevant learning experiences for pupils. Leaders convey a clear vision successfully. This is based on ensuring engaging learning experiences for pupils and providing purposeful well-being and care for all members of the school community.

The headteacher's leadership is robust and sensible. He ensures that all members of the leadership team consider a wide range of evidence to identify the school's improvement priorities. These focus on developing provision to improve well-being, learning experiences and progress in pupils' skills. The whole school team and governors contribute purposefully to specific aspects of the evaluation procedures effectively and most have a sound understanding of their roles in focusing on developing provision further.

Leaders implement a positive culture and ethos to promote, develop and support staff's professional learning. They share ideas and adopt effective and relevant practices jointly intelligently, and this contributes robustly to the ethos of the school as a learning organisation. Leaders support staff to reflect and consider the effect of professional learning on pupils' well-being, skills and progress. For example, staff hold regular professional discussions to discuss specific aspects of the curriculum, their assessment practices and to trial new principles to continue to support pupils' learning.

Leaders forge effective professional relationships with parents. Continuous co-operation and communication promote the school beneficially within its community. Leaders know the needs of pupils and its community well and provide valuable opportunities for parents to support their children's well-being and learning. For example, staff hold workshops with parents and pupils on different aspects of the curriculum and the wider provision. This supports parents to develop an understanding of their children's work, well-being and progress during initial meetings and purposeful networks.

Teachers across the school are effective language models and implement firm expectations in terms of Welsh and English. They encourage pupils positively to speak Welsh and use the language purposefully as a core part of their learning and play. Most pupils have enthusiastic attitudes towards speaking Welsh across the school and they strive regularly to communicate increasingly spontaneously in different contexts. As a result, by the end of their time at the school, most pupils communicate confidently and eloquently in both languages.

Teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' literacy skills. Most of the youngest pupils' early reading and writing skills develop purposefully. Pupils use their early marks confidently as, as their skills develop further, they begin to write sentences, demonstrating a good awareness of basic spelling and punctuation. Many pupils at the top of the school develop secure reading and writing skills in both languages and in a range of useful genres.

On the whole, teachers plan, provide resources and present purposeful mathematics tasks. As a result, teaching ensures that many pupils develop a range of good numeracy skills. Teachers also provide engaging opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills. This means that pupils use their digital skills effectively across the areas of learning. However, pupils are not given enough challenging opportunities to apply all their skills, at appropriate learning levels, across the curriculum.

Teachers provide an interesting curriculum that develops pupils' understanding of their local area and the wider world purposefully, for example by learning about the journey of the river Loughor and the history of the local railway. Teachers also plan sensible opportunities for pupils to discuss important issues, such as relationships and diversity, and purposeful experiences to develop pupils' positive spiritual and moral attitudes. As a result, pupils treat others with respect and develop their awareness of different identities successfully.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the working relationships and respect between staff and pupils are positive. Most pupils work diligently with their peers. They listen carefully to teachers, take pride in their work and progress, and their behaviour is very good. They ask relevant questions and make a good effort to contribute meaningfully to class discussions.

On the whole, teachers explain tasks clearly and support pupils to contribute to their learning intelligently. This engages and maintains most pupils' interest in their learning and enables them to make good progress. In the best teaching and learning practices, teachers ensure that lessons are well-paced and use a range of purposeful resources to support pupils' learning. However, at times, staff tend to over-direct learning, which limits pupils' ability to make independent choices about their learning. As a result, teachers' high expectations and teaching practices are inconsistent, particularly when challenging pupils to support them to achieve successfully. Teachers' feedback also does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils to improve their work completely effectively.

Staff provide engaging learning environments to encourage success and enthusiasm among pupils. This promotes pupils' well-being and progress well. There is a sensible range of quiet spaces for pupils to use when necessary, including valuable intervention areas. They are used wisely by staff to support pupils' well-being and calm individuals in cases of anxiety before they resume their learning.

Provision for pupils with ALN is co-ordinated well. Provision meets the needs of most pupils who need additional support effectively. Staff work successfully in partnership with external agencies to support pupils. Most pupils with ALN make good progress in line with their targets and starting points.

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 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)

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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