

A report on

Ysgol Pencae

**Highfields
Gillian Road
Llandaff
Cardiff
CF5 2QA**

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Pencae

Name of provider	Ysgol Pencae
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Welsh-medium school
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	207
Pupils of statutory school age	170
Number in nursery classes	
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>)	3.9%
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>)	2%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	52.4%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	02/01/2023

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/01/2017
Start date of inspection	19/05/2025

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

Ysgol Pencae provides a caring and inclusive environment for pupils to thrive in a familial community. Almost all pupils feel safe and happy at the school. All staff have high expectations of behaviour, and as a result, almost all behave excellently and demonstrate positive and mature attitudes to peers that are very empathetic.

The headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteacher, leads the school effectively. Staff work together successfully to provide pupils with an interesting curriculum. As a result, most make sound progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and digital skills, as well as other skills.

Most pupils like to learn and persevere well with their tasks. They try to find solutions themselves before turning to adults for help. However, in general, the youngest pupils' staff tend to over-lead the learning, at times. The older pupils' staff develop successful independent learners who find a solution themselves before turning to adults for support.

Staff teach pupils successfully about the differences that exist between people. This means that almost every pupil comes to understand that there are people in the world who are different from them. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to make decisions about their learning and about other aspects of school life.

Leaders know the school well and know what works well and what needs to be improved. They put very successful arrangements in place to improve those things. Governors support and challenge leaders appropriately. They visit the school regularly to observe in sessions, and talk to pupils and staff. They also work closely with the headteacher, which also helps them to understand what is happening at the school.

Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve

- R1 Provide purposeful opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop their independent learning skills, including in the outdoor area

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ysgol Pencae is an extremely caring and inclusive community with a familial, village feel in a city centre. Pupils feel happy and safe there knowing that there is always someone that they can share any fears or concerns they might have. Staff treat pupils in a calm and robust manner which leads to developing mature self-discipline from a very early age. Almost all pupils behave excellently and demonstrate positive and mature attitudes to their peers that are very empathetic. The learning environment is colourful and stimulating for pupils. In addition, the school's procedures to ensure that pupils attend school regularly are robust.

The headteacher is a passionate and caring leader who sets high expectations for staff, pupils and herself. With the strong support of the deputy headteacher and other leaders, she provides the school with an interesting curriculum, a homely culture, an inclusive ethos and a successful strategic direction. All of this has a positive effect on improving pupils' learning and wellbeing. As a result, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, achieve to the best of their ability in their literacy, numeracy, digital and wider skills.

The school's motto is 'Ymdrech a Lwydda', which reflects the familial and supportive element that exists across the school, in which everyone respects and supports each other. This nurtures and develops learners who are willing to venture confidently without fear of making mistakes. The school's values are clear and based on providing rich experiences that stimulate pupils.

Spotlight: Develop the enthusiasm of pupils who are empathetic

In effective Cloriau Clebran and Cylchoedd Croeso sessions, the school has established a culture in which they develop individuals who show mature respect for others. In addition, they encourage pupils to see themselves in a mirror in order to identify and internalise morals that allow them to treat others with courtesy and respect. As a result, these approaches are rooted firmly in pupils' soul. It permeates all elements of the school's curriculum and has a positive effect on pupils' enthusiasm and readiness to learn.

The whole-school approach to the curriculum is very robust and provides rich and extremely engaging opportunities for pupils to participate in meaningful and valid learning experiences. These experiences build on pupils' skills successfully over time and enable pupils to transfer their skills naturally from one area of the curriculum to another. Across the curriculum, pupils develop robust knowledge of matters of principle and the skills to participate as active citizens in a developing world. A notable example of this is the way in which pupils at the top of the school have created a working relationship with a construction company to research the benefits of solar panels before designing and

building eco-housing models. This ignites their curiosity and a strong commitment to their learning.

Most pupils develop very positive attitudes towards their learning. They persevere well when faced with new tasks or challenging activities. This contributes to increasing pupils' ownership of the activities and enthusiasm in their learning. However, at times, staff in the youngest pupils' classes tend to over-lead the learning which, in turn, limits opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills. The oldest pupils develop into successful independent learners who find a solution on their own before turning to adults for help.

Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills in their work across the curriculum. They plan a combination of visits to local galleries and welcome visitors such as drama companies who encourage the pupils to think creatively. This is reflected in the older pupils' ability to create scripts contemporaneously, present them in a theatrical manner and their ability to role-play effectively, for example when conveying their enthusiasm for saving the Welsh language.

The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness successfully. By discussing principles such as rights, fairness and respect in the Cylch Croeso sessions, most pupils develop a robust understanding of the nature of communities in their local area. By studying the celebrations and traditions of world religions, pupils consider other people's perspectives and values successfully and develop positive and respectful attitudes towards diversity in terms of culture and beliefs. This is reinforced during the school's international week. As a result, almost all pupils develop robust knowledge and understanding of the diverse nature of society.

The school tracks pupils' progress very robustly. Leaders coordinate extremely effective support for the few pupils who have additional learning needs. The teaching team offers inclusive and suitable provision for the pupils who need it.

Pupils influence the work of the school directly within the classrooms and through various councils. Members of the Criw Cŵl Cymraeg, for example, organise a silent disco to promote love of Welsh music, and the senedd presents activities to promote diversity.

Staff prepare pupils successfully for the next steps in their learning. Information is transferred successfully between the various institutions and the school which means that the youngest pupils are able to settle in quickly. Robust transition arrangements are in place which include virtual visits and lessons with an international language teacher for the oldest pupils, which prepares them thoroughly to transfer to the secondary sector.

Leaders have robust and successful procedures to evaluate the school's strengths and the areas that need to be improved. They consider the outcomes of these procedures to set

sensible priorities to drive improvement. School improvement procedures are detailed and give a clear priority to the correct issues.

Leaders ensure that staff have very beneficial opportunities to develop professionally through successful action research which improves the quality of their teaching and enables them to undertake their roles successfully and have a positive effect on learning. For example, their strategies to improve pupils' standards of mathematics have succeeded in creating individuals who are not only confident in discussing mathematical language but who also apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum successfully. They promote national priorities continuously, including the benefits of reading and speaking Welsh. This has a positive effect on the attitude of almost all pupils who make very strong progress in their skills and take pride in their Welsh language and culture.

Governors support the school successfully and hold staff to account sensibly, where necessary. By observing in sessions, talking to pupils and staff, and by working closely with the headteacher, they have a sound understanding of standards and provision. This enables them to work effectively with the headteacher to set priorities for improvement.

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 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 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/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, 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.

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).