

A report on
Gwynedd & Môn Community Learning Partnership

**Ffordd Penlan
Parc Menai
Bangor
LL57 4HJ**

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

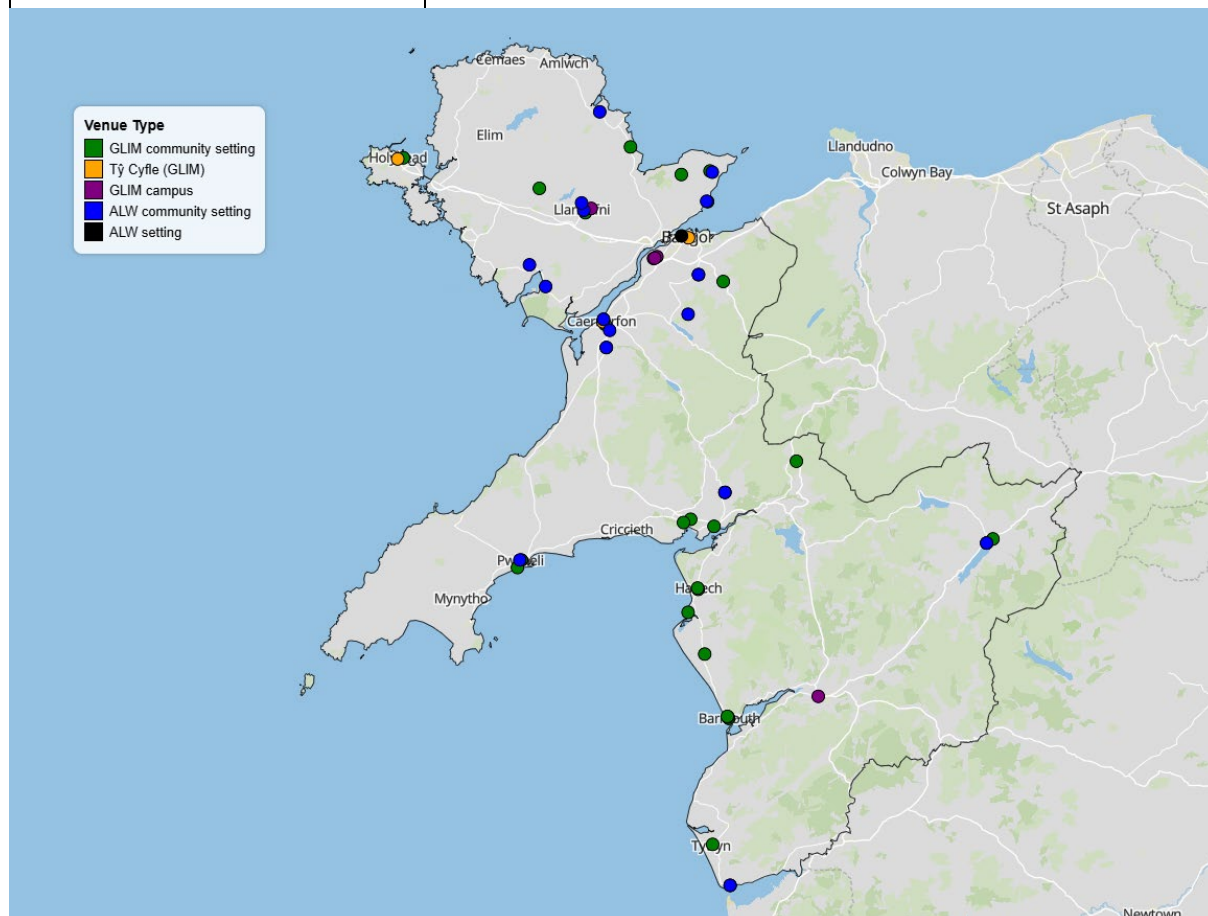
**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

This report is also available in Welsh

About Gwynedd & Môn Community Learning Partnership

Name of partnership	Gwynedd & Môn Community Learning Partnership										
Local authorities involved with the partnership and key delivery partners	<p>The Gwynedd and Môn Community Learning Partnership is chaired by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council • Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn / Isle of Anglesey County Council • Grŵp Llandrillo Menai • Addysg Oedolion Cymru / Adult Learning Wales <p>The two main delivery partners at the time of the inspection are Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (GLIM) and Adult Learning Wales (ALW).</p>										
Any significant changes since the last inspection	No major structural changes since the last inspection.										
Number of learners at time of inspection	At the time of the inspection, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai had 551 learners enrolled and Adult Learning Wales had 261 learners enrolled.										
Number of learners in the previous full academic year	<p>In the academic year 2023-2024, the partnership had the following numbers of learners, in provision from various funding routes.</p> <table> <tr> <th>Provision type</th><th>Learners</th></tr> <tr> <td>Provision funded through GLIM and/or ALW part-time FE funding allocation</td><td>888</td></tr> <tr> <td>ESOL provision funded through GLIM and/or ALW further education allocation</td><td>Full time 114 Part time 75</td></tr> <tr> <td>Provision funded through the Community Learning Grant</td><td>398</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>1355</td></tr> </table>	Provision type	Learners	Provision funded through GLIM and/or ALW part-time FE funding allocation	888	ESOL provision funded through GLIM and/or ALW further education allocation	Full time 114 Part time 75	Provision funded through the Community Learning Grant	398	Total	1355
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<p>Details of the partnership's programmes, in terms of Welsh Government funded courses (ESOL) and basic skills and range of other (leisure/cost-recovery) courses</p>	<p>During 2023-2024, the partnership had 398 unique learners who engaged in classes funded using the Community Learning Grant issued to Gwynedd and Ynys Môn local authorities by the Welsh Government. These classes were delivered by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai.</p> <p>A further 566 learners engaged in adult learning and ESOL classes funded using Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's further education (FE) funding received directly from the Welsh Government.</p> <p>An additional 493 unique learners across the two counties engaged in classes with Adult Learning Wales using the funding it received directly from the Welsh Government.</p> <p>Both providers subcontract a small proportion of their delivery, for example to deliver green woodworking for well-being courses via Ynys Twca and food and nutrition courses via Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's dietetics team.</p> <p>The map below shows the location of its learning venues:</p>
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<p>About the learners on the partnership's courses</p>	<p>In 2023 – 20024 the partnership's learners had the following age profile:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="687 304 1126 768"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age</th><th>Proportion</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>16-19</td><td>4%</td></tr> <tr> <td>20-24</td><td>6%</td></tr> <tr> <td>25-40</td><td>26%</td></tr> <tr> <td>41-60</td><td>28%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Over 60</td><td>36%</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Seventy-three per cent of the partnership's learners were female.</p> <p>Twenty-four per cent of learners described themselves as a fluent Welsh speaker, 16.5 per cent as Welsh speaker but not fluent and 59.5 per cent as not a Welsh speaker.</p> <p>Twenty-four per cent of learners were resident in postcodes from the most deprived areas (top two quintiles in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation - WIMD).</p>	Age	Proportion	16-19	4%	20-24	6%	25-40	26%	41-60	28%	Over 60	36%
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<p>About the population of the partnership's area</p>	<p>According to the Office for National Statistics' most recent census data, Gwynedd's resident population in 2021 was 117,400, representing 3.8% of the population of Wales. The population of Ynys Môn was 68,900, which was 2.2% of the Welsh total. In contrast to the Wales-wide increase, the population of both areas has declined since the 2011 census. Both counties have extensive rural areas that are sparsely populated. The population density is highest in Bangor and Caernarfon on the northern edge of Gwynedd, and in the towns of Holyhead and Llangefni on Ynys Môn as well as the villages near the two bridges linking the island to the mainland.</p> <p>The Welsh language and culture is strong in both counties; the proportion of the population who say they can speak Welsh (December 2024) is 76% in Gwynedd and 63% on Ynys Môn, both significantly above the Wales-wide figure of 27%.</p> <p>The 2021 census showed that Anglesey had a relatively high proportion of residents aged 65 years and over, 26%</p>												

	<p>compared to the Wales average of 21%; the corresponding figure for Gwynedd was 23%. The proportion of residents aged 15 to 64 in both counties was below the national average of 62%; for Ynys Môn this was 58%, but slightly higher at 61% in Gwynedd.</p> <p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) in 2019 showed that, overall, both counties were less deprived than average for Wales. The percentage of areas within each county that were among the 50% most deprived in Wales were 34% in Gwynedd, and 39% on Ynys Môn.</p> <p>The Office for National Statistics' Annual Population Survey/Welsh Local Labour Force Survey results show that in both Gwynedd and Ynys Môn, the proportion of working-age residents with qualifications at level 2 or above, at 88.1% and 89.1% respectively, are better than the Welsh average of 87.6%. In both counties, fewer working-age adults than average have no formal qualifications; 4.0% in Gwynedd and 6.4% on Ynys Môn, compared to the Wales average of 7.9%.</p>
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/11/2019

Summary

Across the partnership, many learners make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy, digital or vocational skills. Many 'English for speakers of other languages' (ESOL) learners develop strong oracy skills, pronounce clearly and use accurate vocabulary and grammar. Most learners report improved confidence, motivation and mental health as a result of engaging with education. They value learning environments that are inclusive, respectful and emotionally safe, where they feel comfortable participating.

Most tutors plan and deliver well-structured, inclusive and purposeful sessions, tailored to learners' individual needs, interests and aspirations. They make good use of initial assessments and ensure that learners work at a level appropriate to their ability. Tutors build strong, trusting relationships with learners and know them well. They routinely adapt provision to meet a wide range of needs, although in a very few areas of provision, tutors do not have access to sufficient information about learners' additional learning needs and this reduces their ability to plan for these learners.

The majority of fluent Welsh speakers across the partnership access their provision either bilingually or through the medium of Welsh and in bilingual sessions, tutors seamlessly transition between using the Welsh and English language well and make good use of bilingual teaching materials, handouts and presentations. We include a spotlight on strengths in bilingual teaching and learning in the report.

The partnership has a clear strategic vision with a strong focus on widening access to adult learning, particularly in rural areas and town and city centre sites. It has made effective use of external funding to equip rural venues such as village halls with modern furniture and digital devices. As a result, more learners and potential learners are able to access learning opportunities in their immediate locality, although in parts of west and south Gwynedd provision remains limited due to the challenges of population sparsity.

We spotlight the Tŷ Cyfle town-centre learning settings, which are effective centres for the delivery of essential skills and personal development courses but also help repurpose underused spaces into vibrant community hubs.

A few learners report difficulties accessing course information or enrolling, primarily due to a reliance on digital systems. Although staff frequently provide support to help learners, digital-only approaches remain a barrier for a few learners.

Both main providers have responsive and relevant professional development for staff and offer useful training on a range of topics, although they do not make full use of

opportunities to share professional training between providers in subjects which are delivered by both partners.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the service continue to improve:

- R1. Improve the co-ordination and accessibility of course information and enrolment processes, particularly for learners who face digital barriers or prefer non-digital communication methods
- R2. Develop opportunities for cross-partnership working to support consistency of practice, peer collaboration, and the sharing of effective approaches

What happens next

The partnership is not in follow-up and will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations identified in the report. We will consider progress against the recommendations in our regular link inspector visits.

Main findings

Teaching and learning

Across the partnership, most tutors plan and deliver well-structured, inclusive and purposeful sessions, tailored to learners' individual needs, interests and aspirations. They make good use of initial assessments to identify learners' individual starting points and ensure that learners work at a level appropriate to their ability. As a result, most learners, including those that have an additional learning need, make good progress in their learning and develop increased confidence and skills across a wide range of subject areas.

Many learners make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy or vocational skills. In English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) sessions, many learners develop strong oracy skills, demonstrating clear pronunciation and accurate vocabulary and grammar, often progressing from pre-entry to higher levels.

Most learners confidently recall prior learning and apply newly acquired knowledge and skills to meaningful, real-life contexts. They retain and apply technical vocabulary confidently.

On digital courses, many learners demonstrate strong improvement in their digital skills, particularly older learners who use these newly acquired skills to help them with everyday tasks such as communicating with their families online, accessing banking and using two factor authentication. A learner on an 'introduction to spreadsheets' course talks about how their new skills will support them in their role as treasurer for a local community group.

Most learners show highly positive attitudes to learning, they are motivated and happy to be on their course, and engage fully in sessions. Nearly all learners interact respectfully with their tutors and peers and work well individually and in paired and group tasks. They describe their learning environment as welcoming, supportive and conducive to their well-being and skills development.

Many ESOL learners are overwhelmingly positive about the support they get from their tutors, not only for their language skills development, but also the support they offer in navigating everyday issues such as accessing healthcare or communicating with their children's school.

In most sessions tutors give regular, constructive verbal and written feedback which helps learners to reflect on and improve their performance. In the best cases, tutors facilitate the use of peer-to-peer feedback between learners, making good use of peer mentors to help others make sound progress.

Most tutors make good use of a wide range of learning resources, including IT equipment, digital tools, visual aids, and real-life materials, to support learning and reinforce key concepts.

Most tutors know their learners' needs well, initially through development of useful learner or group profiles and on an ongoing basis through one-to-one or tutorial sessions. Most tutors use individual learning plans, digital learning records and ALN tracking tools to monitor progress and support learners' development. Where used well, these tools enable tutors to respond effectively to learners' individual needs. However, in a very few areas of the provision, mechanisms for tracking learner progress and the recording and sharing of ALN information are inconsistent. In such cases, tutors do not have access to key information to enable them to better understand learner needs and plan support.

Spotlight on bilingual teaching

The majority of fluent Welsh speakers across the partnership access their provision either bilingually or through the medium of Welsh. In bilingual sessions, tutors seamlessly transition between using the Welsh and English language well and make good use of bilingual teaching materials, handouts and presentations. Many learners who are not Welsh speakers say the use of Welsh and bilingual delivery and resources in their sessions helps them improve their understanding and day-to-day use of Welsh terms.

Most tutors use effective questioning techniques to stretch learners' thinking and understanding. In stronger examples, they personalise follow-up questions to individuals and encourage healthy challenge and debate between learners. In a very few cases, however, tutors miss opportunities to extend learners' thinking and skills development by either answering their own questions or overly guiding learners.

Spotlight on developing Welsh skills on a teaching assistants' course

The partnership runs a well-established 'introduction to teaching assistant' course which equips learners with the skills needed to work in a school environment. Tutors adapt delivery models to accommodate learner needs and exemplify the skills and behaviours required to become a teaching assistant.

Many learners, often not fluent Welsh speakers, improve their Welsh language skills in preparation for work experience. Throughout the course, they develop an improved understanding of key issues and hone their skills through simulated activities and work placements, following which many successfully progress into sustained employment in local schools.

The most recent published performance data for the partnership is the Welsh Government Learner Outcome Report for 2022-2023. This shows that the rate at which learners successfully complete their qualification for that year was 87%, above the national comparator of 84%.

In order to improve further, the partnership should:

- Strengthen arrangements for recording and sharing information about learners with additional learning needs (ALN), to ensure that all tutors have access to information to inform planning, support and teaching

Well-being, care, support and guidance

Most learners across the partnership report improved confidence, motivation and mental health as a result of engaging with education. They value learning environments that are inclusive, respectful and emotionally safe, where they feel comfortable participating. Learners highlight the value of being part of such positive and supportive learning communities, especially for those who are returning to education after past difficulties. ESOL learners who have come to the UK as refugees because of war in their home countries welcome being part of a new community where they have opportunities to share experiences, celebrate their cultures, and make new friends. Older learners who have lost confidence following bereavements and extended periods of isolation also appreciate how learning experiences help them to rebuild their self-esteem, reconnect socially, and regain a sense of purpose in their daily lives.

Most tutors build strong, trusting relationships with learners and know them well. They routinely adapt provision to meet a wide range of needs, including additional learning needs and mental health. Learners consistently say they feel listened to and supported, particularly when managing challenges such as anxiety, caring responsibilities, or low digital confidence. Tutors proactively adjust session timings, resources and activities to help learners remain engaged. For example, in an ESOL session, learners benefit from a relevant learning activity centred around car insurance after a learner brought a query to the classroom. Learners' suggestions have also influenced the introduction of enrichment activities, such as walks, mural painting and climbing that reflect personal interests and maintain a focus on learners' well-being.

Most learners benefit from personalised guidance from tutors, including advice on further learning, career pathways and referrals to external support. Many say this guidance helps them to make informed decisions about their next steps. For example, ESOL learners describe how support provided by the partnership has helped them take steps towards employment, with others preparing to progress to A levels or university. In another example, a learner who initially accessed a course for mental health and well-being

reasons has since progressed onto a support worker role on the same programme. However, a very few learners are unclear about progression opportunities, particularly at the end of short non-accredited taster courses.

A wide range of enrichment and well-being activities support learners' broader development. Many learners participate in additional opportunities, such as cultural visits, outdoor activities and volunteering, which enhance their learning experiences and reduce social isolation. Learners on ESOL programmes take part in extra-curricular activities such as trips to Bodnant Gardens and cultural events that celebrate Welsh traditions, including Dawnsio Gwerin. One group of Ukrainian ESOL learners formed a choir led by a learner who is a conductor. The choir performed at an event on Bangor Pier, allowing learners to share their cultural heritage, strengthen their confidence and connect with the local community.

Many learners benefit from calm, welcoming learning environments that support their engagement and enjoyment in learning. Settings include community venues, the Tŷ Cyfle town-centre learning hubs, gardens, kitchens, and college-based classrooms and workshops. These are well-maintained, focused spaces that tutors use effectively to support both the practical and well-being aspects of learning.

Spotlight: A recipe for well-being: learners supporting their community

In one community venue, older learners on a cooking at home course benefit from a professional, purposeful learning environment. Using donated ingredients, they work in pairs to weigh and measure, naturally developing numeracy skills through tasks like estimation, subtraction and scaling up and down, supported by the tutor. As the course progresses, learners build confidence and develop their practical cooking skills. The learning experience culminates in an event, where learners prepare and serve afternoon tea for the donating businesses. This reinforces their learning while fostering a strong sense of community, purpose and well-being, with many learners saying it helps reduce loneliness and build social connections.

The partnership has recently launched a useful and easy-to-navigate website that provides a comprehensive overview of partnership's provision, along with clear information about locations and wider partner organisations. While this centralised platform has the potential to improve access to information across the partnership, it has only been live for a short period, and it is too early to measure its overall impact.

A minority of learners report difficulties accessing course information or enrolling, primarily where these require learners to use digital systems. These learners describe challenges navigating online platforms, particularly where they have limited access to devices or low levels of digital confidence. Although staff frequently provide support to

help learners – for example, by offering one-to-one help or signposting learners to local provision – digital-only approaches remain a barrier for a few learners. In a few cases, learners express a preference for paper-based materials or face-to-face interactions when accessing course information or completing enrolment processes.

Learners feel safe in their learning settings. They describe clear expectations around respectful behaviour and say they know how to raise a concern if needed. Learners frequently refer to the trust they have in their tutors and express confidence in their responses to issues. The emphasis on mutual respect and clear boundaries is a consistent feature across the partnership.

Safeguarding practices are appropriate, with all staff undertaking a range of suitable safeguarding training and following robust health and safety procedures. There are multiple safeguarding resources and support mechanisms for learners to access, which are included as part of induction handbooks. The partnership works well together and with other partners across the region at a strategic level to discuss safeguarding matters, including radicalisation. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at the partnership's strategic and operational meetings. The partnership's arrangements for the safeguarding of learners meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

In order to improve further the partnership should:

- Clarify and define progression routes for learners at the end of short, non-accredited courses to ensure they are aware of appropriate next steps
- Explore alternative methods of advertising and enrolment to reduce barriers for learners with limited digital access or confidence

Leading and improving

The partnership has a clear strategic vision with a strong focus on widening access to adult learning. The network of delivery locations now extends to over 50 sites, including provision in remote communities and new or recently rebranded and refurbished Tŷ Cyfle learning centres in Bangor, Caernarfon and Holyhead. Strategic objectives are shaped collaboratively through strategic and operational groups involving Adult Learning Wales (ALW), Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (GLIM), and Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Councils. This helps ensure that provision is responsive, inclusive and aligns appropriately with local, regional and national priorities.

The partnership has made effective use of external funding to equip rural venues such as village halls with modern furniture and digital devices. As a result, many learners are now able to access learning opportunities in their immediate locality. Both delivery partners collaborate effectively on venue planning and curriculum alignment. This helps minimise duplication of provision and facilitates timely responses to third-sector requests for

learning provision. The main partners also engage with a few sub-contractors to deliver personal development and well-being courses.

Adult learning provision in parts of west and south Gwynedd remains limited due to the challenges of population sparsity in these rural areas. The partnership is planning to address this, to improve access and ensure equitable opportunities for learners in these areas.

The lead partners are flexible and responsive in how they manage their provision. For example, ALW applies lower minimum learner number thresholds to reflect rural delivery contexts, while GLIM uses data trends to adapt its offer by discontinuing courses in lower recruitment areas and extending provision in nearby alternative locations.

Curriculum planning makes effective use of available data, including information captured via GLIM dashboards and in ALW through budget oversight processes. Both providers are beginning to monitor and evaluate trends in progression rates more systematically, alongside traditional measures of retention and success rates.

The Gwynedd and Môn partnership scrutiny group has recently merged with the equivalent group in Conwy and Denbighshire. The merged group meets regularly with an external chair to provide enhanced oversight. The partnership has well-established quality assurance cycles, including observations, learning walks and professional discussions. These inform a wide range of professional development activities, from mandatory updates to wider themes such as artificial intelligence, digital skills and anti-racism. GLIM's 'Project Ambition' initiative drives and supports continuous improvement across all its provision, while ALW adopts an effective needs-based observation model tailored to staff and course priorities.

The partnership gathers learners' feedback through surveys and forums, as well as during learning walks (informal observations), with outcomes feeding into self-assessment reports and leading to improved learner experiences.

The partnership has made sound progress against the recommendations from the previous inspection of adult learning in the community. In particular, community-based provision has been expanded in response to local need. Continued progress is being made in relation to support for learners with additional learning needs, learner voice and marketing strategies.

In GLIM, recent moves towards a more centralised marketing strategy have led to the removal of local social media pages. This has had some negative impact on local accessibility and awareness of information regarding course availability. The Tŷ Cyfle centres are valued for their accessible locations, welcoming internal environments and strong learner support. Currently, these centres do not communicate fully effectively the

range of their offer and learners and potential learners do not always know the full range of what is available.

Spotlight on Tŷ Cyfle learning centres, widening access and helping to address urban decline

The Tŷ Cyfle centres play a key role in widening access to adult learning by offering welcoming, community-based environments that support learner well-being and reduce barriers to participation. Their accessible urban locations, flexible delivery, and inclusive atmosphere promote a strong sense of belonging, making them effective hubs for re-engagement, particularly for those less likely to attend traditional college settings.

GLIM has worked closely with local authorities to repurpose and redevelop these previously underused buildings. The Tai Cyfle represent a useful strategic contribution to local attempts to revitalise urban areas.

Welsh language and culture are embedded well across the curriculum. Many classes are delivered bilingually, with growing capacity for Welsh-medium provision supported by staff training, in-house translation, and intermediate-level delivery targets.

Both ALW and GLIM have useful mechanisms in place to support staff well-being, and provide responsive and relevant professional development for staff. Most staff have access to relevant mandatory training, tailored workshops and supportive peer networks, although a few part-time tutors, especially those in remote locations or with limited hours, report feeling isolated and struggle to access training or engage with peers.

Training has also addressed wider well-being topics, such as menopause, stress and conflict management, with further training on restorative approaches, artificial intelligence and anti-racism developed in response to learner and tutor feedback. The impact of training is evaluated well through learning walks, informal observations, professional discussions and course evaluations.

The partnership does not make full use of opportunities to share professional training between providers in subjects that are delivered by both partners, such as digital skills and arts, and this limits the exchange of effective practice and joint professional learning in these areas.

To improve further, the partnership's leaders should focus on:

- continuing to improve access and ensure equitable opportunities for learners in west and south Gwynedd
- strengthening communication with learners and potential learners at the Tai Cyfle to ensure that they are fully aware of the adult learning opportunities available

- ensuring that all part-time staff, particularly those in remote locations and with a small number of teaching hours, have sufficient access to professional development and peer networks
- developing cross-partnership professional learning networks to enable the sharing of effective practice, especially in common subject areas such as digital skills and arts

Additional information

Safeguarding arrangements

The provider's arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults do not give any cause for concern

Evidence base of the report

Before the inspection, inspectors:

- analysed the outcomes from the learner and staff questionnaires
- reviewed the partnership's published performance data

During the inspection, inspectors:

- met the chair of the partnership, officials of the local authorities, senior and middle leaders and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the partnership's work
- meet learners to discuss their work, to listen to their views about various aspects of their provider
- observed a broad sample of sessions
- observed and spoke with learners outside of sessions
- looked closely at the partnership's self-evaluation processes
- considered the partnership's quality improvement planning and looked at evidence to show how well the partnership had taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinised a wide range of partnership documents, including information on learner assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and, information on learners' well-being, including the safeguarding of learners, and records of staff training and professional learning

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- reviewed 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 learners...*’ or ‘*very few learners...*’. 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 the Learning and Skills Act (2000).

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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