

A report on
Ysgol Gynradd Saron

Saron
Rhydaman
SA18 3LH

Date of inspection: September 2025

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Gynradd Saron

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Saron
Local authority	Carmarthenshire County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Category 3 Welsh-medium School
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	N/A
Number of pupils on roll	220
Pupils of statutory school age	168
Number in nursery classes	22
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%)	10.8%
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%)	3.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	65.5%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Lead partner for Initial Teacher Education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/04/2025

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	02/01/2017
Start date of inspection	29/09/2025

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

The headteacher leads the school very effectively, ensuring that it is a homely and happy place for pupils and staff. One of the school's most prominent features is the way in which staff trust the pupils and give them responsibility to take risks when learning, without the fear of making mistakes. As a result, nearly all pupils have good independent learning skills and behave respectfully, kindly and politely towards each other.

Staff listen to pupils, parents, governors and members of the community regularly and act on their ideas by adapting the school's procedures, where appropriate. They encourage pupils to be proud of their Welshness and to be ready to learn without too much support from adults.

By providing pupils with an interesting curriculum, staff develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills successfully. Learning activities are based on pupils' ideas and often begin from the perspective of the local area, before talking about Wales and then the wider world. Pupils are given a number of opportunities to lead in the school and to influence what happens there. This nurtures their leadership skills and independence skilfully.

Teachers and assistants expect pupils to do good work at school. By observing them learning and tracking their progress, staff know the next steps in pupils' development. This enables nearly all pupils, including those affected by poverty and those with additional learning needs (ALN), to make sound progress from their starting points.

Staff have clear roles which enable them to meet pupils' needs well. Leaders have identified the need to develop the leadership skills of staff at all levels to improve the school continuously. The headteacher and the governing body understand what works well at the school and what needs to be improved. This enables them to set suitable priorities to develop the school further.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Continue to develop the leadership skills of staff at all levels to enable them to support leaders to improve the school continuously

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The headteacher leads the school extremely effectively, developing an innovative culture, an inclusive ethos and providing a robust strategic direction. She focuses directly on improving pupils' well-being and learning and ensuring that nearly all pupils make sound progress. This includes those who are affected by poverty and those with ALN. The school's values are clear and based on its motto, '*Gorau dysgu, cyd ddysgu*'.

Leaders set and convey high expectations for staff, pupils and themselves. One of the school's most prominent features is the way in which the headteacher encourages staff to trust the pupils and give them responsibility to work together continuously when learning and take risks without the fear of making mistakes. As a result, by the time they reach the top of the school, pupils are active and ambitious learners who demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

Spotlight 1 – developing pupils' independence

By planning stimulating and constructive experiences for pupils, staff trust them from an early age to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers track pupils' progress purposefully, which enables them to provide ambitious activities for them. By doing so, pupils nurture their skills confidently and know that the trust of staff enables them to develop as confident and independent learners.

Leaders listen to pupils' ideas consistently. They also consult regularly with parents, governors and members of the local community and adapt provision, where appropriate, to ensure that it remains relevant and timely to pupils' learning. Encouraging Welshness, independence and respect among pupils supports them to become mature learners and principled and healthy individuals who take pride in their Welsh language and culture.

Leaders review the school's work extremely effectively. Monitoring and self-evaluation processes are robust and successful and reflect the school's current situation clearly. This enables leaders to set appropriate and timely priorities for continuous improvement. Governors have a sound understanding of their roles and visit the school regularly, such as when shadowing specific areas of learning and experience. By doing so, they understand what the school does well and what needs to improve.

Leaders provide staff with high quality professional learning opportunities and experiences, which has a positive effect on pupils' well-being, learning and independence. They always consider national priorities in developing the school further, such as tackling the impact of poverty and developing the Welsh language. Staff have clear roles which enable them to meet pupils' needs well. Following the recent appointment of the headteacher and the need to redistribute staff roles, leaders have identified the need to

support staff at all levels to develop their leadership skills further to improve the school continuously.

Staff work together extremely successfully to develop and deliver an interesting and comprehensive curriculum for pupils. Provision is based on pupils' ideas, the values of the term and on developing their understanding of history, culture and diversity from the perspective of their local area, Wales and the wider world. Teachers support pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness extremely successfully. As a result, nearly all pupils are kind to each other and treat others with empathy, courtesy and respect.

Teachers plan a variety of interesting activities for pupils that correspond well to their learning needs. Pupils listen attentively and respond confidently both orally and in writing in both languages, where appropriate. They read to a standard that is at least suitable for their age and stage of development. Nearly all have a sound understanding of mathematical concepts and apply them confidently in a variety of numeracy activities across the curriculum. They foster good digital skills from a young age and demonstrate a growing ability to apply them confidently in different contexts.

Teachers provide interesting opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in 'authentic' cross-curricular contexts. For example, following a visit to an art gallery, older pupils emulate the work of different artists effectively. Then, they organise an exhibition of their work for their parents and the governors. They research the cost of frames before calculating a reasonable price to sell their products to their parents. They write invitations and design tickets for the occasion and use their coding skills to create an electronic device to count the total number of visitors to the exhibition.

The school environment is extremely stimulating and provides useful opportunities for pupils to learn in a variety of spaces.

Spotlight 2 – the use of the environment to promote learning

Staff provide a natural environment that nurtures pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm towards learning through the creative design of the classrooms, skilful use of the outdoor learning areas and by providing resources that are beneficial to pupils' learning. The inclusive environment supports pupils to engage positively with their learning, manage emotions and develop resilience in calm and homely spaces.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils and use skilful questioning methods to support learning. They ensure that their teaching moves learning forward at an appropriate pace and presents the appropriate challenge and relevant support to pupils. By observing them undertaking their tasks and tracking their progress carefully, staff have a sound understanding of the next step in pupils' learning and ensure that they provide them with

an opportunity to take that step. This enables nearly all pupils to make sound progress from their starting points.

Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to foster their leadership skills through a variety of committees and their voice is at the heart of the school's life. Their participation in groups such as 'Senedd Saron' and the eco committee has a direct influence on important decisions, such as reducing milk waste and monitoring the speed of vehicles outside the school grounds. By fostering their leadership skills and independence, staff prepare pupils exceptionally well for the next steps in their learning.

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.

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