

**A report on**

**Ysgol Cefnlllys**

**Cefnlllys Lane  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 5WA**

**Date of inspection: March 2026**

**by**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## About Ysgol Cefnlllys

Name of provider	Ysgol Cefnlllys
Local authority	Powys County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	198
Pupils of statutory school age	177
Number in nursery classes	
Percentage of 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 Primary is 21.7%)	21.3%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 9.2%)	12.4%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	13.6%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2024

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	December 2016
Start date of inspection	02/03/2026

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](http://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 Cefnlllys is a caring and ambitious school at the heart of its community. Leaders place pupils' well-being at the centre of their work while maintaining clear expectations for learning. As a result, most pupils feel safe, supported and ready to learn. Governors work closely with leaders and provide effective support and challenge. They are involved in monitoring the school's work and ensure that funding, including the pupil development grant, is used carefully to support pupils' progress and reduce the impact of poverty.

The recently formed senior leadership team works well together and shares a clear vision for the school. Leaders evaluate the impact of their work thoughtfully and place strong emphasis on national priorities such as inclusion and the development of Curriculum for Wales. Professional learning is purposeful and helps staff improve their practice and develop leadership skills. The school's provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a particular strength. Staff know pupils well and create a calm and inclusive environment where pupils with ALN, including those in the specialist classes make positive progress and develop confidence and independence.

The school's work to support vulnerable pupils, including care experienced and recently adopted pupils, is a strength. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to ensure pupils receive the care and support they need to engage in learning. Safeguarding arrangements are strong and staff understand their responsibilities well.

Teaching across the school is effective. Teachers provide clear explanations and plan engaging learning experiences that help pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The school has a strong reading culture, and pupils develop exceptionally well as independent learners. Pupils gain a good understanding of Welsh culture and heritage, and many develop confidence in using the Welsh language.

Leaders recognise the need to continue to develop the school's curriculum to provide pupils with to make progress across a broader range of learning experiences that reflect Curriculum for Wales. In addition, although leaders work closely with agencies to support pupils with complex needs, attendance and exclusion rates remain too high.

## **Recommendations**

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

- R1 Improve attendance and reduce exclusion
- R2 Continue to strengthen the school's curriculum to provide greater breadth of experience and to further support pupils' skills development

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

Ysgol Cefnlllys is a school at the heart of its community. Pupils are at the forefront of all decision-making and the school's aspirational approach sets firm foundations for their future. Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being appropriately while maintaining clear expectations for learning, ensuring that most pupils feel safe, supported and ready to learn.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Through their involvement in self-evaluation and monitoring, they maintain a clear focus on school improvement and play an active role in school life. They work closely with leaders to manage finances, including the use of the pupil development grant to ensure spending aligns with improvement priorities and reduces the impact of poverty on pupils' learning and experiences.

The newly established senior leadership team works cohesively, with clearly defined roles and a shared vision to nurture confident, caring and capable learners. Through a highly collaborative approach of reviewing and refining the quality of teaching and learning, they effectively evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupils' outcomes. Leaders maintain a strong focus on national priorities, enabling most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from low-income households, to make positive progress in learning.

Professional learning is well-planned and purposeful. Opportunities to observe effective practice and engage in joint monitoring activities strengthen staff confidence. Importantly, leaders allow staff the time needed to embed change securely. Professional learning has had a notable impact on improving the consistency of teaching and strengthening leadership at all levels.

The school's provision for pupils with ALN is a strength. The additional learning needs coordinator ensures that identification, monitoring and support for pupils with ALN addresses their learning, social and emotional needs effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants across the school create a calm, supportive and highly inclusive culture in which skilled staff are responsive to pupils' individual needs. This ensures that most pupils with ALN, including those in the specialist classes, make positive progress from their starting points, improve their engagement, and develop their independence.

### **Spotlight: Supporting care experienced and recently adopted pupils**

The school's work to support vulnerable pupils is exceptional. Leaders have a deep understanding of the impact of trauma and take a compassionate approach to supporting pupils with complex needs. They develop valuable working relationships with external agencies to support those who experience anxiety or behavioural challenges. An insightful and strategic focus on provision for care experienced and recently adopted pupils, their families and carers, enables the school to engage pupils in their learning while prioritising their safety and well-being. This is a school where staff and governors build a curriculum around vulnerable pupils that supports them to heal and learn at the same time.

The school promotes a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff, including those in the specialist classes understand their responsibilities well and respond appropriately to concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies to monitor pupils' attendance. However, persistent absence and exclusion rates are too high.

The school is developing a purposeful curriculum that reflects the holistic nature of Curriculum for Wales. Teachers combine areas of the curriculum such as science and humanities skilfully to create rich learning experiences that inspire pupils. Thoughtfully planned learning experiences support pupils to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills and help them to plan and organise their work. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to build on their skills in areas such as the arts or to gain a deep understanding of themes such as diversity.

The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their ethical, social and moral understanding. Teachers enable pupils to explore belief and values. From a young age pupils develop their understanding of right and wrong and the impact of their actions on others. Assemblies and whole school events support most pupils to develop a strong sense of belonging and identity and show care and consideration for others.

Across the school, pupils develop a sound understanding of Welsh culture and heritage, which fosters pride in their local area and Wales. Most teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills progressively across the school. Most pupils respond confidently to familiar commands and questions, and many pupils use simple phrases appropriately in lessons. The Criw Cymreig is particularly enthusiastic about promoting Welsh and finds creative ways to encourage pupils to embrace the language.

Across the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils and most plan appropriately challenging learning experiences consistently. During lessons most teachers provide pupils with clear explanations and set purposeful learning intentions. They support pupils effectively, provide exemplars and useful success criteria, and ask questions that help

pupils make progress. Pupils make suitable contributions to their learning and often identify their own next steps. In most lessons, teachers provide feedback that supports pupils to reflect on and improve their work, and to develop a secure understanding of the purpose of their learning.

### **Spotlight: Developing independent learners**

Across the school, nearly all pupils develop well as independent learners. They collaborate purposefully, take ownership of their learning and apply their knowledge and skills in a range of contexts. Younger pupils are comfortable exploring their environment freely. They enthusiastically share and explain their learning and readily articulate what they can and cannot do, recalling their learning over time, and relating it to their own experiences. Older pupils regularly influence how and what they learn and demonstrate high levels of independence. The oldest pupils assess and discuss their learning confidently and respond to critique thoughtfully.

Teachers plan learning experiences that enable pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills and to demonstrate their digital competence effectively. They are strong language models who value opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening. They plan a range of informal and formal learning experiences that enable pupils, from a young age pupils to listen well and speak with confidence. Many pupils benefit from opportunities to write for a range of purposes and by the time they leave the school, they write successfully, clearly and creatively. The school has a rich reading culture with an open and inviting library taking a prominent place in the centre of the school. Nearly all teachers choose texts that inspire learning. The youngest pupils delight in picture books and enthusiastically retell familiar stories. Many older pupils persevere with challenging texts and use a range of advanced reading skills to support their learning. In the specialist classes, nearly all pupils develop communication skills well through consistent use of assistive technology, signs and symbols, increasing their participation in learning.

As pupils move through the school, they make good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge. They have a secure understanding of concepts and transfer their skills competently to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils generally make suitable progress in developing digital skills and often use these purposefully to enhance 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/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body 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 and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to 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 classes, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- 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 makes references 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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