

A report on

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn

**Maerdy Industrial Estate
Maerdy Road
Ferndale
CF43 4AB**

Date of inspection: January 2026

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Category 3
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	170
Pupils of statutory school age	117
Number in nursery classes	31
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 the primary sector is 22.9%)	27.9%
Percentage of 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%)	38.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	42.7%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2009

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/01/2019
Start date of inspection	26/01/2026

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

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn y Forwyn is a supportive and inclusive community that places a strong emphasis on pupils' progress and wellbeing. The headteacher has a clear vision, with the aim of ensuring that pupils have rich learning experiences in engaging and caring learning environments. This contributes purposefully to excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning among pupils.

The headteacher's purposeful vision, which includes meaningful contributions from staff and the wider community, supports the school's improvement arrangements successfully, and the leadership responsibilities are well established and sustained across the school.

Teachers and assistants work together purposefully. They are effective language models and concentrate thoroughly on promoting pupils' care and learning. This supports good progress in most pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills from their starting points. Staff work diligently with parents and external agencies and know pupils' needs well, which include pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).

Teachers provide learning experiences that stimulate pupils purposefully and enable them to make beneficial progress. The quality of teachers' teaching is robust across the school. On the whole, staff support pupils to make independent choices about their learning. However, teachers' feedback does not identify the next steps in learning consistently enough. Teachers provide interesting opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the areas of learning. However, the activities do not challenge pupils effectively enough.

Staff and pupils foster close and loyal working relationships. Staff encourage pupils to work together and share ideas and feelings successfully, which promotes the development of their respect for others intelligently. Staff support pupils to develop beneficial personal, social and creative skills, which contribute strongly to their awareness of their local area and culture.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Strengthen feedback to support the next steps in pupils' learning
- R2 Provide learning experiences, across the curriculum, that challenge pupils to apply their skills effectively

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, supportive and inclusive learning community. The headteacher sets a clear and purposeful strategic direction for the school and has high expectations of herself, staff and pupils. She encourages pupils to embrace happiness and to aim to achieve their aspirations. She works diligently with the leadership team, staff and governors to provide engaging learning experiences that are relevant to pupils. Through this, leaders convey the school's vision successfully with a clear emphasis on providing engaging learning experiences and prioritising wellbeing for the whole school community.

The headteacher is a sensible and conscientious leader. She has established robust, stable and sustained leadership structures across the school and most staff and governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They consider a wide range of evidence that enables them to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They set meaningful improvement priorities that address these areas for improvement purposefully.

Leaders promote a positive culture which promotes, develops and supports staff's professional learning effectively. They share robust and relevant practices intelligently. This contributes purposefully to the school's ethos as a learning institution. Leaders support staff to reflect and consider the effect of professional learning on pupils' wellbeing, skills and progress. For example, staff hold regular discussions to discuss pupils' understanding of diversity in Wales, feedback and assessment, and trial new principles to support their professional learning.

Leaders foster effective relationships with parents. The continuous cooperation and communication promote the school in its community successfully. Leaders identify the needs of pupils and the community thoroughly. They offer valuable opportunities for parents to support their children's wellbeing and learning and enrich their engagement with the school. For example, staff organise reading sessions, practical science activities and workshops on how to eat healthily. This supports parents to develop their understanding of their children's work, wellbeing and progress purposefully.

Teachers explain tasks clearly and support pupils to contribute to their learning intelligently. In the best practice, teachers ensure a purposeful pace to lessons and use a good range of resources to support pupils' learning successfully. Teachers and assistants know when to encourage perseverance among pupils and when to offer additional support. This engages and maintains most pupils' interest in their learning and enables them to make good progress considering their starting points. However, teachers' feedback does not identify the next steps in learning consistently enough.

Teachers across the school are effective language models and have high expectations in terms of the development of pupils' Welsh and English skills. They encourage pupils to speak Welsh and make purposeful use of the language as a core part of their learning and play. Most pupils have good attitudes to speaking Welsh and they make an enthusiastic effort when speaking in different contexts. By the end of their time at the school, most pupils communicate confidently in both languages.

Teachers support the development of pupils' literacy skills effectively. The early reading and writing skills of most of the youngest pupils develop well. They experiment with making marks confidently. As their skills develop further, they begin to write sentences purposefully, by demonstrating a beneficial awareness of basic spelling and punctuation. Most pupils at the top of the school develop good reading skills and many write effectively in both languages in a range of useful genres.

Teachers' and assistants' teaching enable most pupils to make sound progress in their numeracy skills and digital competencies. They plan interesting and varied activities, offer multimedia digital opportunities, and provide useful mathematics resources to their pupils. These methods build confidence and promote independence among pupils, which supports their learning purposefully.

Teachers provide an engaging curriculum that develops pupils' understanding of their local area and the wider world effectively. For example, pupils discuss the history of the Rhondda Valley and the effect of Welsh people on global issues which contribute to raising their aspirations and broadening their horizons. On the whole, the provision develops pupils' skills systematically and gradually over time appropriately. Teachers provide interesting opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the areas of learning. However, the activities do not challenge pupils effectively enough.

Teachers plan sensible opportunities for pupils to discuss important issues. This includes relationships, diversity, and purposeful experiences to develop pupils' spiritual and moral attitudes. As a result, pupils show respect for others. In addition, they develop their awareness of identities successfully and most have positive attitudes to learning. They work together enthusiastically and build loyal relationships with staff. They listen carefully to teachers and assistants and take pride in their progress. Most pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they contribute to class discussions meaningfully.

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

Staff provide engaging and stimulating learning environments both inside and outside, which encourage success and enthusiasm among pupils effectively. There is a sensible range of quiet spaces for pupils to use, when required, including valuable intervention areas and the 'Cwtsh'. They are used wisely by staff to support pupils' wellbeing and progress well.

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 not a cause for concern.

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/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)

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

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