

A report on

Ysgol Nant Y Groes

**Greenfield Road
Colwyn Bay
LL29 8ET**

Date of inspection: February 2026

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Nant Y Groes

Name of provider	Ysgol Nant Y Groes
Local authority	Conwy County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	234
Pupils of statutory school age	181
Number in nursery classes	25
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%)	46.5%
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%)	18.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	2.8%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	7.2%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2013
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/01/2018
Start date of inspection	02/02/2026

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 Nant y Groes is a welcoming and inclusive school where leaders and staff create a caring and supportive environment for pupils. A clear shared vision promotes positive values such as respect, kindness and aspiration. As a result, most pupils make good progress in their learning over time and develop as thoughtful and considerate individuals. Pupils from low-income households, and those with additional learning needs, including those who attend the learning resource bases, receive effective, individualised support that helps most to engage positively with learning and make good progress in developing their learning skills, especially in their writing skills.

Across the school, staff know pupils well and establish strong, respectful relationships with them. This has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, which are consistently strong across the school. Teachers provide a broad and balanced curriculum and makes purposeful use of the local community to enrich pupils' learning. Through this, pupils benefit from meaningful experiences that help them to develop an understanding of their Welsh identity, social responsibility and the wider world.

Consistent practices and high expectations from teachers and support staff contribute to calm, purposeful learning environments. Most teachers set a suitable pace and provide an appropriate level of support and challenge to pupils. However, at times, tasks that are delivered by staff are over directed and do not always encourage pupils to develop as independent learners.

Leaders and governors provide clear and purposeful direction for the school and share a strong commitment to pupils' learning and well-being. Leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors know the school well and provide appropriate support, although their level of challenge is developing. While attendance has improved slightly over time, persistent absenteeism remains higher than national averages.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Reduce rates of pupils' persistent absenteeism
- R2 Enable all pupils to make purposeful choices about how and what they learn to further develop as independent learners

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ysgol Nant y Groes is an inclusive and nurturing school. The headteacher, supported well by the senior leadership team, has developed a strong and purposeful vision for the school. Shared aspirations for all pupils to 'Believe, Achieve and Succeed', are evident across all aspects of school life. This ensures that most pupils make good progress in their learning and develop as caring and ambitious learners.

The school has an effective and inclusive provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The strong levels of communication and collaboration that exist between teachers and support staff ensure that there is an accurate, shared understanding of pupils' individual needs. Support staff use this knowledge well to provide specific, needs-led interventions for pupils. This has a notable impact on their learning and well-being. Consequently, most ALN pupils, including those who attend the learning resource bases (LRBs), make strong progress towards their individual targets and engage positively with their learning and school life.

Across the school, staff know their pupils well and develop strong, supportive working relationships within a nurturing learning environment. Consequently, within lessons and around the school, nearly all pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes to learning are strong.

Teachers work together purposefully to provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that is rooted in the local community. Beneficial opportunities are provided for pupils, including those in the LRBs, to learn about their local area, their Welsh identity and the wider world, for example by visiting Colwyn Bay to study modern street art. This, in turn, prepares pupils to be conscientious and inquisitive citizens. Staff support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness successfully. As a result, pupils consider other viewpoints and values effectively and develop a sound understanding of individuals who are different from them.

Most pupils develop listening and speaking skills successfully. The youngest pupils begin to understand Welsh instructions from an early age. By the end of their time at the school, most pupils are confident English speakers and are developing their Welsh language skills suitably. The school's strong focus on literacy has fostered a positive love of reading, which, in turn, supports most pupils to enjoy reading and develop their skills constructively. By the time they leave the school, most pupils read fluently, with expression and firm understanding.

A notable feature of the school is its positive culture for writing and the meaningful impact on pupils' writing skills.

Spotlight 1: Developing a positive culture for writing

Leaders have worked collaboratively with all staff to evaluate progress and standards of pupils' writing skills across the school and have taken decisive action to secure timely improvements. Targeted professional learning has supported staff to refine their approaches to teaching writing, with a clear focus on segmenting the writing process into manageable, progressive steps. This 'Cold to Gold' approach has strengthened pupils' skills, enabling them to write with increasing confidence. As a result, most pupils are highly engaged in writing, and older pupils consistently produce high-quality written work across the curriculum.

Across the school, most pupils make good progress in mathematics and use their knowledge to solve problems with increasing confidence. Younger pupils develop their understanding of number effectively from an early age through engaging practical activities. Many older pupils apply their mathematical understanding effectively to other areas of the curriculum, supporting their learning across a range of areas of learning experiences, for example to plan and construct sea defences designed to protect the Colwyn Bay coastline. Overall, most pupils, including those in the LRBs, apply their literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills productively across the curriculum.

Teachers share the learning objectives and question pupils purposefully. This builds on their previous learning beneficially and extends their knowledge and understanding of different aspects further. A notable strength is how teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations and display a consistent approach to classroom organisation and routines throughout the school. In the main, most teachers set a brisk pace to the lessons and challenge pupils appropriately. In the most effective practice, staff adapt activities thoughtfully to provide pupils with an appropriate level of independence. However, at times, tasks are overly directed by staff and do not always encourage pupils to develop as independent learners.

There are good opportunities for pupils, including those from low-income households and those in the LRBs, to influence the life and work of the school. For example, leadership groups are raising pupils' awareness of drinking water during the day. This supports nearly all pupils understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily.

Leaders have effective procedures to identify the schools' strengths and areas for improvement. They consider a wide range of evidence to identify the school's improvement priorities. These focus on developing provision to improve well-being, learning experiences and progress in pupils' skills. Staff and pupils contribute purposefully to the evaluation procedures, and, as a result, nearly all staff have a sound understanding of their roles in developing provision further.

Governors are committed advocates of the school, they have a sound understanding of the school's context and its successes and challenges. They are in the early stages of adopting their role as critical friends, providing both support and challenge to leaders, particularly in relation to the operational running of the school. In general, the challenge around provision, and pupils' progress and standards are less developed.

The school has robust procedures to support pupils' attendance and punctuality, which include intensive support from the family liaison officer. However, although the school's attendance has improved slightly over time, persistent absenteeism remains higher than the national averages.

Leaders prioritise, plan and deliver professional learning that aligns well with individual staff needs and school priorities. Recent professional learning around positive behaviour strategies has impacted positively on behaviour and attitudes to learning around the school.

The school has been highly successful in developing positive, welcoming relationships with parents, carers and the local community. Nearly all parents, including families whose pupils are in the LRBs, provide positive feedback on their engagement with the school and their child's learning experiences. They conduct timely meetings to review interventions and monitor progress to ensure they are successful in enabling pupils to achieve to the best at their stage of development.

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)

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

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Publication date: 08/04/2026