

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffin**

**Sandy Lane  
Caldicot  
Monmouthshire  
NP26 4NQ**

**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 Gymraeg y Ffin

Name of provider	Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffin
Local authority	Monmouthshire County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	157
Pupils of statutory school age	102
Number in nursery classes	29
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%)	17.4%
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%)	*
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	14.7%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	02/06/2025

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	09/03/2026

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](https://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 Gymraeg Y Ffin is a family community that provides an inclusive and caring environment. Most pupils feel safe and happy at school. They behave well and show maturity and respect for each other. The school's arrangements for promoting attendance are robust and effective.

The headteacher is a passionate leader who sets high expectations for staff and pupils. With the effective support of the deputy and the leadership team, staff work together successfully to provide pupils with an interesting curriculum. As a result, most pupils make sound progress in developing literacy, numeracy and digital skills, as well as other skills. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their extended writing skills in their work across the curriculum.

The school nurtures independent and confident learners from an early age, by using rich experiences to foster curiosity and creativity. The curriculum is broad, relevant and rooted in meaningful learning activities that build on many skills successfully. A whole-school approach to developing creativity is very strong, with activities across the curriculum providing beneficial opportunities for pupils to apply wider skills.

Most pupils make strong progress from their starting points, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from low-income households. Pupils influence curriculum design effectively but the opportunities for pupils' committees to contribute more widely to school life are limited.

Leaders know the school well and know what works well and what needs to be improved. They put very successful arrangements in place to improve those aspects. Governors support and challenge leaders appropriately.

## **Recommendations**

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

- R1      Extend opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills across the areas of learning
  
- R2      Develop the role of pupils' committees to strengthen their influence on the school's work

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin is a happy and inclusive community that prioritises promoting pupils' wellbeing. Most pupils feel happy and safe there, knowing who to turn to if they have any fears or concerns. The learning environment is caring and pupils receive beneficial support. Most pupils behave well and demonstrate positive and mature attitudes to their peers. In addition, the school's procedures to ensure that pupils attend school regularly are very robust.

The headteacher is a passionate and caring leader who sets high expectations for staff, pupils and herself. With the robust support of the deputy and other leaders, she provides the school with a homely culture, an inclusive ethos and a successful strategic direction. Despite a recent period of instability with regard to staffing, leaders, teachers and assistants have a positive effect on improving pupils' learning and wellbeing. As a result, most pupils, including those with ALN, achieve to the full extent of their ability in their literacy, numeracy, digital and wider skills.

The school's motto, namely 'Dysgu chwilfrydedd, byw gyda pharch, tyfu gyda'n gilydd yn ein cymuned Gymraeg', reflects the familial and supportive element that exists. That contributes to nurturing and developing independent learners who are ready to venture confidently from an early age. This is enriched in effective outdoor learning activities, namely Llan Llanast and Mercher Mwdlyd. The school's values, which are based on providing rich experiences that stimulate pupils, permeate the provision.

Staff provide a broad, rich and contemporary curriculum for pupils that is rooted skilfully in the learning activities. These experiences build on many of pupils' skills successfully over time and enable them to transfer their skills naturally from one area of the curriculum to another.

Most pupils develop oral skills well. They listen attentively to adults' instructions and each other's contributions. The youngest pupils develop their reading skills successfully with many reading fluently in both languages by the time they reach the upper years. Staff provide purposeful opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop their early writing skills. At the top of the school, many pupils write at length in a variety of genres in language sessions. However, the opportunities to write at length in various contexts across the areas of learning and experience are limited.

Many pupils use their understanding of mathematical concepts confidently and apply them appropriately in various contexts. Almost all pupils' digital skills develop effectively; for example, pupils at the top of the school design and create objects by using a 3D printer.

Teachers work very effectively together to plan a range of interesting and rich experiences jointly through a 'Big Questions' approach. This engages pupils' curiosity and their strong commitment to their learning. One of the school's clear strengths is the way in which staff develop pupils' creative skills.

**Spotlight: Developing pupils' creative skills in a local context.**

Teachers plan purposefully to provide rich and extended opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills successfully across the school. The youngest pupils work together to design and create unique drawings by using recycled material, which promotes sustainability. Pupils at the top of the school create impressive 3D models and an annual mural that reflects their experiences and memories of their journey through the school. The work is extremely successful in developing a wide range of pupils' skills, including literacy, numeracy and digital skills as well as building their understanding of global citizenship.

By offering purposeful opportunities for pupils to reflect and worship jointly, teachers support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness effectively. This leads to ensuring that almost all pupils are kind and show empathy and respect for each other and others.

Across the school, there is a strong sense of teamwork. An effective example of this is how staff work together to identify and support the needs of individual pupils. All members of staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' needs and support all pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning, which is a notable strength of the school. The learning activities respond purposefully to the needs of all pupils.

The school tracks pupils' progress very thoroughly. Leaders coordinate highly effective support for pupils with ALN. Staff offer inclusive and suitable provision to pupils who need it, including for promoting wellbeing and managing emotions.

The pupil's voice is strong in considering contributions to enriching the curriculum. Staff include pupils' ideas purposefully in planning learning activities that engage them and their ownership of the themes. However, there are few opportunities for pupils that represent the various committees to contribute to school life more broadly and to make decisions about the next steps in the school's development.

Staff prepare pupils successfully for the next steps in their learning. Information is transferred successfully between the various organisations and the school, which means that the youngest pupils are able to settle quickly. Robust transition arrangements are in place which include additional visits and sessions for the most vulnerable children, which prepares them thoroughly for transition into the secondary sector.

Leaders have robust and highly effective procedures in place to evaluate the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. They consider the outcomes of these procedures to set priorities to stimulate improvement. The school's improvement procedures are detailed and give a clear priority to the right issues.

### **Spotlight: Empowering staff's leadership skills to drive continuous improvement in a self-improving organisation**

By developing thorough and incisive evaluation procedures, leaders identify the school's strengths and areas for development in detail. Evaluation and improvement planning processes have matured over a short period of time but provide a sound basis for sustainable improvements in learning and teaching. Highly effective distributed leadership systems are rooted across the school, with clear leadership roles allocated strategically in line with improvement priorities. Leaders foster a strong culture of professional self-reflection among staff in weekly professional development meetings, which enables them to lead improvement within their areas of responsibility. This contributes significantly to sustainable improvements in teaching, learning experiences and pupils' outcomes over time.

Leaders ensure that 'Tîm Y Ffin' are given very beneficial opportunities for professional development which improve the quality of their teaching and enable them to undertake their roles successfully and have a positive effect on learning.

Governors support the school successfully and challenge sensibly, where necessary. By observing in sessions, talking to pupils and staff, and by working closely with the headteacher, they have a sound understanding of standards and provision.

### **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. However, they have recently begun to work with the local authority to address a situation of overspending.

## 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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**This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).**

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