

**A report on**  
**Ysgol Bryn Hedydd**

**Spruce Avenue  
Tynewydd Road  
Rhyl  
Denbighshire  
LL18 3SU**

**Date of inspection: April 2026**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Bryn Hedydd

Name of provider	Ysgol Bryn Hedydd
Local authority	Denbighshire 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	468
Pupils of statutory school age	355
Number in nursery classes	54
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%)	15.5%
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%)	2.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	2.8%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	6.8%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/04/2023

A report on Ysgol Bryn Hedydd  
April 2026

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	17/02/2020
Start date of inspection	27/04/2026

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

There is a strong sense of enjoyment and belonging throughout the Ysgol Bryn Hedydd school community. Leaders have established an inclusive and aspirational culture that focusses sharply and successfully on improving pupils' learning and well-being. Most pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress from their individual starting points.

Leaders and staff model positive behaviour, relationships and language well. This supports pupils to develop exemplary attitudes to learning and school life and demonstrate excellent behaviour. Nearly all pupils take great pride in their work and achievements and develop as confident and independent learners.

The school's approach to developing pupils' oracy skills is highly effective. Pupils develop a wide range of vocabulary and use language exceptionally well in their talk, their writing and across the curriculum. Most pupils develop strong mathematical and digital skills, and overall, they read well. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to use the Welsh language though the progress they make slows over time.

The school's curriculum is rich and engaging. Teachers use the local area and community partnerships to provide purposeful, real-life contexts and experiences for pupils. Most teachers provide pupils with learning activities that are well-matched to their needs and the provision for ALN pupils is strong.

Leaders know the school well and demonstrate accuracy and success in their evaluations and improvement work. They distribute leadership roles well and ensure that all staff have access to relevant and beneficial professional learning. In recent times, these successful processes have led to improvements in pupils' writing skills and foundation learning provision.

## Recommendations

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

R1 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

Ysgol Bryn Hedydd is a happy school that instils a strong sense of enjoyment and belonging across the school community. Senior leaders lead with purpose, clarity and humility. They have established an inclusive and aspirational culture that focusses sharply and successfully on improving pupils' learning and well-being.

Leaders demonstrate consistently high expectations, which are embraced by staff and pupils alike. Collectively, leaders and staff model positive behaviour, relationships and language well, helping most pupils to develop as considerate, respectful and resilient individuals.

Throughout the school, pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning and school life. Standards of behaviour are excellent. Nearly all pupils take great pride in their work and achievements and are keen to progress. They develop effective learning skills as they move through the school, helping them to become confident and independent learners, and most make good progress from their individual starting points. This includes pupils that are eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN).

Leaders know the school well. They make effective use of a comprehensive range of self-evaluation activities, showing honesty and accuracy in their judgements. This helps them to establish priorities for the school and to recognise successes. Governors, who support the school well, are beginning to join monitoring activities and this is helping to develop their first-hand knowledge of the school's work.

### **Spotlight: High quality, strategic leadership that impacts positively on teaching and learning**

The school has a strong track record of securing improvements and there is a successful culture of impactful distributed leadership. Senior leaders show trust in staff and value their input, skills and experience. They help staff to grow as leaders and empower them to lead successfully on key aspects of the school's work. This helps to ensure that morale across the school is good and there is a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration that impacts positively on both teaching and learning. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to timely and relevant professional learning that meets both whole-school and individual needs. Recently, notable improvements have been seen in foundation learning provision and pupils' writing skills.

Most pupils develop strong writing skills. This is particularly evident in the work of older pupils which is often of an impressive standard, showing well-considered use of an extensive range of relevant vocabulary. As they move through the school, most pupils develop extended pieces of writing, working diligently through a process of refinement to

produce a finished piece of work. The teaching to facilitate this progress and development is highly effective. In a very few lessons, learning experiences do not challenge pupils well enough, or allow them to develop as independent writers.

The school has an appropriate culture of reading. Most pupils make suitable progress in their development as readers, with more able pupils making particularly good progress. In a few instances, pupils do not have a broad enough range of strategies to support them to read fluently for understanding. Through a novel-based approach to the curriculum, teachers skilfully weave reading provision that helps to support pupils' development of other skills, in particular writing and oracy, and their understanding of the lives of others.

### **Spotlight: High quality oracy and language development**

From the time they start school in the youngest classes, pupils benefit from a highly effective focus on language and communication skills. Across the school, staff immerse pupils in a wide range of vocabulary that helps most to use descriptive and technical language to impressive effect. Staff are skilled at helping pupils to understand the meaning of the language they learn. This highly effective provision permeates the curriculum and ensures that pupils develop the capacity and confidence to use an ambitious and relevant vocabulary in nearly all aspects of their learning.

The school establishes a positive foundation for Welsh oracy in the youngest classes, where nearly all pupils engage enthusiastically in simple conversations. As they progress through the school, pupils retain their enthusiasm for learning Welsh. However, the school's approach to the teaching of Welsh does not support pupils well enough to enable them to make the progress they are capable of over time.

The school has embedded a clear and consistent approach to teaching mathematics. Most pupils make good progress in developing and applying their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They apply their numerical understanding well in their work across the curriculum through a range of relevant and meaningful contexts and use their strong language skills to explain their mathematical thinking effectively.

Most pupils develop strong digital competence through regular, purposeful use of technology that enhances their learning, creativity and independence across the curriculum. Provision to support pupils' engagement with the expressive arts and music is beneficial and the school makes effective use of external partners to enrich pupils' creative learning experiences.

Most pupils develop a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Innovative initiatives such as the 'Next Gen' project support pupils well to take responsibility for their own learning and development. Through this, pupils develop a

strong, first-hand understanding of how they can support people in the local community. They undertake a series of valuable life skills tasks that help them to develop strategies to recognise, understand and deal with the challenges that life presents.

The school's rich curriculum provides engaging learning experiences that support pupils to develop as capable, confident individuals. Pupils of all ages have good opportunities to contribute to planning the schools' curriculum and enjoy doing so. There are useful opportunities for pupils to learn about the history, culture and linguistic heritage of Wales and teachers draw thoughtfully on the local context of Rhyl to enrich the curriculum. The curriculum enables pupils to develop their understanding of the complex nature of societies and current issues and helps most to become creative thinkers. They enjoy challenges and respond positively to opportunities to solve problems that the curriculum provides.

Most teachers set consistently high expectations for pupils' learning, fostering both independence and collaboration effectively. They draw effectively on pupils' prior learning and make productive use of feedback. In most lessons, this ensures that learning activities are well-matched to pupils' needs, providing them with the challenge and scaffold they need to help them move on. In a very few instances, teaching does not match pupils' needs sharply enough and pupils complete relatively low-level tasks or tasks that are too hard, which limits their progress.

In many cases, teaching is adaptive and innovative, with staff acting as skilled facilitators who question pupils adeptly and make creative use of resources. Older pupils in particular respond well to this approach, showing productive independence in how they use teachers' prompts to move their learning forward. The approach to foundation teaching and learning is developing well and helps pupils to learn through valuable play and exploration. The indoor and outdoor learning environments support both teaching and learning successfully, providing stimulating and supportive spaces for pupils to develop and apply new skills.

Staff provide consistently high levels of care, encouragement and pastoral support. Provision for pupils with ALN is highly effective and well-led. Staff engage sensitively with pupils and provide well-considered and targeted interventions. In addition, sharp, regularly reviewed individual development plans and strong partnership with parents and specialist services support ALN pupils to make good progress and develop their confidence and independence well.

Leaders monitor attendance robustly and systematically and collaborate with families and external agencies effectively. Attendance rates are good and show sustained improvement over time, including reductions in persistent absence.

## **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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publications Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)

© Crown Copyright 2026: This report may be re used free of charge: (a) in any format or medium; and (b) may be translated by or on behalf of an education and/or training provider in respect of which this report relates into any language, in each case provided that it is re used and/or translated accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must, in each case (including in the case of a translation) be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 01/07/2026