

A report on
Ysgol T. Gwynn Jones

**Llanlian Road
Old Colwyn
Colwyn Bay
Conwy
LL29 9UA**

Date of inspection: June 2026

by

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

About Ysgol T. Gwynn Jones

Name of provider	Ysgol T. Gwynn Jones
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	187
Pupils of statutory school age	103
Number in nursery classes	36
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%)	22.7%
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%)	7.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	5.8%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2012

A report on Ysgol T. Gwynn Jones
June 2026

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	11/11/2019
Start date of inspection	01/06/2026

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

The headteacher, leaders, governors and staff work together effectively and enthusiastically with the aim of helping pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes. Staff know pupils and their families well and use this understanding to provide helpful support, including for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The school is a thoughtful and reflective environment where staff discuss teaching and learning honestly and adapt provision thoughtfully to meet the needs of pupils. This has already helped to improve a number of key areas, such as the teaching of phonics.

Teaching is effective across the school. Staff have high expectations and positive working relationships with pupils, which helps pupils stay engaged and make good progress over time. In nearly all cases, learning moves at a good pace. Leaders recognise the need to strengthen staff expertise in using questioning that extends pupils' learning and promotes deeper thinking. The curriculum is broad, balanced and engaging. Pupils benefit from creative and meaningful learning experiences, including opportunities to learn about Wales, the wider world, different cultures and moral and social issues. Outdoor areas and classrooms are welcoming and support pupil independence effectively.

Most pupils make good progress in literacy, numeracy and digital skills. They develop confidence in speaking, reading, writing and using number in practical contexts. Provision for Welsh is effective, and most pupils enjoy using Welsh through songs, rhymes and simple conversations.

The school has a strong safeguarding culture. Staff support pupils with ALN well. Leaders have built strong relationships with parents. Most parents feel that staff are approachable and communicate well. Rates of pupil attendance at school are too low.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Improve attendance
- R2 Further improve teachers' use of questioning to enable pupils to develop their thinking skills and achieve their next steps in learning

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The headteacher works effectively with other leaders, governors and staff to set a clear strategic direction that focuses strongly on working to secure the best outcomes for pupils. They have established a strong sense of teamwork, enthusiasm and shared purpose among staff. This helps to create a calm, purposeful school community where pupils feel safe, behave well and engage positively in their learning. Leaders have embedded effective systems and processes across the school, but they also respond with agility to emerging challenges and changes in the needs of pupils and families. For example, they have strengthened arrangements to track pupils' well-being in response to increasing social and community pressures. This helps to ensure that the school provides worthwhile support for pupils' social and emotional needs.

Leaders and staff use assessment and tracking processes well to monitor pupils' progress in knowledge, skills and understanding over time. They combine this information with their knowledge of pupils' needs and family circumstances to adapt provision and target support appropriately. This helps most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those at risk of underachievement because of poverty, to make good progress from their starting points. Teachers assess and track pupils' progress robustly from entry baselines and use this information effectively to inform future planning.

The school is developing well as a reflective learning community. Staff discuss professional practice and the quality of teaching and learning openly and honestly. Leaders use their understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in teaching to focus professional learning, build on existing strengths and provide support where needed. For instance, leaders have identified the need to develop further the role of staff as enabling adults, so that they can support pupils to think more deeply and achieve their next steps when working independently. The school has a strong track record of identifying and addressing areas for improvement. For example, leaders and staff identified the need to refine the teaching of phonics through joint monitoring and professional discussion. Although this work is still developing, there are already measurable improvements in pupils' knowledge of phonics and in how they use this knowledge to support reading and writing.

The school's reflective culture and strong teamwork help to ensure that teaching is effective across the school. Staff have high expectations of pupils and develop positive working relationships with them. This supports pupils to remain on task, behave well and engage successfully in learning. In nearly all lessons, the pace of learning maintains pupils' interest and helps them move forward. However, there are a few missed opportunities for staff to use questioning skillfully enough to deepen pupils' learning and develop their thinking skills. Staff provide immediate verbal feedback that motivates pupils to persevere and make progress. Written feedback and opportunities for self-assessment also help many older pupils improve their work.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and purposeful. It provides pupils with a wide range of creative, authentic and engaging learning experiences. Leaders and staff review the curriculum regularly to ensure that it reflects pupils' interests and changing needs, and keeps them engaged with their learning. Staff plan beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures, their local area, Wales and the wider world, as well as moral and social issues. They ensure opportunities for pupils to feel a sense of awe and wonder. For example, pupils in the nursery learn about the life cycles by watching caterpillars emerge from eggs, turn into pupae and then butterflies.

Learning environments, including outdoor areas, are welcoming and stimulating. These support pupils to develop independence effectively. A range of teaching strategies provides strong opportunities for pupils to work independently, challenge themselves and make pleasing progress. Pupils have suitable opportunities to express their views and influence the life of the school.

As a result of careful planning and engaging learning experiences, most pupils develop sound literacy, numeracy and digital skills as they move through the school. The youngest pupils develop early communication and writing skills through purposeful independent activities and opportunities to collaborate and learn with their peers. By Year 2, most pupils read at an age-appropriate level, with many using their knowledge of phonics successfully to decode unfamiliar words. Most pupils develop their oracy skills well over time. They speak clearly and confidently, including when addressing unfamiliar adults. In writing, pupils build early physical readiness for mark-making in the nursery, and by Year 2, many show a growing understanding of different writing forms and the effect of language choices.

Most pupils develop secure early number skills, including counting, recalling number bonds and beginning to understand multiplication and division through practical sharing activities. By Year 2, most pupils develop a sound understanding of place value and use this to support addition and subtraction. They apply their numeracy skills appropriately in practical contexts, including outdoor learning. Pupils also develop suitable digital skills.

Many use a range of devices and applications independently, including tables, stop motion animation, programable toys and QR codes.

Provision for Welsh is effective. Teachers plan positive Welsh learning experiences, and most pupils enjoy learning the language through songs, rhymes and recorded conversations with their peers. Most pupils make sound progress in developing their Welsh language skills as they move through the school and use Welsh confidently to introduce themselves, talk about their interests, where they live and the weather.

The school has created a strong safeguarding culture. Processes and procedures are robust, and nearly all pupils feel safe in school. The ALN Coordinator (ALNCo) works successfully to ensure clear processes, high expectations and well-targeted professional learning that results in strong support for pupils with ALN. Staff identify pupils' needs at an early stage and apply a graduated response effectively. They use limited resources creatively and draw on a wide range of internal and external support to meet pupils' needs.

Spotlight: Working with agility to respond to changing additional learning needs

The development of the Ocean Room is a strong example of leaders identifying a need and adapting provision to improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders recognised that a few pupils with more complex learning needs required a calm, purposeful space where staff could provide targeted support and help them regulate successfully. In response, they created the Ocean Room and developed a range of effective approaches to support pupils' learning, independence and well-being. Adults use strategies that enable pupils to access this provision calmly and purposefully and, where appropriate, to rejoin their peers successfully in class. This provision demonstrates leaders' commitment to adapting support so that vulnerable pupils can participate fully in school life.

Leaders have established strong relationships with parents. Most parents feel that staff are approachable, listen carefully to their concerns and communicate effectively. Transition arrangements are planned carefully at entry and exit points. Staff use bespoke approaches for pupils who need enhanced transition, including home visits and purposeful experiences before moving settings. This helps nearly all pupils transition successfully. Regular family learning sessions support parents to develop the skills to help their children with learning at home and ensure close working relationships with school staff. Leaders use a wide range of carefully considered strategies to improve rates of pupil attendance. However, attendance remains too low.

Governors have a clear, up-to-date and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders have developed effective processes that enable

governors to gather first-hand evidence about the quality and impact of provision. This helps governors support the school's work and provide appropriate challenge to leaders.

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/carers 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.

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

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: 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: 03/08/2026