

A report on
Ysgol Dewi Sant

Rhuddlan Road
Rhyl
LL18 2RE

Date of inspection: May 2026

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Dewi Sant

Name of provider	Ysgol Dewi Sant
Local authority	Denbighshire County 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	426
Pupils of statutory school age	318
Number in nursery classes	61
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%)	14.0%
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%)	26.0%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	26.1%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.5%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2016

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	26/09/2016
Start date of inspection	18/05/2026

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

Leaders promote an inclusive ethos and have established a positive culture that focuses clearly on pupils' well-being and learning. Their vision, which is based on regular encouragement and support, leads to excellent behaviour among pupils as well as enthusiasm for their learning. Leaders' commitment to evaluating and improving provision regularly ensures a climate of continuous improvement.

Leaders promote staff development purposefully, and professional learning opportunities have a positive effect on pupils' learning and wellbeing. Governors support and challenge leaders wisely, focusing on improving provision through detailed monitoring arrangements. A sensible allocation of roles and responsibilities takes into account staff's workload and wellbeing effectively. Rich learning opportunities, including educational trips, develop pupils' understanding of their 'cynefin', or local area, purposefully and promote their sense of belonging to a community successfully. In addition, purposeful opportunities for pupils to voice opinions has a positive influence on the life of the school.

On the whole, teaching sessions are lively and, in the best practices, teachers provide engaging activities that respond intelligently to pupils' interests. As a result, pupils' progress in their literacy, numeracy and digital skills is sound, given their starting points. However, the challenge in the activities provided by teachers to encourage pupils' independence in their learning is not consistent enough across the school.

Staff and pupils foster warm and loyal relationships, and teachers encourage co-operation and sharing of ideas meaningfully. They provide appropriate feedback to support learners to improve, but the quality of feedback does not lead to next steps in pupils' learning effectively enough.

The learning environment is welcoming and stimulating, with a good range of resources inside and outside the building that support learning successfully. The curriculum offers broad experiences which build systematically on pupils' skills as they move through the school. Over time, pupils develop valuable personal, social, emotional and creative skills that foster compassion and respectful cultural awareness.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Ensure that activities support pupils to improve their independent learning skills
- R2 Ensure that teachers' feedback supports pupils to improve their work effectively.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders undertake their roles skilfully to create an inclusive culture that focuses on pupils' wellbeing successfully. This purposeful vision leads to a homely ethos and a stimulating learning environment, which is central to leaders' commitment to improving provision continuously. They communicate their vision clearly to staff and pupils, and this supports robust standards of wellbeing among most pupils. This, in turn, is supported by an atmosphere of encouragement which promotes pupils' personal and social development beneficially. Most pupils are welcoming to each other and visitors. They speak enthusiastically about their learning experiences and they behave excellently.

Most pupils make strong progress from their starting points, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from low-income households. Most of them have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively, speak confidently, and take pride in their work and progress.

Leaders set high expectations and evaluate the provision skilfully and thoroughly. As a result, they have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They put in place purposeful improvement processes that lead to sustained improvements over time. For example, recent developments include improving pupils' reading and mental mathematics skills across the school.

Leaders support staff's development intelligently and provide professional learning activities that address the areas in need of improvement beneficially. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning and wellbeing. In addition, leaders address national priorities skilfully, such as developing a broad and balanced curriculum. In addition, they promote pupils' online safety well.

Governors have an essential role in supporting and challenging leaders at the school. They ensure appropriate use of the budget, which includes funding resources to enrich learning. In addition, governors, along with staff, focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning effectively. They take part in regular monitoring activities which hold teachers to account thoroughly for the effect of their work on pupils' outcomes.

Leaders allocate roles and responsibilities skilfully in order to meet pupils' needs successfully. They consider staff's workload and wellbeing carefully, by developing productive relationships with parents, local schools, support agencies and the wider community. This includes entrepreneurship sessions, such as running stalls selling plants that have been grown by pupils. Practical activities such as this promote pupils' understanding of different careers in the world of work within their community successfully. Staff ensure that pupils have valuable opportunities to influence school life, their local area and the wider world, which includes fundraising for local and national charities.

Staff provide effective support for pupils with ALN. They know the pupils well and use the information sensibly to ensure that transition arrangements between classes and other providers enable pupils with ALN to access support effectively. Staff work well with external agencies, which has a positive effect on pupils' outcomes.

The working relationships and respect between staff and pupils are strong. Most pupils work well with their peers and listen attentively to teachers. They ask thoughtful questions and contribute eloquently to class discussions. The progress in most pupils' oracy skills is good, and they express their opinions and discuss facts and their feelings confidently.

Most pupils make good progress in their reading skills. They are eager readers who engage with texts sensibly. Across the school, many pupils write successfully for a range of purposes. They write in different genres intelligently and begin to improve their work through appropriate editing and redrafting.

Teachers plan to deliver appropriate mathematics tasks and they provide a good range of beneficial support resources. Teaching helps to ensure that most pupils acquire sound numeracy skills and use them purposefully in valid activities. In addition, teachers provide robust opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills and apply them purposefully across the areas of learning.

On the whole, teaching sessions move the learning forward in a timely manner. Teachers offer sensible opportunities for pupils to co-operate and share ideas to develop their skills. This equips pupils to present their work in various ways, such as digital presentations. Teachers provide suitable feedback to enable pupils to understand tasks better and improve their work. The feedback usually draws pupils' attention to what they are doing well, but it does not always lead to specific improvements in their work. As a result, opportunities to nurture clearer next steps in their learning are less consistent for pupils across the school.

Teachers explain tasks clearly and encourage pupils to contribute to their learning meaningfully. Effective questioning by teachers helps pupils recall previous knowledge

purposefully and create intelligent links that deepen their learning. Teachers and assistants create an engaging environment in the interesting classrooms and stimulating outdoor areas, which include a range of rich resources. The provision targets pupils' skills development and progression well and encourages pupils to learn productively. However, the levels of challenge provided by teachers to encourage pupils' independent skills are not consistent enough across the school.

The curriculum provides a good breadth and balance of learning across all areas of learning and experience. There is a balanced range of activities that provides sensory learning experiences, which build on pupils' skills systematically as they move through the school. In addition, most pupils develop an understanding of their local area, Wales, and the wider world effectively. For example, on a field trip, they study the work of the town's lifeboats and study international themes meaningfully by celebrating different cultures.

Teachers provide strong support for pupils' personal, social and emotional development, by fostering loyalty, reflection and respect successfully. The curriculum supports pupils' creative development well, and guest artists work alongside teachers to enrich pupils' artistic skills. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are promoted effectively. As a result, pupils appreciate different beliefs and show tolerance and consideration for other people intelligently.

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, there is a deficit in the school's budget. A plan has been agreed with the local authority to remedy the situation.

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.

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Publication date: 21/07/2026