

A report on
Ysgol Llys Hywel

**Market Street
Whitland
Carmarthen
Carmarthenshire
SA34 0QB**

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 Llys Hywel

Name of provider	Ysgol Llys Hywel
Local authority	Carmarthenshire Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Dual stream school
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	135
Pupils of statutory school age	103
Number in nursery classes	9
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%)	14.1%
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%)	5.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	28.2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	02/09/2019

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	25/11/2019
Start date of inspection	05/05/2026

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

Ysgol Llys Hywel is a caring and welcoming learning community which supports pupils' emotional and social needs successfully. The headteacher's robust vision to provide education for all pupils in a happy and safe environment is shared purposefully with pupils and the wider school community. The provision to support pupils' wellbeing is an effective feature of the school.

Leaders use self-evaluation processes suitably, which promotes improvements in provision and pupils' progress appropriately. Many pupils make suitable progress in their skills over time. However, the learning experiences do not always challenge pupils consistently enough. As a result, a few pupils do not always achieve to their full ability.

On the whole, the school curriculum engages pupils' interest appropriately. There are purposeful opportunities for pupils to influence their learning by sharing their ideas when starting a new unit of work. However, the curriculum is not broad and balanced enough nor does it develop an understanding of the history, culture and traditions of Wales effectively. Most pupils respond to teachers' feedback purposefully and understand what the next steps are in their learning successfully.

All staff have a productive working relationship with pupils which creates a caring atmosphere across the school. Support arrangements for pupils, including pupils with additional learning needs, are robust. Staff use a good range of purposeful support programmes that meet the needs of pupils successfully. Staff model the Welsh language effectively. However, pupils across the school do not make good enough progress in developing their Welsh oral skills. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning, and almost all behave consistently well.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Ensure that learning experiences challenge pupils appropriately
- R2 Ensure that the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills appropriately across the areas of learning
- R3 Improve pupils' Welsh oral skills

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The school is a happy and inclusive learning community in which pupils and staff treat each other with care and kindness. The headteacher's passionate leadership sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school. She has a robust vision which ensures that all pupils receive education in a homely and safe environment. She is supported by enthusiastic staff who share this vision effectively with pupils and the wider school community.

All staff have a productive working relationship with pupils, which nurtures a caring and inclusive atmosphere across the school. Pupils are respectful and show care towards each other. In the best practice, teachers support pupils to utilise and use Welsh as a core part of their learning. However, many teachers do not support pupils to acquire Welsh speaking skills effectively enough over time.

The school's provision for developing writing skills in both languages is effective and many pupils make appropriate progress in developing these skills. Opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy and digital skills are purposefully planned and this contributes to clear progress in these skills. The majority of teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to apply their skills skilfully in beneficial activities, for example through the enterprise project. Across the school, staff share constructive feedback with pupils who recognise their strengths and identify what they need to do to improve. From an early age, pupils respond effectively to this feedback and improve their work purposefully.

The behaviour of almost all pupils across the school is consistently good. They are polite, welcoming and enjoy sharing their experiences with staff and visitors. Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning, become familiar with tasks and concentrate effectively for extended periods on learning activities. However, in some cases, adults over-lead the learning and the activities do not always challenge a few pupils consistently enough. In addition, the provision for foundation learning pupils does not encourage them to learn increasingly independently and to explore purposefully enough in rich learning experiences.

Pupils undertake responsibilities on several school committees conscientiously. They appreciate the opportunities they receive to have a positive influence on the life and work

of the school and develop important leadership skills such as collaboration and showing empathy. For example, they are caring towards Lleucu, the wellbeing support guinea pig.

Most pupils develop creative and physical skills successfully as they move through the school. Pupils experiment creatively, perform across a range of media and take part in physical activities that contribute effectively to their physical development and emotional wellbeing. In addition, the weekly outdoor sessions support most pupils to develop collaboration and problem-solving skills purposefully.

Teachers deliver a curriculum that, on the whole, engages the interest of many pupils. At times, purposeful use is made of the local area to provide learning experiences that relate closely to pupils' everyday life. For example, staff are organising engaging activities to celebrate the school's 150th anniversary. In these cases, pupils respond enthusiastically and their enjoyment of their learning is evident. However, the curriculum is not broad and balanced enough to support pupils' development, understanding and knowledge across all areas of learning. Purposeful opportunities are provided for pupils to influence their learning by offering ideas about what they would like to learn. In addition, teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of religions, morals and practices in different cultures through a range of engaging texts.

Leaders encourage staff to develop professionally to improve the quality of teaching and equip them to fulfil their responsibilities in full. The school's procedures for managing staff's performance are thorough. The relevant learning opportunities that are provided link closely to the school's improvement priorities as well as the development needs of individual staff.

Leaders encourage teamwork among staff across the school successfully which contributes to their understanding of their roles and responsibilities valuably. They are responsible for specific aspects of the school's work and contribute purposefully to ensuring that many pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from low-income households, make appropriate progress in their skills from their starting points.

The school provides purposeful support for pupils with ALN. Their needs are identified early, and well-planned programmes are provided to promote progress in their well-being, and their literacy and numeracy skills. Staff monitor and track pupils' progress from their starting points thoroughly and design purposeful support programmes that respond to pupils' requirements effectively.

The school's self-evaluation and quality assurance arrangements are appropriate. Leaders use several evidence sources suitably to gain a clear picture of the school's performance. They identify strengths and some aspects for improvement correctly and use this

information successfully to set clear priorities for improvement. For example, they have purposefully planned opportunities for pupils to respond to their work effectively. The governing body is supportive of the headteacher and staff and promotes the school in its community successfully.

With the support of staff and governors, leaders promote a culture of safeguarding in an effective way. This supports a strong sense among pupils at Ysgol Llys Hywel of being happy and safe in their school.

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. Although the school has a high percentage of reserves, there is a spending plan in place for the next three years.

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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