

A report on
Ysgol Rhostyllen

**School Street
Rhostyllen
Wrexham
LL14 4AN**

Date of inspection: May 2026

by

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

About Ysgol Rhostyllen

Name of provider	Ysgol Rhostyllen
Local authority	Wrexham 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	220
Pupils of statutory school age	166
Number in nursery classes	25
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%)	19.8%
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%)	3.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	5.4%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2024

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	08/01/2018
Start date of inspection	11/05/2026

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 Rhostyllen is a happy and inclusive school with a strong sense of community. Nearly all pupils, enjoy school. They develop positive relationships with staff, have a strong voice in matters that affect them and feel safe and valued.

During their time at school, most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN) make good overall progress from their individual starting points.

In a relatively short period of time, the headteacher has worked with senior leaders, staff and the wider community to develop trusting team ethos. Together they have worked diligently to introduce many beneficial improvements that impact positively on pupils' learning and well-being. These include effective changes to the learning environment and approaches to teaching.

Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to learn through play and practical experiences and to learn about their locality, Wales and the wider world. The regular opportunities for pupils to engage in purposeful physical and creative activities.

Teaching supports most pupils to use their speaking skills effectively and to develop well as writers. However, the school's approach to teaching reading does not consistently support pupils to make the progress they could. Most pupils make suitable progress in mathematics. They learn and use a good range of digital skills to support and present their learning. Most pupils are enthusiastic about learning to speak Welsh. They are beginning to use the language with greater confidence and accuracy in lessons and around the school.

Most teaching is purposeful. It matches pupils' developmental needs and interests well. Teachers interact effectively with pupils to give helpful feedback and to address misconceptions. They generally ensure that learning moves forward at a good pace in lessons and over time. In a few instances, especially when teaching mathematics, teachers do not capitalise fully on opportunities to deepen or extend pupils' learning.

School leaders have an accurate overall picture of the school's current strengths and areas for improvement. However, they do not always evaluate the difference that improvement work makes to pupils' learning and progress sharply enough.

Recommendations

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

R1 Improve pupils' reading skills and strengthen the culture of reading at the school

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ysgol Rhostyllen is a happy and inclusive school with a strong sense of community. Nearly all pupils enjoy school. They develop positive and productive relationships with other pupils and adults that help them to feel safe and valued. Pupils have a strong voice and influence the curriculum and aspects of school improvement successfully. Arrangements to communicate with parents and to include them in their child's journey through school are purposeful and productive.

The headteacher has worked with pupils, staff and the wider community to develop an inclusive approach to school leadership and improvement.

Spotlight: Cultural change through effective leadership

The headteacher provides calm, clear and effective strategic leadership. In a relatively short period of time, he has created a strong culture of improvement through high expectations, trust and effective teamwork. His leadership has supported staff to become more outward looking and to seek opportunities to learn with and from other schools. This positive climate provides a safe space where staff embrace change and confidently take appropriate risks to improve their professional practice. These improvements enhance pupils' school experience and progress well. This is particularly evident in developments to the learning environment for younger pupils, which now supports teachers to provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn creatively through exploration and play to build their skills, knowledge and understanding.

During their time at school, most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good overall progress from their individual starting points.

Most pupils speak confidently about their learning often using a good range of relevant contextual vocabulary. Younger pupils benefit from regular opportunities to write independently. Most of these pupils progress rapidly from basic mark making to presenting independently written recounts of traditional tales. As pupils move through the school, they continue to make good progress in writing. In a few instances, highly effective teaching and strong subject knowledge help pupils produce well-structured, purposeful writing that includes accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. Most older pupils choose vocabulary carefully and use techniques such as simile, metaphor and personification effectively to enhance their work.

Most younger pupils enjoy listening to stories and discussing books. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to teaching phonics to strengthen pupils' early reading skills. Most pupils develop suitable decoding skills as they move through the school and read basic texts successfully with suitable understanding. However, provision does not support pupils well enough to develop a broader or more advanced set of reading skills progressively. Pupils do not have access to a good range of high-quality literature. This limits their reading experience.

Most adults model the Welsh language appropriately. They encourage pupils to use Welsh during lessons and throughout the school day. Overall, pupils make steady progress in learning and speaking Welsh. They use a suitable range of Welsh vocabulary and phrases frequently and with growing confidence.

Most younger pupils develop their mathematical understanding successfully through play and practical activities, for example when comparing objects that are lighter or heavier. As they move through the school, most pupils develop a sound understanding of number operations and apply this knowledge appropriately in their work across the curriculum. However, teachers do not always deepen pupils' mathematical understanding well enough through questioning, for example to enable pupils to explain their methods or the reasons for their answers. In general, pupils do not make strong enough progress in presenting and interpreting data in graphs.

There are purposeful opportunities for pupils to use their digital skills in their work across the curriculum. Most pupils use technology confidently in a range of contexts to support their learning and progress.

The school's curriculum is broad and interesting. Teachers make effective use of opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and heritage of Wrexham and Wales. Teaching supports pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well and there is a strong emphasis on pupils' health and well-being and their physical development. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about diversity in society. The methods used by teachers to present learning experiences engage nearly all pupils successfully.

Most teachers match the content and style of delivery within lessons to pupils developmental and educational needs. This includes well considered practical learning approaches for younger pupils. When working with older pupils, teachers establish clear intentions for learning and support pupils to understand what they need to do to be successful during individual tasks or sequences of lessons. The pace of most teaching is good. Teachers interact purposefully with pupils to provide instant verbal feedback, to exemplify good work or to take advantage of opportunities to address misconceptions. This practice is not as well developed in mathematics teaching.

The school's provision for pupils with ALN is effective. Pupils receive tailored interventions and consistent support from staff that help them to make good progress in their learning and well-being. Staff provide high levels of care, encouragement and pastoral support. Beneficial strategies, such as daily check-in boards and access to a well-resourced sensory room, help pupils regulate their emotions successfully when they feel that they need to.

Leaders have reviewed roles and responsibilities carefully to align with the school's priorities. Members of the senior leadership team set a positive tone for the school's teaching, digital work and provision for pupils with ALN. Increasingly, staff from across the school take leadership responsibility for aspects of the school's work, for example for introducing the phonics strategy and forest school provision.

Leaders have an accurate overall understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They implement change purposefully to improve provision and pupils' experiences. Recent improvements include the development of pupils' independence, a focus on writing skills, notable changes to the learning environment and an increased emphasis on the use of Welsh language. These all have a positive impact on pupils' engagement and progress.

Leaders are developing an increasingly reflective and inclusive improvement culture by involving staff in activities such as book scrutiny and other forms of monitoring. However, monitoring processes do not always focus sharply enough on evaluating the impact of

improvement strategies on pupils' progress and standards. For example, leaders and staff know that all teachers implement the new feedback policy but at this stage, they are less clear about the difference it makes to pupils' learning and progress.

Governors support the school appropriately through regular involvement in the life and work of the school. They are beginning to develop their role in self-evaluation and improvement processes suitably. They work with other school leaders to use financial resources, including the pupil development grant, effectively to support pupils' learning, well-being and additional needs.

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.

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