



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern**

**Bodedern  
Bro Alaw  
LL65 3SU**

**Date of inspection: October 2022**

**by**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh.**

## About Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern

Name of provider	Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Bilingual
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	789
Pupils of statutory school age	700
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	
Number in the sixth form	89
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average  <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the secondary sector is 18.5%)</i>	20.1%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a)  <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the secondary sector is 23.0%)</i>	17%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	63%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	01/04/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	October 2014

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: [mylocalschool.gov.wales](https://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Overview

Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern is a caring community that promotes a positive culture of inclusion, respect and raising aspirations. Most pupils are proud to be a part of the 'Ysgol Boded family' and feel that they thrive in a happy and safe ethos. In many cases, teachers manage their classes effectively and have high expectations in terms of pupils' behaviour.

A high proportion of pupils take advantage of opportunities to join clubs and take part in activities organised by the school. In these clubs, pupils are given valuable experiences to develop their subject knowledge and understanding or to take advantage of cultural opportunities or physical exercise. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of nearly all pupils.

Many pupils make suitable progress in their lessons and express themselves appropriately when answering the teacher's questions. They use reading strategies successfully to locate facts, select information and identify style features in texts. They are able to express themselves appropriately when writing at length in Welsh and English. However, overall, a minority of teachers do not encourage pupils to use the Welsh language enough. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they should in their Welsh communication skills. Although the school's leaders and governors recognise the need to strengthen the focus on ensuring linguistic progression for pupils, planning for this has not been developed in full.

In a majority of lessons, teachers plan effectively and ensure that they provide an appropriate level of challenge for pupils. In these lessons, there are beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and subject knowledge. A majority of teachers provide pupils with beneficial feedback on their work and give pupils an opportunity to respond to their comments. Although there are strengths in the quality of teaching across the school, in a minority of lessons the shortcomings in teaching mean that pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

Since being appointed in April 2020, the headteacher has worked diligently to establish a strong sense of teamwork among the staff. There is a culture in which staff are keen to receive training to develop the quality of their work and develop their roles. Leaders have also forged a close and supportive relationship with parents and communicate with them through open evenings, newsletters and interesting videos. Governors work closely with leaders and understand their responsibilities in full. Many middle leaders lead their areas of responsibility effectively and undertake a range of useful quality control activities. However, they do not evaluate teaching by considering its effect on learning closely enough. This means that leaders do not always have enough of an effect on improving the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make in the classroom.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that developing pupils' Welsh language skills is a whole-school priority and is implemented at all levels
- R2 Improve teaching by addressing the shortcomings that are identified in the report
- R3 Strengthen self-evaluation processes by considering the provision according to its effect on pupils' learning in the classroom

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Learning

Many pupils make suitable progress during their time at the school. They are able to recall previous knowledge appropriately to use it in lessons. In a few lessons, pupils make very swift and strong progress in their knowledge and understanding. They apply their previous knowledge to new contexts effectively. For example, pupils use their previous knowledge of how to analyse the poem 'Ofn' when discussing an unfamiliar poem in their Welsh lessons. Many pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make suitable progress against their targets as a result of appropriate intervention. However, a minority of pupils do not make enough progress in their lessons.

Most pupils listen attentively and respectfully to instructions and explanations from their teachers. They listen carefully to the contributions of their peers when discussing in small groups. Many pupils express themselves suitably when answering the teacher's questions. A few pupils express themselves elegantly and use sophisticated vocabulary in Welsh and English. However, a minority of pupils lack confidence when using subject terminology and when structuring their contributions in Welsh and English. This means that they provide short, under-developed responses when answering the teacher's questions. Too often, pupils do not take advantage of opportunities to practise their Welsh language skills when giving answers in the classroom or when discussing with their peers, and tend to turn to English. This is mainly in lessons where teachers do not have high enough expectations in terms of pupils' oral contributions, including their expectations when using the Welsh language.

Many pupils use appropriate strategies to locate facts and gather information when reading a variety of texts across the curriculum. These pupils are able to select information from a variety of sources successfully to answer specific questions. Overall, they recognise style features successfully, for example when analysing the lyrics of popular songs in their English lessons. When they are given an opportunity to do so, many pupils read aloud confidently and vary their tone of voice and pace suitably. A minority of pupils are able to summarise their findings from reading successfully and develop their analytical skills appropriately. A few more able pupils have sophisticated higher-order reading skills. They are able to analyse skilfully how and why authors select particular words to create an effect on the reader and demonstrate the ability to appreciate texts in both languages.

Many pupils express themselves appropriately when writing at length in Welsh and English. They use paragraphs correctly and organise their ideas effectively. However, a majority of pupils' work is littered with careless spelling and grammatical errors. Pupils often include slang or non-standard words in their work in both languages and do not give sufficient consideration to the audience. A few more able pupils write capably and explain their views skilfully. They are able to structure their work skilfully and include relevant examples to support what they say.

A majority of pupils have sound number skills. For example, in their mathematics lessons, they are able to use previous knowledge of square numbers and algebra to simplify surds. They are able to solve word problems or multi-step problems

successfully. Many pupils have an appropriate understanding of shape and measurement work and are able to analyse data effectively. They are able to apply their basic numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, they calculate the number of subatomic particles in an atom in their science lessons. Shortcomings in the basic numeracy skills of a minority of pupils limit their ability to develop their numeracy skills.

Many pupils have sound basic digital skills. For example, pupils produce attractive presentations that include elements such as buttons and hyperlinks in their French lessons. In their Welsh and humanities lessons, they create websites and use programming and design software suitably in their technology lessons.

In their physical education lessons and clubs, most pupils perform a variety of physical skills correctly and with control. Many pupils use their fine motor skills successfully when constructing electronic circuits and when planning isometric 2D shapes in their design and technology lessons. Many pupils develop their creative skills successfully. For example, pupils experiment when creating different patterns and colours in their art lessons. Many pupils develop their thinking skills appropriately, for example when analysing plans for scientific experiments to identify the effect of changing specific variables.

Overall, pupils who study Welsh second language make appropriate progress in their oracy and writing skills. They are able to follow instructions and express themselves by using simple sentences.

Sixth-form pupils are mature and speak engagingly when discussing their work with visitors. In many lessons, they make sound progress in their subject knowledge and understanding and their wider skills. They listen attentively to the contributions of their teachers and the oral contributions of their peers and contribute intelligently to class discussions. They explain their views clearly and consider and build upon the contributions of their peers.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Pupils' well-being is a clear strength at Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern. Most pupils are exceptionally proud to belong to the "Ysgol Boded family" and thrive in the happy, safe and caring ethos that has been established. There is a strong sense of friendship and co-operation between pupils. Many pupils feel that they are respected and treated fairly and, in turn, demonstrate a high level of trust and respect towards the school, their peers, staff and visitors.

Most pupils feel safe at the school and free from physical and verbal abuse. They acknowledge that the school's adults take care of their well-being and know whom to approach if they have any concerns. As a result, these pupils are happy at the school and confident that any issues in relation to bullying will be dealt with quickly, effectively and sensitively. Overall, pupils appreciate the support that is available from heads of year, counsellors and pastoral staff at 'Y Nyth' and 'Ystafell 46'.

Most pupils feel that the school is inclusive and that the school community celebrates diversity positively. They feel that they are encouraged to respect the views of others, for example by working with an anti-racism charity. The LGBTQ+ club provides vital support and gives learners a voice in terms of their sexuality. Most pupils understand

the benefits of making healthy choices in relation to their diet and emotional well-being and know how to stay safe online.

Pupils who need additional support develop valuable life skills through alternative activities in the outdoor learning area. For example, they garden and build homes for hedgehogs. These activities help to nurture their self-confidence and self-respect.

Nearly all pupils understand the school's expectations in terms of behaviour. Pupils are motivated by the school's reward systems to improve their attendance, punctuality, engagement and progress. Pupils share their views regularly on aspects of school life through questionnaires and surveys and many feel that they influence the school's policies. For example, they have contributed towards informing the school's mobile phone policy.

Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs, take advantage of opportunities to develop their leadership skills and to shoulder responsibilities. Each tutor group is represented on the school council, where they are given valuable opportunities to share their views. Pupils fulfil their roles enthusiastically and maturely and develop their personal and social skills successfully. The school council has planned improvements to the school environment, such as ensuring play equipment to support pupils' well-being.

Many pupils feel that they are encouraged to take part in the '*Clybiau Boded*' extra-curricular activities. Participation rates are high in a wide range of clubs and activities, including a variety of sports and clubs such as British Sign Language, board games and farming. The school ensures that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are given opportunities to participate fully in these activities.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and have positive attitudes to learning. Many pupils apply themselves diligently in lessons and show resilience and perseverance. They work independently and take responsibility for their learning and progress. A few pupils arrive late at their lessons and are slow to settle into work. A few also have difficulty concentrating when working independently.

Most sixth-form pupils show maturity, independence and ambition. They feel that they are supported well by the school and are ready for the future. They appreciate the pastoral and academic support provided by the school. They are confident that they are able to access support or advice whenever necessary. Sixth-form pupils develop their interpersonal skills effectively by supporting younger pupils with their literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

Most teachers forge beneficial working relationships with pupils and establish a positive environment in lessons. They have useful practices that ensure that pupils settle quickly at the beginning of the lesson and are ready to learn.

In many cases, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. These teachers manage their classes effectively and deal promptly with any pupils who are causing low-level disruption or are not concentrating. They have sound subject knowledge and give pupils clear instructions and explanations. They walk around the classroom

effectively to ensure that pupils are on task and understand what is expected of them. They make good use of valuable and attractive learning resources and make purposeful use of the displays in the classrooms.

In many cases, teachers ask appropriate closed questions to monitor pupils' knowledge or progress. However, only a minority of teachers use questioning techniques skilfully to develop pupils' thinking skills and ensure that they contribute at length to develop their oral skills.

In a majority of cases, teachers plan lessons effectively. They ensure an appropriate level of challenge and select carefully the activities that will enable pupils to learn. These teachers plan beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, in addition to their subject knowledge. They ensure that there is a suitable tempo, where the pace of teaching corresponds to the pace of learning. They ensure a good balance between the amount of time learning is led by the teacher and time for pupils to work independently or in small groups.

In a few lessons, there is very high-quality teaching, which enables pupils to make swift and strong progress. In these lessons, teachers have very high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and challenge pupils to think deeply. They provide valuable opportunities to develop pupils' skills in relevant contexts that are woven skilfully into activities. They plan skilfully to design activities that enable pupils to apply their understanding and skills in various contexts independently.

A majority of teachers are robust language models who introduce new subject terminology effectively. However, overall, teachers do not have high enough expectations in terms of the pupils' use of the Welsh language in their written work or their oral responses.

In a minority of lessons, shortcomings in teaching mean that pupils do not make as much progress as they should. In these cases, the level of challenge is often too low and teachers miss opportunities to extend pupils' understanding and develop their skills. Tasks are repetitive, there are too many scaffolds, pupils copy from the whiteboard or teachers use worksheets that limit pupils' responses. In a few cases, teachers do not use their subject knowledge effectively enough to plan how pupils will learn more challenging concepts.

A majority of teachers provide pupils with beneficial feedback on their work. They comment on what the pupil has done well and how they could improve their work. These teachers set appropriate expectations and give pupils an opportunity to respond and correct their work. However, in a minority of cases, teachers' feedback is not effective enough. Teachers' comments are superficial and they do not insist that pupils improve their work. Across the curriculum, teachers' feedback to develop pupils' literacy skills is inconsistent. This means that pupils often do not develop the way that they express themselves for a range of purposes, or that they repeat basic spelling and grammatical errors.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of nearly all pupils. In key stage 4 and the sixth form, it provides a range of subjects that respond to pupils' aspirations by working effectively with local schools and a local college to expand the choice further. The options that are available in key stage 4



have expanded significantly over recent years to include more vocational courses, such as tourism and creative media.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities that support the curriculum and develop pupils' interests. These include interesting clubs such as a farming club, a salon club and a golf club. As part of enriching the curriculum, the school has organised relevant educational trips to local sites, such as Rhosneigr beach and Cwm Idwal.

Leaders have a clear vision for the school's new curriculum, which is based on ensuring education of the highest quality, raising aspirations and preparing pupils for the world of work. The school has established successful processes for planning, trialling, reviewing and refining tasks in a few areas of learning and experience. As a result, leaders have adapted their plans beneficially.

Planning to develop pupils' literacy and digital skills across the subjects is appropriate. The literacy co-ordinator gives all staff purposeful guidance on how to adapt and use tasks that provide challenge for pupils in reading and interpreting information. The routine of providing useful feedback on improving literacy has been introduced but is in its early days. Interventions from specialist staff mean that pupils with weak reading skills make strong progress in Welsh and English.

The digital competence co-ordinator provides staff with clear guidance on providing suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their digital production and creative skills. Although provision for numeracy has not been co-ordinated to the same degree as the other skills, this does not have a detrimental effect on the opportunities pupils are given to apply their numeracy skills.

The curriculum includes valuable experiences for pupils to learn about the culture of their area, Wales and the world. For example, learning activities on the history and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people are prominent within subjects and the morning tutor periods. The cross-curricular unit on 'Identity' also enables pupils to appreciate the work opportunities that are available in their local area and further afield.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to pursue their courses and education through the medium of Welsh. However, pupils often choose to pursue their courses in English.

### **Care, support and guidance**

Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern is a caring community in which pupils' emotional, health and social needs are a priority. As a result, pupils develop as respectful learners who are proud of their community.

The well-being team promotes a positive culture that is based on inclusivity and respect and on raising aspirations. They work closely with each other and staff to support pupils' emotional, social and behavioural needs and ensure that they are ready to learn and get the best out of school life. Pupils benefit from the valuable opportunities and interventions that are provided, which include literacy interventions and support for emotional and social well-being. The school works effectively in

partnership with external agencies, for example through presentations from the police and '*Criw Craidd*' days.

The personal and social education (PSE) programme and experiences to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are suitable. For example, in PSE and religious education lessons, pupils are encouraged to understand and respect other cultures and religions. Class tutor periods are also used purposefully to hold discussions and reflect on current affairs, such as racism and equality. However, the PSE programme across the school has not been planned strategically enough to raise pupils' awareness of their well-being, mental health and emotional needs in full.

Provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is appropriate. One-page profiles and individual learning plans include relevant information for staff about how to support pupils. The school ensures that statutory annual reviews include the pupil, parents and other relevant stakeholders. Through the 'provision map', ALN pupils are tracked in terms of their scores in their basic skills, national tests, assessments and against their academic targets. Based on this, the school provides a number of valuable interventions to support pupils with ALN, such as the '*clwb clonc*' discussion group, a homework club and the '*Rydw i'n gallu*' ('I can') group.

Arrangements to support pupils' behaviour are sound and staff address any unacceptable behaviour quickly. As a result, most pupils behave very well in their lessons and around the school. By listening to pupils, schools have identified well the social challenges that they face. As a result, the school ensures suitable opportunities for pupils to express their views on a variety of issues; for example, the school council and year forums were consulted about the outdoor dining area. Effective strategies are also in place to promote pupils' attendance. However, leaders do not analyse information about the attendance of specific groups of pupils over time in enough detail.

The school provides a wide range of sports opportunities to help pupils to exercise and make healthy choices, for example by attending extra-curricular activities, including girls' and boys' football and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. There are also beneficial cultural opportunities for pupils, such as the ukulele club, music club and art club.

A strong feature is the valuable careers advice and guidance to help pupils make choices about their future. The school organises open evenings and taster sessions that meet pupils' interests well and provide useful information about a range of careers, including those with local employers. All pupils can take advantage of beneficial support, advice and guidance and are encouraged to attend national fairs and college or university open days.

The school's safeguarding culture is sound. The school's staff and governors receive safeguarding and anti-radicalisation training at an appropriate level. As a result, staff understand their roles clearly when undertaking safeguarding arrangements and know what to do if a pupil voices concern.

## **Leadership and management**

Since being appointed in 2020, the headteacher has provided the staff with sensitive and energetic leadership. Despite the challenges of the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the headteacher, with the support of the remainder of the senior leadership team, has succeeded in building a strong sense of teamwork among the staff. They have shared their vision to improve teaching and pupil well-being with all staff effectively. They promote the school's safeguarding culture appropriately. Leaders at all levels provide their staff with useful support and advice and also challenge underperformance effectively, where necessary.

Leaders have forged a very close and supportive relationship with parents. They communicate with them effectively in open evening and through regular newsletters and engaging videos that celebrate the work of departments and pupils on the school's website.

Many middle leaders lead their areas of responsibility effectively. They hold purposeful meetings that discuss important aspects, such as teaching, curricular developments and pupils' well-being. There are useful management arrangements between middle leaders and the senior team, including regular meetings to discuss strategies to address relevant issues. However, in a few cases, leaders do not act strategically enough in their roles.

The school has appropriate performance management arrangements, which lead to useful opportunities for staff to develop professionally. Due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, these arrangements have not included full lesson observations during the last two years.

The governing body is passionate about the school and understands its responsibilities in full, particularly when planning strategies to mitigate the effects of poverty on the achievement of specific pupils. For example, the school ensures opportunities for these pupils to attend after-school extra-curricular clubs by providing free transport home. Governors work closely with leaders to set a strategic direction for the school. They also co-operate beneficially with the bursar, who manages the school's resources very carefully. They prioritise expenditure thoughtfully to ensure that grants are used purposefully, including the Pupil Development Grant. They ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for eating and drinking healthily. They recognise the need to strengthen the focus on ensuring linguistic progression for pupils.

Since 2020, the senior leadership team has planned and adapted self-evaluation arrangements appropriately. These processes have a positive effect on some important areas, for example by ensuring high standards of pupils' well-being and restructuring the school's leadership. Many leaders undertake quality control activities, such as learning walks, scrutiny of books and listening to learners. To support the evidence from these activities, they make good use of data from tracking and monitoring pupils' progress to identify strengths and areas for improvement. However, they do not evaluate teaching in terms of its effect on learning in enough detail. This limits the effect that leaders have on improving the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils.

Self-evaluation processes have allowed leaders to identify appropriate priorities, including a focus on pupils' skills, the quality of teaching and curricular developments. However, at times, actions in the improvement plans are not purposeful enough. For example, although the need to plan to improve Welsh language skills has been identified, planning for this is under-developed.

The school has suitable arrangements for listening to pupils. For example, the school's committees have evaluated the school's behaviour policy and, as a result, the school has improved the rewards system. The school also uses questionnaires effectively to seek parents' views and responds to them appropriately. For example, the school has adapted its reporting arrangements to provide parents with more details about pupils' progress.

Leaders make purposeful use of self-evaluation activities to plan a wide programme of professional learning activities for teaching staff, assistants and support staff. There are close links between this programme, the school improvement plan and the performance management arrangements. Leaders have succeeded in creating a culture where staff are keen to receive training to improve the quality of their work and develop in their roles. Purposeful activities are provided to support the development of staff's professional knowledge, understanding and teaching and leadership skills. For example, staff have received very useful training on how to forge constructive working relationships with pupils. There are beneficial opportunities for staff to share good practice both inside and outside the school, and there is comprehensive support for newly qualified teachers and students.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body/members of the management committee through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- 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

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (<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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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**This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English)**

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