



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gynradd Esceifiog**

**Gaerwen  
Anglesey  
LL60 6DD**

**Date of inspection: January 2023**

**by**

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

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

## About Ysgol Gynradd Esceifiog

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Esceifiog
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	156
Pupils of statutory school age	122
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	20
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 primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	13.0%
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 primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	34.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	65.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/06/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/06/2014
Start date of inspection	23/01/2023

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 Gynradd Esceifiog is a happy and friendly learning community that encourages pupils to take pride in their school and the community. The leaders' robust vision permeates all of the school's activity, with a clear emphasis on 'growing, learning and succeeding together'. This close-knit and supportive ethos ensures that pupils' well-being is given a prominent priority in this inclusive school.

Teachers and assistants work together productively to provide a good range of interesting experiences for pupils. The learning areas, including the outdoor areas, are stimulating and interesting and all parts of the building are used highly creatively. These areas support pupils' well-being beneficially and ensure that they are ready to learn. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and develop as independent learners. They are polite and very caring towards each other. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent.

Overall, teachers' teaching methods are sound. They question pupils skilfully and include them regularly as an integral part of their learning to support them to improve their work. As a result, many pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills that are appropriate for the next steps in their learning. However, where provision is not as sound, teachers do not provide learning activities that are challenging enough and do not ensure that pupils' skills build systematically enough over time.

The headteacher has a sound knowledge of the school and encourages staff to work closely with local schools and to be reflective in their actions to improve provision. However, improvement systems do not focus in enough detail on evaluating provision to improve pupils' standards and progress specifically.

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that teaching challenges pupils to achieve to the best of their ability
- R2 Improve provision to ensure that pupils develop their skills constructively
- R3 Ensure that improvement systems focus in more detail on evaluating and improving pupils' standards and progress

## What happens next

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

## Main findings

### Learning

During their time at the school, many pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills that are appropriate for their stage of learning and their starting points. They recall previous learning, acquire knowledge, deepen their understanding and develop new skills successfully. However, in a very few classes, pupils do not build on their skills and previous learning successfully enough.

Across the school, most pupils listen carefully to staff presentations and respect the contributions of their peers consistently. From an early age, many of the youngest pupils' Welsh communication skills develop suitably. In the Reception and Year 1 class, they develop vocabulary and sentence patterns effectively when communicating with adults and peers. At the top of the school, most pupils communicate clearly in Welsh and English and speak confidently in a range of contexts. However, a minority of pupils are too willing to turn to English in lessons and less formal situations.

Many pupils' reading skills develop well from an early age. Most of the youngest pupils recognise individual letters and familiar simple words confidently. Older pupils develop their reading skills skilfully when researching specific areas. By the end of the time at the school, many read clearly and with good expression in both languages.

The youngest pupils make sound progress in developing their writing skills and, by Year 1 and 2, most write in Welsh in different genres successfully. When beginning their next stage at the school, a majority of pupils develop their writing skills appropriately but, on the whole, pupils are not given enough opportunities to write regularly to develop sound writing skills. At the top of the school, many pupils write at length in a good variety of genres. They use sensible adjectives, paragraph methodically and use interesting and persuasive vocabulary when writing their manifesto to be a member of the school committees. Most consider the needs of their audience skilfully, for example by using ordinals correctly when writing a recipe. However, on the whole, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their English writing skills.

Many pupils develop their number skills robustly across the school. The youngest pupils begin to recognise numbers and use their numeracy skills in different contexts, for example when creating a graph to show their favourite farm animals. In Year 1 and 2, pupils calculate the cost of fruit and vegetables correctly in their shop and solve addition problems confidently. As they move through the school, pupils' progress in their numeracy skills and their mathematical understanding varies. Although progress in pupils' skills is appropriate by the end of their time at the school, their mathematical understanding and numeracy skills do not build systematically on their previous knowledge and understanding. As a result, a minority of pupils do not develop their skills to the best of their ability.

Nearly all pupils develop their digital skills suitably. They use programs to work together and share ideas as a group. They save and retrieve work in personal files completely independently and use a variety of programs to produce and adapt work

with increasing independence. Nearly all pupils speak intelligently about e-safety and understand its importance when learning at school and at home.

Across the school, pupils benefit from valuable opportunities to develop their creative skills. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 emulate the work of artists skilfully and vary the tone and colour carefully to create effect, such as the sea, the sky and the landscape. Many pupils develop their musical skills valuably when working together to create a short piece of music based on their class story.

Nearly all pupils develop their physical skills well across the school. For example, they take part in a variety of activities that promote their health and well-being effectively, for example when playing team games and taking part in dance and gymnastics sessions.

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

Pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Esceifiog are proud of their happy, caring and homely community and treat each other with positive attitudes. They are happy and demonstrate pride when talking about their teachers and their school. They are polite and thoughtful and treat visitors and their peers with respect and care. Nearly all pupils feel safe, free from physical, emotional and verbal abuse and are respected and treated fairly at school.

A strong feature of school life is the way in which most pupils behave positively and maturely towards others. Nearly all pupils respond effectively to the school's vision and values to 'grow, learn and succeed together'. As a result, nearly all pupils' behaviour is sound as they work in the classroom and during playtimes.

Many pupils use a variety of methods to develop their emotional wellbeing, which supports them to be ready to learn. For example, they use a variety of suitable resources and relevant areas effectively to support them to feel safe and help them to concentrate on their work.

Across the school, most pupils interact well with adults. They develop to become ambitious and skilful learners who are ready to learn, showing confidence and resilience, and to persevere with their work. For example, pupils use the '*dyffryn dysgu*' method, which encourages them to persevere diligently when facing a challenge in their work.

Most pupils' independent learning skills are a strength across the school. For example, the youngest pupils use the learning areas in the classroom and the outdoor learning areas highly effectively to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Older pupils also work wholly independently as part of the class arrangements and use approaches to overcome obstacles effectively before seeking support from staff.

Most pupils develop their physical skills and respond positively to opportunities to undertake a range of activities during lessons, break times and lunchtime. Nearly all pupils make healthy choices by drinking water and eating fruit during snack times.

Through the work of the councils, nearly all pupils feel that adults at the school listen to their views and consider them in decisions that affect them. For example, the health and well-being council has developed the 'Be Kind' scheme to support pupils to solve problems positively in play activities during break times. As a result, pupils develop their social skills effectively.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are sound. They are keen to share ideas and participate fully in their learning. Many pupils use feedback effectively to move their learning forwards. For example, they use specific methods to respond to the work of their peers and provide comments on how to improve their work. These processes are beginning to have a positive effect on progress in many pupils' skills.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The learning areas, including the outdoor areas, are stimulating and interesting, where every nook and cranny is used creatively to support learning or protect and encourage pupils' well-being. Staff across the school create attractive areas inside the building to motivate pupils, such as the calm '*hafan heddwch*' area and the learning areas within the classrooms. These support pupils' learning experiences and the wider curriculum valuably.

Teachers and assistants have a caring and productive working relationship with pupils, which creates a learning environment where pupils' well-being and development is given purposeful attention. A strong feature of teaching is the way in which staff foster positive attitudes to learning among pupils and create an ethos where they feel confident to ask questions, express their views and are not afraid to make mistakes.

The strong qualities in teaching include the way in which teachers and staff across the school question pupils masterfully by asking questions that encourage pupils to extend their answers and develop their thinking skills. They support pupils to understand their lesson objectives and ensure that pupils concentrate well and persevere. They encourage good behaviour from pupils and guide them in a caring manner to work respectfully with others.

Teachers work together productively to develop an interesting curriculum and, on the whole, plan a range and depth of engaging experiences in line with the Curriculum for Wales. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and are active in experimenting and planning learning activities within the areas of learning and experience. Many of their ideas are beginning to become embedded in their approaches to teaching and learning. On the whole, teachers develop pupils to be adventurous and creative learners. There are beneficial opportunities for pupils to contribute their ideas about what they would like to learn and influence the types of activities within interesting themes. Many of the learning experiences derive from the context of the school and the local area, for example as the youngest pupils study life on the farm and where their food comes from. The oldest pupils learn about local artists and the features of engineering in the surrounding area, for example when considering the historical properties of the Menai Bridge.

Overall, teaching, the curriculum and teachers' planning ensure a relevant range of learning experiences for pupils. Pupils' skills develop robustly in a majority of classes, where they make consistent progress, with pupils in a few classes making sound progress. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their literacy skills effectively by writing descriptive sentences about man-made and natural materials. However, where provision is not as robust, learning activities do not provide enough challenge for pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. On the whole, teachers do not provide activities that support pupils to develop their skills constructively over time. In a very

few classes, over-use of worksheets also limits the opportunities for pupils to apply their skills extensively enough.

In most classes, teachers and staff provide pupils with useful feedback, whether verbally during lessons, in writing or on their work through electronic methods. Teachers also provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own work and that of their peers. As a result, many pupils know what they need to do to improve their work and how.

Teachers provide parents with useful information about their children's progress, including opportunities for parents to see the types of activities they have been completing at school by providing electronic clips and photographs.

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

The school has robust arrangements to support nearly all pupils' emotional, health and social needs. Staff forge a sound relationship with pupils, which promotes beneficial attitudes towards their well-being. For example, members of staff have expertise in developing pupils' emotional well-being and, as a result, the school provides highly effective support for pupils who need specific support. Provision promotes and supports pupils' excellent behaviour highly successfully.

Staff help nearly all pupils to understand issues relating to values, equality, diversity and inclusion purposefully. This permeates all aspects of the life and work of pupils effectively and the school has a prominent culture of inclusion with a strong emphasis on respect.

The school has highly effective provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). As a result of planning provision skilfully, pupils receive support that meets their needs beneficially. The school communicates well with parents and carers about ALN arrangements and pupils are an integral part of the process. The school gives full consideration to the views and feelings of the child, parents and carers as part of these valuable arrangements.

Staff have purposeful arrangements to track the progress of pupils with ALN, which relate to the targets in their individual development plans and their progress from their starting points. As a result, nearly all pupils who need further support with their learning make appropriate progress. However, leaders do not use information about the progress of individuals, groups or cohorts of pupils effectively enough to measure the effect on learning and identify further support steps.

Staff use partnerships with other schools and agencies effectively to provide valuable support for pupils. For example, by working with other agencies, staff communicate clearly and in a timely manner to ensure additional support for pupils. Staff work with local schools to develop and ensure consistency in the arrangements to provide supportive assistance to all pupils, particularly those with ALN.

Collective worship arrangements provide beneficial opportunities to develop pupils' moral and spiritual understanding. Assemblies have an inclusive atmosphere, for example as pupils use sign language while singing. The school's culture also promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development effectively, for example by providing a variety of appropriate opportunities for pupils to explore new ideas. For



example, pupils research Islam and compare it to other religions while studying Qatar and the World Cup.

Provision supports all pupils to participate in whole-school decisions effectively. For example, most express interests across the curriculum soundly to plan for themes and ask meaningful questions to develop learning.

The school encourages most pupils to use their imagination to engage with the creative arts through their studies, extra-curricular activities and educational visits. For example, staff provide beneficial music and art activities for pupils. The school also provides a variety of interesting educational visits, such as a visit to the farm when studying 'Where does our food come from?'.

Staff promote a culture of safeguarding effectively and the arrangements are not a cause for concern. The procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns about pupils is robust and staff make timely referrals to external agencies, where appropriate. The school has robust processes for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has created and established a clear vision for all individuals within the school community. This vision permeates firmly throughout the school and all partners aim for the shared principles and act on them effectively.

The headteacher has high expectations for herself, pupils and staff. Leaders have developed an effective team of staff who are fully committed to the school's values and promoting the well-being of pupils and staff. They understand their roles and responsibilities within the school community clearly.

The school has robust plans that focus on meeting pupils' needs. For example, staff support pupils' well-being effectively to ensure that they are ready to learn and enjoy learning. Leaders also have a close relationship with, and a sound understanding of, the needs of the school's families. They ensure that poverty does not have an effect on educational attainment by providing a variety of local activities to support the curriculum. Leaders also forge productive relationships to promote pupils' well-being and behaviour.

Governors are proud of the school and are fully committed to its development. They play an appropriate part in the school's self-evaluation processes, which enables them to identify strengths and areas for improvement. They have an understanding of national priorities and act on their responsibility to ensure that pupils learn about eating and drinking healthily appropriately. Together with the headteacher, governors manage the school's funding carefully and review expenditure in detail to ensure its best possible use. They link expenditure appropriately with the priorities in the improvement plan and use funding and grants suitably to enrich provision for pupils.

The headteacher has useful knowledge of strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders encourage staff to be reflective in their monitoring arrangements to evaluate the priorities in the school improvement plan. This information, which derives from individual staff's monitoring books for example, is fed into the school's improvement processes. Leaders seek the views of all members of the school community appropriately as part of its improvement processes.

The school works effectively with staff from local schools, for example to respond to national priorities, the new curriculum and ALN legislation. As a result of this co-operation, leaders produce shared priorities to ensure improvement. For example, following monitoring processes, partners in the cluster were asked to evaluate and refine provision to provide an appropriate challenge for pupils with ALN. As a result, pupils act on their improvement targets and make appropriate progress in their skills. However, priorities for improvement do not always link closely enough with the school's standards and provision directly enough.

Leaders have created a productive culture and ethos to promote and support the professional learning of all staff. They provide beneficial opportunities for them to take part in a good range of training that responds robustly to their individual needs and the school's priorities. For example, many teachers and teaching assistants receive intensive training to support pupils' wellbeing, which has an excellent effect on pupils' attitudes to learning.

## 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).**