



# Report summary for parents and carers on Ysgol Y Castell

**Date of inspection: October 2022**

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

# Overview

Ysgol y Castell is a happy, caring school where pupils work and play together confidently. Staff focus well on pupils' well-being, and this allows pupils to thrive in the school's inclusive environment. Pupils say that they feel safe, secure, and happy in school. They know that adults in the school care for them and that they can turn to them when they face challenges or have difficulties. Support for pupils' emotional well-being is highly effective and is a strength of the school.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to school, behave well and enjoy their learning. They form strong relationships with adults and one another and show respect and courtesy for all members of the school community. Most pupils focus well in lessons and demonstrate interest in their learning. As a result, most pupils make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well.

The school provides a rich, broad, and balanced range of learning experiences and additional provision that meets the educational and wider needs and interests of pupils well. Staff are encouraged to try new approaches to teaching and to develop the range of learning experiences they offer pupils. They listen carefully to what pupils want to learn about and weave their ideas into well planned sequences of lessons that build systematically on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, however, pupils do not always receive the challenge or opportunity to use these skills across the curriculum as well as they could.

School leaders have high expectations of themselves and everyone within the school community to do their best for pupils. They set a positive and ambitious tone for the school's work. They foster collaboration among staff, build professional expertise and strengthen partnerships with parents successfully. This helps the school to address national priorities such as curriculum reform and pupils' well-being successfully. They set clear goals for improvement; however, monitoring activity does not always focus sharply enough on the difference improvement work makes to pupils' learning. The governing body plays an important part in the life of the school. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively. They have a wide range of knowledge and expertise that helps them to carry out their roles well.



# Recommendations

- R1 Focus self-evaluation and improvement work more sharply on what pupils know, understand and can do
- R2 Challenge all pupils to improve their digital and extended writing skills across the curriculum
- R3 Improve pupils' confidence and ability to speak in Welsh, both in lessons and around the school

## What happens next

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





## School context

Name of provider	Ysgol Y Castell
Local authority	Denbighshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Number of pupils on roll	229
Pupils of statutory school age	182
Number in nursery classes	23
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 23.0%)	22.9%
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 16.1%)	11.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	28/04/2014
Start date of inspection	10/10/2022
Following the retirement of the previous headteacher at the end of the summer term 2022, a new headteacher has been appointed but will not take up post until January 2023. The deputy headteacher, who was appointed in January 2021, is undertaking the role of acting headteacher until that time.	

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