



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

**A report on**  
**Ysgol Foel Gron**

**Mynytho**  
**Pwllheli**  
**Gwynedd**  
**LL53 7RN**

**Date of inspection: March 2024**

**by**

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

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

## About Ysgol Foel Gron

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Name of provider   | Ysgol Foel Gron |
| Local authority  | Cyngor Gwynedd  |
| Language of the provider   | Welsh           |
| Type of school   | Primary         |
| Religious character  |                 |
| Number of pupils on roll   | 32              |
| Pupils of statutory school age   | 24              |
| Number in nursery classes (if applicable)  | 6               |
| Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average<br><i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.7%)</i> | 17.2%           |
| Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a)<br><i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 13.2%)</i>               | 12.5%           |
| Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home  | 50.0%           |
| Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language   | 0.0%            |
| Date of headteacher appointment  | 01/09/2019      |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)  | 12/10/2015      |
| Start date of inspection   | 11/03/2024      |

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 Foel Gron is a caring and inclusive community that gives a clear priority to pupils' well-being and learning. The headteacher has established a close-knit, familial atmosphere which promotes a culture of regular co-operation successfully between staff. The headteacher is supported appropriately by the governing body, which supports leaders to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The headteacher co-operates and communicates effectively with parents, which fosters the school's homely feel successfully.

Staff have a good understanding of the well-being and learning needs of all pupils. They use different sources of information effectively to organise support that is tailored to meet pupils' needs effectively. They have a supportive working relationship with pupils, which contributes well to fostering their well-being, learning and self-confidence.

Teachers provide a range of interesting experiences that support pupils to make relevant progress in their skills. Recently, they have focused successfully on improving pupils' English reading skills and their ability to use their numeracy skills in activities across the curriculum. As a result, most pupils show an increased understanding in developing their English reading skills and in applying their numeracy skills to solve problems in various contexts. However, teachers do not provide opportunities for pupils to develop all skills in a range of rich learning experiences in the outdoor areas regularly enough.

Nearly all pupils arrive at school ready to learn. They enjoy their activities and work well with their peers. Most are enthusiastic, listen well and contribute to discussions maturely. By Year 6, pupils respond appropriately to teachers' feedback and make suitable improvements to their work. However, pupils do not always understand what the next steps are in their learning which, in turn, slows their progress. Many work increasingly independently and develop their ability to make choices about their activities appropriately. Pupils develop a good understanding of the local area, Wales and the wider world.

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure regular opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in rich learning experiences in the outdoor area
- R2 Improve pupils' understanding of the next steps in their learning

## What happens next

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

## Main findings

### Learning

A majority of pupils enter the school with skills that correspond to what is expected for their ability and stage of development. During their time at the school, most pupils make sound progress in their learning. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress in a wide range of skills.

Pupils' Welsh oracy skills develop successfully. By Year 2, nearly all pupils have good spoken language and take pride in the Welsh language. They communicate confidently by using a wide range of vocabulary. Nearly all pupils listen attentively in story sessions and discuss and recall stories they have heard maturely. As they move through the school, nearly all pupils' oracy skills develop soundly in both languages. By Year 6, most pupils express an opinion effectively and use varied vocabulary and language patterns to hold interest.

Most pupils' reading skills develop well. The youngest pupils use phonological knowledge to read texts and refer to characters within stories. By Year 2, they handle books confidently and show enjoyment and pleasure when reading factual texts. By Year 6, many pupils are fluent and confident readers and use appropriate intonation and expression in both languages. They summarise factual texts purposefully, show a sound understanding and recall information successfully, for example when responding to Reading Mastermind quiz questions as part of World Book Day celebrations.

Across the school, pupils' writing skills develop very well. Many of the youngest pupils begin to form letters and write words successfully. By Year 2, nearly all pupils write factual texts appropriately, for example when noting the life cycle of a penguin. Many pupils spell appropriately by using suitable verbs and adjectives when writing an advertisement for an explorer. The oldest pupils write effectively across a range of genres and for different purposes and audiences. By Year 6, many pupils write at length and use rich vocabulary in both languages. They express an opinion effectively and give meaningful reasons, for example when discussing whether animals should be used in a circus.

From an early age, most pupils' mathematical skills develop purposefully. They have a sound understanding of place value and apply their skills to place numbers in order appropriately. By Year 2, most read and identify the temperature on a thermometer, measure length and use standard measurements appropriately when weighing. By Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of number facts and calculation methods. Nearly all pupils apply these skills in practical activities in the classroom, for example when calculating the cost of organising a circus trip to Ireland.

Many pupils' digital skills develop effectively. The youngest pupils use digital devices confidently to access apps to support their work. Nearly all pupils present word processing work effectively to share information, for example when identifying foods as part of Chinese New Year celebrations. By Year 6, pupils use a range of programs and apps with increasing confidence to record and present their work, including sharing an imaginary story about the Mynytho area. However, pupils' skills in

compiling databases and spreadsheets to record data have not been embedded to the same extent.

Across the school, pupils' creative skills develop well. From an early age, the youngest pupils use a range of materials effectively to produce attractive artwork, for example when creating 3D models of animals across the world. By Year 6, many pupils experiment confidently with different genres, for example by using watercolour paints to create art pieces for the Mynytho Eisteddfod. Pupils have worked effectively with a local artist to produce an attractive mural that shares the school's motto.

Many pupils' physical development develops effectively, for example as the youngest pupils create clay models skilfully. Pupils across the school develop swimming, ball and sports skills effectively during lessons at the local gym.

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

Nearly all pupils' well-being skills develop very well. The happy and welcoming environment contributes well to ensuring that nearly all pupils feel safe and valued. Warm and purposeful working relationships between adults and pupils ensure that pupils know whom to approach for help or support. Pupils' pride in their school is clear. The oldest pupils develop into mature and responsible pupils who are very caring towards the youngest pupils. This is evident during break times and when travelling on the bus to the local gym on a weekly basis. Nearly all pupils behave well both inside and outside the classroom and show a respectful attitude towards others.

Pupils across the school have a sound understanding of the importance of making sensible choices in terms of diet and a healthy lifestyle. Nearly all enjoy taking part in a suitable range of physical activities to improve their awareness of the importance of keeping the body healthy. For example, pupils across the school contribute eagerly to cycle to school week as they travel on their scooters and bicycles every day. Most show a sound understanding of how to stay safe online, for example when creating a poster to promote e-safety for a local competition.

During their time at the school, nearly all pupils are given beneficial opportunities to represent their peers on the school council. They support the school's work appropriately, for example when organising events and occasions to raise money for charities and deciding how to make marks on the playground. However, many pupils do not participate regularly enough in influencing and acting on the wider work of the school. They contribute appropriately to the life of the local community, for example as they welcome members of the community to their St David's Day service.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are an obvious strength at the school. Nearly all pupils respond successfully to staff guidance to complete tasks and contribute effectively to class discussions. In the youngest pupils' class, pupils work together effectively, concentrate for extended periods and persevere diligently when searching for letters to build words in the block tub. They influence on what they would like to learn well and lead their learning effectively as they show an interest in finding out more about animals around the world, for example. As they develop through the school, many build appropriately on their skills to work independently and gain confidence in taking further responsibility for their own learning. They work together successfully as a

group and are very willing to learn from each other, for example when solving problems as they create presentations about animals that live in Patagonia.

Pupils across the school respond effectively to teachers' feedback and use this information effectively to improve their work, for example to improve spelling and when re-drafting. Appropriate targets are usually set to identify the way forward for pupils in their language and numeracy skills. However, most pupils do not show a sound understanding of their targets nor have taken ownership of them effectively enough to move their learning forward.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The school provides a range of stimulating activities for pupils and offers experiences that are of interest to them. Pupils' suggestions and interests are taken into account when planning learning activities effectively, for example by providing opportunities for pupils to conduct a scientific experiment based on a current volcanic eruption in Iceland. As a result, most pupils' motivation and attitudes to learning are consistently good.

Teachers plan a curriculum that engages and holds pupils' interest in acquiring their knowledge and understanding to develop their skills appropriately. Staff are beginning to monitor and map provision to achieve the principles of Curriculum for Wales effectively. However, teachers do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding and appreciation of diversity in society, for example about ethnic minorities and different relationships.

Teachers provide purposeful opportunities to enrich curricular activities for pupils by inviting visitors to share their experiences and organising beneficial opportunities for them to work with local artists and poets. They provide rich experiences for pupils to visit their local area to improve their understanding of sustainability well, for example when learning about seagrass meadows and the nearby sources of green energy. At times, staff use the outdoor areas on the school grounds appropriately as a resource to reinforce learning experiences. However, this provision is not utilised enough and it's not used to develop the full range of pupils' skills.

The school provides activities that meet pupils' requirements in terms of their ability and stage of development effectively across the school. As a result, staff ensure that all pupils have access the curriculum. Staff speak Welsh to a high standard and use a range of appropriate questioning methods that recall pupils' previous learning purposefully. The school has a strong Welsh ethos and, as a result, pupils use the Welsh language naturally and develop as confident bilingual learners. By Year 6, pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop their Spanish skills, this supports them as they transfer to the nearby secondary school.

Pupils are given suitable opportunities to write in a wide range of genres and for different purposes across the curriculum. Teachers provide rich activities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, for example when writing a thank you letter to a visitor to the school. Pupils' numeracy skills are developing effectively across the areas of learning, for example when considering whether the distance between an object and a light source has an effect on the size of a shadow.

Teachers and assistants support pupils with their work extremely effectively. There is obvious respect and a caring and inclusive ethos throughout the school. The environment supports learning well, with organised learning areas and effective displays across the school celebrating pupils' achievement and success. Tasks and activities in the indoor learning areas are planned purposefully and enable pupils to build on their skills. However, teachers do not provide enough purposeful opportunities for pupils to further develop their skills within rich learning experiences in the outdoor areas.

Staff provide effective oral feedback during activities to move pupils' learning forward and ensure that they understand their work. Teachers provide purposeful written feedback that identifies aspects of work that need to be improved. Overall, teachers set appropriate targets to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, targets are not reviewed regularly enough and there are very few opportunities for pupils to respond to them. As a result, this inhibits a few pupils in developing their skills to the best of their ability.

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

The close working relationship between staff and pupils leads to a caring and familial community which ensures that nearly all pupils are proud of their school. The friendly and warm ethos supports the sense of belonging and encourages everyone to commit fully to the care that is given to pupils and their families. Staff know the pupils well and respond sensitively and supportively to their emotional and well-being needs.

The school has good arrangements for identifying pupils' needs at an early stage and provides them with successful support. Assistants have a sound understanding of various support schemes and use this knowledge skilfully to plan and tailor support programmes that respond to the needs of individual pupils successfully. Support is provided in a timely manner and, as a result, nearly all pupils make good progress. This is one of the school's strengths.

The school works successfully with a variety of partners and agencies to support pupils, for example by working with the visual impairment team and the specific learning needs team. Staff review the progress of pupils with ALN regularly to ensure that they develop consistently.

The school provides valuable opportunities to celebrate and develop pupils' understanding of their local area, culture and heritage. Beneficial visits to Foel Gron support their understanding of their area effectively. Activities within the theme 'Gair mewn Gwlân' ('A Word in Wool') have also improved their knowledge of local streams successfully. Residential visits to Cardiff broaden the oldest pupils' horizons effectively. Pupils' Welshness is supported well by inviting a drama company to the school to perform a presentation on William Morgan, for example. Through this, valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to work with Welsh actors, which contributes firmly to their confidence to perform individually and as a group.

Overall, provision for developing pupils' understanding of the wider world, including their awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion, is developing appropriately. The school improves pupils' knowledge of their rights when discussing the right of the

week in assemblies and they reinforce this effectively by learning a song that talks about their rights.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well. Pupils are given valuable opportunities for collective worship, reflection and to sing together. Pupils treat others with respect and care during these beneficial periods, which reflects the school's ethos and values well and strengthens pupils' pride in their school. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about Christianity in assemblies and when planning for the older pupils to write an interesting newspaper article about the crucifixion. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to learn about the beliefs of other religions, such as Hinduism and Islam.

There are appropriate opportunities for pupils on the school council to meet and discuss the school's work. In their sessions, they make decisions that contribute appropriately to a satisfactory range of activities, such as raising money for different charities. This contributes effectively to pupils' ability to develop as principled citizens who show empathy for their fellow human beings.

There are robust arrangements for promoting pupils' punctuality and attendance. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and there are robust systems in place to ensure that pupils are safe at school. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher's high expectations and an effective culture of co-operation among staff are a strong feature of this rural school. Together, they have established a close-knit, familial ethos, they are caring towards the pupils and succeed in nurturing respectful and confident pupils who are happy in the classroom and ready to learn. Pupils' well-being is a clear priority for the school. Leaders have worked well with all members of the school community to create a vision which aims to create a curriculum that provides a variety of interesting experiences.

Leaders have a range of beneficial procedures to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement appropriately. They consider information from a wide range of sources and use the findings sensibly to improve provision and pupils' progress. This has had a positive influence on pupils' standards in improving their English reading skills, in addition to supporting them to apply their numeracy skills in various cross-curricular contexts.

Staff performance management procedures promote their professional learning well and provide valuable opportunities for them to develop at all levels. They work together effectively as area schools to develop a mutual understanding of planning methods that meet the requirements of Curriculum for Wales. Following catchment area training on improving pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum, teachers are planning more purposefully, and this has had a positive effect on pupils' skills. The headteacher and staff work together to decide on the training programme and the professional learning that is needed. They interweave their training to align with the school's priorities effectively and, as a result, significant development is seen in aspects such as well-being and ALN support.

Members of the governing body support the headteacher and staff well and work diligently to ensure an inclusive education for pupils. They are very aware of the importance of looking after the well-being of the headteacher and staff and have established a specific sub-committee to achieve this. Governors receive valuable information from the headteacher about the school's work and are beginning to take part in a variety of relevant monitoring and evaluation activities. Following recent discussions, members of the body showed concern at a sudden drop in the attendance percentage. As a result, an urgent priority was added to address this. The governing body ensures that all food and drink provided by the school complies with appropriate legislation and that there are appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school has robust arrangements for managing resources, including financial resources. Leaders spend the budget prudently and the governing body monitor this appropriately. They ensure that funding is spent purposefully by investing in resources to improve the quality of the building and the learning environment. They make good use of the pupil development grant to support specific pupils. Members of the governing body promote a culture of safeguarding and promote provision for pupils' health and well-being successfully.

The relationship between the school and parents is an obvious strength. Regular co-operation and communication ensure that parents have a sound understanding of what is happening at the school. This contributes effectively to strengthening the school's sense of a being close-knit community.

## 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).**