



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

**A report on**  
**Ysgol Waunfawr**

**Waunfawr**  
**Caernarfon**  
**Gwynedd**  
**LL55 4LJ**

**Date of inspection: April 2024**

**by**

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

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

## About Ysgol Waunfawr

Name of provider	Ysgol Waunfawr
Local authority	Cyngor Gwynedd
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	120
Pupils of statutory school age	87
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	12
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 23.7%)</i>	13.5%
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 13.2%)</i>	15.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	75.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	22/04/2024

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 Gynradd Waunfawr is a happy, familial and welcoming school. All staff work together effectively to create a caring, Welsh ethos and a safe place where staff and pupils care for each other naturally. Care and respect permeate the school and the supportive working relationship between staff and pupils builds confidence and supports them to enjoy their time at the school greatly. They are happy to attend, behave well and develop positive attitudes to learning.

The school has a strong Welsh atmosphere with a distinct feature of providing a range of valuable experiences and a clear emphasis on promoting pupils' awareness of their local area and the history and traditions of Wales. This deepens their pride in their school and the wider community and creates a strong sense of belonging.

Teachers provide rich and stimulating learning experiences that engage the interest of most pupils. This enables them to develop the skills they need to access the whole curriculum. Pupils have a strong voice in the life of the school and enjoy the opportunities they are given to influence what they would like to learn within the termly theme. They thrive by contributing to a variety of councils which have a positive effect on school life. As a result, most pupils show strong motivation, a curious interest in their learning and make sound progress from their starting points. However, at times, they are not given enough opportunities to decide for themselves how to respond to activities with increasing independence.

The headteacher provides effective and supportive leadership which gives the school a clear direction. She receives strong support from dedicated staff who work well together as a team and share responsibilities sensibly. They show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements. Governors have a good understanding of the school's work and support the school effectively.

## Recommendations

- R1 Provide more opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how they organise and present their work and to respond to learning activities with increasing independence
- R2 Expand opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback in a timely manner so that they know what to do to improve and develop their work further

## What happens next

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

## Main findings

### Learning

On entry to the school, most pupils' skills are around what is expected for their stage of development, with the exception of their Welsh language skills, which is a new language to a few of them. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make sound progress and achieve well.

Across the school, most pupils speak confidently and politely. Pupils who are latecomers to the Welsh language gain confidence quickly and respond positively to encouragement from staff to use the language during their activities. The youngest pupils listen with increasing interest and develop confidence to speak during activities and play sessions effectively, for example when role-playing in the surgery. Most of the oldest pupils speak Welsh completely naturally and many use rich language and purposeful vocabulary when discussing their work. They express themselves maturely in Welsh and English, for example when explaining how to create models of the heart.

Across the school, most pupils develop their reading skills successfully. The youngest pupils show enthusiasm towards learning and achieve this with increasing confidence. Many are happy to tackle unfamiliar words by using a variety of purposeful reading methods. Most of the oldest pupils read intelligently in various contexts in Welsh and English. They use their reading skills effectively to gather information from various books and texts and from appropriate websites, for example when researching and presenting information to support their work on ancient Greek myths.

Most pupils' early writing skills develop skilfully. They make marks purposefully both inside and outside the classroom and begin to form letters and write simple words. As they move through the school, most pupils' work develops effectively. They write for a variety of audiences and for different purposes. As their skills develop, many use a good range of punctuation and spell more complex words correctly. At the top of the school, many use rich vocabulary in both languages and organise their work sensibly, using paragraphs correctly. More able pupils enrich their writing by using idioms, similes and extensive vocabulary to add colour and interest to their work, for example when writing the diary of a child from Cwm Celyn.

Most children's numeracy skills are sound across the school. They apply their number skills, show a secure grasp of the features of shapes and handle data confidently in different rich contexts. For example, by Year 2, many use different equipment correctly to measure and compare the size of different objects in the outdoor area. Most of the oldest pupils work confidently with the four number rules and develop secure data-handling skills. At the top of the school, many recall number facts quickly when solving two-step problems. They apply their measuring skills successfully, for example when comparing the wingspan of different birds.

From an early age, most pupils use an increasing range of digital equipment and software confidently in different contexts to support their learning, for example when recording their work in the performance area. Many of the oldest pupils apply their

digital skills effectively to support their research skills, for example when creating and presenting an animation to show the main parts of a plant. They handle data confidently, for example when investigating the effect of physical activity on the heart rate.

Most pupils develop creative, artistic and physical skills skilfully, using a range of materials and techniques. For example, the youngest pupils use different foods to create a colourful collage of different African landscapes. Many of the oldest pupils vary tone and colour carefully, for example when emulating the work of famous artists from Wales and further afield. Across the school, pupils apply their creative skills skilfully through drama, role-play and by performing publicly.

Most pupils develop good physical skills through a range of stimulating activities. The youngest pupils move with good control of the body and recall previous learning by demonstrating different shapes skilfully. During their time at the school, pupils participate enthusiastically in a variety of activities such as swimming and orienteering and various competitions. As a result, they have a sound understanding of how to take care of their health and fitness.

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

Nearly all pupils feel happy within the school's inclusive, caring and homely environment. Warm and purposeful working relationships between them and the staff ensure that they know whom to approach for help and support. Most pupils behave well and treat each other with courtesy and respect. They treat their peers with care and sensitive consideration when working together on learning tasks and during break times. The way in which the oldest pupils, through '*Ffrindiau Ffeind*' activities, care for the youngest pupils and take advantage of opportunities to teach them, reflects this effectively.

Most pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and show a clear interest in their activities. They apply themselves positively to the rich range of learning experiences that are provided for them and talk enthusiastically about their work. From an early age, pupils familiarise themselves quickly with classroom arrangements when choosing tasks in different areas of provision and move freely between learning activities. They are respectful of each other's contributions and achievements and are happy to learn in various situations, such as in pairs, groups and as a whole class. Most pupils show perseverance and the ability to concentrate well for extended periods, for example as the youngest pupils follow a recipe to make *bara brith* in the mud kitchen for soldiers in the Crimean War.

Most pupils develop increasing resilience as they move through the school. This is highlighted, for example, as they face unfamiliar and challenging situations. They work productively within timescales and the oldest pupils take increasing responsibility for timing their tasks. Many show a willingness to work independently and take ownership of their learning. However, at times, a minority of pupils are over-reliant on guidance from adults and, as a result, they do not develop their learning skills effectively enough to organise and present their work with increasing independence.

The pupil's voice has a central place in the life and work of the school. Pupils have a leading role in suggesting ideas in terms of choosing their learning themes. Many have the confidence to undertake leading roles in the classroom and do so increasingly effectively as they mature. For example, the oldest pupils take on the role of teacher to lead basic skills activities, such as a mental mathematics task during registration periods, showing the ability to think on the spot when creating 'problems' for their fellow pupils. They make good use of opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a range of roles and pupil's voice councils. Members undertake their roles and duties maturely and conscientiously. They show pride in the way in which they influence the life and work of their school. For example, the Welsh Language Charter group are consistent language models when reading Welsh books to the youngest pupils on a weekly basis, have established a Welsh reading corner and organised a 'Wales has Got Talent' competition.

Nearly all pupils develop a sound understanding of values and how to develop as principled and responsible citizens. They are very willing to discuss their feelings and to be sensitive and respectful towards the feelings of others, for example during circle time. Through a range of activities, including the work of the school councils, they develop empathy towards others who face difficult circumstances. A good example of this is the way in which pupils are keen to lead and organise activities to support local and national charities.

Most pupils understand the importance of making responsible choices to protect their physical and emotional health. They understand how to make healthy eating choices and the need to keep the body and mind healthy, for example by drinking water regularly and eating fruit at break times. They also commit to purposeful activities, for example during sessions to promote mindfulness. Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, including staying safe online. They apply this effectively when completing their learning activities. They are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and punctually, which contributes effectively to improving the recent attendance rates.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The headteacher and staff have a clear and firm vision for the school's curriculum which reflects the nature and context of the community, including learning activities which incorporate the linguistic and cultural nature of the area. Staff work together effectively to provide a rich and broad curriculum that ensures progression and development in pupils' skills successfully. Provision incorporates the school's vision purposefully and covers all of the areas of learning and experiences of Curriculum for Wales effectively. Staff encourage pupils to express an opinion about what they would like to learn and to suggest their own ideas when planning new themes, and then use their suggestions when preparing learning activities. This ensures that pupils have ownership of what they learn. As a result, most show enthusiasm and interest in their learning.

Staff have good knowledge of different areas and create purposeful learning environments where pupils develop their imagination and problem-solving skills and explore and discover for themselves in a valuable manner. They prepare stimulating and interesting activities that support pupils to apply their skills effectively across the curriculum. On the whole, staff use the indoor and outdoor learning areas effectively,

which has a positive effect on developing pupils' skills. However, opportunities for the oldest pupils to use the outdoor areas are limited.

Staff enrich pupils' learning experiences with a range of interesting visitors and visits. For example, the youngest pupils visit the local chapel to hold a mock wedding and visit the library in Caernarfon to promote their interest in the world of books. The oldest pupils visit the Conwy RSPB centre to reinforce their theme work on birds. Staff invite parents to the school regularly to share their expertise to enrich pupils' experiences. For example, the youngest pupils' theme, 'From Farm to Fork', was brought to life as a small foal visited them on the school playground.

All staff forge robust working relationships with pupils, which fosters a supportive environment for learning. They identify the educational needs of all pupils well and encourage and praise their efforts regularly. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour from all pupils and, as a result, they treat adults and their peers with respect and courtesy. Effective reward methods are used to celebrate pupils' efforts and positive attitudes.

All staff communicate with pupils by using polished Welsh of a high standard to reinforce pupils' spoken language. A strong Welsh ethos encourages pupils to use the Welsh language effectively in all aspects of school life. As a result, most pupils develop as confident and competent bilingual learners during their time at the school.

Teachers use a range of teaching methods and various resources to motivate pupils to learn successfully. They ask pupils probing questions which support them to recall previous learning and check their understanding and to extend their efforts further. Teachers share the objectives of sessions regularly and the oldest pupils are given a purposeful opportunity to contribute to the process of setting the success criteria for their learning. In turn, this leads to improvements in the standard of pupils' work. In the best practice, staff plan purposeful opportunities that encourage pupils to develop their independence from an early age, by ensuring access to different activities that engage and hold their interest successfully. However, there is a tendency, at times, for staff to lead activities too much, which limits opportunities for pupils to decide how they organise and present their work and respond to activities with increasing independence.

Staff provide beneficial oral feedback, which encourages pupils to consider what they have achieved and to know how to improve their work. Teachers respond appropriately to pupils' work in books, offering useful comments for improvement. However, there are not timely enough opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback to develop and build on their good work and improve it further.

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

The close working relationship between staff and pupils, and among the pupils themselves, leads to a caring community and a familial, friendly and warm ethos which supports a sense of belonging. Staff know the pupils and their families exceptionally well and respond purposefully to their emotional and social needs. This has a positive effect on pupils' well-being and enthusiasm for learning and is reflected in their positive behaviour.

Staff discussions and the approach of regular monitoring and tracking pupils' progress contribute successfully to identifying a clear and up-to-date picture of the needs of all pupils. This helps clearly with early identification and action when responding to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Provision to support pupils with ALN is well organised and effective. The headteacher, who acts as the ALN co-ordinator, works closely with teachers and staff to provide beneficial support, including a range of interventions that meet the needs of those pupils who are a cause for concern well. Staff include pupils, parents and the views of external agencies to plan the next steps in pupils' learning effectively.

Promoting the Welsh language and the use of the language within the school and socially is a natural and strong feature of the school. Staff provide valuable opportunities for the enthusiastic members of the Welsh Language Charter council to lead activities that have a positive effect on this element of the school's work. One of the school's strengths is the way in which staff promote and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and culture. Pupils take advantage of valuable opportunities to celebrate their Welshness and feel that they belong to the local area.

The school's ethos and collective worship sessions promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development purposefully and successfully. Staff encourage pupils to reflect on values such as fairness, friendship and kindness and to consider the views of others sensitively, for example during circle time periods and mindfulness sessions. Learning about Christianity and other religions promotes pupils' understanding of the importance of tolerance and developing values such as respect and empathy. The good links with the local chapel for celebrating the Harvest Thanksgiving festival and Christmas contributes beneficially to developing pupils' knowledge of these aspects.

The school and its local area are a source of obvious pride for the whole school community. Staff make every effort to take advantage of the wealth of learning opportunities around them, for example by visiting the local surgery and undertaking orienteering activities on Moel Eilio. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to learn about the wider world, for example by learning about life in other countries, for example when discussing the differences between life in Botswana and their life here in Wales. As a result, many pupils are beginning to develop their awareness of how diverse society is today. The school has taken steps to begin teaching foreign languages, namely French and Spanish, to the oldest pupils, which is proving popular and is a means of broadening their horizons successfully.

Developing pupils' awareness and knowledge of environmental issues and the importance of protecting the planet is given good attention within provision. Members of the eco council are enthusiastic about their responsibilities and play a leading role in these aspects, for example by leading recycling activity within the classrooms. These are valuable opportunities for pupils to contribute practically and directly, which is an effective means of learning about these issues in a more meaningful and relevant way.

The school provides purposeful opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of how to stay physically and emotionally healthy. Pupils are encouraged to drink water regularly and to eat fruit during break times. A clear emphasis is also placed on



providing purposeful and successful opportunities to promote pupils' physical fitness by participating in physical exercise activities and a good range of sports and tournaments.

The school's culture of safeguarding is sound and all staff understand that they are all part of ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils' understanding is promoted to help them keep themselves safe when learning online. The school implements secure strategies to promote punctuality and regular attendance among pupils, including daily monitoring, regular communication with parents and follow-up work supported by the local authority. As a result, attendance rates are improving gradually.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is based on creating a happy, welcoming and inclusive learning environment where each individual is given an opportunity to develop their talents, are valued, respected and motivated to the best of their ability. This vision is reflected clearly in the school's motto and values, '*Bydd Wych – Bydd Weithgar*' ('Be Excellent – Be Diligent'), and has been shared successfully with the school community. Staff, parents and governors work together effectively to realise this vision and its effect can be seen in pupils' well-being and development.

The headteacher is supported effectively by skilful, dedicated and energetic staff. Staff roles and responsibilities are defined appropriately and everyone fulfils their duties conscientiously and purposefully. This is reflected successfully in the positive attitudes of most pupils towards the life and work of the school. Leaders promote a culture of safeguarding effectively and, as a result, pupils feel safe and enjoy their time at the school.

A strong feature of the school is the natural Welsh and Welsh-speaking ethos and pupils' sense of pride in the language and their local area. The rich range of artistic experiences is a very effective means of developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of their local area and its wealth of history and traditions.

The relationship between the school and parents is an obvious strength. Regular co-operation and communication ensures that parents have a sound understanding of what is happening at the school. This contributes effectively to their ability to support their children at home, as well as their ability to provide ideas that enrich pupils' learning experiences at school. An example of this is the contribution of parents in providing expertise to ensure pupils are given an opportunity to have a night 'beneath the stars'.

Robust self-evaluation procedures are at the heart of the school's life and work. The process is based on a wide range of evidence, including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and conducting learning walks. The headteacher ensures that all staff have an active role in the process. This ensures that they are aware of the school's strengths and the aspects that need to be improved. The headteacher and school leaders use findings from the self-evaluation process, along with local and national priorities, to devise a clear strategic direction which focuses on improving pupils' outcomes and well-being. For example, staff have identified the need to

improve pupils' attendance and also to ensure that teachers' feedback is more effective in ensuring that pupils have a better knowledge of what they need to do to improve their own work.

Leaders create a positive culture and ethos that promotes and supports the professional learning of all staff. The individual expertise and experiences of staff are used effectively in allocating curricular responsibilities and promoting professional learning. A programme of valuable training is provided which aligns with the school's current priorities and the school works successfully with other partners to meet national priorities, such as realising Curriculum for Wales and the reforms to the ALN Act. These opportunities encourage effective co-operation with other schools in the catchment area, for example to ensure a shared understanding of the expected progression steps as pupils move through the school.

Members of the governing body are extremely supportive of the school and know it well. The governing body understands and discharges its duties effectively. Members have a sound understanding of the school's priorities and the rationale behind them. They support the school to implement its improvement strategy. Governors contribute appropriately to monitoring activities and this helps them to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge of the school's progress while responding sensibly to the areas for improvement. They ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders manage resources appropriately while ensuring that the school has plenty of staff to respond to pupils' needs. They review expenditure carefully and link expenditure to the school's improvement priorities appropriately. A variety of grants are used purposefully, including the pupil development grant, to support provision and promote pupils' well-being.

## 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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