



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Y Borth**

**Menai Bridge  
Anglesey  
LL59 5HS**

**Date of inspection: May 2024**

**by**

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

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

## About Ysgol Y Borth

Name of provider	Ysgol Y Borth
Local authority	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	225
Pupils of statutory school age	181
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	14
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>	14.2%
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>	8.3%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	47.5%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2013
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	13/05/2024

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](http://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 y Borth provides a happy, inclusive and homely environment where all pupils are respected and develop as well-rounded and responsible individuals. Across the school, pupils are extremely caring towards each other, treat adults with respect and demonstrate excellent behaviour. A distinct Welsh feel permeates the school and staff plan valuable opportunities for pupils to develop as proud citizens who are knowledgeable about their local area and their national heritage.

One of the school's most prominent qualities is the way in which staff take care of pupils' health and well-being, ensuring a well-rounded education for them with great success. The very supportive working relationship between adults and pupils builds confidence and empowers pupils' positive attitudes to learning successfully. As a result, they persevere well with their tasks and enjoy learning.

Over time, most pupils make strong progress in a wide range of skills from their various starting points, particularly in their digital skills. Staff identify pupils' needs well and work together effectively to plan broad and interesting learning experiences for them. Provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is robust. Overall, across the school, over-use of ready-made worksheets slows pupils' progress in fostering their writing skills further across the areas of learning, particularly those who are more able.

An excellent feature of the school's work is the way in which staff plan valuable opportunities for pupils to foster their entrepreneurial skills successfully through a valuable range of interesting experiences, which also promote the importance of sustainability skilfully. Pupils' welcome leadership roles, undertake numerous responsibilities and influence the school's life and work regularly.

An obvious strength in provision is the way in which staff use the building and extensive outdoor areas to create a stimulating learning environment for pupils. They provide a rich curriculum that includes the pupil's voice regularly about what they would like to learn. However, at times, opportunities for pupils to make independent decisions about how to complete and present their work are inconsistent.

The headteacher provides caring leadership and is completely dedicated to the school. He is supported skilfully by a dedicated governing body that has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The parent-teacher association is active and contributes regularly to enriching provision, for example by investing purposefully in specialist digital equipment to nurture pupils' inquiry skills.

## Recommendations

- R1 Reduce the use of ready-made worksheets to enable pupils to develop their writing skills further, particularly those who are more able

- R2 Expand opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about how they complete tasks and present their work

## What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to providing valuable experiences to nurture pupils' entrepreneurial skills, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Learning

During their time at the school, most pupils, including those in particular groups, make strong progress across a range of skills from their various starting points, particularly in their social and digital skills. Most pupils' oral Welsh skills also develop successfully by the end of their time at the school.

Across the school, nearly all pupils listen well. They pay attention to instructions from adults and listen carefully to their peers when working in small groups and in class discussions. As pupils move through the school, most begin to use spoken language with increasing accuracy and expand their vocabulary appropriately. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils respond sensibly to questions from their peers when discussing the properties of 2D and 3D shapes appropriately. By the time they reach the top of the school, most pupils contribute wisely to discussions, listen attentively and respect the views of others, for example when creating a podcast discussing the length the school terms and holidays successfully.

Most pupils' reading skills develop effectively in both languages. In the reception class, many pupils begin to recognise letters and link them to their sounds with increasing accuracy. By the end of Year 2, many read clearly and with appropriate expression. They use phonic methods effectively to identify simple and familiar words correctly. Most of the oldest pupils read Welsh and English texts intelligently and with increasing fluency, showing a secure understanding of the content. For example, they use their knowledge of a complex story to explain the actions and motivations of characters skilfully.

From an early age, many pupils' early writing skills develop effectively. Many of the youngest pupils develop their fine motor skills robustly by making marks and start to form letters and write simple words on chalkboards. By Year 2, many write interesting sentences with increasing independence for different purposes when writing a portrayal of a superhero of their choice, for example. Most of the oldest pupils continue to develop their writing skills successfully in both languages and, at the top of the school, they have sound spelling, punctuation and grammar skills. Most pupils

show a good awareness of the features of a range of writing genres, for example when writing a touching monologue from the perspective of St Dwynwen effectively. However, across the school, pupils are restricted to recording on ready-made worksheets which, in turn, limits their ability to write freely at times.

Across the school, most pupils develop a good range of numeracy skills and apply them successfully across the areas of learning. From an early age, they use everyday objects purposefully to count numbers up to 20 correctly and apply their learning successfully in practical, valuable contexts. By Year 2, most pupils use standard measurements correctly and record their written calculations appropriately. For example, in the outdoor learning area, they apply their measuring and money-handling skills effectively when measuring different volumes of shampoo to wash cars and sell it in a garage. In Years 3 and 4, most pupils use their data-handling skills confidently when creating and interpreting a bar graph to show details of Dinorwig Quarrymen in 1899. Most of the oldest pupils apply a good range of number skills to solve real-life mathematical problems confidently. As part of an entrepreneurial project, they calculate the cost and potential profit of designing, producing and selling unique t-shirts to their peers carefully.

As they move through the school, most pupils' digital skills develop soundly. From an early age, they use an electronic tablet appropriately to record and upload their work with increasing independence. By Year 2, most pupils give directions to a programmable toy confidently to reach different characters from the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. As pupils' skills mature, most in Year 3 and 4 research a wide range of websites to gather information while creating effective digital presentations about the planets. At the top of the school, most pupils use a good range of programming software skilfully, which includes using a heart rate monitor correctly to collect and interpret measurements in a spreadsheet.

Most pupils develop sound physical skills, taking full advantage of a wide range of opportunities to keep fit during their learning sessions and at break and lunchtimes. For example, pupils in the nursery class develop their balancing skills effectively when controlling bicycles energetically on the playground, while most of the oldest pupils participate confidently in cricket, swimming and gymnastics sessions. Across the school, most pupils develop their creative skills effectively. For example, the oldest pupils use a variety of materials and styles skilfully to emulate famous artists and when producing very impressive Celtic clay pots.

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

Nearly all pupils feel happy and safe within the school's inclusive, caring and homely environment. Pupils have a secure working relationship with staff based on trust and respect and they know whom to approach if something is worrying them. Nearly all pupils feel that they are valued, respected and treated fairly by staff. As a result, nearly all behave excellently during their learning sessions and when playing with their friends, which contributes effectively to strong pupil attendance rates.

An excellent feature of the school's life and work is the willingness of nearly all pupils to treat each other with mindful care and consideration and show regular appreciation for the contributions of their peers. Almost without exception, on entry to the school, pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and show an inherent interest in their

work. Most pupils concentrate diligently and show resilience and perseverance when engaging in their learning activities successfully. Across the school, they use purposeful strategies skilfully to help them to overcome any difficulties they face. This helps them well to cope with challenges. As a result, most pupils develop into ambitious and confident learners who are ready to learn.

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of keeping the mind and body healthy. They value the regular opportunities they are given to keep fit and enjoy making purposeful and energetic use of the equipment that is available to them in the outdoor learning areas and during break times. Across the school, most pupils take advantage of regular opportunities to participate in suitable sessions to relax the body and mind. These sessions provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to control their own emotions and appreciate a period of reflection. Overall, these various activities develop pupils to be healthy and confident individuals.

Almost without exception, pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe when learning online and to not share their personal details with strangers. This is reinforced purposefully by regular visits from the community police officer, who provides beneficial sessions on a range of themes that reinforce pupils' understanding of the importance of safety appropriately.

Most pupils feel that adults listen well to their views and give them good consideration in decisions that affect them. They respond positively to opportunities to influence what they would like to learn within their termly themes. At the beginning of each term, pupils share their ideas by adding questions about what they would like to discover and learn at the beginning of a new theme. Overall, most pupils use feedback effectively to move their learning forward purposefully when responding to comments from staff and peers.

Across the school, nearly all pupils, including those in specific groups, are given successful opportunities to undertake leadership roles effectively. They discuss responsibilities enthusiastically, give sensible reasons for making certain decisions and take pride in their success. For example, the school council has a good influence on promoting pupils' Welsh language and Welshness successfully, ensuring that they are immersed in music by well-known Welsh artists daily. With the close-knit support of the '*Bydis Buarth*' ('Playground Buddies'), they ensure that there is plenty of play equipment available during break and lunch times to promote an ethos of harmonious play among pupils.

Nearly all pupils develop a sound understanding of the importance of being moral and principled citizens. They develop the ability and confidence to discuss their feelings with others and show empathy towards communities in crisis. For example, the oldest pupils discuss their fundamental rights maturely when identifying the Ann Frank's situation as part of their theme work about the Second World War. This heightens their awareness of fairness and equality well. By raising money for various charities and contributing generously to the local food bank, most pupils foster a strong awareness of the needs of others in different communities. This deepens pupils' understanding of the importance of their contributions to creating a caring society.

## Teaching and learning experiences

Staff provide a rich curriculum and experiences that spark pupils' imaginations successfully. They have a sound understanding of their pupils' needs and their learning style and use this information sensibly when planning interesting learning experiences for them. As a result, they ensure that pupils can take advantage of a wide range of rich opportunities across the breadth of the curriculum that motivate and engage nearly all pupils.

Across the school, staff provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to influence what they learn. By using a variety of methods, pupils provide useful ideas about what they would like to learn at the beginning of their new themes. This fosters pupils' ownership of their learning, which contributes positively to engaging and maintaining their curiosity when applying themselves to tasks. In the best practice, staff ensure a skilful balance between adult-led activities and opportunities for pupils to make choices in relation to their learning. However, at times, teachers do not provide regular enough opportunities for pupils to make independent decisions about how to complete and present their work.

Staff enrich the curriculum by using the pupils' 'cynefin', or local area, successfully. Valuable visits are organised for pupils to visit places of historical and cultural interest. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils visit a local museum to deepen their knowledge of the life and working conditions of the quarrymen. Staff provide memorable experiences for pupils to attend residential courses, which have a strong influence on building their resilience and ability to work with their peers.

By inviting visitors to the school, pupils are given purposeful learning experiences that inspire them to raise their aspirations for careers and the world of work. As part of their theme work on 'superheroes', the youngest pupils ask questions to the mountain rescue team and the fire service, for example about their role in keeping everyone safe in the community.

A notable element of the school's work is the way in which staff provide rich experiences for pupils to apply a wide range of skills while undertaking entrepreneurial challenges regularly. For example, the oldest pupils have sound creative and problem-solving skills when creating paper bricks from recycled materials and then selling them to members of the wider school community. This deepens their understanding of the importance of sustainability and fosters their money-handling skills extremely successfully. As part of provision for relationships and sexuality education, staff plan valuable opportunities for the oldest pupils to deepen their awareness of the changes that happen to them during puberty.

An obvious strength in provision is the way in which the foundation learning staff create stimulating learning environments and make skilful use of the extensive learning areas to develop the numeracy skills of the youngest pupils. For example, pupils in the reception class apply their measuring skills correctly when researching which teapot would be best for pouring tea for Siôn the Giant's friends at his party.

Across the school, there are warm and supportive working relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers and learning assistants know the pupils well and set high expectations for them, including for their behaviour, and support them to meet them

consistently. This helps to ensure that pupils are ready to learn and to make productive use of their time.

During learning sessions, staff question pupils skilfully to check their understanding and to encourage them to extend their initial responses. They provide pupils with useful verbal feedback during their learning activities and offer constructive comments that relate specifically to the success criteria set for a specific task. They provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to respond to their own work and the work of their peers. Overall, across the school, teachers over-use ready-made worksheets during learning activities. This limits opportunities for pupils to expand on their written work, at times, particularly those who are more able.

Staff promote a Welsh ethos successfully and use songs and nursery rhymes effectively to reinforce language patterns and expand pupils' vocabulary skilfully. All staff model and use polished Welsh to reinforce pupils' spoken language. As a result, this contributes positively to building pupils' confidence in using the language effectively when undertaking their learning activities and playing with their friends.

End-of-year reports for parents are comprehensive and report effectively on their children's well-being and progress. They include pupils' comments and present sensible aspects for parents to support their children on the next steps in their learning.

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

The close working relationship between staff and pupils, and among the pupils themselves, contributes wonderfully to creating a caring and familial learning community. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils exceptionally well and respond purposefully to their emotional and social needs. The positive attitudes of staff support pupils to settle quickly and contribute well to school life. This contributes appropriately to fostering pupils' emotional well-being and encouraging them to promote positive attitudes to learning successfully.

A notable element of the school's work is provision for supporting pupils' emotional well-being. Staff provide effective methods for pupils to express their feelings and control their emotions effectively, for example by making purposeful use of number fans or choosing which colourful monster best conveys their feelings. These arrangements ensure that staff respond promptly if a pupil feels anxious or unhappy. The use of the 'Ardal Glyd' cosy area also contributes productively to providing a safe haven for anxious pupils to calm down before resuming their learning. As a result, staff adapt provision skilfully and show empathy for individuals when responding to unexpected situations that may arise.

Provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is sound. The ALN co-ordinators (ALNCo) and learning assistants are extremely enthusiastic about their responsibilities in supporting pupils. As a result, they identify pupils who need additional support in a timely manner and provide a range of suitable support programmes that target their specific needs successfully. Staff communicate effectively with parents regarding ALN arrangements, including pupils who are a central part of the process. Under the skilful guidance of both ALNCoS, staff use external agencies effectively to enrich provision, for example by working closely with



the interaction and communication team and the speech and language therapy team to support individuals and specific groups of pupils. This ensures that most pupils who receive additional support make good progress from their various starting points.

One of the school's strengths is the way in which staff promote and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and Welsh culture. The youngest pupils, for example, receive a live performance from a roadshow which raises their awareness of the wool industry in Wales during the industrial revolution. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to celebrate their Welshness and feel that they belong to the local community. For example, pupils take part enthusiastically in the annual parade in Menai Bridge to celebrate St David's Day. By inviting visitors to the school, staff plan effective opportunities for pupils to engage with the expressive arts. For example, Year 4 pupils participate energetically when performing in an African drumming workshop. These experiences encourage pupils to contribute creative ideas and their ability to work well as members of a team.

Staff provide purposeful periods of collective worship for pupils to foster their moral and spiritual skills appropriately. As a result, these periods encourage them to reflect quietly on spiritual and religious aspects. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to deepen their understanding of the multicultural nature of society, for example when studying the lives of influential people such as Betty Campbell and Rosa Parks. Through this, pupils develop sound attitudes towards celebrating diversity.

Staff deepen pupils' understanding of sustainability effectively. For example, they teach pupils how to grow vegetables in the school garden and how to use the produce to create healthy meals in the Cooking Club. These experiences also strengthen their understanding of the importance of making healthy choices in relation to their diet.

Staff develop appropriate opportunities for pupils to make decisions about the school through their membership of the school council. Purposeful opportunities are provided for them to express their views on how to improve different aspects of the school's life and work. They meet with the catering company to discuss the current menu and suggest solutions to try to reduce the school's food waste.

Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in a variety of sports that develop their resilience and physical skills successfully. For example, the football team has recently won a competition and the netball team has represented Anglesey's schools in a national tournament. Across the school, pupils take advantage of valuable opportunities to take part in the arts, for example by competing and experiencing success in recitation, singing and dancing at the Eisteddfod.

The school has effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils and they are not a cause for concern. The school's arrangements for monitoring and tracking pupils' attendance are sound. Leaders keep appropriate records of absences. They contact parents and the welfare officer in a timely manner to discuss any concerns regarding their children's attendance and provide valuable support, where appropriate. These arrangements have ensured that pupils' attendance at the school is good.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is a wise, firm and completely dedicated leader who puts the well-being of his staff and pupils at the heart of his work. He succeeds in creating a caring, happy and inclusive learning community where everyone's contribution is acknowledged and valued. The headteacher is supported skilfully by members of the management team and they have a clear vision for the school, 'opening doors to the future' for pupils. They convey this vision clearly to pupils, staff, parents and members of the wider community.

The headteacher has high expectations of himself, pupils and staff. The energetic team of staff work together effectively to provide stimulating and entertaining learning experiences that spark nearly all pupils' imagination and meet their needs. As a result, they fulfil their roles conscientiously and with a sound understanding of the school's main priorities. They uphold good values and a high standard of professional conduct which contribute successfully to supporting excellent standards of behaviour from pupils.

Leaders address national and local priorities robustly. For example, they have embedded the principles and expectations of Curriculum for Wales appropriately and are implementing key elements of the Additional Learning Needs Act soundly. Leaders and staff give a clear priority to developing all pupils' Welsh language skills and pride in Wales. By organising purposeful visits to local places of interest, such as the Marquis Tower and the Coastguard Station in Moelfre, they nurture pupils who take pride in their local area successfully.

Staff promote a culture of safeguarding effectively and, as a result, pupils feel safe at school and enjoy their time at the school. The learning assistants are integral parts of the school team and make a valuable contribution to improving pupils' learning achievements and emotional and social skills by implementing purposeful well-being support programmes that are funded partly by the pupil development grant. This has a consistently good effect on developing the confidence and supporting the behaviour of pupils with emotional and social needs.

Leaders ensure that there are robust arrangements in place to evaluate pupils' progress and provision. A clear and detailed timetable is implemented which guides the school's self-evaluation and improvement arrangements, which includes a good range of purposeful monitoring activities which leaders and staff implement conscientiously. Monitoring reports are detailed and identify strengths and areas for improvement accurately. Leaders use the outcomes of these activities effectively to set sensible priorities for improvement.

The governing body are strong advocates for the school and know the school and its community very well. They provide the headteacher with appropriate support and challenge and fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously and successfully. Members of the governing body undertake a range of relevant monitoring and evaluation activities, for example by conducting learning walks and discussing pupils' standards in mathematics alongside staff. The headteacher also takes advantage of the expertise of members of the governing body skilfully to support the school's work, for example when conducting site safety walks. As a result of their sound understanding

of the school's activities, they have a good knowledge of strengths and areas for development.

Leaders ensure that the school has effective arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. They have recently worked successfully with the school to gain a grant to regenerate an area of the playground to grow and harvest vegetables to be used in the Cooking Club and sold to the wider community. As a result, these purposeful opportunities nurture ethical and informed pupils who gain valuable entrepreneurial skills.

The headteacher and governors monitor the budget carefully. They ensure that spending decisions focus sensibly on the school's priorities for improvement. Alongside various grants and valuable contributions from the parent-teacher association, leaders invest wisely in resources to enrich provision in the outdoor learning areas.

Leaders have created a positive culture and ethos to promote and support the professional learning of all staff. They provide rich opportunities for them to undertake a good range of professional learning opportunities, which respond firmly to the individual requirements and the school's priorities. Staff meet regularly to share ideas and support each other, for example in adapting and ensuring consistency in the style of the 'challenge cards' to nurture the independent learning skills of the youngest pupils as they undertake their activities diligently in the learning areas.

The school has a productive relationship with the nearby secondary school. For example, staff from the secondary school visit the school to hold beneficial mathematics and physical education sessions with the oldest pupils to facilitate effective transition arrangements.

Leaders have a sound relationship with parents and ensure that they have effective communication process to enable them to raise any issues that may affect their children's well-being and learning. Parents are welcomed to the school's activities in the community, for example to watch their children repeat their performances at the Eisteddfod and take part energetically in the annual talent show.

## 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).**