



# Report summary for parents and carers on Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn

**Date of inspection: May 2024**

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

# Overview

Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn is a nurturing school with an inclusive ethos. Staff build trusting relationships with pupils. They know their pupils well and generally adapt approaches skilfully to meet the needs of pupils. Over time, many pupils develop into confident and happy learners.

Many pupils develop a range of important skills that support their learning and well-being effectively. Over time, many pupils make strong progress in developing their social and emotional skills. In relation to their individual starting points, many learners meet their personal targets. These skills prepare them successfully for progression to their next steps in life and learning. However overall, pupils' ability to write at length is underdeveloped, mainly due to a lack of structured opportunities to do so.

The quality of the teaching at the school is inconsistent. In the minority of lessons where teaching is most effective, teachers deliver highly engaging learning experiences and provide activities that are based within authentic learning contexts. Many teaching staff intervene and challenge pupils appropriately and sensitively to ensure that they continue to engage with tasks at a pace that is appropriate for the individual. In a few cases, where teaching is less effective, pupils tend to be passive for too long during lessons or are provided with tasks that do not inspire or challenge them.

The headteacher provides purposeful and calm leadership. The relatively new senior leadership team are passionate and committed to the school and its pupils.

The school's use of first-hand information to inform strategic planning is underdeveloped, and the information that the school does have is not collated to inform whole-school areas for improvement well enough.

# Recommendations

- R1 Address the safeguarding issues raised during the inspection
- R2 Improve the quality and the consistency of teaching
- R3 Improve the planning and the provision for pupils' literacy skills
- R4 Strengthen the arrangements for self-evaluation and improvement planning

## What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will work with the local authority to review the school's progress. This is the lightest touch of follow-up, as it is not statutory.

## School context

Name of provider	Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn
Local authority	Denbighshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Maintained Special
Religious character	None.
Number of pupils on roll	133
Pupils of statutory school age	107
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 Maintained Special is 46.8%)	37.0%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Maintained Special is 100.0%)	100.0%

Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	3.2
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.4
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/07/2016
Start date of inspection	13/05/2024
<p>Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn is a local authority special school maintained by Denbighshire County Council. The school provides day and residential placements for pupils aged 3 to 19 with autism. Pupils are drawn from the whole of Denbighshire as well as from neighbouring local authorities across the North Wales region.</p> <p>The school is based on three sites in the town of Denbigh. There are 62 pupils of secondary school age at the main site, 37 pupils at the primary setting and 25 secondary-aged pupils with more complex needs at Ty'r Ysgol. The residential provision is situated alongside Ty'r Ysgol.</p> <p>All pupils have statements of special educational needs or Individual Development Plans. Nearly all pupils have English as their home language. Around 42% of pupils are eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>Since late 2021, the school has been engaged in discussions with the local authority to rationalise provision into a single site and to extend the capacity to meet need.</p>	

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