

A report on
Ysgol Gynradd Cynfran

**Dolwen Road
Llysfaen
Colwyn Bay
Conwy
LL29 8SS**

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

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

About Ysgol Gynradd Cynfran

Name of provider	Ysgol Gynradd Cynfran
Local authority	Conwy County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	English medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	177
Pupils of statutory school age	143
Number in nursery classes	18
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 22.9%)	26.9%
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 11.1%)	17.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	19/02/2025
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/01/2018
Start date of inspection	19/05/2025

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

Ysgol Gynradd Cynfran is an inclusive community with a strong emphasis on the well-being and development of pupils, staff and the wider community. The headteacher has a clear vision to ensure that pupils have engaging learning experiences in a well-organised and caring learning environment. Staff work effectively as a team to support pupils' well-being and to plan a broad and balanced curriculum. They develop valuable relationships with families and external agencies and have a good understanding of the local community context. Despite working closely with families, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

Overall, pupils learn at an appropriate pace during lessons. Teachers provide feedback to pupils that improves their learning. Staff create engaging and stimulating learning environments and many classrooms contain valuable resources that support pupils with their learning. Outdoor areas are well used to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to explore learning in an outdoor environment. However, staff do not enable pupils to develop appropriately as independent learners, able to make choices about their own learning.

Pupils have regular and worthwhile opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Most pupils make good progress in developing these skills and apply them suitably to their work across the curriculum. Most pupils develop as confident speakers and develop a wide range of vocabulary in English. They lack confidence when speaking in Welsh.

Leaders encourage staff to take ownership of their own professional development, but there are missed opportunities to link professional learning opportunities to important aspects of the school's work in need of improvement. Governors are well-informed by leaders and support the school to manage its budget efficiently and evaluate the impact of grant funding effectively.

Recommendations

We have made three recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Ensure that all pupils develop as effective independent learners able to make choices about how they learn
- R2. Strengthen professional learning opportunities to ensure that they are linked appropriately to the aspects of teaching and learning in need of improvement
- R3. Improve pupils' attendance

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ysgol Gynradd Cynfran is a supportive and inclusive primary school. The headteacher has high expectations and sets a clear strategic direction for the school. She works diligently with the leadership team and staff to ensure that there are interesting and purposeful learning experiences for pupils. Staff develop respectful working relationships with pupils and the pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. Many pupils work well with their peers, listen carefully to teachers and take pride in their work and the progress they make in learning. Leaders work closely with the school community and place the care and well-being of all members of the community at the heart of their vision for the school.

Teachers provide a stimulating curriculum that develops pupils' understanding of the world and their locality effectively, for example by learning about the history of the local lifeboat station to help pupils understand the history and geography of the local area. Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to learn about relationships and diversity. Pupils treat others with respect and develop their knowledge and understanding of culture and identity. Staff use outdoor areas effectively to enhance pupils' well-being and learning. Pupils benefit from quiet spaces around the school where they can communicate their emotions and anxieties to supportive staff members who will help them.

Most teachers explain tasks clearly and ensure that lessons are suitably paced and enable many pupils to make good progress in their learning. Staff use a range of engaging resources to further enrich learning experiences. Teachers provide feedback to pupils that supports them to improve their learning appropriately. However, in a minority of lessons, staff do not enable pupils to work independently or to make suitable choices about their learning.

Most teachers are effective language models in both English and Welsh. They encourage pupils to speak Welsh and younger pupils use the language purposefully during lessons. However, many older pupils do not build on their Welsh language skills effectively enough and often lack confidence in speaking Welsh. Most pupils are more confident and articulate when communicating in English. They ask relevant questions and make a good effort to contribute to class discussions.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. Younger pupils show a basic understanding of punctuation in their early writing attempts and the oldest pupils demonstrate a sound grasp of writing skills when applying their knowledge to their work across the curriculum. Teachers plan effectively to improve pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding. They consider pupils' next steps and ensure that most pupils apply a broad range of numeracy skills in other aspects of their work at a suitably challenging level. Pupils develop their digital competence successfully through the rich learning experiences provided.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their physical skills. They quickly develop co-ordination and gross motor skills from an early age using the balance bikes on the school's bike track. Most pupils develop a good range of creative skills and create pieces of artwork in the style of a range of artists. Most older pupils learn music vocabulary well and develop an understanding of musical elements using a range of instruments.

Most pupils understand their role in society and decision making. Older pupils learn about the work of the Senedd and Houses of Parliament, as well as meeting local councillors to discuss their roles within the community. Older pupils make and sell craft items and plants. These experiences contribute successfully to developing pupils to become mature and conscientious citizens who show pride in their local area. Pupils are beginning to develop their leadership skills through pupil leadership groups and support the school's work appropriately. Most older pupils use their voice positively to promote issues that they care about.

Leaders ensure that pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) receive the support needed to meet their needs effectively. The school works successfully in partnership with external agencies to ensure that pupils with ALN make good progress towards their individual targets.

Leaders consider a wide range of monitoring information to identify the school's priorities for improvement focused on improving pupils' learning experiences, progress and well-being. The whole school team contribute to regular evaluation of the school's work and staff have a sound understanding of their role in school improvement. Leaders create a positive culture of professional learning, equipping staff to reflect on their teaching and to trial new approaches. However, leaders do not always link professional learning opportunities clearly enough to aspects of learning that need improvement, such as Welsh. They do not provide enough opportunities for staff to learn from each other.

The governing body is highly supportive of the work of the school and works closely with the headteacher to manage the school's finances effectively. Governors use grant funding effectively to improve the quality of learning experiences. They have a broad awareness of the school's improvement priorities but rely too heavily on the information they receive. This limits their ability to act as a critical friend to leaders.

Spotlight: Parents in Partnership

Ysgol Gynradd Cynfran is a nurturing school where every pupil matters. The school has strong collaboration with families through a range of useful family workshops. The headteacher places great importance on staff communicating regularly with parents and carers as partners in their children's education. This has resulted in improved parental engagement that helps them to support their children's learning effectively. The effective communication between the school and families is valued by all

Although leaders work with staff and external partners to monitor pupils' attendance, the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals is too low and needs improvement.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern

The school's arrangements for site management give cause for concern and have been brought to the attention of the local authority

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read 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 classes, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- 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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. ‘*most pupils...*’ or ‘*very few pupils...*’. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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