

A report on
Ysgol Trefnant

**Henllan Road
Trefnant
Nr. Denbigh
Sir Ddinbych
LL16 5UF**

Date of inspection: September 2025

by

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

About Ysgol Trefnant

Name of provider	Ysgol Trefnant
Local authority	Denbighshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales VA
Number of pupils on roll	92
Pupils of statutory school age	67
Number in nursery classes	15
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%)	7.7%
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%)	3.8
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	6.4
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	10.4
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2023

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/11/2018
Start date of inspection	29/09/2025

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

Leaders at Ysgol Trefnant create an inclusive environment where teamwork and care for pupils' and staff well-being are a priority. Relationships across the school are strong, and pupils demonstrate respect, behave well and attend school regularly. The curriculum reflects local culture and identity well and provides rich opportunities for pupils to connect with their community and to understand the wider world.

Overall, teaching is purposeful and engaging. Most teachers have high expectations and use effective questioning to develop pupils' thinking skills. Support staff make a strong contribution to learning. Pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress in developing their oracy and reading skills and their mathematical knowledge. They enjoy reading for pleasure and use their numeracy skills well in a range of meaningful contexts. However, pupils' writing skills are less well developed due to frequent use of worksheets and limited opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Staff promote the Welsh language well, and pupils develop confidence in using the language. However, pupils' digital skills are not developed progressively.

Leaders regularly evaluate the work of the school but monitoring activities do not always evaluate the progress of pupils accurately enough. Leaders identify broad school priorities across the federation, but they do not always focus on what most needs improving. Working on priorities across the federation of schools has improved support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), but wider collaboration and distributed leadership is less developed.

Staff provide pupils with a wide range of sports, clubs and leadership opportunities. They maintain strong relationships with parents and the community.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Ensure that monitoring and self-evaluation enables the school, including the governing body, to identify the most important areas in need of improvement
- R2. Further develop leadership at all levels across the federation and share the good practice that exists in teaching and learning
- R3. Develop pupils' writing and digital skills progressively

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders at Ysgol Trefnant successfully develop a school culture based on teamwork, with a clear focus on the well-being of pupils and staff. Working relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Across the school, most pupils behave very well, show respect to others and attend regularly.

Leaders plan a broad curriculum that reflects the school's local context and culture well. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to engage with the community and develop a sense of identity. The school's curriculum develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills successfully. Many pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of diversity within the school, Wales and the wider world.

Ysgol Trefnant is federated with nearby Ysgol Llanbedr. Leaders across the federation work together successfully, for instance to improve provision and outcomes for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The roles and responsibilities of other staff across the federation are less clear and opportunities for all staff to regularly collaborate or share good practice in teaching and learning are limited.

Leaders work effectively with teachers and teaching assistants to provide effective support for pupils with ALN. They identify and monitor the progress of pupils with ALN well and collaborate effectively with external agencies to provide specialist support and advice. Staff provide a broad range of strategies that supports the emotional and social development of pupils well.

Leaders carry out a suitable range of activities to evaluate the work of the school, including assessing the effectiveness of learning environments and sampling quality of pupils' work. Overall, these activities lack rigour and generally focus on the actions of staff rather than the progress of pupils. Leaders choose school improvement priorities and apply these across the federation, but they do not always prioritise the most important aspects of the school's work in need of improvement. Leaders address national priorities such as developing the Welsh language suitably. Across the school, staff use Welsh regularly during learning activities. In the younger classes, pupils enjoy singing familiar Welsh songs and rhymes. Many older pupils expand their vocabulary well when talking in familiar contexts.

Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and ensure that learning moves at an appropriate pace. They use questioning and feedback effectively to check pupils' understanding and to extend their learning. Across the school, they are well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants. Staff are developing suitable indoor and outdoor learning environments to support younger pupils' independent learning skills.

From an early age, most pupils make good progress in developing their communication skills. During learning activities and play, they confidently discuss their work using a broad range of vocabulary. They listen attentively to staff and their peers. Younger pupils develop a good understanding of letters and their corresponding sounds. As they move through school, pupils develop fluency and read with expression and increased understanding. They use an effective range of strategies that enable them to understand a wide range of texts. Across the school, pupils discuss their books with enthusiasm and develop a love of reading. Staff provide younger pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their early writing skills. Most pupils make suitable progress in developing their spelling and punctuation. Most older pupils develop their writing skills appropriately. However, they do not have opportunities to write purposefully, and the overuse of worksheets limits what they write.

Across the school, most pupils develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding well. Teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Younger pupils develop a good understanding of place value and use a range of calculation methods. Older pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in wide range of contexts.

Teachers provide pupils with a few opportunities to use their digital skills in purposeful contexts. For example, older pupils develop their coding skills successfully when they use them with programmable construction sets. Overall, opportunities for pupils to use their digital skills are limited, and they do not develop a wide enough range of digital skills progressively.

Across the school, staff provide a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' physical skills. Older pupils enjoy being involved in a range of sporting activities and benefit from the wide variety of extracurricular clubs. Many pupils play an active role in the schools' numerous pupil leadership groups. They develop their leadership skills well, show commitment to their roles and are proud of their achievements.

The school has strong relationships with parents. They communicate regularly about school events and about how they can support their child's learning at home. Leaders promote the importance of attending school regularly and successfully work with families to improve attendance.

Members of the governing body provide committed support for school leaders, and they have a suitable understanding of the school. However, they are not regularly involved in activities designed to evaluate the school's work, and they are largely reliant on the detailed information provided by the headteacher.

Additional information

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

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking

Leaders and governors manage the pupil development grant funding appropriately.
Currently, the school has a significant deficit budget and there are no robust plans in place to manage the school's resources going forwards.

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.

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