

A report on

Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn

**Ffordd Dyffryn
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 2LZ**

Date of inspection: November 2025

by

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

About Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn

Name of provider	Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn
Local authority	Conwy County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	172
Pupils of statutory school age	149
Number in nursery classes	23
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 21.7%)	35.1%
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 9.2%)	10.3%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	5.2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	6.5%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	20/11/2023

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/09/2019
Start date of inspection	24/11/2025

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 Ffordd Dyffryn is a happy and inclusive school where pupils feel safe, respected and well supported by staff. The strong working relationships between staff and pupils create a warm, nurturing environment, and nearly all pupils behave well. They show a keen interest in their learning and take pride in their work.

Leaders identify the school's strengths and areas for development successfully and are strong role models. Members of the governing body know the school well and provide effective support.

Staff provide pupils with many valuable opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Younger pupils enthusiastically develop their early reading skills, while older pupils write with clarity for a wide range of purposes. Most pupils enjoy a range of texts and by the end of Year 6, read fluently and confidently. Most pupils become proficient mathematicians and regularly apply their skills across the curriculum. Pupils' digital skills are less well developed.

Teachers plan interesting learning activities and have high expectations of pupils. Staff make learning engaging and use questioning skilfully to deepen pupils' thinking. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) receive beneficial support from staff, and most make good progress. In the learning resource base, staff plan activities that meet each pupil's individual needs well. In the younger classes, the outdoor learning spaces are undeveloped and do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to further apply and improve their skills.

The curriculum reflects the local area of Llandudno and Welsh culture effectively. Pupils learn about fairness, equality and respect and have opportunities to take on important leadership roles. For instance, pupil ambassadors help their peers to feel safe and included.

Overall pupils' attendance remains too low, especially for pupils eligible for free school meals.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Improve attendance
- R2. Ensure that pupils develop their digital skills progressively over time
- R3. Improve opportunities for younger pupils to develop their skills through outdoor learning

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn is a happy school where pupils feel safe and valued. Staff consistently model care, empathy and support for others. They establish strong working relationships with pupils. Nearly all pupils behave well and show very positive attitudes towards their learning.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is well supported by other senior leaders. Together, they nurture a caring and inclusive ethos with a clear focus on teamwork. Leaders and staff evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development through a wide range of activities, including listening to learners. Their regular book celebrations highlight strengths in pupils' learning and identify clear actions for improvement. Leaders implement national priorities successfully, including additional learning needs (ALN) reform and the development of pupils' Welsh language skills. Over time, leaders make good progress in addressing whole-school priorities, such as developing pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum.

The school's curriculum reflects its local area of Llandudno well. Staff plan learning activities that help pupils understand the cultural and linguistic character of Wales and the wider world. Pupils benefit from a variety of worthwhile opportunities that develop their creative skills, including art, drama and performance activities. During learning activities, most pupils learn about key values such as equality, fairness and respect. They explore their moral and spiritual beliefs and develop as thoughtful, reflective individuals.

Most pupils, including those who have ALN and those affected by poverty, make strong progress in their communication skills. Nearly all staff model language well and emphasise key vocabulary during learning activities. This helps to ensure that by the end of Year 6 most pupils communicate clearly and confidently when speaking.

Spotlight: A focus on developing pupils' reading skills

Leaders and staff have a relentless drive and passion to develop pupils' reading skills. Most younger pupils take part enthusiastically in learning activities that help them develop early reading skills. Across the school, nearly all pupils enjoy a wide range of texts, including stories and poetry. Skilled teaching assistants deliver a range of programmes that effectively support groups of pupils, such as those new to English or with ALN, to rapidly develop their early reading skills. As they move through school, most pupils become fluent and enthusiastic readers.

Most pupils develop effective writing skills. The youngest pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities to explore mark-making through play, and staff encourage them to express ideas freely. Teachers help older pupils to use a clear writing process that supports their

understanding of the key features of a range of text types. By the end of Year 6, most pupils write accurately for a wide range of purposes.

Across the school, most pupils become proficient mathematicians. The youngest pupils learn to count using a range of practical equipment. As they progress through school, pupils use a wide range of mental and written methods to solve calculations accurately. Staff provide older pupils with valuable opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in meaningful contexts across the curriculum, such as when they analyse data or measure materials in design tasks.

Many staff are strong Welsh language role models. Most younger pupils learn a useful range of everyday words and phrases and enjoy using them with staff or visitors. From Year 3 upwards, most pupils have a few beneficial opportunities to use more complex language patterns.

Many pupils use tablet devices appropriately, for example to access educational games. Many older pupils develop their digital skills when they research information or create simple presentations. However, overall, pupils have limited opportunities to develop a wider range of digital skills progressively.

Spotlight: Pupil leadership promoting inclusion

The school develops pupil leadership well. Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to take part in purposeful and inclusive leadership roles. For example, the pupils who serve as ASD (autism spectrum disorder) Ambassadors help others understand the experiences of pupils with ASD. They offer practical suggestions for staff and pupils to reduce anxiety and support pupils when they feel overwhelmed. Their work strengthens the school's inclusive ethos and raises awareness within the community.

Leaders use detailed tracking systems to identify patterns in pupil attendance. They work in partnership with a very few parents to identify barriers and agree strategies to improve their child's attendance. Despite this, overall pupil attendance remains low, and the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers continues to widen.

Across the school, teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of pupils. They use effective questioning to build on pupils' prior knowledge and develop their thinking skills well. Teachers maintain a good pace in learning activities, which helps sustain pupils' engagement. They ensure that the indoor learning environments support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well, they provide a range of visual prompts and celebrate pupils' successes. However, the outdoor areas for younger pupils are underdeveloped. Pupils do not have regular access to open-ended resources that encourage creativity, curiosity and physical development. When pupils do go outside, adults often lead the activities. This

limits opportunities for pupils to explore independently and to develop skills through rich, purposeful play.

In most mainstream classes, teachers use a range of methods that evaluate pupils' learning well. They share clear success criteria at the start of tasks. This helps pupils understand the purpose of their learning and what they need to do to succeed. Staff give effective verbal feedback during learning activities, and this supports pupils to improve their work successfully.

The school provides strong support for pupils with ALN. Leaders and staff have effective systems to identify pupils' needs early. They work successfully with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive any specialist guidance they require. This collaborative approach helps many pupils with ALN to make good progress towards their individual targets. Across the school, teaching assistants deliver highly effective interventions that support pupils' literacy, numeracy and social and emotional development

In the two resource base classes, staff create well-organised learning environments that help pupils regulate their emotions and meet their sensory needs. Staff plan learning activities that match the needs of individual pupils effectively, and as a result pupils in these classes make good progress from their different starting points.

Leaders provide professional learning that supports staff development well. All staff, including teaching assistants, benefit from regular professional development reviews that link clearly to school priorities or personal goals. Members of the governing body provide enthusiastic and knowledgeable support and are actively involved in deciding and monitoring the school's priorities.

The school develops strong relationships with parents and carers. Most parents feel that leaders listen to their views and respond appropriately. Staff communicate effectively with families through a variety of methods, which strengthens the partnership between home and school.

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 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/carer 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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