

A report on

Ysgol Bryn Coch

**643 Victoria Road
Flintshire
Mold
CH7 1EW**

Date of inspection: February 2026

by

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

About Ysgol Bryn Coch

Name of provider	Ysgol Bryn Coch
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	636
Pupils of statutory school age	504
Number in nursery classes	69
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%)	19.8%
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%)	8.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	4.2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.2%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	Yes
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2009
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/01/2019
Start date of inspection	02/02/2026

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

At Ysgol Bryn Coch, pupils receive a significant level of care and respect. Throughout the school, relationships are strong. Staff model language, behaviour and interactions effectively and pupils of all ages respond in kind. They behave well, are polite and show sensitivity towards one another.

Leaders and staff have a keen awareness of pupils' individual needs and provide skilful teaching that develops most pupils' learning and well-being successfully. Support staff contribute purposefully, helping identified pupils to enhance their confidence, well-being and learning through a comprehensive range of programmes and strategies. The school is highly inclusive, housing two successful resource classes where pupils with specific individual needs thrive.

The school is a language rich environment, where staff have high expectations for pupils' learning. From their earliest days in school, staff expose pupils to a wide range of experiences that expand their awareness, understanding and use of language through a broad and purposeful curriculum. Consequently, as they move through the school, most pupils develop strong oracy, reading and writing skills. Nearly all pupils make valuable progress in the development of their mathematics and digital skills. They are confident when using a range of digital technologies and enjoy working with staff to explore the use of artificial intelligence in their learning.

Leaders, staff and governors know the school well. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, though work to improve attendance is underdeveloped. Overall, leaders and staff make effective use of high-quality professional learning to enhance the school's work. There is a strong culture of collaboration and sharing of effective practice, both within the school, and with external partners.

Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Improve attendance, especially for pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those who have additional learning needs

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Pupils, and their individual needs, interests and talents, are at the heart of every aspect of Ysgol Bryn Coch's work. High expectations, a rich curriculum and truly effective nurture provision help most pupils to develop as confident, motivated learners who behave well and interact with others happily and courteously. Caring and mutually respectful relationships are evident throughout the school, bringing a strong sense of togetherness. This makes this very large primary school feel welcoming, equitable and homely. The school's two resource classes, where pupils benefit from thoughtful care and valuable personalised learning, only add to the school's strong level of inclusivity.

The school is language rich, and staff are consistently strong and effective language role models. They demonstrate high expectations for pupils' language development, helping most pupils to learn and use a purposeful range of technical and sophisticated vocabulary as they get older. Most older pupils use the strong vocabulary they develop with purpose and accuracy in their writing. In general, pupils make good progress in writing as they move through the school, creating interesting pieces that show creativity, imagination and purposeful organisation.

There is a strong culture of reading in the school. This impacts positively on pupils' skills and their enjoyment of books. From an early age, staff support the development of pupils' pre-reading skills through a valuable range of strategies that help their acquisition and understanding of language successfully. Teachers plan and resource reading activities skilfully, helping most pupils to read confidently and enthusiastically by the time they leave the school.

Staff across the school adapt their teaching of mathematics skilfully to meet pupils' needs, ensuring that nearly all make strong progress. They make effective use of concrete apparatus, helping pupils to contextualise their learning and gain a hands-on understanding. Nearly all pupils make strong progress in the development of their digital skills. The school's approach to digital learning is ambitious and astute, taking extremely good account of the ever-changing nature of digital technology.

Spotlight: A well-considered approach to the use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Ysgol Bryn Coch embraces the onset of AI with purpose and thought. With the individual needs of pupils at the forefront of their planning, teachers use AI to adapt texts to align more beneficially with the interests and needs of reluctant readers. This increases the engagement and progress of these pupils. Pupils are beginning to use AI themselves to present their learning in creative ways. They refine the instructions they give to AI as they

go, thinking carefully about the language and prompts they use. Leaders and staff also exercise sensible levels of caution. Their approach to teaching e-safety has evolved accordingly and they successfully help pupils to develop a strong understanding of the potential dangers involved in the use of AI.

Across the school, teachers provide pupils with relevant, progressive opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills. This helps most pupils to develop positive attitudes towards the language and to make suitable progress. Overall, pupils apply their literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh skills across the curriculum with confidence, purpose and accuracy.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning and school life in general. This is a notable facet of the school. They behave consistently well and engage with their learning with enthusiasm and determination. Overall, pupils take on challenges happily. They react well to teachers' high expectations and show aspiration to achieve highly in their learning.

Across the school, teachers use questioning successfully to build on pupils' prior knowledge and to develop their thinking skills. They maintain a good pace in lessons. This helps to sustain pupils' engagement. Staff often provide immediate feedback to pupils, and this supports pupils' understanding and progress well. The varied range of teaching approaches that staff deploy help most pupils to carry out their learning effectively, both by themselves and in collaboration with others.

There is a highly effective and inclusive menu of provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The strong levels of communication and collaboration that exist between teachers and support staff ensure that there is an accurate, shared understanding of pupils' individual needs. Support staff use this knowledge extremely well to provide specific and productive support for identified pupils. This has a notable impact on these pupils' learning and well-being. Consequently, most ALN pupils, including those in the resource classes, make strong progress towards their individual targets.

Leaders and staff have designed the curriculum thoughtfully and collaboratively. The use of high-quality storybooks as a stimulus and context for learning drives meaningful themes and rich, progressive experiences that reflect the full breadth of Curriculum for Wales. Pupils of all ages develop valuable spiritual, moral, social, and cultural awareness through religion and values learning, community participation, and rights-based work. They explore themes that help them understand their place in an inclusive global society and learn about diversity through stories about the lives of people from a range of backgrounds, religions and ethnicities.

Highly effective professional learning underpins the curriculum, classroom practice and additional support. A reflective approach to evaluating the impact of professional learning on pupils' outcomes helps to secure consistency in the quality of teaching.

Spotlight: Collaboration for sustained improvement

A highly effective focus on strong and sustained collaboration runs through the school's work. Staff work closely together to successfully improve teaching, learning experiences and outcomes for all pupils. Leaders provide structure, time and trust for staff to collaborate and trial approaches. The school's outward facing, collaborative approach to improvement has a significant impact on pupils and staff at the school, and on practitioners beyond. Staff work effectively with other schools and partners to share expertise, refine practice and strengthen provision for vulnerable pupils.

Leadership is effective and well distributed. Leaders work closely and strategically with staff and governors to establish clear roles and responsibilities that build capacity at all levels. Self-evaluation and improvement planning are robust and purposeful. There is a clear and shared understanding of the school's priorities for improvement and a collective forward-thinking approach. Governors provide constructive strategic oversight and challenge. They have a good understanding of the needs of pupils and value first hand opportunities to observe learning and teaching.

Leaders monitor attendance, follow up on daily absence and work with outside agencies and families to address individual attendance concerns. Despite these strategies, persistent absenteeism is too high and the overall attendance of ALN pupils and those who are eligible for free school meals is too low

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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