

Ysgol Syr John Rhys
Ponterwyd
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3JX

This letter is also available in Welsh

02/06/2026

Dear leaders and staff

Interim Visit: May 2026

A team of inspectors visited Ysgol Syr John Rhys recently to consider progress in relation to a recommendation from the previous core inspection. The inspection team took advantage of the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, talk to pupils and staff, consider documentation and look at samples of pupils' work. Below is a summary of the findings from the visit.

Focus of visit

Develop pupils' Welsh writing skills

- The headteacher has reflected deeply on the best way to develop pupils' writing skills. She has held staff meetings, consulted with partners and worked effectively with neighbouring schools.
- Leaders create a productive ethos and culture to support staff's professional learning to nurture pupils' writing skills. They are given valuable opportunities to share ideas and plan jointly, in addition to opportunities to share good practice. Through this, they provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and promote enjoyment of learning.
- Teachers use purposeful resources, such as '*Y Wal Serennu*', to support learning effectively. This enriches the content of pupils' writing successfully.
- Staff are sound language models. They use effective teaching methods, such as questioning pupils appropriately, and provide beneficial feedback that supports pupils to develop their written work. They provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to assess and improve their work and pupils respond positively.

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Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

- Most pupils make sound progress in their writing skills. The youngest pupils acquire early writing skills successfully, for example when combining letter sounds to write simple words. At the top of the school, pupils write more extensively and make imaginative vocabulary choices to capture the reader's attention purposefully.

Develop pupils' Welsh reading skills

- Leaders and teachers work with neighbouring schools to promote pupils' reading skills purposefully. They foster a strong culture of reading across the school, for example by encouraging pupils to 'read with Deri'.
- The learning environment supports the development of pupils' reading skills purposefully. Stimulating and attractive displays, which include purposeful vocabulary, and access to books relating to the theme, support pupils to immerse themselves in their reading.
- Staff organise beneficial activities which enable pupils to read with peers in '*ffrind bach a ffrind mawr*' (big friend and little friend) sessions. These sessions contribute positively to developing pupils' confidence and enjoyment of reading.
- Teachers plan suitable reading activities and choose texts purposefully to engage pupils' interest. They also create stimulating texts to support learning, by using artificial intelligence technology effectively, where appropriate.
- Staff implement specific strategies to develop the youngest pupils' early reading skills. They place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' phonological awareness and provide a suitable range of strategies to support reading development. As a result, most pupils at the top of the school are beginning to read with increasing fluency and understanding.

The school's most recent core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6672315>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director