



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Ysgol Bro Gwaun  
Heol Dyfed  
Fishguard  
Pembrokeshire  
SA65 9DT**

**Date of inspection: October 2019**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Bro Gwaun

Ysgol Bro Gwaun is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school situated between the towns of Fishguard and Goodwick in Pembrokeshire. Currently, the school has 534 pupils on roll compared to 621 pupils when the school was last inspected in April 2012. The current proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 15.2%, which is slightly lower than the Welsh average for secondary schools of 16.4%.

The school is categorised as 'English-medium with significant Welsh'. Many pupils come from English-speaking homes. However, around 27% of pupils are fluent in Welsh and around another 68% of pupils can speak Welsh to some degree. Around 1% of pupils have English as an additional language. Most pupils come from a white British background.

The school has about 26.6% of pupils on the special educational needs register, which is slightly higher than the Wales average of 22.5% for secondary schools. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is 2.1%, compared with the average of 2.2% for the whole of Wales. The school has a local authority special needs resource base for pupils with complex needs, with 14 pupils currently attending.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2017. The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher, one deputy headteacher and three other senior leaders.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

Ysgol Bro Gwaun is a caring community that focuses wholeheartedly on developing its pupils as confident and responsible citizens. The positive working relationships between staff and pupils is a notable strength of the school. Pupils are proud members of the school community and most behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous towards their peers, staff and visitors. Many pupils have positive attitudes to learning and have a positive impact on school life.

Many pupils make sound progress in lessons and perform well in external examinations. Teachers know their pupils well and successfully create a positive and inclusive learning environment. They have high expectations of both pupil behaviour and what they can achieve.

The headteacher offers assured leadership. Leaders have a clear vision for raising the ambitions of all pupils and preparing them for their future lives. This vision has been successfully communicated to staff, pupils and parents and contributes to the strong sense of community within the school. Through effective teamwork, leaders have brought about improvements in key areas of the school's work such as key stage 4 outcomes, attendance rates and the behaviour of pupils.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement planning processes focus appropriately on the evaluation of pupils' skills
- R2 Ensure that the provision for Welsh matches all pupils' abilities and previous academic experience of the language
- R3 Improve the effectiveness of teaching in a minority of lessons
- R4 Improve pupils' skills, in particular their higher order reading skills, their thinking skills and the extended writing skills of a minority of pupils

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

In lessons and over time, many pupils make secure progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills. At the end of key stage 4, pupils generally perform well and make more progress than expected.

Many pupils have a positive attitude towards their work. They recall prior learning well and apply this appropriately to new situations. For example, in mathematics lessons, pupils apply their knowledge of the link between fractions, percentages and decimals effectively to calculate proportional changes using multipliers.

Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers. Many are happy to share their ideas and make purposeful contributions to group or class discussions, using subject specific terminology accurately and confidently. They show respect towards others' opinions and work well in small groups or pairs. For example, in art lessons they discuss maturely when they compare and contrast their work with that of famous artists. A few pupils offer only brief answers to questions or lack the confidence to contribute to class and group discussions.

Many pupils are confident in skimming and scanning a range of texts to extract useful information. These pupils show a secure understanding of meaning in texts, locate facts accurately and select relevant information to inform their judgements. For example, in religious education, pupils successfully locate and evaluate information from a range of sources when comparing Christian and Jewish birth ceremonies. Many pupils have a sound grasp of inference and deduction, for example when interpreting sources on dealing with life in the trenches in the First World War.

Many pupils produce writing that is mostly technically secure and make good use of subject specific terminology in a variety of subjects. They write well for an appropriate range of purposes and audiences. For example, they write persuasively to produce a newspaper article on threats to our environment in geography or when writing a letter encouraging others to visit Wales. However, a minority of pupils' writing lacks structure and they make frequent spelling, punctuation and grammar errors. A few, more able pupils produce extended writing of high quality, with effective use of genre specific vocabulary and sophisticated literary techniques such as extended metaphors. In many instances, pupils, including those with special educational needs, proof read and redraft paragraphs in order to improve their work.

The majority of pupils have well developed basic number skills and a secure understanding of measures. For example, in science, pupils are able to confidently carry out calculations involving speed, distance and time. The majority of pupils are able to solve numerical problems suitably. For example, in mathematics, they successfully calculate flight times which require the consideration of different time zones. Many pupils have secure graphical skills and are able to draw accurate climate graphs for London and Nairobi in geography and use these graphs to compare and contrast the climate of the two cities. However, a few pupils have weak numeracy skills. They do not have a sufficient grasp of basic number skills to be able to apply these skills in context and draw only basic conclusions from graphs.

Most pupils use basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately across the curriculum to present information and carry out research. Many pupils develop their higher order ICT skills suitably across the curriculum. In mathematics they use modelling software to draw polygons and apply their understanding of formulae in spreadsheets appropriately in science, mathematics and geography.

Many pupils develop their creative skills appropriately. In food technology, they devise the recipe for a quiche that they will be cooking in the following lesson. In general, pupils develop their physical skills well and are confident when participating in practical lessons, showing high levels of independence. For example, Year 8 pupils play and referee their hockey game and evaluate their performance before deciding on a key area for improvement. Many pupils develop their thinking skills suitably. In science, pupils consider what they want to learn about the heart and what questions they want answered. However, in general, pupils do not develop their thinking skills and creative skills well enough.

Over the last three years, pupils have performed well at the end of key stage 4 and generally make more progress than expected. The performance of all groups of pupils, including those that are eligible for free school meals generally compares well with that in similar schools. At the end of Year 11, nearly all pupils remain in education, employment or training.

At key stage 4, many pupils achieve a level 2 GCSE qualification in Welsh as a second language and a few pupils achieve a level 2 GCSE qualification in Welsh first language. The majority of pupils who study Welsh as a first language have a firm grasp of the language. They use a suitable range of subject-specific vocabulary appropriately when discussing the advantages and disadvantages of organ donation. A minority lack confidence to elaborate on their answers. When writing, their command of basic vocabulary is sound but their written work contains too many inaccuracies. Many pupils who study Welsh as a second language are able to communicate confidently. They produce well-structured writing when discussing topics such as healthy eating and exercise.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Most pupils take pride in their school and the local community. The school's family atmosphere and team ethos are strong aspects of life at Ysgol Bro Gwaun. Most pupils are happy at school and treat their peers and staff with high levels of respect. They demonstrate well-developed social skills as they interact with visitors. Most pupils feel safe and secure at school and know who to approach if they need support. Many pupils feel valued and feel that the school responds effectively to any concerns raised.

In general, pupils including those with special educational needs, are eager to take on responsibilities within the school. There are well-established form, year and whole school councils which are actively involved in decision making. For example, special educational needs pupils have contributed to staff training by creating videos explaining their preferred teaching methods. The work of the school council has led to specific changes such as those to the canteen queuing system. The 'young carers union' work effectively to raise awareness and provide beneficial support for young

carers in the school and partner primary schools. Nearly all pupils in Year 11 demonstrate strong leadership skills and responsibility in hosting a variety of regular activities for younger pupils.

Most pupils behave well in class and around the school. They arrive punctually to lessons, settle quickly and listen to their teachers attentively. Many pupils display a positive attitude towards their learning and sustain their concentration throughout the lesson. They work productively in pairs or small groups, supporting each other well. For example, in history they work diligently in small groups when discussing the reliability of different sources. They respond positively to the contributions of their peers, such as when discussing the advantages and disadvantages of legalising the use of performance enhancing drugs in sport. The majority of pupils are eager to learn and show resilience when faced with challenging tasks. They endeavour to solve problems independently before asking their teacher for assistance.

Most pupils develop well as ethical and tolerant citizens, making valuable contributions to the community through local and national charities. They have organised numerous events and collected a significant amount of money and resources, for example contributions to the local Foodbank, Felindre Hospital and Cancer Research.

Nearly all pupils understand how to stay safe online and many pupils show an appreciation of the importance of healthy eating. For example, in food technology and science lessons they confidently discuss the 'eatwell plate' and nutritional values. They understand the importance of exercise and most feel that there are plenty of opportunities to participate in activities such as dance and rugby. A strong feature is the leadership role taken by a few pupils who work as young leaders in these clubs.

Over the last three years, attendance has improved, and in 2019 it is well above that of similar schools.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Most teachers foster positive working relationships. They know their pupils well and create successfully a supportive and positive learning environment. They have strong subject knowledge and deploy useful routines to ensure that pupils settle quickly and are ready to learn.

Many teachers set out clear learning objectives to give purpose and structure to the lesson. These teachers use group and pair work effectively to enhance pupil learning and contribute to the development of both oracy and wider social skills.

Many teachers have high expectations of both pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. They plan challenging activities that engage pupils' interest and build well on their previous learning. They provide pupils with useful verbal feedback and monitor their progress closely. These teachers provide pupils with clear success criteria so that they are able to evaluate their own performance and improve their work.

Many teachers ask useful questions that check pupils' knowledge and recall. A minority ask questions that challenge pupils' understanding and encourage them to think deeply and extend their answers.

In a minority of instances, teachers do not plan lessons carefully enough to ensure that pupils develop their independent learning skills. In these lessons, teachers over-direct the learning which limits pupil engagement and their opportunities to work independently or in small groups. In a few instances, activities are not sufficiently matched to pupils' ability or do not build well enough on their prior learning.

Many teachers provide constructive and beneficial feedback on pupils' work that shows them clearly how they can improve. They ensure that pupils address and correct any spelling, punctuation and grammar errors.

In most subject areas, the curriculum at key stage 3 builds suitably on key stage 2 work. Links with partner primary schools are strong and the transition arrangements are effective and valued. At key stage 4, the school provides a comprehensive range of valuable courses which are relevant to pupils' locality and interests. For example, they offer courses in construction and farming.

There are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of Welsh heritage and culture through activities such as the 'Caffi Cymraeg', the annual school eisteddfod, participation in the national eisteddfod and studying units of work on their local area in humanities. At key stage 3, the school has recently taken appropriate steps to strengthen provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills. However, a minority of key stage 4 pupils do not follow a Welsh language course that is appropriate to their previous educational experience.

The school has valid plans outlining their possible implementation of the new curriculum for Wales. It is piloting a worthwhile approach to humanities teaching for a group of Year 7 pupils. The grouping of pupils caters well for the needs of all learners, especially for pupils with special educational needs and vulnerable pupils. The school provides bespoke off-site provision for the very few pupils in key stage 4 in danger of becoming disengaged.

The school provides a wide range of valuable extra-curricular activities which link beneficially with work done in the classroom. Examples include trips to the theatre, trips of historical interest and valuable projects to enrich the learning of more able pupils.

The school's intervention strategies for pupils in need of additional support are a strong feature. Pupils with weak literacy and numeracy skills receive valuable and effective interventions tailored to their needs. In key stage 4, pupils with weak literacy and numeracy skills receive extra support throughout the year and their progress is monitored effectively.

Many departments plan and implement successfully a range of stimulating activities to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. For example, in science, pupils use their ICT skills to construct a database when discussing power stations. However, in a few instances, literacy, numeracy and ICT tasks do not provide



suitable levels of challenge for all pupils. Systems to monitor and evaluate pupil progress in skills through effective collection of first hand evidence are underdeveloped.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Ysgol Bro Gwaun is a close-knit, caring community that promotes inclusivity and pupils' wellbeing particularly well. The school provides worthwhile support and guidance to pupils with special educational, emotional, health and social needs. Staff have a detailed understanding of individual pupils' needs and backgrounds and use this sensitively to provide them with support.

The school gathers useful information systematically to track and monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of different groups of pupils. This has contributed to improvements in outcomes at key stage 4 and a notable increase in rates of attendance. Leaders make beneficial use of the information collected to ensure timely, personalised support and interventions for pupils. Staff also use this information skilfully to celebrate pupils' achievements with a Friday phone call to parents and carers. Pupil progress checks and annual reports are highly personalised. They highlight pupils' achievements and attitudes to learning well. They provide parents with valuable information regarding next steps in learning. The school is successful in helping parents to support their child's learning and wellbeing. For example, the school hosts regular coffee mornings for parents and carers to discuss the specific needs of their children.

Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are strong. The school identifies individual pupils' needs through effective transition processes and baseline assessment information. Provision is thorough across the school and all individual education plans contain relevant targets and strategies to promote achievement and progress.

Staff receive valuable support to help them to adapt provision to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs through the beneficial strategies and resources on the school's digital dashboard. The highly effective provision in both 'Harbwr' and 'Enfys' provides stimulating and tailored interventions for these pupils. For example, they develop their confidence and progress in reading by reading aloud to a rabbit. As a result of the sensitive and tailored provision, these pupils are very happy and make effective progress. The school collaborates well with a range of external agencies such as the 'Farm School' and a youth worker to further enhance curricular provision and to develop the life skills of pupils with special educational needs.

The working relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and reflect the strong feeling of community within the school. The school has consistent and beneficial arrangements to foster a positive culture around behaviour. Praise and celebrating success are central to this and are a key component of the strong ethos developed at Ysgol Bro Gwaun. This has had a positive effect on most pupils' ability to manage their own behaviour appropriately.

There are valuable opportunities for pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make decisions about the life and work of the school. The strong structure of the school council is successful in allowing pupils to influence decision making at a school level.

There are well planned transition arrangements and positive relationships with local primary schools to help Year 7 pupils settle well. Opportunities for primary school pupils to visit the school, such as the community based agricultural 'Cows on Tour' activity, support the schools transition arrangements effectively. Further targeted initiatives include worthwhile programmes such as 'Bwrlwm' and 'Bwrlwm Bach' where pupils spend a period of time at the school prior to transition to develop their Welsh language skills.

There is a strong focus on developing the school's role within the local community with a wide range of activities that allow pupils to build positive relationships in their locality. For example the school has forged beneficial links with local businesses to provide a range of valuable experiences for pupils at the 'Gwaun Fest'.

The school works well in partnership with external agencies to deliver a strong programme of personal and social education. This includes a structured 'mindfulness' programme, valuable sessions by the police liaison officer and assemblies on matters such as 'body image'. This programme makes a beneficial contribution to pupils' understanding of equality of diversity and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There are worthwhile arrangements within the school to promote healthy eating and drinking. Activities in lessons such as science, personal and social education lessons, Welsh and technology support these arrangements well.

The school provides valuable extra-curricular activities to promote pupils' health and social development. Comprehensive activities are arranged for pupils at lunchtime and after school such as the tractor club, 'Caffi Cymraeg' and school music and drama productions. Pupils' achievements are celebrated well in assemblies to foster extra-curricular participation and pride in the school. There is a focus on promoting personal values, for example the celebration of fair play and sportsmanship of the rugby team.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Since his appointment in 2017, the headteacher has developed a clear vision for the school based on raising the ambitions of all pupils and preparing them for their future lives. He is supported well by his leadership team. They work together effectively and share a strong sense of purpose and commitment to the school's values which are reflected in the motto 'Angori doeth, dyfodol disglair' (wise foundations, bright futures). Senior leaders have been successful in securing improvements in pupil outcomes and wellbeing.

Senior leaders have established clear lines of communication to ensure that all staff have a secure understanding of the school's expectations and priorities. This has resulted in a strong sense of common purpose across the school which has contributed positively to staff morale.

Senior leadership roles and responsibilities focus clearly on improving pupils' wellbeing and the standards of their work. Line management arrangements are rigorous and ensure effective support and challenge for middle leaders in their areas of responsibility.

The school has purposeful arrangements for managing the performance of staff. Objectives relate directly to the school's improvement priorities and support individual professional development well. Leaders have been successful in developing a culture that promotes and values continuous learning for all staff. Teachers have a wide range of opportunities to share good practice both within and outside of the school. They are beginning to explore new approaches to teaching through research projects across all areas of learning.

Many leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' books, as well as the views of pupils and wider stakeholders, to help evaluate the school's work. For example, the school successfully sought the views of parents on the effectiveness of its teaching and learning updates and gained useful information about pupils' reading habits at home. However, overall, self-evaluation processes do not focus well enough on the standards of pupils' skills in lessons and books.

The school's improvement processes have led to notable progress in a number of important areas over the last three years. For example, a focus on developing pride, ethos and wellbeing have helped lower the rates of pupil exclusions and to improve pupils' attendance and attainment. Improvement processes reflect whole-school and department specific priorities well.

The governors are supportive of the school and have a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They offer valuable support and challenge to all leaders and link effectively with individual departments.

Under the scrutiny of the governing body, senior leaders ensure that their spending decisions align well with the school's improvement priorities. The school's finance board manages the budget effectively, allowing leaders to invest in resources and renovation work to improve the school. This has helped to ensure that the school buildings provide a comfortable and stimulating environment within which pupils learn and thrive. The school uses grant funding, including the pupil development grant, effectively. This has helped to secure strong outcomes and improve the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent 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 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' wellbeing, 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

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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