



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

**A report on**  
**Ysgol Bro Brynach**

**Llanboidy**  
**Hendyggwyn ar Daf**  
**Carmarthen**  
**Carmarthenshire**  
**SA34 0EL**

**Date of inspection: November 2023**

**by**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## About Ysgol Bro Brynach

Name of provider	Ysgol Bro Brynach
Local authority	Carmarthenshire County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	95
Pupils of statutory school age	63
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	20
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	25.4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	23/06/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	30/06/2015
Start date of inspection	06/11/2023

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:  
[mylocalschool.gov.wales](http://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Overview

Ysgol Bro Brynach is part of a federation with Ysgol Beca. The school's friendly, inclusive and happy ethos is impressive and is a strong feature of all its work. Most pupils are well behaved and treat each other and adults with respect and courtesy. The school's culture of safeguarding is robust and pupils feel safe while undertaking their learning experiences.

As a result of detailed and purposeful plans, most pupils make good progress in their numeracy and literacy skills. Planning for pupils' digital skills is not as well developed. As a result, they do not make as much progress in their digital skills.

Staff work together effectively to ensure that the curriculum provides a wide range of exciting and rich experiences. Pupils' views are at the heart of the planning process; therefore, most immerse themselves in their learning experiences enthusiastically. Staff provide engaging and stimulating experiences through '*Gwener Gwyllt*' activities, which develop pupils' skills effectively. Pupils respond with curiosity and motivation and genuinely enjoy their learning. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to choose independently how they would like to complete tasks and present their work. Staff foster a warm and supportive working relationship with pupils and identify their needs well. There is a hardworking environment within the school and a constant buzz to all its activities. Overall, teachers use a range of teaching techniques skilfully.

The acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school which has been shared purposefully with staff, parents and pupils. The vision is based on giving all pupils an opportunity to thrive within a caring environment. She is supported with dedication and passion by the staff. Although there have been inconsistencies in the leadership of the federation over an extended period of time, staff and governors have succeeded in gaining a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are very supportive of the school and show a good awareness of their roles and responsibilities. They support leaders and staff appropriately.

## Recommendations

- R1 Continue to develop effective leadership across the federation
- R2 Ensure that planning enables pupils to make sound progress in their digital skills
- R3 Ensure consistency in the arrangements for embedding the role of pupils in their learning across the federation

## What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the effective use of the outdoor areas to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Learning

During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make sound progress in developing many of their skills from their starting points.

Most pupils listen attentively to teachers and support staff. Most pupils respect the views and contributions of their peers when discussing their work and respond respectfully to them, using appropriate language and tone of voice. Their speaking skills increase soundly in both language and they apply their skills across a good range of contexts by using purposeful vocabulary. However, pupils tend to turn to English when holding discussions in the classroom and when socialising during break times.

Across the school, most pupils develop their reading skills well. They enjoy reading and appreciate the range of texts that are available to them throughout the school. Most of the youngest pupils develop early reading skills successfully and come to recognise the sound and form of letters quickly. By Year 2, they use a good range of effective strategies to read unfamiliar words. Many of the oldest pupils continue to develop their reading skills appropriately in both languages. A few read with good expression, give due attention to punctuation and consider the listener when reading. Most apply their reading skills skilfully in their work across the curriculum.

Most pupils' writing skills develop well across the school. The youngest pupils recognise an increasing range of letters and experiment by combining them to create simple words. By Year 4, they use subject specific vocabulary accurately, such as 'evaporation', 'condensation' and 'precipitation' when writing text to explain the water cycle. By the top of the school, pupils develop as more enterprising writers. For example, when creating attractive posters to advertise a local show, they give full consideration to the probable audience. They apply their skills confidently across the areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils make good progress in their mathematics and numeracy skills from their starting points. For example, the youngest pupils discuss the properties of simple shapes confidently and emulate them in the outdoor area by using a range of natural materials. Year 2 pupils discuss shape and the number of sides of 3D shapes when developing their understanding of their properties. By the top of the school, they use

their understanding of the properties of angles skilfully to calculate the size of the internal and external angles of triangles and missing angles around a point. They apply their number skills purposefully across the curriculum.

During their time at the school, many pupils develop their digital skills increasingly. They use a suitable range of programs skilfully and apply their skills successfully to achieve specific purposes. For example, by the time they reach the top of the school, pupils use their coding skills to create a game that emulates the features of a traditional arcade game.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to physical activities. They enjoy physical education sessions and strive energetically during these sessions. They respect the rules of activities and listen carefully to the teacher's instructions and the encouragement of their fellow players. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils develop their ball-control skills and avoid defenders successfully while playing a range of fun games.

Most pupils' creative skills develop well throughout the school. For example, the youngest pupils enjoy choosing a range of fruit and arranging them imaginatively to create interesting face shapes. By the time they reach the top of the school, they use a variety of materials and styles skilfully to emulate the work of famous artists. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils create their own interpretations of their view from the classroom window.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils are extremely polite and friendly and very caring towards their peers. They greet staff cheerfully as they arrive each morning and extend a very warm welcome to visitors. Nearly all enjoy coming to school and feel happy within the homely and cosy environment. Pupils and parents appreciate the care provided by staff and are confident that the school addresses any concerns and problems quickly. Most pupils behave consistently well in all aspects of the school's work.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy and apply themselves to their tasks with excitement and enthusiasm, particularly during practical and creative lessons such as '*Gwener Gwyllt*' ('Wild Friday'). These sessions contribute effectively towards developing their co-operation, investigation and thinking skills. Many show commendable perseverance when they face difficulties and support and help each other naturally. This contributes successfully to the development of their independent thinking skills as well as their resilience.

Many pupils enjoy undertaking roles and responsibilities within the school and fulfil them with commendable dedication and energy. The school council, for example, is hardworking in raising money to buy new sports equipment, which has a positive effect on pupils' fitness and well-being. The eco council also encourage their peers to recycle and save energy and water which, in turn, fosters positive attitudes towards sustainability. Most pupils value regular opportunities to voice their opinions about what they would like to learn; for example, by sharing ideas through the '*Llwybr Lleisiau*', they influence their thematic work. However, pupils are not always given opportunities to make decisions about how they would like to present their work.

Most pupils respond successfully to oral and written feedback from staff. As a result, they have a sound understanding of what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

Many pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of supporting their society and its people. They organise beneficial activities that contribute successfully to their awareness of their square mile. For example, the owner of a local shop comes to the school to share his experiences of working at the shop and the link with local history. Many pupils have a sense of duty to help others, both locally and nationally, for example as they plan and hold a coffee morning in aid of the Macmillan charity.

Nearly all pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of being ethical and humanitarian citizens. For example, the school welcomed new pupils who were Ukrainian refugees and supported them as they settled at the school. As a result, pupils show a sound awareness of issues relating to human rights.

Most pupils have a suitable understanding of how to stay safe while using the internet. Regular visits by the community police officer and campaigns by the 'Digital Wizards' reinforce this understanding and promote continuous vigilance among pupils in relation to this aspect.

Nearly all pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of making good choices in terms of eating and drinking healthily and the effect this has on their health. They participate enthusiastically in physical activities and clearly enjoy taking part. Most enjoy representing the school in various sports competitions. They also appreciate the opportunities they are given to join their peers across the federation to take part in fun sports sessions.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

Staff have a caring and warm relationship with all pupils. They treat them with kindness and respect which creates an inclusive environment in which the happiness, well-being and progress of all pupils are a priority.

The school provides a balanced, rich and stimulating curriculum that reflects its nature and local context successfully. Staff work together tirelessly to provide a wide variety of experiences that meet the needs of most pupils well. They inspire pupils and encourage them to do their best, which has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning.

Teachers provide learning experiences that have been planned skilfully. They build systematically on pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills and experiences to ensure progression as pupils move through the school. Teachers plan very effectively to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and creative skills, but planning for pupils' digital skills is not as well developed.

On the whole, many staff use the indoor and outdoor learning areas effectively. They work together closely as a team to foster strong attitudes of perseverance and resilience among all pupils. Teachers and assistants develop and reinforce pupils' skills skilfully in engaging and varied contexts. For example, staff provide a menu of

activities for pupils which are based on the current theme and build on skills that pupils have already practised. Pupils undertake all activities over a period of time. The range of activities spans all areas of the curriculum and promotes strong progress in pupils' skills and confidence. Staff use a wide range of resources skilfully to engage pupils' interest and curiosity during these activities. For example, staff provide extremely interesting opportunities for pupils to make rockets from different resources and experiment with the most effective method of launching them.

Teachers include pupils' views and preferences skilfully while planning their activities. At the beginning of each term, they provide opportunities for pupils to influence the direction of themes by encouraging them to ask probing questions that they would like to have answered through the learning experiences. Questions are added to the '*Llwybr Lleisiau*'. All pupils are also given regular opportunities to add to the list as their curiosity and learning highlight new ideas and lines of enquiry. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to choose independently how they would like to present their work.

The school makes effective use of its local community and its colourful history to elicit pupils' pride in their locality and ignite pupils' imagination. For example, the oldest pupils learn about Howell Powell's efforts to help local residents by ensuring a clean water supply for the village.

On the whole, teachers use a variety of teaching methods effectively. As a result, pupils are motivated to engage in their activities enthusiastically and make sound progress in their learning. Staff are effective language role models and this helps pupils to develop their fluency well. They share the aim of learning regularly and consider previous learning carefully when planning to develop pupils' skills in different contexts. They ensure that pupils know what needs to be done and understand when they have succeeded. Adults question pupils skilfully. They often use questioning techniques that extend and deepen pupils' understanding and build on their ability to think critically. Many teachers develop suitably-paced learning activities. Where this practice is not as effective, pupils tend to lose interest in their work quickly.

All staff give pupils regular and valuable oral feedback, which enables them to identify what they do well and what they need to do to improve. Teachers provide simple but effective written feedback to pupils which offers them clear guidance on the next steps in their learning. Pupils respond positively to feedback and, as a result, they often improve the standard of their work purposefully. Pupils are given regular opportunities to assess their own work and that of their peers. Pupils are confident when discussing what they need to do to succeed in their tasks.

Staff use a range of information to track pupils' standards, progress and well-being effectively. This provides them with a useful picture of each individual's development and the next steps in their learning. Teachers share information with parents and carers regularly about their children's progress and well-being. This helps them to understand how they can help their children at home.

## Care, support and guidance

The care, support and guidance provided by Ysgol Bro Brynach is a clear strength. The school is a happy, friendly and inclusive community that values courtesy, respect and good behaviour. There is a fond and warm working relationship between staff and pupils, and staff encourage all pupils to do their best in all aspects of the school's work. The school knows its pupils and their families well and uses this knowledge to support pupils further with their well-being and learning needs. Parents and carers value the support provided for their children and the support they receive as families.

The school supports pupils' emotional, health and social needs successfully. This is a strong feature across the federation. Staff respond to pupils' needs skilfully and with sensitivity and empathy. For example, pupils share their feelings when they arrive at school in the morning through the use of an electronic device. Staff respond quickly to any needs that arise and provide support, as necessary. The 'Cwtsh Clyd' is also a safe and supportive haven that provides valuable support for vulnerable pupils. Here, support is provided by a senior assistant who has received purposeful training to support pupils with aspects of their emotional well-being. As a result, pupils show a good awareness of their well-being and emotional needs and strategies they could use to support themselves. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is sound. Most pupils who need additional support make good progress from their starting points. The teaching team has effective arrangements to monitor and track pupils' well-being and progress. This enables them to identify pupils who need additional support at an early stage. They provide purposeful support programmes that meet the needs of individual pupils well. Programmes include support to promote pupils' emotional well-being and develop their literacy skills. There is close co-operation between the school and the home. Parents and pupils play an important role in the process of reviewing pupils' progress and setting targets for the next steps in their learning. The school works effectively in partnership with external agencies, for example the county's specialist speech and language team, to support the development of pupils' language skills.

The school provides a wide range of activities that promote the physical health and emotional well-being of nearly all pupils successfully. For example, pupils take part in a football competition to celebrate Wales playing in the World Cup and take part in the Urdd's sports competitions. Through such activities, they foster strong values such as fair play, respect towards their fellow players and the need to persevere.

The school provides numerous opportunities for pupils to assume leadership roles and responsibilities. They undertake their roles conscientiously and with pride. For example, the 'Digital Wizards' communicate effectively with the parent and teacher association to attract funding to purchase new digital programs for the school. As a result, they develop their co-operation and planning skills purposefully.

The school organises rich opportunities to celebrate and develop pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and culture. The school is the focal point of its community and takes full advantage of opportunities to hold activities in the local area. For example, they use the River Gronw effectively to complete a scientific enquiry and take part in fun tug of war training sessions on the local field as part of preparations for the Llanboidy Show. As a result, pupils become increasingly aware



of, and knowledgeable about, the history of their local area and take pride in its wealth of culture and tradition.

Periods of collective worship provide opportunities for pupils to develop their moral and spiritual skills successfully. These periods encourage pupils to reflect quietly on spiritual and religious aspects. They encourage pupils to consider important values, such as pride, and express this when singing the school song with commendable passion during the morning assembly.

The school has robust strategies for promoting pupils' attendance. Staff work purposefully with families and support them effectively where their children's attendance is a cause for concern. All members of staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures and processes. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management**

In a very short period, the acting headteacher has succeeded in sharing her vision with staff, pupils and parents. This vision is based on clear and firm values that reflect the aspiration for each individual to succeed within a caring community, celebrating the unique identity of both schools in the federation. She is supported well by the governors and a team of dedicated staff who work together diligently to ensure continuous improvements. Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the federation and understand their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. As a result, a homely and supportive feeling cascades through the work of the school.

The acting headteacher has high expectations of her staff, pupils and herself. She works diligently to ensure that responsibilities are shared appropriately among the staff. They are responsible for specific aspects of the school's work, for example developing a curricular area or refining the assessment procedures. This contributes beneficially to ensuring that most pupils make sound progress in their skills over time, mainly in literacy and numeracy.

Although there has been instability in the school's leadership arrangements over a long period, leaders have succeeded in establishing a range of useful processes for monitoring aspects of the school's provision. They gather an appropriate range of first-hand evidence to evaluate the effect of this provision on pupils' standards, progress and well-being. For example, they monitor teachers' plans and pupils' work. As a result, leaders have a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They implement purposeful procedures which address the areas for improvement and give purposeful attention to wider national improvement priorities.

There are suitable procedures for managing staff's performance. They have beneficial development targets that link clearly to the school's priorities and the specific needs of staff. In turn, targets align purposefully with the professional learning activities that are organised for staff. Teachers have recently attended training to develop their ability to question pupils more effectively. This has contributed positively to developing a successful environment of inquiry across the federation. There are effective opportunities for staff to experiment with different

approaches to delivering the curriculum. For example, they refine their planning processes for providing stimulating experiences for pupils to reinforce and apply their skills across the curriculum through a range of rich activities. Staff also share good practice purposefully with other schools.

The governors are very supportive of the federation's work. They value the benefits of working in a federation and are aware of the opportunities the arrangement provides while also wanting to preserve the unique identity of both schools. By undertaking a range of relevant monitoring activities, they have a good understanding of the strengths at both sites, along with the areas for improvement. The governing body has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking, for example by encouraging pupils to drink water regularly and eat fruit each day.

Leaders manage resources and funding appropriately and review expenditure appropriately. They link expenditure wisely to the school's improvement priorities and use grants purposefully to enrich provision for pupils. For example, the pupil development grant is used to provide support programmes that focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the school.

The school has an effective relationship with parents and the wider community. For example, parents help to provide fun French sessions for the school's oldest pupils. This contributes successfully to developing their listening and speaking skills and their awareness of the advantages of multilingualism. The school is proactive in developing parents' confidence to support their children to develop their literacy skills at home. For example, teachers hold open evenings to present detailed teaching strategies and packages. Parents appreciate the sense that they can talk to any member of staff to discuss their children's well-being and education.

## 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/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- 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

## Copies of the report

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

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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