



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

A report on

Ysgol Maes Y Llan

**Maes y Llan Lane
Ruabon
Wrexham
LL14 6AE**

Date of inspection: November 2024

by

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

About Ysgol Maes Y Llan

Name of provider	Ysgol Maes Y Llan
Local authority	Wrexham County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Category 1 – English Medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	144
Pupils of statutory school age	110
Number in nursery classes	14
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 22.9%)	24.5%
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 11.1%)	8.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.7%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	12.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/10/2017
Start date of inspection	04/11/2024

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 Maes Y Llan focuses on the well-being of its pupils, creating a compassionate and inclusive environment where they feel valued and safe. The school is a calm and happy community with mutual respect between staff and students. Most pupils enjoy attending regularly and are proud of their school. The senior leaders and staff have developed the learning environment creatively, in a way that encourages pupils to explore and develop their skills indoors and outdoors.

The school supports most pupils, including those with socio-economic disadvantages and additional learning needs, to make suitable progress. Young pupils settle well and adapt to routines, benefiting from purposeful opportunities that enhance exploration, problem-solving, and language skills. They develop good phonic skills, and gain confidence in reading and writing. The curriculum is being aligned with Curriculum for Wales and focuses on developing pupils' knowledge and skills through meaningful topics. Teachers engage well in professional learning and collaboration with other schools.

Teachers provide purposeful opportunities for applying literacy skills across subjects, preparing pupils for real-life situations. However, opportunities for pupils to use their digital skills and numeracy skills are limited. Staff encourage pupils to behave well and stay engaged in lessons, although teaching is sometimes over-directed and limits independent learning. Across the school, pupils' use of the Welsh language is inconsistent, with older pupils lacking confidence when using basic sentences and phrases.

The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, and cultural understanding and emphasises healthy relationships and safety. Pupils learn about Wales and engage in community events. The school values pupils' opinions, with leadership groups contributing to school improvements, like running an outdoor library.

Partnerships with families are growing and the school provides parents with a welcoming space to engage in their children's learning.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Offer appropriate challenge and opportunities for all pupils to develop and apply their skills independently
- R2 Plan opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills progressively and to apply their digital and numeracy skills across the curriculum
- R3 Improve the teaching of Welsh across the school to enable pupils to develop their skills progressively

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Pupils' well-being is at the heart of Ysgol Maes Y Llan. Leaders and staff work diligently to ensure that the school is a compassionate and inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued. The care, support and well-being they provide is highly effective. The school is a calm and happy community, where staff and pupils show a high level of respect for each other. Most pupils enjoy school and understand the importance of attending school regularly. They are eager to respond to adults and are proud of their school. Overall, pupils feel safe and well cared for.

The headteacher and staff have created a warm, welcoming and nurturing school. Recently, they have focused their attention on improving the learning environment, and planning the learning spaces skilfully, especially for the younger pupils, to provide activities that interest and foster curiosity in learning.

Spotlight: Effective leadership to improve the learning environment to ensure that provision meets the pupils' needs

The leaders' vision was to create a learning environment where pupils could practise and consolidate their skills in new contexts. Staff have achieved this by creating defined areas that provide consistency, and sufficient space to enable pupils to move around, collaborate, and explore indoors and outdoors. This means that pupils develop their literacy, physical and creative skills well.

The majority of pupils start school in the nursery class with skills below those expected for their age. During their time in school, most pupils, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantage and pupils with ALN, make suitable progress from their starting points. This is a result of the effective support that staff provide.

The youngest pupils settle well into daily routines, and they benefit from the many purposeful opportunities, indoors and outside, that help them to explore, solve problems, and develop their language and physical skills successfully. Pupils develop their phonic skills well and, over time, many become confident readers. Teachers develop pupils' writing skills effectively to ensure that most write for a range of purposes using different genres by the time they leave the school.

The school is developing its curriculum to align with the principles of Curriculum for Wales. Teachers focus learning on planned topics and are beginning to consider the ways in which areas of learning and experience will contribute to the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. School leaders ensure that staff have opportunities to engage in meaningful professional learning and the time to collaborate with other schools to develop their ideas.

Overall, teachers plan plenty of purposeful opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum. This enables pupils to develop their skills in meaningful ways and prepares them well to use these when they are older in real life situations. However, pupils' digital skills do not develop systematically enough and there are limited opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and lessons progress at an appropriate pace. This helps to ensure that most pupils are engaged and actively involved in their learning. Most teachers use questioning skilfully to assess progress and extend learning in lessons. Teachers deploy support staff well. In the majority of lessons, teaching provides an appropriate level of support and challenge for pupils' learning. In some cases, staff tend to direct pupils' learning too much, which limits opportunities for them to learn independently does not always provide sufficient challenge.

In the youngest classes, teachers and pupils use Welsh suitably during lessons. However, the provision to support pupils' development of Welsh oracy skills across the school is inconsistent. Staff and pupils do not use Welsh regularly and most older pupils lack the confidence to speak Welsh in lessons or around the school.

Staff ensure that the curriculum supports the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding, for instance teaching them to be considerate of others, to respect differences and to understand the importance of equality. Pupils become confident individuals with a sound awareness of the importance of healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe, including online. Teachers ensure valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about Wales and their local community through visits and involvement in local projects.

The school values the opinions of pupils. The pupil leadership groups are beginning to work alongside school leaders to bring about improvements. For example, the pupils created and now run an outdoor library regularly as part of the school's focus on reading. The pupil groups help them to develop their leadership skills and take on responsibility and promotes their self-esteem effectively.

The headteacher provides effective leadership and has high expectations for pupils' well-being and behaviour. The school runs efficiently, and staff have well-defined roles. The clear processes result in a robust safeguarding culture across the school.

The headteacher and senior leaders work conscientiously to provide a clear strategic direction for the school's development, ensuring that all groups of learners have access to worthwhile learning activities. The school's governing body has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher and governing body monitor the budget carefully and allocate resources to address identified priorities within the school development plan.

The school's partnership with families is developing well. The school provides a welcoming space for parents to share social and learning experiences, for instance, and the regular presence of senior leaders and teachers at the school gates means that parents can ask questions and receive information about their children quickly and efficiently. An effective development in this area is the introduction of sessions

for parents, for example Little Numbers in Nature. This has resulted in improved parental engagement that helps them to support their children's learning effectively.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for site security 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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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