

A report on
Ysgol Esgob Morgan Voluntary Controlled Primary

**Ffordd Siarl
Ashly Court
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 0PT**

Date of inspection: March 2025

by

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

About Ysgol Esgob Morgan Voluntary Controlled Primary

Name of provider	Ysgol Esgob Morgan Voluntary Controlled Primary
Local authority	Denbighshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	None
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary school Estyn does not inspect denominational religious education or the religious content of collective worship when it is a school with a religious character. Instead, the governing body is required by law to arrange for denominational religious education and collective worship to be inspected separately.
Number of pupils on roll	117
Pupils of statutory school age	117
Number in nursery classes	NA
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%)	20.6%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having	6.0%

an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	4.3%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	8.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2009
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/04/2018
Start date of inspection	03/03/2025

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

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

Summary

The headteacher provides strong leadership with a clear vision for pupils' well-being and progress. Leaders use self-evaluation effectively to drive school improvement. The governors support the school's work well such as in the development of the curriculum and they actively monitor aspects of the school's work, including the progress pupils make in developing skills. Leaders and staff provide high levels of care and support for pupils' well-being. This is a strength of the school.

Staff create a nurturing environment in which pupils feel safe, valued, and welcomed. Throughout the school, strong relationships contribute to a calm, and respectful culture. Teachers foster positive attitudes to learning, with most pupils engaging well in activities. Most pupils enjoy school and nearly all display exemplary behaviour in class and around the school. All pupils benefit from purposeful opportunities to take on leadership roles and to contribute to the life of the school.

The school has developed a vibrant curriculum that supports pupils to engage well with their learning experiences. Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from low-income households make good progress in many aspects of their learning. However, teachers do not always provide effective feedback that enables pupils to understand their next steps in learning sufficiently.

The school fosters a strong Welsh culture, promoting pride in Welsh heritage and identity through rich opportunities in topic work. However, many pupils lack confidence in using their Welsh language speaking skills.

Leaders ensure that professional learning opportunities for staff focuses on school priorities. They use research and effective strategies to help pupils make good progress, participate well in learning, and feel happy and safe. Training on well-being and social development helps staff support all pupils by building their confidence, relationships, and the social skills they need to thrive.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Ensure pupils receive effective feedback that helps them understand how to improve their work.
- R2. Further develop pupils' confidence and independence in speaking Welsh.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The headteacher provides effective leadership with a clear and ambitious vision for pupils' well-being and progress. Leaders put pupils' well-being at the heart of the school's work. They create a nurturing and aspirational learning environment with a rich curriculum that meets pupils' needs appropriately. The school's strong partnership with parents and the local community has helped the school create a high-quality outdoor area for pupils to enjoy and learn in.

The school's governors engage regularly in school life and have a good understanding of the school's improvement priorities. They play an integral role in decision-making and act successfully as a critical friend to leaders when monitoring and evaluating the school's work. They play a key role in curriculum development and their work in evaluating the quality of provision has led to improvements in pupils' enjoyment of and progress in reading.

Staff ensure all pupils feel safe, valued and welcomed as members of the school community. This is a strength of the school. Nearly all pupils enjoy school and appreciate the wide range of experiences on offer. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong, creating a calm and respectful atmosphere where everyone values each other's views. Most pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and engage well in activities, contributing to the happy and motivating learning environment. A strong aspect of the school's work is the plentiful opportunities for all pupils to take on leadership roles and make valuable and authentic contributions to school life.

As a School of Sanctuary, the school cultivates empathy, tolerance, and acceptance, enriching pupils' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural understanding. Through topic work on themes such as displacement and rights, pupils explore the impact of conflict and emotions, both on themselves and on others. They develop a deep sense of fairness, equality, and the ability to address injustice calmly and thoughtfully.

Teachers collaborate to plan a broad and balanced curriculum that stimulates and engages pupils, offering a variety of activities to challenge and support skills development across the curriculum. They effectively integrate a variety of approaches including opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups, supporting them to develop

their critical thinking and teamwork. Staff know their pupils well, providing opportunities for independence and collaboration through group projects and pupil-led learning. Lessons are well-paced, and teachers use questioning effectively to engage pupils and check their understanding. Teachers provide pupils with clear explanations of their expectations and useful success criteria.

Most pupils including those from low-income backgrounds and with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress in learning. Most pupils develop outstanding listening, speaking, and reading skills. They build on these skills to become articulate and confident speakers and fluent, analytical readers. Many pupils' writing skills improve suitably over time, but where teachers do not provide effective feedback to support pupils to improve their writing, they make slower progress. Staff provide strong opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills. Most pupils use technology confidently for learning, problem-solving, and creativity while applying it safely and responsibly for communication, research, and presentation. Most pupils demonstrate strong mathematical knowledge and understanding.

Spotlight: Authentic opportunities for pupils' to apply their numeracy skills

To improve their financial education and their understanding of the world of work, older pupils take on a range of responsibilities across the school through authentic learning experiences. They apply for roles such as shop assistant in the craft shop or groundskeeper for the school's outdoor areas, developing key skills in budgeting, writing job applications, and interviewing techniques. These real-life contexts enhance their numeracy skills through costing and budgeting tasks while also building confidence, communication skills, and a sense of responsibility.

The school has successfully developed a strong Welsh culture that promotes pride in Welsh heritage and culture. Staff provide rich opportunities for pupils to learn about influential historical figures, such as Owain Glyndŵr. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their Welsh language speaking skills. While they generally use sentence patterns correctly in Welsh lessons, they lack confidence and independence when speaking the Welsh language.

Staff provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills well, including through art and music. Pupils investigate the work of artists and use a wide range of media. They enjoy extracurricular experiences including music workshops and dance classes.

The headteacher places a strong emphasis on developing leadership across the school, distributing roles and responsibilities effectively. Leaders ensure that professional learning is closely aligned with the school's priorities and informed by research and best practice.

This approach has a positive impact on pupils' progress and engagement. The recent training on developing pupils' oracy skills, supports nearly all pupils to develop their discussion and debate skills confidently. Leaders use monitoring processes effectively to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Spotlight: Effective Whole-School Training and Partnerships to Support All Pupils

Leaders provide highly successful training for all staff through strong external partnerships, designed to improve pupils' well-being and social development. Staff are equipped with effective strategies to support pupils to self-regulate. This consistent approach enables pupils to build positive relationships, and develop the social skills needed to thrive both in school and beyond.

The school has robust systems in place to identify pupils with additional ALN. Staff make effective use of specialist support and guidance. The provision for pupils with ALN is well-planned, and monitored, enabling pupils to make strong progress towards their individual learning and development targets.

Although the school promotes healthy eating and drinking through its curriculum too many pupils bring unhealthy snacks to eat at breaktimes.

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/carers 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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