



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg  
Colcot Road  
Barry  
CF62 8YU**

**Date of inspection: March 2019**

**by**

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

## About Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg is a designated Welsh-medium school that is maintained by Vale of Glamorgan County Council. Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg merged with Ysgol Nant Talog in September 2015 to create a school that provides education for pupils from 3 to 19 years old. There are a total of 1,120 pupils on roll, 238 pupils in Years 1-6 and 882 in Years 7-13. There are 128 pupils in the sixth form.

The school is situated in the town of Barry. Pupils come from a wide area, which includes Barry, Wenvoe, Rhoose, Penarth, Sully, Dinas Powys, Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and St Athan. Pupils from other schools in the catchment area transfer to the secondary school in Year 7.

Most pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds and 7.3% are eligible for free school meals, which is much lower than the national average. Thirty-nine per cent (39%) of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes, but most pupils speak Welsh fluently. The school admits pupils from the full range of ability. Thirteen per cent (13%) of pupils have additional learning needs, and the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is below 1%. Both figures are below the national average.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2016. The senior leadership team includes the headteacher, deputy headteacher, three assistant headteachers and a business manager.

The school is currently a pioneer school and is working with the Welsh Government and other schools to proceed with developments in relation to the curriculum in the Science and Technology Area of Learning and Experience, and professional learning.

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

Robust leadership has ensured a strong sense of pride and belonging among pupils and staff at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg. The school is a highly inclusive, caring and Welsh community. Overall, pupils behave excellently, show outstanding attitudes towards their work and take pride in their Welshness. The excellent care and guidance that the school provides corresponds fully with the school motto, “Dyro dy law i mi ac fe awn i ben y mynydd” (Place your hand in mine and together we will go to the mountain top).

The positive relationship between teachers and pupils is an exceptional feature. This succeeds in creating a safe environment for pupils to discuss, take risks, make mistakes and learn. During their time at the school, most pupils make secure progress in their skills, understanding and knowledge.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve standards, particularly in key stage 4
- R2 Ensure that pupils in the secondary department develop their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum
- R3 Improve the school's monitoring and self-evaluation processes, and ensure that leaders evaluate provision in line with its effect on pupils' standards and achievement
- R4 Address the financial deficit

## **What happens next**

The school will produce 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 pupils' attitudes towards learning and Welshness, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

During their time at the school, most pupils make secure progress in their skills and understanding. They recall previous learning successfully, and many apply it effectively to new situations. For example, in their music lessons, Year 8 pupils link vocabulary and phrases that they have learnt in drama lessons, such as 'osgo' (poise), 'ystum' (gesture) and 'cymeriad' (character) skilfully when considering their compositions. In a minority of cases, pupils make very strong progress in their skills, understanding and knowledge, for example as Year 6 pupils compare the oppressive leadership style of Hitler and the emotional leadership style of Churchill.

Most pupils acquire the Welsh language soon after they start at the school. During the foundation phase, they make exceptionally good progress in their oracy skills. For example, they use clear expression and vary their tone of voice effectively when conducting interviews with eyewitnesses for a news bulletin. Across key stage 2, most pupils have exceptionally good oral skills in both languages.

In the secondary department, most pupils listen attentively and respectfully to the teacher and their peers. Many are keen to contribute orally to class, groups and pair discussions. These pupils speak Welsh and English to a high standard and convey their views confidently and maturely. An example of this is that pupils, in their history lessons, discuss and come to logical conclusions about whether John F. Kennedy was a strong and courageous president. Across the school, many pupils speak maturely and adapt their language skilfully, depending on the audience.

During their time at the school, most pupils develop as confident readers in both languages. In the foundation phase, they enjoy reading and discuss their stories and work enthusiastically. By the end of key stage 2, most analyse texts and summarise information highly successfully, for example when discussing current affairs in the news. In the secondary department, most pupils use a variety of reading strategies confidently in order to gather information and come to sensible conclusions. Many use their higher order reading skills, such as comparing, summarising and analysing effectively. For example, sixth-form pupils are probing and skilful in their interpretation of techniques as they discuss whether 'A Streetcar Named Desire' is a traditional tragedy.

Most pupils develop early writing skills successfully; for example, in the reception class, pupils use simple words to describe an artist's picture. They build soundly on their skills and, by the end of key stage 2, many write to a high standard in a wide range of writing forms. They produce pieces that succeed in engaging and holding the reader's interest, for example when writing about the childhood experiences of evacuees during the Second World War.

Many pupils in the secondary department write extended pieces effectively and in a variety of forms, such as when Year 9 pupils write a factual report about flooding in Dhaka, in Bangladesh, in their geography lessons. They have a sound understanding of audience and register. They have a wide vocabulary in Welsh, English and the foreign languages that they study. A minority of pupils have rich,

sophisticated vocabulary, and a few pupils have a particular talent for writing and creativity. However, a few pupils do not have a sound enough understanding of audience. A minority, including able pupils, make frequent spelling and grammatical errors.

Most pupils in the foundation phase make good progress in their mathematical development. They use their skills successfully when weighing different foods in the mathematics area. Across key stage 2, most apply their numeracy skills confidently when working across the curriculum. A notable example of this is the way in which more able pupils use a scale correctly when calculating the distance between different stages of the Tour de France.

Many secondary pupils have a strong grasp of the concepts of number and measurement. They calculate and handle equations correctly, for example when calculating temperature, volume and pressure in their physics lessons. Many use their number skills successfully to solve everyday problems. For example, Year 7 pupils calculate profit and loss confidently when selling produce. Many pupils apply their data-handling skills effectively in various situations across the curriculum.

Across the primary department, most pupils make strong progress in their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In the foundation phase, most use a tablet skilfully to record videos, and check their content to ensure that they speak clearly. In key stage 2, many create a database successfully in order to summarise and analyse information that they find on the internet.

Overall, pupils in the secondary department do not develop their ICT skills well enough across the curriculum, particularly the advanced skills of programming, using spreadsheets and producing databases.

Many pupils make good progress in developing their thinking skills. In Year 3, pupils develop their thinking skills by solving numerical problems to calculate how many boats are needed to clean oil pollution at sea.

Most pupils make strong progress in their creative skills. For example, Year 10 pupils create pieces of artwork of a high standard on the theme 'Ar Lan y Môr' (At the seaside), by emulating the work of artists such as Alfred Morris and Alison Moger, and adapting the techniques they have learnt to work on other themes.

Most pupils make good progress in their physical skills. For example, pupils in the foundation phase develop robust fine motor skills by cutting out shapes and creating two- and three-dimensional shapes from straws and clay.

Over the last three years, the school's performance has improved in most of the performance indicators in key stage 4. In 2018, the school's performance was higher than that of other similar schools in many of the indicators, and similar in the remaining indicators.

Overall, in key stage 4, performance in the capped points score and the level 2 indicator including English or Welsh and mathematics is broadly similar to that of similar schools over the last three years. Over the same period, the proportion of pupils who succeed in gaining five grade A\*-A GCSEs or equivalent is close to that in similar schools.

At the end of key stage 4, the performance of boys and girls has generally been similar to that in similar schools since 2016. Over the last three years, the performance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals has varied but, overall, is slightly lower than that of their peers in similar schools.

At the end of Year 11, nearly all pupils remain in full-time education or training.

The performance of sixth-form pupils is strong. The wider points score and the proportion of pupils who gain three A\*-A grades and three A\*-C grades are consistently higher than in similar schools.

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

Pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning at the school are a notable strength. Most pupils show exceptional pride in their school, and develop as ambitious and confident learners. Nearly all have very positive attitudes towards school life. They take pride in their Welshness and appreciate greatly being part of a close-knit and caring Welsh community.

Nearly all pupils show very high levels of respect towards other pupils and staff. They are highly welcoming towards visitors and interact maturely with adults. Nearly all pupils behave particularly politely and considerately in lessons and around the school. Most pupils have extremely mature social skills.

Nearly all pupils' positive attitude towards their work is an excellent feature. They show obvious curiosity and genuine enjoyment in their lessons. They undertake their work diligently and show resilience when facing challenges. They maintain their concentration and persevere with tasks very successfully. They take ownership of their own learning and show very strong independent learning skills.

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know whom to approach if they have any concerns. Most are confident that the school will respond to their concerns. Overall, they have a sound understanding of the importance of staying safe on the internet and the need to keep their personal information secure by using passwords.

Many pupils participate enthusiastically in the excellent range of learning experiences and extra-curricular activities that are provided, including musical activities and performance clubs. Pupils' dedication to these activities and their aspiration to excel in their performances is an excellent feature.

Nearly all pupils understand clearly the importance of eating healthily and keeping healthy. This is reinforced exceptionally well in a very wide range of activities, for example in regular physical education sessions and when competing against other schools. A majority of pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 take part in extra-curricular sports regularly, including fitness sessions before the start of the school day. In the primary department, nearly all pupils take part enthusiastically in the 'Nerth Ein Traed' daily walking sessions. This contributes towards developing their fitness very effectively.

Many pupils are very willing to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities. They make an excellent contribution to the school's life and work, for example as members of the cabinet and the school council. Many other groups, such as the eco council,

Welshness council, language mentors and digital wizards, also make a valuable contribution to the school's work. For example, pupils in the primary department contribute to the decision making process of selecting the theme for work projects and how they want to contribute to the community. An exceptional feature is the Welshness committee, which has a very positive effect on promoting social use of the Welsh language across the school. They organise gigs at the school, and the Welsh language ambassadors work closely with younger pupils to promote the use of the Welsh language as a way of life. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously and act as mature role-models when supporting younger pupils with literacy and numeracy activities. This has a positive effect on pupils' skills across the school. Many pupils make purposeful decisions in relation to their learning. For example, as a result of pupils' views, a training session was organised for staff on how to give effective feedback. As a result, it is a specific focus for the school's development in terms of teaching and learning.

Nearly all pupils are developing exceptionally well as ethical and tolerant citizens. Many are hard-working and creative when organising a wide range of activities to support a wide variety of local, national and international charities. For example, the school holds a special race during sports day, in which nearly all pupils and members of staff take part to raise money for a local cancer charity, which creates a close and beneficial link between the school and the charity.

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

One of the school's strengths is the positive and productive relationship between staff and pupils. Most teachers have high expectations in terms of behaviour, and create a safe environment for pupils to discuss, take risks and learn from their mistakes. They are effective language models who correct pupils' language skilfully and sensitively. This has a very positive effect on the accuracy and high standard of pupils' spoken language.

Many teachers are enthusiastic about the areas that they teach. This, in addition to the wide range of experiences that they provide, helps to ensure that pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Many plan lessons carefully to include activities that provide a suitable level of challenge and valuable opportunities for pupils to think deeply. In these sessions, there is a good balance between activities that are led by adults and time for pupils to work independently or in groups to consolidate their learning. Many teachers use relevant and interesting resources that succeed in engaging pupils' interest. They are effective communicators who explain concepts or task requirements clearly. These teachers use their understanding of individual pupils' needs skilfully to monitor progress closely and intervene purposefully, where necessary.

In a minority of lessons in which teaching is excellent, teachers use their subject expertise highly skilfully to ensure that pupils make very strong progress and to engage their genuine interest. They plan a series of structured activities that develop pupils' understanding and independence highly successfully. They increase the level of challenge skilfully when pupils are ready to be stretched further.

In a few cases, teaching does not succeed in ensuring that pupils make the expected progress. In these cases, teachers do not ensure that the level of challenge is



suitable for pupils' ability, or they do not build well enough on pupils' prior learning. In a very few cases, teachers do not correct pupils' misconceptions in a timely enough manner.

Most teachers provide valuable oral feedback on pupils' work and effort. Many question pupils skilfully in order to test their knowledge. However, only in a minority of cases do teachers ask pupils probing questions in order to deepen their understanding.

Many teachers provide purposeful written feedback on pupils' work, which enables them to know how to improve. However, in a minority of cases, teachers' comments are not specific enough to allow pupils to know exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum from the foundation phase to the sixth form. Staff in the primary department have very sound knowledge of the principles of the foundation phase. They plan rich opportunities for pupils to reinforce their new skills regularly across the learning areas. For example, they plan valuable opportunities to develop fine motor skills by picking up small balls from the water tub with various tools. Learning groups in key stage 3 are structured effectively to support pupils who need additional support. The most able pupils are stretched and mentored skilfully to maximise their progress. For example, pupils in Years 8 and 9 who are more able in mathematics receive additional extension sessions.

The school provides a good variety of option subjects for pupils in key stage 4 and the sixth form, and adapts the curriculum purposefully to meet the needs of a variety of pupils. Pupils receive comprehensive advice and guidance when selecting their subjects.

As a pioneer school for the Curriculum for Wales, teachers plan and trial new activities and learning experiences confidently. Thematic projects, such as the work on Patagonia in Years 5 and 6, and 'Fi, Fy Mro, Fy Myd' in Year 7, integrate experiences that develop different skills well.

The school ensures effective progression in the curriculum between key stages 2 and 3 within its own school and through robust transition arrangements with other primary schools in the catchment area. However, it does not take full advantage of the opportunities that come from being an all-age school when developing the curriculum, for example by sharing expertise and resources.

The school plans thoroughly to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum throughout the whole age range. An effective example of this is the 'Llwyfan Llafar' scheme, which provides rich opportunities to develop pupils' oracy skills. Teachers plan purposeful opportunities to develop ICT skills increasingly in the primary department. For example, pupils in the foundation phase film themselves independently when describing the taste of different foods. However, provision to develop pupils' ICT skills in the secondary department is not comprehensive enough.

The school provides beneficial literacy and numeracy intervention programmes from the foundation phase to key stage 3. The 'Mêts Maths' and 'Menter Maths' programmes, and reading schemes led by sixth-form students, provide valuable support for younger pupils to develop their skills.

An exceptionally rich range of extra-curricular experiences is provided for pupils through various clubs, visits to the local area and beyond, and sports experiences. These opportunities include a Debating Club within the secondary English department and an extensive selection of sports clubs, including orienteering, table tennis and team sports. These experiences have a positive influence on pupils' wellbeing, Welshness and motivation, and develop their social skills particularly well.

Provision to develop pupils' pride in the Welsh language is central to all of the school's work. The school provides a wide range of valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their appreciation of Welsh culture and heritage, including studying myths and legends, and an annual trip to visit important landmarks in Welsh history.

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

Ensuring pupils' wellbeing is at the heart of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg's work. An emphasis on nurturing respectful, caring and responsible citizens, and providing care and support of the highest quality, permeates throughout all of the school's work. Staff's exceptional dedication to supporting pupils' wellbeing contributes beneficially to the excellent behaviour of nearly all pupils, their respectful and welcoming demeanour and their positive attitudes to learning.

Support for pupils with emotional, health and social needs is exceptional. On the whole, the school's staff have exceptional knowledge of pupils' requirements. The wellbeing centre and the 'cwtsh' provide a safe haven that provide a comprehensive range of support, such as social skills, specialist plans and mentoring sessions with learning coaches. A notable example is the nurture programme, which supports and develops Year 8 pupils as they address daily demands and challenges. Beneficial mindfulness sessions in the wellbeing centre help to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem. On the whole, this frequent support helps pupils to engage positively with life, both within the school and beyond.

The school has comprehensive systems to track academic progress, and this information is used effectively to identify different target groups. There are successful systems to track pupils' attendance and wellbeing. Staff use these systems particularly well in order to identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving, and implement purposeful interventions in order to address their individual needs. The effective work of the attendance officer and pastoral team has ensured consistently high attendance over time. Extremely comprehensive wellbeing provision, which considers all pupils, includes work with partnerships with a wide range of external agencies, such as purposeful use of youth wellbeing services, Young Carers and "Bobbies on Call".

Arrangements for pupils with additional learning needs are excellent. The provision map is comprehensive, and individual education plans ensure that the school provides tailored assistance to support these pupils through a wide range of interventions. The school monitors the effect of support for pupils with additional learning needs closely, and ensures that this provision is adapted to the needs of these pupils.

The school has a positive relationship with parents. Effective communication systems ensure that the school and parents work in partnership in order to support

the academic development and wellbeing of all individuals. Interim and end-of-year reports for parents are personal and comprehensive, and include useful and specific improvement targets. The school provides parents with information and support of a high standard by communicating regularly about attendance and by providing weekly open sessions for parents to discuss issues in relation to their children's wellbeing.

Provision for developing pupils' creative and expressive skills, and their understanding of culture, is an exceptional feature of the school's work. There is a wide range of valuable opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities and clubs, for example the performing arts, cultural events and extensive musical performance, such as the musicals 'We Will Rock You' and 'Les Miserables'.

The school has robust arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily. A very wide range of physical activities is provided, including before and after-school clubs, which succeed in promoting pupils' fitness and igniting their enthusiasm towards staying healthy.

Valuable and numerous opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to activities within the community and to raise money for different charities. A notable example is the regular opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to visit Barry hospital to socialise with the elderly and teach them ICT skills.

There are rich opportunities for pupils to express their opinions, shoulder responsibilities and undertake leadership roles. For example, through the school cabinet and various forums, pupils undertake various roles enthusiastically, which develop them to become active and responsible citizens. They contribute confidently to policies such as anti-bullying and feedback on work.

Pupils' moral, social and spiritual development is supported well during valuable pastoral periods, personal and social education sessions and assemblies. The important contributions of external speakers contribute to pupils' understanding of a wide range of social and wellbeing issues. The school develops positive attitudes towards equality and diversity skilfully. As a result of this valuable provision, pupils develop as responsible, tolerant and respectful citizens.

The school has very robust transition arrangements in order to ensure that new pupils settle quickly at the school. The school provides valuable guidance in order for pupils to make informed decisions about their learning and career choices in the future. This is reinforced successfully through purposeful mentoring.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

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

The headteacher's vision is based firmly on the mission of skilful teamwork to create a successful and inclusive learning community. The school's strategic objectives, which focus on developing the principles of the Curriculum for Wales within a Welsh culture, support this vision very well. There is a clear sense of co-operation among staff, and all of the school's stakeholders embrace the vision and convey pride in being members of the school community.

Robust leadership has had a positive influence on important aspects of the school's work. These include standards in the primary department and key stage 5, pupils' attendance and positive attitudes, and a strong sense of Welshness.

The senior leadership team and extended senior leadership team have suitable, specific responsibilities, and lines of accountability are clear. They act efficiently to support the headteacher and to set a robust strategic direction for the school's work. Meetings have a consistent and regular structure. These meetings focus clearly on standards, teaching and the school's priorities for improvement.

The governing body is very enthusiastic and works effectively with leaders to set a strategic direction for the school. Members have an appropriate overall understanding of the school's performance. This enables them to challenge the school and develops them to become critical friends.

Leaders at all levels have comprehensive knowledge of what happens in the school from day to day, and a good understanding of the school's strengths and a majority of its weaknesses. They have high expectations and share positive aspects of provision effectively among the staff in order to stimulate continuous improvement. An example of this is the beneficial meetings to share good practice that were organised after the school's teachers observed each other in triads. However, leaders do not have a clear and detailed enough picture of all aspects for improvement, and they do not give enough attention to evaluating the school's work in terms of its effect. For example, when evaluating lessons and scrutinising books, they do not give sufficient attention to evaluating the quality of provision in terms of its effect on pupils' standards and skills. As a result, planning for improvement at whole-school level, or departmental level, is not always incisive or specific enough.

All of the school's stakeholders contribute to the process of gathering an appropriate range of useful evidence, which feeds into the school's self-evaluation processes. All members of staff are involved in the comprehensive arrangements for scrutinising books, and there is an appropriate programme of lesson observations and learning walks, which includes staff and governors. There are beneficial forums to seek the views of parents and staff, and numerous opportunities for pupils to express their opinions on departmental and whole-school issues. There are clear examples of pupils' views influencing decisions, for example changes to tests in mathematics, and introducing boys' hockey in physical education.

A majority of leaders have a suitable understanding of the significance of a range of relevant data. However, overall, leaders at all levels do not have a sound enough understanding of data in all of its detail, or of the school's performance in comparison with that of similar schools.

The school has a strong ethos of supporting professional learning. Staff benefit from a wide range of valuable opportunities to develop professionally. For example, training on developing pupils' wellbeing for assistants in the primary department has a positive effect on improving pupils' emotional wellbeing. The school works successfully with schools and other education organisations in order to expand provision for staff's professional development. The school's professional development programme is based firmly on improving aspects of teaching. Beneficial opportunities for teachers to work in triads have led to improvements in

aspects of teaching. Overall, performance management arrangements are suitable, link directly to the school's priorities and lead to purposeful professional learning opportunities.

The headteacher, business manager and governors manage the school's funding appropriately. However, there has been a deficit in the budget for two years. A plan has been approved by the local authority to eliminate the deficit within the next two years.

The school is staffed appropriately and good use is made of the grounds and buildings. Accommodation on the primary site is of a particularly high standard. The school uses grants appropriately. The use of the pupil development grant has had a positive effect on the attendance and wellbeing of the few pupils who are eligible for free school meals, but has not had enough of an effect on their standards in key stage 4 over time.

## 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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