



Deep Dive: Heol Goffa onsite Nurse Provision

Quality & Safety Intelligence Group

February 2026

The purpose of this report is to provide the Quality & Safety Intelligence Group with an update following the recent publication of an Estyn Inspection report of Ysgol Heol Goffa.

Timeline

Week commencing 24th November – Estyn inspectors contacted both the Chair of Governors and Director of Education regarding safeguarding concerns about staff undertaking medical care.

17th December 2025 - Estyn addressed their safeguarding concerns in formal correspondence with the Chair of Governors for Ysgol Heol Goffa. This states that “Staff, including teaching assistants, are routinely required to provide a high level of medical care for pupils with complex medical and potentially life-threatening conditions. This is a joint responsibility of the local authority and the school”.

15th January 2026 – Initial contact from the Director of Education to the Health Board to inform of the concerns raised by Estyn and to inform the report would be published on the 29th January 2026.

19th January 2026 – Health Board representatives met with Ysgol Heol Goffa and Welsh Government officials as part of the formal review of the "Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs" Welsh Government Guidance. The discussion steered around the Estyn report due to be published and several actions agreed.



29th January 2026 – Estyn report published which states "The lack of a dedicated school nurse affects the level of ongoing medical support available for pupils with complex health needs. In similar schools, a nurse helps coordinate care and support families. Having this role would offer parents more reassurance and help pupils receive consistent, well-coordinated medical support during the school day".

4th February 2026 – All Health Board actions achieved as agreed with the School and Welsh Government other than care plans. This specifically relates to Epilepsy Care plans which is a known Service Risk. All care plans relating to the 12 children with complex health needs have been reviewed. In addition, the Service has established an assurance dashboard to manage training and care planning. The service has rolled this out to Portfield School in Haverfordwest with mainstream schools to be added shortly.

5th February 2026 -Health Board Senior Leads met with Director of Education, Chair of Governors and School Headteacher. Education communicated this was a HB responsibility. A series of meetings agreed in the coming month. An action set on the 19th January remains outstanding by Education to clarify their insurance arrangements.

6th February 2026 – Discussion held with Health Board Corporate Legal team to ascertain our legal duty in relation to insurance. These discussions are now ongoing between Health Board and Education legal colleagues.

10th February 2026 – Health Board Leads met with Welsh Government Health officials to discuss progress and ascertain Welsh Government stance,

Background



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Ysgol Heol Goffa is a special school situated in Llanelli, maintained by Carmarthenshire local authority. The school provides placements for pupils aged from 3 to 19 years with overlapping additional learning needs. Currently, there are 127 pupils on roll which is an increase of 64% since the last inspection. 12 pupils have physical health needs which include gastrostomy feeding inclusive of blended diet, catheterisation and tracheostomy care.

Current arrangements include:-

A dedicated Specialist Community Public Health Nurse-School Nurse to meet the health and wellbeing needs of children and young people. The role has a public health approach with the emphasis on prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities.

Access to the Childrens Community Nursing Service in Carmarthenshire for support with named nurses allocated for each pupil with physical health needs. This is via a central monitored telephone and generic email in the absence of the named nurse.

Ongoing training education and support from the Childrens Community Nursing Service which includes care coordination, care planning and support to inform individual healthcare plans for the 12 pupils with physical health needs.



Training Governance – Childrens Community Nursing Service

Risk assessments are undertaken and care plans developed.

Each staff member identified by the school is trained through a series of sessions which include

- Theory training,
- Observation training
- Competency sign off

School staff must demonstrate **competence and confidence** in undertaking the task to achieve competency sign off.

Training and competencies are reviewed regularly but at a minimum annually.

Ysgol Heol Goffa receives approximately 422 hours of training across the school calendar year, equating to 33 staff, some of which will only require awareness training.

No reported clinical/safeguarding incidents by Education staff in the last 3 years.

The service is developing a calendar of training dates until the end of the Summer Term to be shared with the School as well as monthly roundtable meetings established inhouse by our Practice Development nurse to monitor training.



All Wales picture

Initial benchmarking across Wales has found that all other Special Schools have an element of onsite nurse provision, which are usually aligned to the Childrens Community Nursing Service.

Each service model varies in terms of skill mix, roles and responsibilities, service delivery and funding and each service model has reported challenges.

Whilst staff are employed by the Health Boards across Wales, funding varies with some being solely health funded, some joint LA/health funded, and some service level agreements funded solely by local authorities. The Health Board employs a registered nurse who is based in Portfield School in Pembrokeshire, this is funded via service level agreement (0.48 WTE per week registered nurse) by the School/ Local Authority.

This makes Ysgol Heol Goffa an outlier across Wales with only Betsi Cadwalader yet to confirm their service model.

Additional considerations

Service level agreement in Portfield School Haverfordwest is due for review, early indication the School may not renew.

Children with similar health needs as those attending special schools also attend mainstream schools where there is further disparity across Wales as there are various models to meet their needs, this is reflective of the Hywel Dda picture.

Incorrect use of 'School Nurse' and the SCPHN SN role by Education and Estyn



Hywel Dda Childrens Community Nursing Service – Carmarthenshire

Current caseload

Current caseload of complex children & young people stands at approximately 150 for the Carmarthenshire team, which does not include short-term care as this fluctuates on a weekly basis.

Continuing care packages in Carmarthenshire stands at 2, with another onboarding. Multiple referrals currently going through Decision Support Tool for recommendations of additional care required.

Currently the Childrens Community Nursing Service delivers :-

- Short term care/Care closer to home
- Long term care
- Management of Continuing Care package (2 in Carmarthenshire, 1 onboarding)
- Training and education responsibility for caseload for parents/carers/family units, education staff, respite and social care staff. For the most complex children and young people this equates to up to 10 people per child or young person requiring annual training.

Current Carmarthenshire service establishment

4.32 WTE registered staff (0.92 WTE is Newly Qualified and a at risk post due to streamlining requirement)



National Guidance

A School Nursing Framework for Wales - part 2 Nursing in Special Schools (2018)

"Each special school should have access to at least one dedicated health board employed special school nurse who will be a registered nurse. They may come from a variety of backgrounds but should be able to demonstrate competencies that enable delivery of the standards. A special school nurses may come from one of the following backgrounds; learning disability nurse, children's nurse or occasionally CAMH's trained mental health nurse; some may hold registration as specialist school nursing qualification Specialist Community Public Health Nurses SCPHN (SN)."

Supporting Learners with Health care Needs (2018)

NHS Wales school health nursing service, third sector organisations and other specialist services.

Healthcare and practical support can be found from a number of organisations. Education settings have access to a health advice service.

The scope and type of support the service can offer may include:

- offering advice on the development of Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)
- assisting in the identification of the training required for the education setting to successfully implement IHPs
- supporting staff to implement a learner IHPs through advice and liaison with other healthcare, social care and third sector professionals.



Recommendations



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The Quality & Safety Intelligence Group is provided assurance that all children at Ysgol Heol Goffa receive a safe standard of care and be alerted to ongoing discussions regarding additional funding to provide on-site school provision, noting that the Estyn safeguarding letter articulates the concern of no on-site provision is the joint responsibility of the Local Authority and the school.

Education have requested an on-site nurse, current funded Health Board establishment will not manage this additional workload to meet this request. This will need to be subject to additional agreed funding.

Service modelling needs to consider that one nurse would become a single point of failure in the event of absence.

Recommendation - A service model to be developed and co-produced with Education with funding to be agreed. This needs to consider that all National Guidance regarding Special Schools is currently under review by Welsh Government.



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The Duty of Candour

Openness and honesty should be at the heart of every relationship between those providing treatment and care and those experiencing it.



DIOGEL | CYNALIADWY | HYGYRCH | CAREDIG
SAFE | SUSTAINABLE | ACCESSIBLE | KIND

The six domains of quality



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Safe

Our health care system is a high quality, highly reliable and safe system that avoids preventable harm, maximising the things that go right and learning from when things go wrong to prevent them occurring again. People's health, safety and welfare are actively promoted and protected; risks are identified and monitored, where possible, risks to safety are reduced or prevented and this is delivered by appropriate numbers of suitably skilled workforce



Effeithlon
Efficient

Our health care system takes a value-based approach to improve outcomes that matter most to people in a way that is as sustainable as possible and avoids waste. We make the most effective use of resources to achieve best value in an efficient way. We only do what is needed and undertake treatments targeted at those likely to gain the most benefit, ensuring any interventions represent the best value that will improve outcomes for people.



Amserol
Timely

Our health care system ensures people have access to the high-quality advice, guidance and care they need quickly and easily, in the right place, first time. We care for those with the greatest health need first, and where treatment is identified as necessary, we treat people based on their identified and agreed clinical priority



Teg
Equitable

Our health care system provides everyone with an equal opportunity to attain their full potential for a healthy life which does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as age, gender, sexual orientation, race, language preference, disability, religion or beliefs, socio-economic status or political affiliation; the organisation that provides care; or location where care is delivered. We embed equality and human rights in our health care system and promote and protect the welfare and safety of children and adults who become vulnerable or at risk at any time.



Effeithiol
Effective

Our health care system ensures decision-making, care and treatment reflects evidence-based best practice, to ensure that people receive the right care to achieve the optimal outcomes possible for them and that matter to them. We design transformative, evidenced-based, whole-of-life pathways that cover prevention, care and treatment, rehabilitation and embed these into local service delivery.



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person centred

Our health care system meets people's needs and ensures that their preferences, needs and values guide decision-making that is made in partnership between individuals and the workforce. We care about the well-being of individuals, their families, carers and our staff. We ensure that everyone is always treated with kindness, empathy and compassion and we respect their privacy, dignity and human rights. We are committed to working better together to put people and their families at the centre of decisions, seeing them as experts working alongside professionals to get the best outcome and experience.