A report on

Argoed High School

Bryn Road
Bryn Y Baal
Nr Mold
Flintshire
CH7 6RY

Date of inspection: September 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Argoed High School

Name of provider	Argoed High School
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	504
Pupils of statutory school age	502
Number in sixth form	No
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 Secondary is 20.2%)	17.5%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Secondary is 17.8%)	22.9%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/01/2016
Start date of inspection	25/09/2023

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.

Overview

Ysgol Uwchradd Argoed is a close-knit and caring community. The inclusive and nurturing nature of the school ensures that most pupils feel safe, behave well and take pride in their school. The positive working relationships between pupils and staff, and the pastoral care the school provides for its pupils are notable strengths. Pupils know that there is a trusted adult to whom they can turn if they need support. As a result, most pupils have good levels of well-being and are developing well as considerate, well-rounded citizens who have positive attitudes to learning.

The school's curriculum is well planned and meets the needs and aspirations of nearly all pupils. Pupils at the learning resource base are well catered for and integrate successfully with the mainstream provision for substantial periods of the school day. Pupils with additional learning needs make sound progress. This is due to the considerable efforts of staff to ensure that these pupils are provided with the necessary support to succeed, though processes to record, track and monitor standards of well-being and provision for ALN are not currently robust.

The school is well led. The headteacher has a clear vision and is highly respected by the school community. He is ably supported by leaders at all levels. Leaders have a secure understanding of the school's general strengths and areas for improvement. They plan well for improvement, and this has led to improvements in important areas of the school's work, such as the quality of teaching, and pupils' behaviour and attendance. However, self-evaluation activities do not always focus closely enough on the impact of provision and therefore leaders do not have the detailed information necessary to plan for further improvement. There are clear lines of accountability and staff at all levels have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. The governing body offers strong support and suitable challenge to leaders. Together with the headteacher and business manager, governors manage resources effectively.

The school's professional learning offer is well planned and is having a positive impact on the practice of staff, particularly in terms of teaching practice. In many instances, teaching is effective in ensuring that pupils make secure progress in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders have established a strong culture for reading at the school. Many pupils have good literacy and digital skills with pupils developing these skills well in their English, and ICT lessons, though there are not enough high quality opportunities for pupils to develop these skills across the curriculum. The provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills is underdeveloped.

Recommendations

R1   Strengthen self-evaluation processes so that they always focus on the impact of provision

R2   Improve the cross-curricular provision for the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills

R3   Strengthen processes to track and monitor pupils' well-being and the quality of provision for ALN

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

In lessons, many pupils, including those pupils who have additional learning needs, make secure progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills. A few make particularly strong progress. Many pupils have sound recall of prior learning and a majority apply their knowledge well to different contexts. For example, they use their understanding of the different types of energy sources available to explain how the National Grid maintains a reliable supply of electricity to consumers. A few pupils do not make as much progress as they could. This is due to these pupils not engaging fully in their learning or because of shortcomings in teaching. Pupils in the learning resource base make sound progress. They develop their thinking, social and emotional skills well, for example, when exploring how to deal with situations of conflict and the impact of different responses.

Many pupils are keen and willing contributors to class discussions. For example, in engineering they identify and discuss possible solutions to hazards in a children's playground. Many pupils listen carefully and respectfully to staff and each other. They follow instructions promptly and respond in a focused manner to teachers' questions. Many pupils have a sound general and subject-specific vocabulary. They structure their verbal responses appropriately, offering valid reasons to support their ideas and use subject specific terminology accurately. A majority of pupils express their opinions confidently and clearly, explaining their viewpoints sensibly. A minority offer particularly well thought out, extended answers, especially when prompted to do so by the teacher. They make multiple points within an argument using a sophisticated vocabulary. Pupils respond positively to the clear expectation by their teachers that they make verbal contributions that are explained and supported. This helps pupils of all abilities to build their confidence when speaking and develop their verbal skills. A few pupils offer brief underdeveloped answers and a very few struggle to interact with their peers in group work.

They are equipped with a range of reading skills which many apply successfully to gain meaning from a variety of texts across the curriculum. Most pupils select basic facts from texts efficiently and many skim and scan to locate relevant information from a range of texts competently. Many pupils develop their higher order reading skills of inference and deduction well, particularly in their English lessons. They identify key literary and writing techniques suitably, annotating and analysing their effect appropriately. These pupils select and use succinct quotations effectively to

support their arguments and utilise literary and linguistic terminology accurately, such as when analysing the poem 'Valentine' by Carol Ann Duffy. A majority analyse texts ably and with sensitivity. A few pupils struggle to annotate texts independently and in sufficient detail and a few are over-dependent on examples and models provided by their teachers.

As they do with their reading skills, many pupils apply key writing skills learnt in English lessons well across the curriculum when given the opportunity. They use connectives and discursive vocabulary, for example, when writing about continental drift theory in geography. As a result, overall, pupils are confident independent writers. Many structure their written responses logically, using paragraphs appropriately to organise their work. They have sound grasp of subject specific vocabulary and a broad general vocabulary. A majority of pupils write at length in a suitable range of forms and for an appropriate range of audiences in English lessons, though opportunities for them to do so across the curriculum are more variable. A few pupils do not use paragraphs to organise their work and fail to punctuate their work accurately. A minority of pupils make frequent spelling errors. As with reading, a few pupils are over-reliant on writing models and scaffolds given to them. A few have poor handwriting.

The majority of pupils have suitable number skills. They calculate effectively using the four rules of number and have a firm grasp of negative numbers and percentages. The majority have a sound understanding of shapes and measures. They work confidently with compound measures such as speed and density and convert between different metric measurements. A similar proportion have sound data handling skills. They calculate averages, draw accurate graphs and, when given the opportunity, they analyse graphs appropriately to draw conclusions. For example, in geography, pupils make confident use of fieldwork data to analyse trends and draw conclusions.

A minority of pupils have weak numeracy skills. They struggle with concepts such as calculating with fractions and the difference between area and perimeter. In a minority of instances, pupils do not use the conventions of statistical graphs well enough. For example, they do not include titles, nor do they interpret graphs to draw conclusions or make predictions.

Many pupils develop their digital skills well in their information and communication technology (ICT) lessons, where they develop their understanding of higher order digital skills such as coding and writing formulae in spreadsheets. When given the opportunity, they apply their skills effectively in different subjects across the curriculum. For example, they use software to build a simple website about a local castle in history, and use spreadsheets in science to analyse the wasted energy from household products.

Many pupils have sound physical skills. For example, Year 7 pupils plan, perform and evaluate short gymnastics sequences. They apply co-ordination, flexibility, timing, control, and balance skilfully. In netball, pupils demonstrate effective spatial awareness, interaction with others, and positional responsibility.

In many instances, pupils develop their creativity well. In their art lessons they mimic the style of the artist Kandinsky by extending an image, matching the colours of the

image, and adding concentric shapes. In their English lessons, pupils produce imaginative pieces of creative writing, making effective use of ambitious vocabulary and literary techniques when writing a twisted fairy tale.

Many pupils develop their thinking skills well in a range of subjects. For example, in their science and mathematics lessons, pupils successfully use a range of formulae to solve problems such as when applying the sine and cosine rules to calculate missing sides and angles in triangles.

In Welsh language lessons, many pupils make steady progress over time. Overall, pupils have positive attitudes towards learning the Welsh language. Most pupils have secure reading skills in Welsh. They use their previous knowledge and language skills well to locate facts accurately and gather points of view in short pieces of text. Many pupils recall previously learnt vocabulary and grammar well, which enables them to make secure progress in writing as they move up the school. They write extended paragraphs and longer pieces of factual writing well by the time they reach the end of Year 9. When there are opportunities to do so, many pupils speak with accurate pronunciation and good intonation. However, due to generally less frequent opportunities for speaking and listening compared with reading and writing, pupils do not make as much progress as they could in their oracy skills.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Many pupils enjoy school and say they are respected and treated fairly. They are proud to be part of the Argoed school community. Most pupils feel safe in school and are confident in what to do if they have any concerns. Most pupils are friendly, polite, and welcoming. They engage readily in conversations with adults and share their views about learning and school life maturely.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around school. This contributes to a calm and focused learning environment. Most pupils arrive to lessons promptly and settle quickly. Many take an active and enthusiastic role in their own learning and engage well with their work. They sustain their concentration when working on set tasks and show an interest in their learning. A few pupils are reluctant to take part in discussions, are slow to settle and do not engage fully in their lessons.

Many pupils listen respectfully to their teachers' instructions and the contribution of their peers. When given the opportunity, they enjoy working with their peers in pairs and small groups. The majority of pupils respond well to feedback that is provided by their teachers, although a minority of pupils do not respond purposefully to this.

Overall, many pupils develop beneficial communication skills by successfully taking on leadership roles both in and out of lessons. For example, in physical education lessons, pupils take on the role of both coach and performer and use digital equipment confidently to analyse and improve performance. Many pupils express that the school listens to their views and takes them into account. The school council has successfully influenced changes to uniform, toilet arrangements and food served at lunchtimes. Pupil leadership groups play an active part in the life of the school. For example, the School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) has been effective in gathering feedback from pupils and liaising with agencies to instigate changes to food service arrangements and menu options.

Pupils develop their awareness and understanding of important life matters and social issues well through participation in a range of extra-curricular activities and 'awareness' days. Many pupils understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They recognise the role that nutrition, online safety, and exercise plays in their own physical, emotional, and social well-being. A small number of pupils participate beneficially in community enterprises, such as volunteering at the local community 'Caffi Isa'.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of learning opportunities outside of timetabled lessons, such as a wide variety of sporting clubs, the 'calm club' and the musical 'jammin' club'. They develop valuable life experiences through opportunities such as Year 10 work experience. Many pupils, including those from the learning resource bases, develop their ability to collaborate and work in teams through their participation in musical theatre productions such as 'Matilda'.

Whole-school attendance has improved over the last academic year and is now well above the national average.

Teaching and learning experiences

Most teachers foster positive working relationships with pupils. They have high expectations of their behaviour and engagement, and successfully create a calm, purposeful learning environment. These teachers have secure subject knowledge and are good language models who ensure that pupils develop their subject specific vocabulary well.

In many instances, teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects. They plan their lessons carefully to challenge pupils. They ensure that the activities build pupils' subject knowledge and understanding successfully. They provide useful resources, give clear instructions and explain concepts effectively. These teachers model examples well to help pupils know what they are required to do and understand what good quality work looks like.

Many teachers use a range of assessment strategies well to monitor pupils' progress. This includes questioning to check pupils' knowledge, effective use of mini white boards and circulating the classroom, offering helpful feedback to individuals and small groups. Where appropriate, they work effectively in partnership with teaching assistants to ensure that pupils, including those with additional learning needs, are supported well.

In a minority of cases, teaching is particularly effective. In these instances, teachers are passionate about their subject and plan their lessons meticulously. They support pupils skilfully to ensure that they think deeply and succeed with the highly challenging work that they're given. These teachers probe pupils' understanding by questioning their assumptions and challenging their misconceptions. They provide pupils with valuable opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding, and develop successfully as independent learners. As a result, pupils make particularly strong progress in these lessons.

In a few lessons, there are shortcomings in teaching. These include insufficient challenge, not planning well enough for what pupils may find difficult, and questioning

that is limited to only testing pupils' recall. In addition, teachers' feedback is not always precise enough to lead to improvements in pupils' work.

Parents are kept well informed on their child's progress through suitable interim and full reports, parents' evenings and a helpful online app. The school has useful processes in place to track pupils' academic progress and ensure that pupils who are underachieving are identified in a timely manner.

The school's curriculum builds appropriately on previous learning. Pupils in Years 7 to Year 9 benefit from a balanced curriculum that provides sufficient time to explore and foster an interest in a broad range of subjects. Pupils who attend the learning resource bases benefit from targeted provision and are integrated into mainstream lessons successfully.

In Key Stage 4, the school provides a wide range of subjects and courses to meet the needs and interests of pupils. The offer includes extended work experience placements and access to appropriate vocational qualifications in partnership with a local college. The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils with additional learning needs to follow relevant meaningful pathways. This is enhanced by courses that support the development of specific pupils' social, emotional and work-related skills.

In planning to implement a Curriculum for Wales, leaders have maintained a clear focus on the quality of teaching. They have consulted appropriately with staff and pupils to formulate a vision for their curriculum. Subject leaders have developed their learning plans suitably in line with this vision. They have worked well with primary schools to establish an agreed understanding of standards across all areas of learning and experience. In a few instances, departments have worked closely together to develop engaging, authentic learning experiences that draw on several subject disciplines. For example, pupils combine their knowledge of mathematics, science, technology and ICT to plan a local cultural festival which included designing and building a zip wire, calculating the financial costs, producing merchandise for the event and shooting a promotional video. Work to establish a shared understanding of progression in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills within a curriculum for Wales is at an early stage of development.

There are suitable opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to develop their knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage and other cross-curricular themes. Curricular provision for the Welsh language is strong. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use the strong Welsh language skills that they develop in their Welsh lessons in other areas of the curriculum, and during extra-curricular activities.

The school has highly effective arrangements for developing pupils' reading skills. In English, teachers encourage pupils to read for pleasure effectively. They explicitly teach a range of valuable reading strategies and provide helpful interventions to improve the reading skills of pupils who need additional support. This work has had a beneficial impact on pupils' standards of reading and their ability to use their reading strategies effectively outside of English lessons.

Subject leaders have identified meaningful opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills in subjects outside of English,

mathematics and ICT. The school has recently refreshed its approach to developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills across the curriculum. Skills co-ordinators have devised plans and a beneficial set of non-negotiable principles to support teachers to develop pupils' cross-curricular skills. They have worked closely with a few subject leaders to improve the quality of provision for extended writing, graph work and digital skills further. This work is beginning to impact positively, for example to help pupils to write purposefully and effectively in science. However, the provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum where relevant is underdeveloped.

The school has a comprehensive personal and social education (PSE) programme that is delivered suitably through curriculum subjects, registrations, assemblies and bespoke days. This provision is supported well by a wide range of partnerships with external organisations that deliver aspects of the programme to pupils or upskill staff within the school to do so. Pupils also appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities that staff provide to enhance their learning experiences and progress. For example, pupils in the learning resource bases appreciate the support provided by the homework club, and pupils who study art are encouraged to attend a weekend residential art course to enhance their creative skills.

Care, support and guidance

Ysgol Uwchradd Argoed is a caring and inclusive community where leaders and staff promote pupils' well-being and attitudes to learning positively and effectively. There is a considerate and supportive ethos, centred on the core principles of 'learning together, working together, succeeding together'. The school provides beneficial support for pupils' social, emotional and communication needs through relevant and helpful intervention programmes and through the nurturing provision at the 'Student Support Centre'. Pastoral leaders work effectively with a wide range of external agencies to support pupils' welfare and well-being. These include the local authority education welfare service, Flintshire's substance misuse advisory service and the School Beat officer. The school's collaboration with a local charity to provide helpful sessions for pupils to improve their confidence is a strong feature.

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is a strength. Pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong through discussions during tutor time, presentations in weekly assemblies and planned whole-school awareness days on important themes such as generosity and respect. Pastoral leaders work together effectively to plan a comprehensive range of learning opportunities to enhance pupils' understanding of a range of important issues. These include tolerance of others, healthy relationships and maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle. Leaders ensure that the topics they explore remain relevant and meet the changing needs of the school community. For example, in response to pupils' wishes, leaders have developed helpful resources on equality, diversity and inclusion. The school promotes pupils' cultural development suitably.

There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their Welsh identity and heritage, for example through the annual school Eisteddfod and activities led by staff from Urdd Gobaith Cymru. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to participate in cultural and sporting activities, for example through sports clubs, the Glee Club, and in regular musical theatre performances.

The school has recently strengthened opportunities for pupils to share their views and influence aspects of school life through regular pupil surveys and through the work of the school council. Recent examples include modifications to summer uniform, improvements in healthy food choices and changes to the operation of the canteen.

The school makes beneficial use of effective partnerships with a wide range of agencies to support the personal and social development of its pupils and to provide helpful guidance and advice on future career choices. For example, there are valuable links with a local building company, which give pupils an insight into the building of the new campus. There are beneficial arrangements for work related education through valuable partnerships with local employers. The school ensures that all pupils in Year 10 have the opportunity to undertake work experience.

There are robust arrangements for monitoring and improving pupil attendance and punctuality. Heads of year and pastoral senior leaders work productively with the attendance officer and families to provide valuable support to pupils with low attendance. As a result of a relentless approach to tackling absenteeism, whole-school attendance has improved substantially in the last academic year and attendance rates now compare well with national averages.

The school provides worthwhile support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). There is a clear and tangible sense of goodwill and desire to make a difference among the ALN team. Staff work together effectively to ensure that pupils with ALN thrive socially and emotionally, and make progress in their learning. Leaders maintain a productive collaboration with cluster primary schools to develop a secure understanding of the needs of pupils at an early stage. This allows them to plan effectively for their transition to high school. Arrangements such as the 'Summer Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP)' and the after-school 'Transition Club' for Year 6 pupils in the cluster help ensure a smooth and successful passage for pupils joining the school.

Relevant leaders work effectively with specialist external agencies to plan and review provision for pupils with ALN. They also maintain a valuable and meaningful relationship with parents of pupils with ALN. Leaders identify suitable targets or objectives for individual pupils with ALN. In general, they monitor pupils' progress through internal team meetings, line management meetings and informal or statutory reviews. The school complies with the requirements of the ALNET (2018) Wales Act and is currently making suitable improvements to administrative, monitoring and evaluation activities.

The school delivers a suitable range of support programmes for pupils who require extra help to manage their social, emotional and communication difficulties. There are appropriate arrangements to identify pupils with weak literacy and numeracy skills and intervention programmes to address these issues are generally sound.

Leaders have recently identified appropriately important areas that require improvement so that they are able to gain a clear picture of all the ALN provision and consequently fully evaluate its suitability and impact on pupil standards. Currently, the processes for recording information and monitoring activities for pupils with ALN are not sufficiently robust. In addition, well-being support plans are not clear enough.

The school has recently strengthened arrangements to record and track a few aspects of its provision through a new digital system.

The school has secure arrangements to safeguard its pupils and leaders at all levels foster a strong culture of safeguarding and well-being. Staff undertake regular training, which ensures that they understand their role in keeping children safe and when to report concerns to senior leaders. The designated safeguarding persons work effectively with statutory external agencies on child protection matters. Pastoral leaders respond swiftly to any incidents of bullying. As a result of these secure features, most pupils feel safe in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides energetic, passionate leadership. His care for the school, its pupils and its community is clear. He has high ambitions for the school and clearly understands the main improvements that need to be made to achieve them. The headteacher's vision of nurturing a happy, successful school is clear, and shared by staff and governors alike. He is a reflective leader who has a sound understanding of the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. He promotes an open and honest culture, which is helping other leaders to strengthen their understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve.

The senior leadership team support the headteacher well and have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities, which are clear and distributed sensibly. Effective leadership has had a positive impact on important aspects of the school's work such as the quality of teaching, improving attendance, the well-being of pupils and staff, and professional learning. The school is making sound progress towards key national priorities such as planning for the Curriculum for Wales, promoting a positive reading culture and nurturing a strong safeguarding culture. Leaders implement suitable actions to alleviate the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

Communication with parents is generally positive. For example, there are regular newsletters, open evenings and opportunities for members of the community to visit the site to see the progress of the new build. The school has recently strengthened its external communications.

Middle leaders are passionate leaders who have a sound understanding of what happens in their departments and year groups. They make suitable use of data to evaluate pupil progress and monitor and improve attendance. Curriculum leaders have planned carefully for Curriculum for Wales and use 'departmental drop ins' to lessons well to build an 'open door' culture in their departments. Recently, they have started to play a more active role in quality assurance activities such as joint lesson observations and work scrutiny with senior leaders. In general, middle leaders have a broad understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in their areas of responsibility. However, because they do not lead on activities to evaluate pupils' learning and well-being or the quality of provision, it is difficult for them to take full ownership of the process to identify relevant priorities and drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.

There is a cycle of regular meetings, which provide helpful opportunities to discuss whole school and area priorities. These include line management meetings, departmental and pastoral team meetings. However, meetings are not always used effectively for strategic purposes and expectations around senior leadership link meetings are not always clear. Consequently, there is too much variation in their quality and impact.

The governing body is extremely supportive of the school and has recently adapted its processes and structures in order to make their work more effective. They know the school and its community well and play an active part in the life of the school. For example, governor open days enable them to meet with pupils and staff to learn more about the school through first-hand experience. They have an appropriate understanding of their responsibility for the promotion of healthy eating and drinking. Governors are developing well in their role as critical friends.

Leaders monitor the budget carefully and financial decisions are closely linked to the school's priorities. There is a clear plan for the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) in 2023-2024 and planned spending is appropriate. The school has recognised that planning for the PDG has not always been clear and that the evaluation of its impact has not been sufficiently thorough or systematic. In response, leaders have implemented useful actions to improve this and made sensible changes to their planned PDG spend for this year based on their general evaluation of last year's spending.

The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, has established a renewed focus on evaluation and improvement. Over the past 18 months they have developed an appropriate cycle of self-evaluation and improvement planning activities and leaders seek the views of stakeholders, particularly pupils, in this process. This has helped leaders to identify improvement priorities more effectively than in the past, put actions in place to address these and monitor progress towards achieving them.

Leaders carry out a broad range of self-evaluation activities, including data analysis, lesson observations and work scrutiny. However, in general, these activities focus too much on identifying the existence of features or the completion of actions and do not focus well enough on evaluating their quality or the impact they have, particularly on pupils' learning. As a result, whilst leaders have a broad understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, this lacks the necessary level of detail to plan effectively for further improvement. Overall, leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work thoroughly enough.

The school has a strong commitment to professional learning and has a valuable universal programme for all staff. This is supported well by regular in-house training on key improvement priorities for teaching and other aspects of practice. It also draws on external support where required. The programme of professional learning is valued and understood by staff and includes a professional learning enquiry programme, along with recent training for leaders at all levels to better understand how to gather first hand evidence and begin to evaluate its impact.

Leaders take account of school priorities and use the findings from quality assurance processes well to plan the universal professional learning offer. For example,

teaching and learning briefings share effective practice identified through quality assurance activities and this contributes beneficially to staff confidence and development. In addition, there is a strong culture of coaching across the school which helps middle and senior leaders support the staff that they manage and begin to reflect meaningfully on their areas of responsibility. Professional learning has had an impact on important areas of the school's work, for example aspects of pedagogy and securing high standards of good behaviour.

There is a suitable system for performance management that includes all staff. Performance management targets linked to leadership responsibilities are generally helpful, though the quality of targets around teaching are more variable. Currently, performance management and the professional learning provision do not always support the individual needs of staff well enough. Evaluation of performance management targets is generally about the completion of actions and does not focus sufficiently on pupils' learning and well-being.

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 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 and middle leaders (where appropriate) 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, where appropriate
- visit a broad sample of lessons, 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

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.

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Publication date: 27/11/2023