



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**Ysgol Morgan Llwyd
Cefn Road
Wrexham
LL13 9NG**

Date of visit: March 2017

by

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

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The monitoring team

Delyth Lloyd Gray	Reporting Inspector
Lowri Jones	Team Inspector
Elfyn Jones	Local authority representative

Outcome of visit

Ysgol Morgan Llwyd is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in January 2014.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is increasing the level of follow-up activity.

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Under the provisions of Section 39 (9) of the Education Act 2005, every annual report to parents prepared by the governing body under Section 30 of the Education Act 2002 must include a statement on the progress made in implementing the action plan.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in around 12 months to review progress against the recommendations.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards in key stage 3, especially at the higher levels, and improve boys' writing skills

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the time of the core inspection, the school has introduced an appropriate range of strategies in order to improve pupils' performance in key stage 3. Since the monitoring visit in May 2016, leaders have focused on improving provision in order to give pupils opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, in addition to strengthening their subject skills. For example, pupils in key stage 3 are given valuable opportunities to write at length for a variety of purposes across many subjects. In addition, many departments set challenging and demanding tasks that engage pupils' interest and strengthen their motivation to learn. These beneficial strategies have contributed to improvements in the core subject indicator and in the individual subjects in 2016. There has been an increase in the number of pupils who attain higher levels in many subjects. In addition, boys' standards of writing have increased since the core inspection.

Despite the improvements in the school's performance in key stage 3, performance in key stage 4 since the core inspection in 2013 is a cause for concern.

Pupils' performance in key stage 4 over the last three years has been much lower than the performance of pupils in other similar schools. The proportion of pupils who gain five GCSE grades A*-C, including Welsh or English and mathematics, is below the modelled outcomes for the third year in succession. This has placed the school in the bottom 25% of schools based on eligibility for free school meals since 2014. Performance in the capped points score has been significantly lower than the modelled outcomes since 2014, and places the school in the bottom 25% of similar

schools. Performance in the indicator that includes five GCSE grades A*-A has been lower than that of other similar schools for three years, and is significantly lower than performance at the time of the core inspection. Performance in mathematics has not improved since the time of the core inspection. However, there has been a trend of improvement over time in performance in English and science.

Since September 2016, in response to the underperformance of pupils in key stage 4, the school has implemented a range of suitable strategies. The school has refined and strengthened its method of tracking pupils' progress. As a result, leaders' ability to identify pupils who are underperforming and putting relevant arrangements in place at an early stage has improved. However, as these are recent strategies, it is not possible to measure their effect on pupils' standards in key stage 4.

Recommendation 2: Share good practice across the school to boost the quality and accuracy of marking, and pupils' response to teachers' comments

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the monitoring visit in May 2016, the school has acted robustly to improve the quality and accuracy of marking, and to ensure pupils' response to teachers' comments. The assessment, marking and feedback policy ('Asesu, Marcio ac Adborth ar Waith') provides clear guidance, and the senior leadership team is effective in monitoring how teachers apply the policy when marking and assessing. A majority of departments now use it consistently.

The school provides a wide range of valuable training sessions that have led to ensuring consistency in staff's understanding of the most effective assessment practices. Robust accountability and quality assurance procedures are in place and, as a result, leaders at all levels operate more effectively in monitoring implementation of the policy. Purposeful intervention and support are targeted to departments when inconsistency is seen in implementation.

A majority of teachers provide pupils with beneficial feedback while they work on extended tasks, for example by explaining and giving pupils additional exercises to correct errors. As a result, the quality of pupils' work is improving significantly. However, in a minority of subjects, feedback is not incisive enough to allow more able learners to reach the next step in their learning.

In a majority of subjects, teachers provide beneficial and valuable comments on the accuracy of spelling, grammar and syntax.

Since September 2016, teachers and pupils use purposeful 'Task Assessment' sheets, and this has led to better consistency in implementation across the school. A majority of departments make effective use of them to deliver good quality feedback at the end of a task. The quality of advice and the targets that are given to learners to improve their work are more specific and clear than was seen during the last monitoring visit. In general, pupils respond appropriately to teachers' comments and make the necessary improvements to their work. However, a few pupils' responses to teachers' comments continue to be brief and superficial.

There is evidence of pupils using success criteria effectively to evaluate their own work and that of their peers in around half of the subjects.

The school's action has led to improvements in standards of achievement in key stage 3. However, it is too early to measure the effect of these practices on standards in key stage 4.

Recommendation 3: Reduce the level of temporary exclusions

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, with the support of its pupils and staff, the school has developed an effective behaviour and reward policy. The school has invested extensively in purposeful training for all staff on behaviour management methods and positive strategies for engaging with pupils. This has led to consistency in the way in which staff respond to cases of misbehaviour in the classroom and around the school. Teachers now have a better understanding of the importance of creating and maintaining a positive and productive ethos in their classes. In addition, pupils understand the high expectations for them to behave responsibly and respectfully.

There are robust arrangements in place to respond to the rare cases of serious misbehaviour. Pupils with severe behavioural difficulties receive valuable specialist support through the 'Cynnal' resource. This provision means that any pupil who is at risk of being excluded receives purposeful and timely support.

Ysgol Morgan Llwyd is a very inclusive school. The acting headteacher and other leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties are given beneficial support so that they can continue with their Welsh-medium education. This is a strong feature of the school's work.

In comparison with the time of the core inspection, the number of pupils who are excluded for a fixed period has decreased significantly.

Recommendation 4: Implement the school's self-assessment recommendations and share best practice among all departments to promote excellence

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Following Ysgol Morgan Llwyd's core inspection in January 2014, the school was judged to be in need of local authority monitoring. Later that year, the level of follow-up activity was changed to Estyn monitoring, as the school had not made enough progress towards achieving the recommendations. Following the monitoring visit in May 2016, more time was given for leaders to act.

In September 2016, following a period of uncertainty in leadership, the current deputy headteacher was promoted to the post of temporary acting headteacher. In a short period of time, she has ensured appropriate leadership and implemented suitable procedures. This has led to improvements according to teachers' assessments in key stage 3. However, the school's performance over time in many important

indicators in key stage 4 is a cause for concern. Since May 2016, the acting headteacher and the senior management team have acted quickly and robustly to strengthen self-evaluation processes, planning for improvement and sharing good practice. As a result, appropriate improvements can be seen in terms of the quality of assessment and the standard of work in pupils' books, the reduction in the number of exclusions, and in leaders' understanding of their roles.

The senior management team and leaders at all levels are honest and evaluative when evaluating the school's work and performance. As a result, they have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. The school's self-evaluation report is a rigorous document that identifies the main strengths and areas for improvement correctly. The report is evaluative on the whole, although there is a tendency to be too descriptive, at times. It is based appropriately on the findings of a range of beneficial activities, which include lesson observations and scrutinising books. The individual and summative reports on lessons and books provide a useful picture of the school's work. However, in a minority of lesson evaluations, areas for improvement are not completely clear and, in general, not enough attention is given to pupils' progress and achievement.

Since the last visit, leaders have worked robustly with an external agency in order to strengthen their leadership skills and their systems for ensuring accountability. As a result, they have a more rigorous understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Leaders' response to the findings of progress-monitoring activities is now more incisive. There is now a clear emphasis in departmental link meetings on acting immediately to identify and support pupils who are underachieving, and there is clear progression from one meeting to the next. The school has also begun to track the progress of target groups across the school more rigorously.

Despite the recent changes, self-evaluation and planning for improvement procedures have not had enough of an effect on maintaining or improving outcomes in key stage 4 in the three years since the core inspection.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to maintain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations in which further progress is needed.