



Report summary for parents and carers on Pencoedtre High School

Date of inspection: November 2022

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

Overview

Pencoedtre High School is a caring school where most teachers nurture positive relationships with pupils. The headteacher and senior leadership team managed the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic well. However, there is a lack of clear, strategic direction from senior leaders and too much confusion over roles and responsibilities. Consequently, their work is not having enough impact on improving important aspects of the school's work. These aspects include attendance and behaviour, the quality of teaching and assessment, the provision for skills, as well as the provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and others in need of additional support. Leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work well enough, particularly in relation to teaching and assessment. As a result, their improvement planning is not sufficiently precise and therefore is not effective enough.

Pupil attendance is a significant cause for concern and leaders lack a comprehensive understanding of the issues affecting attendance. A majority of pupils are friendly and welcoming and enjoy positive relationships with staff and peers. However, minority of pupils are late to lessons, easily distracted and do not engage constructively in their learning. A few pupils do not behave well enough in lessons and around the school and this is impacting on their own progress and that of others.

In a majority of lessons, teachers plan a range of useful activities and provide helpful support that enables pupils to make broadly suitable progress. A few of these lessons are particularly effective and ensure that pupils make secure progress. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not plan well enough and often do not allow pupils to develop and learn independently. These teachers' expectations are too low and pupils make limited progress in their lessons. The school's general approach to assessment does not enable teachers or pupils to understand what they are doing well and what they need to improve well enough.

The school's broad and balanced curriculum is enhanced by a range of valuable extra-curricular activities and a variety of academic and vocational options. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills across the curriculum. For example, across all subjects, pupils produce relatively little written work.

Leaders and staff have a clear aspiration to support pupils' well-being. The school works well with external agencies and offers a wide range of provision to address pupils' needs. However, leaders' quality assurance of this provision is not sufficiently robust and the reasons why pupils are selected for different provisions are not clear enough. The school has started to address the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, but the provision and strategic oversight of this area of work is underdeveloped and only a few pupils have individual.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve strategic leadership and accountability at all levels, including the school's approach to self-evaluation and improvement planning
- R2 Improve the provision and strategic approach to supporting pupils' attendance and behaviour
- R3 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment
- R4 Improve the strategic leadership and quality of the provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), and the general oversight of the range of provisions offered to all pupils in need of additional support
- R5 Improve the provision to develop the standards of pupils' skills
- R6 Address the issue regarding site security at the front entrance of the school

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. This is the most intensive level of statutory follow-up. Estyn will monitor the school's progress on a termly basis following the publication of the inspection report.



School context

Name of provider	Pencoedtre High School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Number of pupils on roll	993
Pupils of statutory school age	912
Number in sixth form	80
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 18.5%)	37.7%
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 23.0%)	30.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	1.9%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	09/01/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	28/11/2022

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