



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: Significant Improvement**

**Cwmbran High School
Ty Gwyn Way
Fairwater
Cwmbran
NP44 4YZ**

Date of visit: October 2018

by

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

Outcome of visit

Cwmbran High School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

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 special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will visit the school in approximately 3 months to evaluate the quality of the plan.

Induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) (providers in special measures only)

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) Regulations 2015 state that an induction period may not be served in a school requiring special measures i.e. described in grounds 6 or 8 in section 2 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013(1). The presumption is that schools requiring special measures are not suitable for providing induction for newly qualified teachers, other than in exceptional circumstances. Therefore schools requiring special measures should not normally appoint a newly qualified teacher (NQT) to their staff.

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.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Improve the standard of pupils' skills, particularly their writing, and numeracy

Nearly all key stage 3 pupils engage well in useful dedicated daily reading time. Many read with suitable understanding and extract basic information from both literary and non-literary texts. Most pupils are aware of strategies such as skimming and scanning to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their reading with purpose. However, only around half of pupils use these skills independently when presented with reading tasks.

A few more able pupils write well, with an extensive and varied vocabulary, and use complex sentence structures to very good effect when required. Around half of pupils produce writing that is mostly technically secure, although a similar proportion continue to make frequent errors in basic spelling, punctuation and grammar. These

errors detract from the quality of their writing, their presentation is poor and expression confused.

Many pupils apply their numeracy skills suitably through subjects other than mathematics. However, a minority of pupils make basic errors. For example, they fail to give units of measurement or scale when producing basic bar charts, line graphs and scale diagrams.

Whilst the standards of pupils' skills in key stage 3 are beginning to improve, there has been little impact in outcomes at key stage 4. Provisional data for 2018 suggests that performance overall has fallen since 2016, and is lower in 2018 than 2017 in all indicators.

Performance in the level 2 threshold, including English and mathematics was below similar schools in 2017 and provisional data for 2018 suggests it remains below in 2018. The proportion of pupils who achieve five GCSE passes at grades A* or A was below the average in similar schools in 2017 and declined further in 2018. The performance of boys and girls respectively, and that of pupils eligible for free school meals remains below that of their counterparts in similar schools.

R2. Improve the behaviour and disrespectful attitudes of a few pupils in a minority of lessons

The school's stepped behaviour policy is understood clearly by most pupils. This behaviour policy and approach is impacting positively upon reducing incidents of poor and disrespectful behaviour. The number of fixed term exclusions and 'call outs' for senior leaders to intervene in incidents of unacceptable behaviour has continued to reduce.

The school continues to collect and analyse data on pupil behaviour. This is used appropriately to recognise patterns in pupil behaviour and is helping leaders to challenge staff to be consistent in their application of the policy. However, a minority of teachers remain inconsistent in the way they apply the policy and there is too much variability in the way instances of poor behaviour or negative attitudes to learning are dealt with. As a result, in a minority of classes, a few pupils do not engage, remain passive and make little progress in learning.

R3. Ensure that the literacy and numeracy framework is implemented fully

Since the previous visit, the school has appointed a senior leader to drive developments in literacy and numeracy and suitably experienced staff to the roles of literacy and numeracy coordinators.

Leaders have implemented a range of useful approaches to promote literacy and numeracy skills across the school. These include an accelerated reading scheme, 'Tearing into reading' days, skills opportunities identified in lesson plans and schemes of work, planned embedded numeracy opportunities, a literacy marking

scheme and coordinated extended writing tasks. These approaches are starting to have an impact on standards in key stage 3. However, there has been limited impact on key stage 4 outcomes.

The school has appropriate processes to monitor the implementation of these literacy and numeracy initiatives. Leaders at all levels carry out learning walks, departmental reviews, book scrutiny and pupil voice activities. These activities have led to consistent application of policies. For example, nearly all teachers provide opportunities to develop writing. However, these activities are not sufficiently focussed on the standards of literacy and numeracy that learners achieve.

Nearly all teachers use the literacy marking scheme when marking pupils' work, and make generally effective use of comments and additional tasks to focus pupils on areas they need to improve. Many pupils respond to these additional tasks and make corrections and minor improvements to their work.

R4. Address the shortcomings in teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress in all lessons

Since the last visit, the school has continued to implement a range of appropriate strategies to improve the quality of teaching. However, this has not had enough impact on improving pupils' progress and the standards they achieve, particularly at key stage 4.

The school carries out a suitable range of activities to evaluate teaching and assessment. These activities have helped the school to identify and support teachers who are underperforming. However, in most cases, evaluation and scrutiny do not focus well enough upon standards of skills and progress in learning. As a result, across the curriculum, many pupils continue to produce work below the level of which they are capable.

In a few lessons, teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They plan a range of tasks that provide a high level of challenge and support a brisk pace to learning. In these lessons, teaching focuses well on developing literacy, numeracy and social skills as well as subject content and knowledge. This helps pupils to make good progress.

In around half of lessons, teachers develop subject knowledge and literacy or numeracy skills in their lessons appropriately. They plan a range of interesting activities that present a suitable level of challenge.

In a minority of lessons, however, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are too low. They do not plan activities that challenge pupils sufficiently and accept work of a poor standard. As a result, pupils do not sustain their interest and make insufficient effort to produce careful work. In these lessons, pupils do not make enough progress.

In a very few lessons, teachers do not engage pupils' interest or challenge them to remain on task. In these lessons, teachers do not encourage positive attitudes to learning and pupils make very little progress.

Since the previous visit, the school has focused attention on improving assessment. There is a consistent approach to providing feedback and setting tasks that will help pupils to improve their work. Many pupils respond well to these additional tasks and as a result do improve their work. However, a minority of pupils do not respond to comments to correct or complete their work. This limits their progress.

R5. Improve the consistency in the work of middle managers, particularly in planning for improvement

The school has continued to support middle leaders appropriately to develop their understanding of self-evaluation and improvement planning. Middle leaders have benefited from valuable professional development opportunities to develop their leadership skills. As a result, they have improved their understanding of key issues and a majority are becoming more confident in carrying out their leadership responsibilities. However, this work has not had a positive enough impact on the standards pupils achieve.

Management meetings are now more structured with a clear focus on key aspects such as pupil behaviour and outcomes. Senior leaders have strengthened the accountability of middle leaders through line management meetings, regular work scrutiny and lesson observations. These procedures are helping middle leaders to adopt a more consistent approach to their work. However, the quality of leadership across the school remains too variable. For example, leaders do not make the link between teaching and its impact on standards well enough.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning draw on suitable first hand evidence. However, the lack of sufficient focus on the standards and quality of pupils' work means that areas for development are often understated and actions for improvement are not identified precisely.