



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

**A report on**

**Ysgol Garth Olwg**

**Main Road  
Church Village  
Pontypridd  
Rhondda Cynon Taf  
CF38 1DX**

**Date of inspection: March 2023**

**by**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## About Ysgol Garth Olwg

Name of provider	Ysgol Garth Olwg
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	All age
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	1249
Pupils of statutory school age	1064
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	54
Number in sixth form	131
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 all-age schools is 21.6%)	8.3%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in all-age schools is 12.7%)	6.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	36%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	02/09/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	20/03/2023

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](https://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

As they move through the school, many pupils make strong progress in their Welsh communication skills. Only a few of the school's youngest pupils speak Welsh fluently on entry to the nursery or reception class. Over time, they develop a sound vocabulary and understanding of the language and its syntax and this enables them to express themselves clearly both orally and in writing.

Most pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and treat each other, teachers and visitors to the school with respect. However, a very few pupils, mainly in Years 9-11, do not behave well and show negative attitudes to learning and towards others. Although many pupils feel safe at school, they note that the behaviour of some pupils during break times and lunchtimes causes them distress. Attendance rates, including the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, have remained low since the pandemic.

There is a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to take part in and contribute to school life through a large number of clubs, drama activities and discussion forums. These include sports and drama clubs, in addition to the 'Siop Siarad' sessions, the Welshness Forum and the Equality Forum. As a result, many pupils make strong development in their social skills and understanding of human rights and other important issues. Sixth-form pupils develop valuable personal skills by leading the forums and volunteering to help younger pupils in their physical education lessons and in sessions to reinforce learning.

Learning experiences up to Year 8 are broad and balanced, on the whole. A rich range of academic and vocational courses are provided for pupils in the sixth form. However, the curriculum for pupils in Years 9-11 is too limited, particularly for more able pupils in Year 9 and pupils with poor engagement in Years 10 and 11.

The headteacher and his leadership team have prioritised Welshness and improving pupils' well-being as a result of the challenges of the pandemic. This has had a positive effect on standards of Welsh and pupils' attitudes to learning, particularly lower down the school. However, strategic leadership to improve a few other aspects of the school's work is not robust enough. This includes provision to develop numeracy skills and digital skills, improving the standards of well-being of a very few older pupils and ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.

Leaders provide a range of valuable opportunities for teachers to discuss, plan and research together to improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school is good and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress in their subject knowledge and literacy.

Leaders set appropriate improvement priorities for the whole school and for individual areas of learning and experience. However, they do not give enough consideration to expected outcomes when devising actions. As a result, they do not evaluate the success of any actions according to their effect on pupils' standards and progress.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement planning so that there is better consideration of the effect of provision on pupils' standards and progress
- R2 Strengthen strategic leadership for the areas for improvement that have been identified in the report, including provision to develop pupils' numeracy and digital skills
- R3 Expand curricular experiences in key stages 3 and 4 to meet the needs of all pupils and ensure that they engage positively with their learning
- R4 Improve attendance

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Learning

Many pupils who begin their education in the nursery and reception classes are non-Welsh-speakers or have Welsh skills that are lower than expected for their age. As pupils move through the school, many make strong progress in their Welsh speaking and writing skills. Overall, pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make sound progress against their personal targets. Many pupils develop beneficial social and personal skills over time. However, a few pupils do not make as much progress as they could due to a variety of factors. These include poor attendance, less positive attitudes to learning, poor behaviour or shortcomings in teaching.

In their sessions and over time, many pupils develop sound subject knowledge. They recall previous knowledge successfully and apply their knowledge and understanding successfully to new contexts. In the few very effective sessions, pupils make very swift and strong progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils in these sessions apply their knowledge very skilfully in challenging and demanding tasks. For example, pupils lower down the school use complex subject terminology, such as *'egin'* ('sprouts'), *'eginblanhigyn'* ('seedling'), *'gwreiddiau'* ('roots') and *'amsugno'* ('absorb') correctly to describe the growth stages of a bean plant. However, a few pupils do not make as much progress as they could due to a lack of development in their Welsh language skills, literacy and numeracy skills or lack of perseverance.

Throughout the school, most pupils listen carefully to presentations and instructions from teachers and many listen attentively to the contributions of their peers. Many pupils speak Welsh fluently and express themselves clearly and confidently. This is an excellent feature lower down the school, where most pupils' spoken Welsh skills are developing very strongly. They use Welsh vocabulary and patterns with increasing confidence and many speak Welsh spontaneously and communicate effectively with each other. Many pupils lower down the school discuss ideas maturely and a few do so skilfully by using complex subject terminology correctly in various areas of learning. On the whole, a majority of pupils higher up the school express themselves clearly, make good use of subject vocabulary and discuss appropriately. More able pupils discuss very confidently and express their opinions clearly and constructively. For example, in their music lessons, older pupils have a good grasp and a strong understanding of subject terminology to evaluate musical elements, such as the texture, orchestral structure, tonality and dynamics of contrasting pieces of music. In their criminology lessons, sixth-form pupils use their subject vocabulary skilfully and express themselves eloquently when considering the principles of using forensic evidence. However, there is variation in the quality and accuracy of Welsh spoken across the school. There are shortcomings in the accuracy of a minority of pupils' language and they use English vocabulary or phrases often when speaking. Higher up the school, a few pupils speak English with each other in oral tasks or are reticent during discussion sessions. A very few pupils have limited vocabulary, which prevents them from expressing themselves clearly.

Many pupils make strong development in their English oracy skills and develop increasingly mature vocabulary over time. For example, pupils in the lower school express their opinions confidently on the controversial question 'should children's

screen time be limited?’ Pupils higher up the school use an ‘ambitious vocabulary’ word bank to upgrade the quality of their oral work when presenting the argument that there is ‘more to Wales than rugby’.

On the whole, most pupils develop suitable basic reading skills. They gather information and collect evidence successfully from a good variety of texts. Many of the youngest pupils read aloud skilfully and confidently and pay attention to punctuation such as quotation marks and exclamation marks and often vary their tone, voice and speed appropriately. They use beneficial reading techniques to help them to interpret texts. In their Welsh lessons, pupils higher up the school analyse a wide range of styles confidently and successfully and give examples and explanations for their answers. In English lessons, many use their higher order reading skills skilfully, for example to interpret style features by identifying similes, metaphors and exultation and describing their purpose and effect. Higher up the school, pupils make appropriate development in their reading skills when they are given an opportunity to do so in a few subjects other than Welsh and English.

Many pupils across the school organise their written work in sensible paragraphs and express their ideas clearly. However, the work of a minority of pupils is littered with English vocabulary and spelling errors. There are beneficial opportunities for pupils to practise writing for a wide range of purposes in their language sessions. For example, many pupils consider the audience carefully when writing a horror description in Welsh or expressing an opinion about reducing the summer holidays for schools. From an early age, many pupils develop a good understanding of language features, such as adjectives, prepositions, vocabulary for expressing opinions and persuasive language and use them skilfully when writing. For example, they use a wide range of adjectives to describe characters in the film ‘Up’ and techniques for expressing their opinion to analyse poems such as Merched Beca. In English, many pupils write a newspaper article successfully about the fight between the Montague and Capulet families in the play Romeo and Juliet. They select suitable vocabulary to hold the reader’s interest and write an imaginary diary skilfully to describe welcoming the Wales team back from the World Cup. However, due to inconsistent opportunities, pupils higher up the school do not develop their writing skills to the same degree across all areas of learning or relevant subjects.

Overall, many pupils have sound basic numeracy skills. Lower down the school, many pupils use mathematical terms confidently when measuring, calculating and using money. For example, pupils in the foundation learning phase use a ruler skilfully to measure plants and non-standard units, such as blocks, to compare the size of the giant’s foot from the story Jack and the Beanstalk with the size of their own feet. Higher up the school, many pupils practise their numeracy skills appropriately in relevant subjects. They usually produce graphs correctly and interpret charts appropriately in their geography lessons. In food lessons, many use the four number rules confidently to calculate and compare the calories in a ‘Big Mac’ and a healthy burger. However, a minority of pupils higher up the school do not apply their numeracy skilfully correctly in a wider range of contexts. For example, some use unsuitable methods to represent data, such as using inappropriate bar graphs.

Most younger pupils make very sound development in their digital skills. For example, in foundation learning, they use software confidently to create pictures, by choosing shape, size and colour sensibly, and use digital devices to match pictures to text when creating the life cycle of a plant. Most pupils develop a very sound

understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. Overall, pupils practise basic digital skills in a few subjects higher up the school. However, pupils do not develop a wide enough range of increasing digital skills.

When they are given opportunities to do so, many pupils develop beneficial thinking skills. For example, in their geography lessons, older pupils think critically when considering information, data and graphs to come to a conclusion about the increase in water usage across the continents between 1900 and 2010. Due to a lack of opportunities, pupils do not develop thinking and problem-solving skills in enough subjects and areas across the curriculum.

Overall, many pupils make sound development in their creative skills. This is a strong feature. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop good sketching skills and pay close attention to detail by using light and heavy tone to emphasise obvious features. Many pupils develop valuable improvisation and devising skills when performing in their drama lessons. Most pupils develop beneficial physical skills. The youngest pupils demonstrate good fine motor skills when cutting along a line carefully, placing coins in a row or placing blocks in order to create a path. Many are proficient in handling scientific equipment carefully, for example when using an aseptic technique to culture bacteria.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Most pupils have positive attitudes to school life and many develop strong social skills when interacting with staff, visitors and their peers. Many feel safe at school, say that they are free from bullying and that they know whom approach if they have any concerns.

On the whole, most pupils listen respectfully to teachers and their peers, manage their behaviour and concentrate well in lessons, treating others with respect. Most pupils move around the school calmly and in an organised manner and talk confidently to adults in a variety of situations. However, the behaviour of a very few pupils hinders their ability to concentrate fully on their learning. Pupils also state that a minority of their peers demonstrate poor behaviour on the corridors and around the school.

Most pupils co-operate diligently with their peers. When working independently, many persevere to complete their tasks and succeed in them. Lower down the school, most pupils show enthusiasm towards their learning and are often keen to inspire their peers when delivering and contributing ideas. In the sixth form, pupils usually demonstrate sound independence and resilience when persevering with challenging tasks and attempt tasks that stretch them.

Many pupils show an interest in what they learn and, on the whole, present their work neatly. However, a few pupils present untidy work with clumsy handwriting. When they are given an opportunity to do so, many pupils respond to oral and written feedback from their peers and teachers. In the best examples, where feedback is clear and sensible, pupils use it beneficially to improve their work and make progress in their skills.

Pupils, including those with additional learning needs, benefit from opportunities to develop their leadership skills and shoulder responsibilities in various pupil forums, such as the 'Equality Forum'. Pupils share beneficial information with governors



about different aspects of the school's work regularly. These pupils fulfil their roles passionately and maturely and develop valuable personal and social skills. Sixth-form pupils benefit from extensive opportunities to develop their leadership skills through their work on forums such as the 'Welshness Forum'. Older pupils also take advantage of opportunities to volunteer to support the youngest pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and through extra-curricular activities. Most sixth-form pupils demonstrate maturity and ambition. They feel that they are supported well by the school and are ready for the future. They appreciate the pastoral and academic support provided and, in particular, the support they receive when preparing to choose universities or apprenticeships.

Many pupils understand the benefits of making informed choices about eating and staying healthy. A minority of pupils take advantage of the opportunity to attend artistic and sports clubs that are available during lunchtime and after school. Throughout the school, many pupils develop their awareness of equity, equality, sustainability and children's rights through lessons, morning sessions and assemblies. They display sensitivity to global concerns and show an increasing awareness of current affairs and their effect on people's lives. For example, pupils lower down the school develop a good understanding of the detrimental effect of plastic on our oceans.

Attendance rates remain low since the pandemic. In addition, the gap between the attendance rates of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and their peers is large and continues to widen. A very few pupils are late arriving at school.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

In most cases, teachers have a good understanding of their specialist learning areas. They establish a hard-working and positive environment in the classroom. They are supportive of pupils, encourage their involvement and perseverance and praise their efforts.

In many learning sessions, teachers plan cohesive tasks that build successfully on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. In line with this, they choose the learning steps and various activities that best suit their classes to move learning forward. These teachers give clear guidance by exemplifying work that provides a good model for pupils to emulate. They use a variety of attractive and beneficial resources to support learning and set high expectations in terms of behaviour, achievement and the standard of oral responses. Learning assistants are used effectively to support specific groups of pupils and sixth-form pupils support younger pupils in physical exercise sessions. Throughout the school, there is excitement in these learning sessions where teachers explain concepts in an engaging way and develop pupils' skills successfully. The various activities and learning steps ensure that pupils make consistent and sound progress. Many teachers question pupils well and use a combination of short, snappy and open-ended questions to promote learning. By doing so, they check understanding, ensure good participation and encourage pupils to try to use Welsh vocabulary correctly and confidently. A few teachers use questioning very effectively to ask probing and incisive questions to probe pupils' memory and understanding and encourage them to think more deeply.

In a very few sessions, where teaching is strong and very effective, teachers have extremely high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They plan skilfully to include

valuable opportunities that meet the needs of all pupils and tasks that build increasingly on their understanding. These teachers hold pupils' attention, give entertaining presentations and provide interesting and valuable learning experiences.

In a few sessions, teachers do not have high enough expectations and do not plan tasks carefully enough. They set less challenging or repetitive tasks, use worksheets or booklets that limit pupils' responses or manage time strictly, which prevents them from adapting teaching according to need. The learning steps in these sessions do not ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress.

Many teachers walk around the classroom regularly to provide pupils with useful advice on how to improve their work. They also celebrate successes by sharing examples of pupils' good work with the class during the learning session. Overall, many teachers provide beneficial written comments on pupils' work, which draw their attention to careless spelling and grammatical errors and provide advice and targets on how to improve their work. On the whole, assessment arrangements higher up the school are complex and complicated. Departments use a number of different strategies to report on strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, pupils do not understand clearly enough how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve.

The school provides parents and carers with comprehensive information about their child's progress through parents' evenings and interim and full reports. Reports for parents of pupils lower down the school include a personal and valuable comment from the teacher. Higher up the school, there is information about the child's achievement and progress, alongside suitable targets for improvement. However, reports are full of lengthy instructions and guidelines to accompany the various assessment methods, which make them very difficult to understand. The quality of feedback and targets in reports higher up the school also varies greatly between subjects.

On the whole, the school provides a curriculum that meets the needs of many pupils. In the sixth form, the school provides a wide range of academic and vocational subjects that respond to pupils' aspirations, such as criminology, sports training and medical science. However, the range of vocational courses to meet the needs of a few pupils in key stage 4 is limited. Year 9 pupils also miss opportunities to develop their knowledge in a few subjects due to the reduced curriculum.

Overall, planning for pupils' progress in their literacy skills is effective. For example, there are opportunities for pupils to write at length in a variety of different genres lower down the school and in a few other subjects in addition to Welsh and English higher up the school. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their oral and reading skills based on various and contemporary methods. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to develop basic digital and numeracy skills in a wide range of areas lower down the school and in a minority of subjects higher up the school. However, provision to develop numeracy and digital skills has not been co-ordinated strategically enough across the whole age range.

Leaders identify pupils with weak numeracy and literacy skills and provide appropriate interventions for these pupils. Support programmes for pupils lower down the school are evaluated and progress is tracked carefully. A number of interventions in Years 7 to 9 have been established very recently and therefore leaders have not measured their impact.

The school has worked with stakeholders, including pupils and parents, to develop a clear vision for the Curriculum for Wales. The school works closely with partner primary schools to plan learning progression lower down the school and teachers have begun to plan progressive learning experiences as pupils move through the school. Teachers experiment with a variety of pedagogic principles, evaluate their effectiveness and then adapt and refine their planning accordingly. They have developed and trialled interesting units of work based on developing progress in skills.

Health and well-being and ethics lessons support the development of pupils' social and emotional skills in Years 7, 8 and 9. However, the personal and social education (PSE) programme has not been planned cohesively and strategically enough to ensure comprehensive, consistent and incremental provision for pupils across the whole age range.

There are valuable opportunities for extend the knowledge and understanding of more able pupils. For example, pupils take advantage of the Seren network, 'Rhaglen Rhagoriaeth' teams to share information and resources, and 'Hafan Her' posters, which include QR codes for challenging activities across the areas of learning. The 'Siop Siarad' scheme during registration periods higher up the school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to learn about the importance of diversity and discuss important local and international issues, such as women's rights in Qatar. The school provides other beneficial opportunities for pupils to learn about the importance of diversity. For example, they study the history and experiences of Black communities in humanities lessons.

The school promotes Welshness and the use of the Welsh language energetically and systems such as 'language tokens' are used to reward the use of the language both in the classroom and socially. The school promotes the Welsh language successfully through a varied series of events and activities such as the school Eisteddfod, celebrating Welsh language music day and playing the 'track of the week'.

Educational trips to France, Poland and London, in addition to local trips to the library, the Senedd in Cardiff and Rhondda Heritage Park provide valuable opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons. Various activities are provided to enrich the curriculum, such as Mandarin lessons, samba workshops and a production of the musical 'Nôl i'r 80au'. A variety of extra-curricular activities are also held, which provide valuable experiences for pupils, for example dance, darts and textiles clubs.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school prioritises the well-being of pupils and staff and succeeds in creating a supportive learning environment. Staff know pupils well and foster a supportive working relationship. On the whole, provision to support pupils' emotional well-being is valuable. Specific areas, such as the 'Hwb Dysgu', the 'Lolfa LEGO' and 'Dosbarth y Bont' meet the needs of individual pupils appropriately. Staff provide appropriate support for individuals and track the well-being of groups of pupils and their attitudes to learning. The school works purposefully with external agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils receive support that responds to their needs.

The additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) and ALN team support pupils effectively across the school. They communicate regularly with staff and parents, for

example through purposeful websites and beneficial events, such as coffee mornings. This improves parents' understanding of how to support their children. The team provides timely staff training to ensure their understanding of the most effective methods of planning for pupils with ALN. Provision is planned clearly, costed effectively and responds to pupils' current needs. Through this, staff provide valuable support programmes for individual pupils and small groups to develop their social, literacy and numeracy skills. The school has robust arrangements to identify the additional learning needs of individuals and track their progress against the targets in their individual development plans. The ALNCo and team, in partnership with pupils and parents, review plans in line with requirements.

Arrangements for pupils' spiritual and moral development are suitable. The school organises various experiences for pupils to develop their understanding of equality, empathy and celebrating diversity as part of the curriculum. This develops their understanding of their own rights and those of others, for example through interesting activities as part of Black History Month celebrations. Through 'Siop Siarad' sessions during registration and assemblies, staff also raise pupils' awareness of current and global affairs. This, in turn, deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding of treating others with respect and fairness. The school has appropriate arrangements for collective worship.

Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding of Welsh identity and culture. For example, staff lower down the school nurture pupils' pride in the local area and their country highly successfully through a variety of creative methods. This contributes positively to pupils' spontaneous use of the Welsh language in formal and informal situations. An appropriate range of extra-curricular activities is provided. For example, sports clubs and artistic performances allow pupils to develop their self-confidence.

Staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills in a relevant variety of councils and forums, for example the Welshness forum, the eco forum and the school council. Throughout the school, members of these forums seek the views of their peers appropriately during registration periods, for example through relevant questionnaires. However, pupils do not always receive timely information about the work of these forums. The school ensures valuable opportunities for sixth-form pupils to contribute beneficially to school life, for example by leading and supporting Year 7 pupils in 'Cyn ac ôl ddysgu' learning reinforcement sessions.

The school provides suitable support for pupils to make subject choices when transferring to key stage 4. However, there is not sufficient guidance to support pupils' curricular options at the end of Year 8. In the sixth form, pupils receive beneficial advice and guidance when considering and planning their next steps for the future.

The school has appropriate systems for tracking attendance and behaviour and there are suitable arrangements in place to react in a timely manner to frequent absences and unacceptable behaviour. However, this does not always have the desired effect on improving overall attendance or the behaviour of a very few pupils.

The school's safeguarding arrangements are appropriate. Staff receive statutory training regularly, which means that they understand their responsibilities in terms of child protection. There are appropriate arrangements for them to report any concerns

and relevant leaders work effectively with relevant external agencies, where necessary.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is based on working together as one community to encourage ambition and foster respect. With his leadership team, he succeeds in realising the aspiration of creating a prominent Welsh ethos across the school and creating a robust culture of safeguarding. Leaders support teams that work together effectively across the school. As a result, all staff have a suitable understanding of the school's high-level priorities, such as the need to promote Welshness and pupils' well-being. In the strongest practice, leaders align the strategic priorities to their areas of responsibility appropriately. On the whole, leaders have high expectations of others. However, leaders do not succeed regularly enough in addressing the few cases where the school's older pupils behave inappropriately. Leaders across the school have a tendency to focus on operational issues from day to day. They do not always act strategically enough to have a robust influence on some aspects of the school's work, such as ensuring that the curriculum is inclusive and responds fully to the needs of all pupils.

Leaders conduct valuable self-evaluation activities which include scrutinising pupils' work, learning walks and session observations. They are timetabled suitably each term. Leaders summarise strengths and areas for improvement from the quality assurance activities and identify useful actions, for example to strengthen teachers' feedback and pupils' response to it. They seek pupils' views appropriately on specific aspects and, on the whole, respond to their findings. For example, changes have been made to provision to promote Welshness across the school following a pupil questionnaire. Leaders seek the views of parents suitably and respond appropriately. Examples of this include adapting their communication methods and making changes to their preparations for the Curriculum for Wales.

Overall, leaders at all levels identify strengths and weaknesses suitably in terms of provision, but they have a tendency to focus mainly on teaching. They provide appropriate comments on pupils' attitudes to learning but there are very few findings regarding the effect of provision on pupils' standards and progress.

The school's priorities derive appropriately from self-evaluation processes and the link between the findings and improvement plans is clear. On the whole, planning for improvement includes appropriate arrangements for allocating responsibilities and sensible timescales. There is consistency in improvement plans across the school, with departments responding to whole-school priorities and, in a few cases, setting additional departmental priorities. However, actions are not always precise and clear enough. Leaders also do not identify the expected outcomes and this hinders their ability to evaluate the success of the actions.

The school has arrangements to monitor development plans regularly and leaders review progress based on the most recent evaluations. However, it is not clear how next steps are planned in cases where progress is limited. In the best cases, the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements have led to improvements, for example in providing support to develop leaders and improve the quality of feedback given to pupils.

Governors challenge and support the school appropriately. They receive suitable information from leaders and pupils give presentations on different aspects of the school's work regularly. For example, pupils explain the school's processes to promote speaking Welsh and explain how they have raised their peers' awareness of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) people. Following the pandemic, governors are beginning to undertake more practical duties, such as attending a health and safety learning walk. As a result, they have a suitable understanding of the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. They ensure that the school responds to the statutory requirements in relation to eating and drinking healthily.

The headteacher, finance manager and governors work together to manage and monitor the budget and priorities for expenditure appropriately. Together, they give due attention to national priorities. For example, they earmark grant funding appropriately, including the pupil development grant, to reduce the effects of poverty by contributing to the cost of educational visits and providing materials to promote pupils' creative and digital skills.

The school has a suitable procedure for managing staff performance, which includes beneficial opportunities for teachers to self-evaluate their practices against the professional standards. The school provides a wide range of training and development opportunities for staff, which include working with other schools and appropriate external providers. The comprehensive 'Teaching and Learning' website include a host of appropriate resources to develop teaching methods. Valuable opportunities are provided for staff to develop as leaders through internal mentoring and external courses. The school ensures beneficial opportunities for teachers across the school to work together in triads to research aspects of pedagogy. Their findings are shared with staff in an annual 'Research Fair'. The school works in partnership with three other schools as lead schools for initial teacher education and contributes appropriately to leading training days. Leaders forge and maintain beneficial partnerships with others. For example, parents take part in mock interviews for the school's oldest pupils and representatives from the local world of work present information about different professions to all pupils.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers, staff and the governing body/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, 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
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- 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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