

Mrs Susan Witchell
Fleur-De-Lys Primary School
School Street
Fleur-De-Lys
Blackwood
NP12 3UX

11/11/24

Dear Susan Witchell,

Interim visit: November 2024

A team of inspectors recently visited Fleur-De-Lys Primary School to consider the school's recent progress against two of its improvement priorities.

During the visit the team had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, look at pupils' work and talk to pupils, staff and leaders.

Below is a summary of progress.

Focus of visit

Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and effectiveness as learners

- Since the core inspection, leaders have collaborated effectively with staff across the federation to establish a whole-school approach focused on developing pupils' independence and effectiveness as learners. They ensure regular and purposeful professional learning opportunities, enabling teachers to reflect on their practice and its impact on pupil outcomes.
- Staff plan well for a range of foundation learning experiences. Independent learning tasks engage pupils effectively and classroom routines are well embedded, providing pupils with choice in how they practice their skills and carry out their tasks.
- Staff are developing valuable opportunities for older pupils to develop their independent learning skills. Pupils are encouraged to plan their learning, discuss ideas, solve problems, and choose how to present information. As a result, many pupils engage purposefully and show resilience in overcoming challenges and sustaining interest in their learning.
- A majority of teachers use strategies appropriately to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose of their learning and how to go about

their work, for example by modelling tasks and providing opportunities for guided practice.

- When given opportunities, pupils often talk with confidence in lessons, sharing their ideas or reflecting upon their work. However, strategies which challenge pupils to explain their thinking, form questions and build upon other's responses are at an early stage of development across the school.
- From an early age, pupils use a variety of strategies and classroom resources effectively, such as working walls or designated classroom 'experts', to support their learning. They collaborate well in small groups, working efficiently to solve problems and exchange ideas. Consequently, many pupils are becoming confident learners who are prepared to tackle more challenging tasks.
- Staff provide useful opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning during lessons, including strategies that enable pupils to evaluate their own and others' work, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Overall, these opportunities support pupils well in understanding their progress, for example they compare pieces of writing over time to identify how their work has improved. However, while teachers encourage pupils to use a broad range of reflective strategies, pupils do not always apply these purposefully to move their learning forwards.

Improve pupils' speaking and extended writing skills

- Overall, the federation is making good progress towards this recommendation. Leaders provide strong support for teachers to improve their practice through well planned professional learning and by ensuring there is effective collaboration across the federation.
- An enquiry-based approach to professional learning has enhanced teachers' skills and their understanding of how to use a range of strategies effectively to develop pupils' speaking and writing skills. As a result, many lessons incorporate meaningful opportunities for pupils to practise, develop, and refine their speaking and writing skills. However, teachers' questioning does not always challenge pupils well enough to develop their speaking and thinking skills.
- Younger pupils speak confidently with each other when problem solving and working together on independent learning tasks or in their play and older pupils confidently speak out in front of audiences for a range of purposes. Teachers plan well to ensure pupils have opportunities to expand and develop their language and communication skills.
- Pupils in younger classes are developing their writing skills appropriately. Teachers support this development with a structured approach to building phonic knowledge, word recognition, and sentence formation. Most teachers use suitable and engaging stimuli to plan writing activities. However, writing tasks in these classes are often overly directed, limiting opportunities for pupils to write independently or practise emergent writing skills.
- In the oldest classes pupils write extended, well-structured pieces of writing with independence and confidence. They use modelled examples effectively to understand the features of different types of writing. As a result, many pupils are becoming more confident when writing at length, for different purposes across the curriculum.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

Overall, the work carried out by leaders and staff at the school has been effective. Leaders are making good progress towards the core inspection recommendations and are working well across the schools in the federation to put in appropriate plans to build on this initial success.

The school's/PRU's latest core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6762061>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles
Assistant Director