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

Ysgol Penrhyncoch  
Penrhyncoch  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3EH

17/12/2024

Dear Catryn Lawrence

### **Interim Visit: November 2024**

Recently, we had an opportunity to visit Ysgol Penrhyncoch and Ysgol Penllwyn, who work together as a federation. We considered how the schools are addressing the recommendations from the core inspection that was held during the autumn term 2022. Below is a summary of the progress against those recommendations.

During the visit, the team had an opportunity to:

- Conduct learning walks in each class
- Meet with pupils, staff and leaders
- Look at pupils' work
- Scrutinise relevant documentation

### **Focus of visit**

#### **Ensure that teachers' expectations are high enough to support all pupils to achieve to the best of their ability**

- The headteacher and staff across the federation have worked together conscientiously to ensure that they respond to the recommendation from the core inspection. They have scrutinised carefully the way in which they ensure that teachers have high expectations for developing pupils' skills. This work has a positive influence on the progress of many pupils.
- Leaders organise beneficial opportunities for staff to discuss effective pedagogy, for example by focusing on pupils' awareness of the importance of considering and acting on feedback when evaluating and developing their work. Many pupils across the age range now understand the importance of using success criteria, and older pupils are beginning to create their own success criteria. They gain confidence when using them to evaluate progress in tasks. As a result, many achieve effectively across the range of skills.

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- Leaders have adapted the arrangements for parents' evenings, and now, the pupils themselves discuss their work with their parents, identifying the aspects where they have gained confidence in their learning. This develops pupils' ownership of their work effectively.
- Staff identify a suitable balance of direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in real-life contexts. For example, in the foundation learning classes, there are beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their oral skills by creating beneficial dialogues. This promotes their confidence when speaking and expressing opinions effectively.
- Teachers plan an increasing range of open-ended activities to encourage and foster pupils' independence. For example, in Year 5 and 6, pupils conduct an investigation to consider the most effective way to spend money when organising a Christmas party for the class. This develops pupils' confidence in applying their number skills in a financial context.
- Teachers present increasing opportunities for pupils to select the level of challenge for different activities and most understand the importance of selecting the task that has the most suitable expectations for them. This work is developing gradually and staff are working together to ensure consistency.
- However, at times, the over-use of worksheets tends to limit opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in writing at length.

**Develop pupils' independent learning skills, including their ability to make choices about their learning, improve their own work and influence the work of the school**

- Provision for the youngest pupils provides a suitable balance of adult-led learning and independent learning activities. This enables most pupils to make good progress in developing independence. Staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to make decisions, for example in choosing tools and cutting real fruit to create images that emulate the work of a famous artist. Pupils benefit from opportunities to apply their literacy skills through activities such as adding speech bubbles to improve their digital presentations.
- Teachers in the foundation learning classes provide a wide range of purposeful resources that encourage pupils to develop their physical, mathematical, creative and linguistic skills. Equipment is accessible to pupils, which enables them to be independent and work together effectively while applying their skills.
- Teachers provide suitable opportunities for older pupils to develop as independent learners. On the whole, they provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to make choices during their written work, for example when writing a report or review. Many pupils are confident when discussing the content of their work and demonstrate a sound understanding of what they need to do to develop further.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to influence the life and work of the school. For example, following the school parliament's request for more scientific activities, they have worked with the local college to create a computer program to manage the process of watering the plants in the school garden.
- Leaders use research and professional learning beneficially to develop staff's knowledge and skills. The productive culture of co-operation helps to drive

improvement. This is beginning to influence staff's confidence in giving older pupils choices about how to record and present their work.

The school'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/6672363>

Yours sincerely



**Liz Miles**  
Assistant Director