



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

A report on

Ysgol Comins Coch

**Comins Coch
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3BQ**

Date of inspection: November 2024

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Ysgol Comins Coch

Name of provider	Ysgol Comins Coch
Local authority	Ceredigion County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Transitional 2
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	139
Pupils of statutory school age	124
Number in nursery classes	6
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 Primary is 22.9%)	12.6%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	13.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	8.1%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	13/03/2017
Start date of inspection	25/11/2024

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

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

Leaders develop a positive culture and inclusive ethos, focusing on pupils' learning and well-being effectively. This nurturing environment, central to their improvement strategies, leads to excellent behaviour and enthusiasm for learning among pupils. Leaders' willingness to improve practices through regular evaluations result in well-organised improvement processes.

Leaders manage staff performance well and professional learning opportunities impact on pupils' learning positively. The governing body supports and challenges leadership rigorously and focus on improving teaching and learning through an effective monitoring cycle. Leaders allocate roles and responsibilities effectively, considering staff workload and well-being sensibly. Learning opportunities, such as entrepreneurial days, promote community understanding successfully, and pupil voice groups influence school life and charity fundraising positively.

Staff and pupils develop excellent working relationships and teachers encourage pupils to collaborate and share ideas sensibly. They provide feedback to help pupils understand tasks and to improve, though this feedback does not always challenge and identify the next steps in individual pupils' learning accurately. Most teaching sessions move at a suitable pace and teachers plan engaging activities, but when teaching is less challenging, pupils' learning is not as effective.

Pupils develop strong oracy and reading skills, becoming skilled readers who engage deeply with texts. They write successfully for various purposes and use effective numeracy and digital skills confidently. Pupils have exemplary attitudes towards learning Welsh and use the language confidently, which is a notable strength of the school.

The learning environment is stimulating and well-resourced, though the outdoor provision is not developed well enough to support pupils to apply their skills in beneficial learning activities. The curriculum offers broad learning experiences, building on previously taught skills effectively. Pupils develop worthwhile personal, social, emotional and creative skills, which promotes effective cultural awareness, empathy and respect for others.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Ensure that teachers manage time effectively in lessons to challenge and accurately identify the next steps in pupils' learning
- R2 Improve the quality and provision of learning experiences in the outdoors

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders work diligently to create an inclusive culture and ethos that focus on pupils' learning and well-being successfully. Creating this positive learning environment is a key element of the leadership's improvement strategies. By communicating their vision clearly with staff and pupils, leaders focus particularly well on pupils' well-being, because of effective care, support, and guidance provision. As a result, nearly all pupils' well-being is a strength of the school. It is supported by a nurturing environment that promotes personal and social development beneficially. Nearly all pupils display impeccable behaviour. They are welcoming to visitors and speak enthusiastically about their learning experiences.

Many pupils make secure progress from their starting points, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those affected by poverty and disadvantage. Most pupils show exemplary attitudes towards learning, and they listen attentively, and show pride in their work.

Leaders set high expectations and regularly evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development purposefully. They implement well-organised improvement processes that result in sustained improvements over time. For example, recent developments include enriching the digital provision across the school.

Managing staff performance is a priority for school leaders. They provide beneficial training to address areas needing improvement, such as recall and questioning techniques. This approach ensures that professional learning opportunities for staff impact positively on pupils' well-being and learning. Additionally, leaders implement strategies to promote pupils' online safety and address pupils' specific learning needs. Leaders also address national priorities rigorously, such as promoting Welsh language skills, which is a notable strength of the school.

The governing body plays a crucial role in supporting and challenging the school's leadership. Governors ensure the efficient use of the budget, which includes establishing, staffing and resourcing a new Welsh medium nursery class. In addition, the governing body, alongside staff, focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning. They participate in a well-planned monitoring cycle that holds teachers to account effectively on the impact of their work.

Leaders allocate roles and responsibilities sensibly to meet pupils' needs well. They consider staff workload and well-being carefully, developing productive relationships with parents, partner schools, external bodies, and the wider community. This includes events like entrepreneurial and '999' days, which promotes pupils' understanding of different careers in the world of work within their community. Staff ensure that pupil voice groups affect most aspects of school life, the community and

the wider world purposefully, which includes fundraising for local and national charities.

Staff provide effective support for pupils with ALN. They use all the information available sensibly to ensure that transition arrangements between classes and other providers allow ALN pupils to access support effectively. Regular professional meetings with pupils, parents, and carers help create individual support packages to track pupils' progress carefully. Staff collaborate well with external agencies, forming good partnerships with health and education professionals, which impacts positively on pupils' outcomes.

The working relationships and mutual respect between staff and pupils are excellent. Most pupils collaborate well with their peers and listen attentively to teachers. Older pupils ask thoughtful questions and contribute eloquently to class discussions. Most pupils have strong oracy skills, articulating their opinions and recounting facts confidently. Many older pupils possess a mature vocabulary, which enriches their oral contributions.

Most pupils develop their reading skills well, becoming skilled readers who engage deeply with texts and read with expression. For example, by Year 6, pupils read fluently and can efficiently skim and scan for information while researching for information on the working life of a child in a Victorian coal mine. Across the school, pupils write successfully for various purposes. Many older pupils produce high-quality writing in different genres, planning their work effectively and improving their contributions through careful editing and re-drafting.

Most pupils acquire effective numeracy skills and use them purposefully in authentic activities. For example, they compare different currencies using exchange rates confidently. Most younger pupils develop digital skills effectively, controlling programmable toys and accessing educational learning programs independently. Older pupils use databases to store data, create charts, and explain their findings sensibly.

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes towards learning Welsh, developing strong communication skills from an early age. As they progress, pupils use the Welsh language confidently in various activities, contributing eloquently to class discussions in Welsh.

Teachers explain tasks clearly and involve pupils in the planning of their learning sensibly. Effective questioning techniques deepen pupils' learning purposefully, helping them recall previous knowledge and make connections across the curriculum effectively. Teachers and other practitioners create stimulating, engaging, and well-resourced classrooms, encouraging all pupils to learn productively. Outdoor provision is less effective, and it does not target the development and progression of pupils' skills well enough.

Teachers offer ample opportunities for pupils to collaborate and share ideas, equipping pupils with skills to present their work in various ways, such as digital presentations on energy conservation. Teachers provide useful feedback, enabling pupils to understand tasks better and to improve their work. However, teachers' feedback does not target the next steps in individual pupils' learning accurately at all

times. Most teaching sessions move learning along at an appropriate pace, with engaging activities that involve pupils purposefully. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is slower, and the level of challenge does not always meet the needs of all pupils well enough.

The school's curriculum provides pupils with a good breadth and depth of learning across all the curriculum areas. Teachers' planning builds on previously taught skills, enabling many pupils to make progress in their learning over time. Additionally, most pupils develop an understanding of their local area, Wales, and the wider world, through studying local power stations and celebrating different cultures through international themes enthusiastically.

Teachers provide strong support for pupils' personal, social, and emotional development fostering empathy, reflection, and respect successfully. The curriculum supports pupils' creative development well, with visiting artists working alongside teachers to enrich pupils' artistic skills. Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural awareness are promoted effectively. For example, by Year 6, pupils understand the benefits and disadvantages of renewable and non-renewable energy sources, appreciate different beliefs, and show tolerance and consideration to others.

Additional information

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

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read 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 classes, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- 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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publications Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh).