

This letter is also available in Welsh.

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03/03/2025

Dear Daniel

Interim Visit: January 2025

A team of inspectors visited Ysgol Bro Tryweryn and Ysgol Ffridd y Llyn, namely the Cysgod y Foel federation. The team considered the progress the schools have made in addressing two of the recommendations from the core inspection in January 2024. Below is a summary of progress against those recommendations. Leaders should use these findings to support further improvements in these areas.

During the visit, we had an opportunity to visit classes at both schools, discuss with pupils, staff, leaders and governors, and scrutinise relevant evidence and pupils' work. The comments below convey our overall findings in relation to both schools in the federation.

Focus of visit

Ensure that learning activities challenge pupils to achieve to the best of their ability

- Leaders have focused meaningfully on addressing the recommendation. This includes using sensible information from their self-evaluation processes, such as learning walks, scrutinising books and their curriculum plans, to set a reasonable direction for improvement.

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- They have invested time and resources in strengthening provision, including improving assessment and progress-tracking methods and working with nearby schools to discover and use good practice.
- There is now an appropriate level of challenge within activities, which supports pupils to develop their skills purposefully. On the whole, most pupils persevere with their tasks effectively and achieve at a level that corresponds to their age and stage. However, there are still a very few examples where learning tasks do not correspond closely enough to pupils' ability and a few examples of over-directing learning. Leaders continue to focus on improving this.

Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders, including the governing body, so that they co-operate more strategically across the federation to address improvement priorities

- The staffing situation has now been stabilised with the appointment of an acting headteacher until August 2025. This has provided more certainty and consistency across the federation's schools.
- The acting headteacher has established a clear vision for maintaining and developing the federation further. Leaders work together to ensure consistency and build on the federation's strongest practices, while also celebrating the unique identity of both schools.
- There are now regular and beneficial opportunities for the assistant headteachers and staff at both schools to work together more closely when discussing and refining provision. They plan and scrutinise different aspects of provision jointly and evaluate the work of the schools, identify strengths and plan for improvement. An example of this beneficial co-operation is the way in which teachers have had opportunities to discuss aspects of effective pedagogy to strengthen provision across the federation.
- Members of the governing body work closely with the acting headteacher, other leaders and the federation's staff. They now play a more strategic role in addressing the improvement priorities. Responsibility for different areas of learning and experience have been allocated to members of the body and a purposeful timetable has been organised for conducting joint scrutiny activities with teachers and leaders. This gives them a greater understanding of pupils' progress and the quality of provision. As a result, they have a firm grasp of what needs to be improved.
- The current school development plan provides an effective framework for improving provision. In addition to curricular areas, leaders have identified the importance of maintaining the well-being of pupils and staff to maintain a resilient and co-operative federation for the future.

The school's most recent 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/6612220>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director