

This letter is available in Welsh

Leaders and staff

Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen
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22/07/2025

Interim Visit: June 2025

Dear leaders and staff,

Thank you for your support during the interim visit to the school on 18th and 19th June. We enjoyed the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils to hear more about the improvement work the school has carried out since the core inspection in September 2019.

During the visit, we had an opportunity to:

- discuss with leaders the progress the school has made in terms of addressing the recommendation relating to improving the quality of teaching and assessment and your work in terms of improving the effectiveness of the self-evaluation and improvement planning process;
- talk to pupils of different ages during their lessons;
- talk to middle leaders about their roles in driving improvements in the two areas in question;
- conduct lesson observations jointly with senior leaders to support your self-evaluation and improvement planning;
- scrutinise work jointly with senior leaders;
- observe a few lessons, scrutinise a small sample of pupils' work and scrutinise a small sample of relevant documents provided by the school.

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Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh.
Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

Focus of visit

How effective is the work of leaders to improve the quality of teaching across the school?

Since the last inspection, leaders appear to have ensured a consistent focus on improving and ensuring consistency in the quality of teaching across the subjects. Professional learning has focused on increasing the level of challenge in lessons, planning to meet pupils' needs and developing teachers' ability to question more effectively. More recently, work has focused on developing pupils to become more independent. From the few lessons observed, it appears that this strategic planning is beginning to have a positive effect on teachers' practice.

From the small sample of pupils' work considered, the quality and effectiveness of assessment and feedback across the subjects are varied. In the best cases, teachers' comments are clear, purposeful and lead to pupils making progress in their subject skills or wider skills. In a few cases, teachers do not provide enough timely feedback on pupils' extended work.

We believe it would be beneficial for the school to consider:

- How will leaders make the most effective use of best practice in terms of questioning to reduce variation between teachers?
- How will leaders ensure that teachers have high expectations of the participation and achievement of all pupils?
- How will leaders ensure that tasks increase in challenge over time?
- How will leaders reduce the variation in the quality and impact of teachers' feedback on pupils' work?

How effective are self-evaluation and improvement planning processes?

During the visit, there was an opportunity to discuss how leaders have addressed the recommendations since the core inspection in 2019 and the subsequent monitoring visit. Since the follow-up monitoring visit, leaders have given due attention to strengthening and ensuring consistency in self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. It was good to see that the school improvement plan includes sensible priorities and that the school's work is based appropriately on these areas for improvement.

The quality assurance process is sensible and purposeful activities have been organised throughout the year to enable leaders at all levels to monitor quality and evaluate progress overall against desired outcomes. It is good to note that senior leaders have ensured that middle leaders, including skills coordinators, develop their roles by taking part in quality assurance activities. These include lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils'

work and producing brief evaluations of their findings. This is a development in the role and work of middle leaders compared to the time of the core inspection. Pupils' views are given due attention in these processes and, in the best cases, changes are made to provision as a result.

It was discussed with leaders how they have tried to increase the focus on the quality of teaching in management meetings and in their monitoring activities. Weekly morning meetings seem to focus on ensuring consistency in good practice in teaching and assessment and are a beneficial opportunity for practitioners to share sound practices from their work. Staff appreciate this new system.

We believe it would be beneficial for the school to consider:

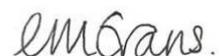
- How will leaders at all levels make more specific use of information about pupils' progress and achievement to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their work and plan for improvement?
- How will leaders at all levels refine quality assurance activities to enable them to focus more closely on pupils' standards and progress?
- To what extent do senior leaders and governors consider the wide range of attainment and well-being data available to them to identify specific areas for improvement and strengthen accountability?

Thank you once again for all your help in planning and organising our visit. We wish you well 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:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/ysgol-dyffryn-ogwen-cy/6614002>

Yours sincerely



Catherine Evans

Assistant Director