

This letter is also available in Welsh

Mair Hughes  
Ysgol Penglais  
Waunfawr  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3AW

24/07/2025

Dear Mair Hughes

**Interim visit:** July 2025

Thank you for your welcome during the interim visit to the school on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2025. We enjoyed the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils and hear more about the improvement work that the school has carried out since the core inspection in May 2022.

During the visit, we had the opportunity to:

- speak with senior and middle leaders about your work around strengthening the safeguarding culture of the school through improved communication, improving the provision for personal and social education and improving self-evaluation and improvement processes
- talk with pupils across Year groups 7,8,9,10 and 12 and hear their feedback about the school
- conduct a series of joint lesson observations and work scrutiny activities with senior leader to support your self-evaluation and improvement planning
- observe a range of teaching and learning sessions, including in English, Welsh, science, design technology, geography, physical education, well-being, construction and health and social care

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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

### **Recommendation 2 - Strengthen the safeguarding culture of the school by communicating clearly with all pupils and parents how incidents of behaviour and alleged bullying are addressed, as well as improving the provision for personal and social education.**

Since the core inspection, leaders have focused on refining the schools' processes to strengthen the safeguarding culture. Through honest reflection they have identified the areas needing improvement in this area and have worked on improving communication with pupils and parents in particular. It was interesting to hear how the school has used professional learning to develop staff understanding around aspects of well-being such as conflict, bullying and diversity and equality. Leaders at all levels have developed clearer lines of communication through providing timely feedback to parents when incidents occur, workshop opportunities for parents, as well as weekly positive phone calls. The school has also focused on developing its outreach work. This includes staff working closely with families in partner primary schools and in the community hubs to support and develop their understanding of well-being issues. It was interesting to hear that leaders feel that this is starting to have a positive impact on parents' engagement with the school.

The school has developed its provision for personal and social education through a research-based approach. There is now an up-to-date curriculum offer which is delivered through well-being lessons for Years 7 to 11, assemblies and form tutor time sessions. This provision continues in the sixth form with the enrichment programme offer. The delivery and content is supported by external providers such as Brooke, PSE Association, NSPCC, and the police. Leaders adapt the curriculum in response to pupils' needs and findings from timely pupil voice feedback, heads of year termly evaluations and use of SHRN data. The work is supported by a programme of professional learning to develop staff's knowledge, understanding and confidence to deliver this work. It was pleasing to hear that pupils we met during the visit value the well-being curriculum offer and feel well supported.

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

- How will the school further develop its communication and engagement with parents?

## **Self-evaluation and improvement planning**

Following the core inspection, the school has further refined its quality assurance processes to provide middle leaders with more autonomy to focus on specific priorities in their areas of responsibility. This, along with the high levels of support provided by senior leaders in line management meetings is highly appreciated by middle leaders. Leaders explained that they see self-evaluation and improvement planning as a continuous process. It was interesting to hear that all staff can participate in professional learning weeks and joint quality assurance activities. It was good to hear staff talk about these activities as developmental opportunities. It was also pleasing to hear leaders at all levels using a shared vocabulary when discussing different aspects of teaching and learning.

Leaders at all levels were able to tell us how they regularly canvass staff and pupils' views to inform their evaluations and how they use data to pose questions about the quality of provision. Leaders explained their view on the schools' strengths and areas for development and how they have identified short and long term priorities for improvement which reflect both the school's needs and national priorities. It was positive to hear that they evaluate progress against these priorities regularly and make adjustments as necessary. Leaders have worked to ensure that they consider better the impact of provision on pupils' progress, although senior leaders recognise that there is inconsistency in how well leaders evaluate pupils' skills when carrying out quality assurance activities.

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

- Do leaders always consider well enough the standards of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills when evaluating the effectiveness of provision?

Thank you again for all your help to plan and arrange our visit.

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/6674047>

Yours sincerely



**Catherine Evans**  
Assistant Director