

West Monmouth School
Blaendare Road
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 5YG

15/10/2025

Dear leaders and staff,

Interim visit: September 2025

Thank you for your support during the interim visit to the school on the 24th and 25th of September 2025. We valued the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils and hear more about the improvement work the school has undertaken since the core inspection.

During the visit we had the opportunity to:

- Hold discussions with leaders and staff about their self-evaluation and improvement work, and their work to improve the teaching to consistently challenge pupils of all abilities
- Talk with pupils and hear their feedback about the school
- Visit a small sample of lessons in subjects across the curriculum
- Scrutinise a sample of pupils' work
- Scrutinise a small sample of relevant school documentation
- Undertake joint lesson observation activities with leaders and discuss the main findings from these activities

Focus of visit

How is the teaching consistently challenging pupils of all abilities to make progress and develop their independence in learning?

In the short time since the core inspection, it was interesting to hear how teachers have been offered a range of professional learning opportunities on a few aspects of teaching such as questioning and adaptive teaching. We also heard that in a few instances,

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teachers are starting to consider levels of challenge when planning lessons. For example, when answering questions, pupils are expected to provide extended verbal responses using subject specific terminology effectively. In addition, during the visit we heard how the school has started to consider strategies to support pupils with additional learning needs through the creation of the 'West Mon 10', although, leaders recognise that these strategies are in the early stages of development. Outside of lessons, the school has refined their processes to identify more able pupils and provide them with a range of beneficial enrichment opportunities.

We think it would be helpful for the school to consider:

- How do leaders ensure that all teachers have a clear enough understanding of how to provide sufficient challenge and develop independence for all pupils?
- How do leaders ensure that professional learning opportunities focus on developing key aspects of teaching for all pupils?

How robust and accurate are the self-evaluation processes to ensure that leaders plan for improvement precisely?

During the visit, it was clear that the school has started to address the recommendation. Since the core inspection, the headteacher has refined and implemented sensible self-evaluation activities. Leaders have benefitted from helpful professional learning on self-evaluation which is beginning to improve the effectiveness of quality assurance activities. In addition, leaders analyse data well to support evaluations. It was pleasing to hear how the school engages well with external partners to support their self-evaluation processes. In our discussions, we heard how senior leaders have refined line management procedures to focus on the effectiveness of middle leader evaluations. However, senior leaders recognise that there is still variation in the quality of these evaluations.

It was noted that leaders use a range of evidence to prioritise areas for improvements, for example, lesson observations, work scrutiny, data analysis and pupil voice. It was interesting to learn how leaders have developed their improvement planning processes.

We think it would be helpful for the school to consider:

- How do leaders reduce the variation in the quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning across the school?
- How do leaders ensure improvement priorities focus clearly on the most important aspects of teaching and skills?

Thank you again for all your help in planning and organising our visit. We wish you well with your future developments.

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/6784072>

Yours sincerely



Lowri Jones

Acting Assistant Director