

Croeserw Primary School  
Bryn Siriol  
Cymmer  
Port Talbot  
SA13 3PL

09/12/2025

Dear leaders and staff

**Interim visit:** December 2025

A team of inspectors visited Croeserw Primary School, part of the Upper Afan Valley federation of schools, to consider progress in relation to two recommendations from the previous core inspection. The inspection team took the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, talk with pupils and staff, consider documentation, and look at samples of pupils' work. Below is a summary of the findings from the visit.

**Focus of visit**

**Improve provision to develop pupils' literacy skills, particularly in reading**

- Since the core inspection, leaders have placed a suitable focus on developing pupils' literacy skills. They have provided teachers and support staff with a beneficial range of professional learning that structures the way in which they support pupils to develop their reading and writing skills. This helps to ensure that a majority of older pupils develop their literacy skills competently. However, a minority of younger pupils have too few opportunities to develop and apply their literacy skills independently and creatively in a developmentally appropriate learning environment.
- A majority of pupils develop their speaking and listening skills suitably as they move through the school. Many talk about their home life and personal experiences confidently. A minority explain their learning and share their ideas in suitable detail.
- Across the school, a majority of pupils develop their writing skills appropriately. Older pupils have appropriate opportunities to write in different styles and are beginning to use a broader vocabulary. They have a few opportunities to redraft

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and improve their writing following feedback from teachers. However, in general this process does not support pupils well enough to bring about improvements to their work. In general, pupils do not always write or present their work neatly.

- The youngest pupils are developing a useful understanding of the link between letters and their associated sounds. A majority are beginning to use this to read short texts and decode new words appropriately.
- A majority of older pupils read a range of texts appropriately and read aloud with suitable fluency. They use a few strategies to make meaning from words and sentences, including a knowledge of phonics. A minority enjoy reading and talk about books they read for pleasure. In a few cases, pupils' vocabulary is limited, and this hinders their understanding of what they read.

**Strengthen the contributions of leaders at all levels, across the federation, particularly to evaluation and improvement work**

- Since the core inspection, leaders have strengthened their monitoring activities to ensure they draw on first-hand evidence when evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work. These include book looks, learning walks, and regular class visits. As a result, leaders are now able to identify specific areas for development more precisely.
- Leaders maintain a strong focus on national priorities, including improving attendance. The family support officer works effectively with parents to engage them in school life and to help them ensure their children attend more regularly. This work is beginning to have a positive impact on the proportion of pupils who attend school consistently.
- Leaders have strengthened provision for pupils with additional learning needs by creating a support classroom where teaching can be more targeted to pupils' individual needs. This has supported teaching across the school by improving learning behaviours and helping pupils access the curriculum more successfully.
- Across the federation, leadership roles and processes are more clearly defined. Assistant headteachers now have sufficient time to manage the day-to-day demands of their school sites. This enables them to take greater responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and to work more closely with colleagues across the federation. As a result, there is a growing ethos of support and reflective practice.
- Leaders work productively together and are increasingly creating opportunities for staff collaboration. Joint planning sessions and the sharing of pupils' work to discuss progress are beginning to raise expectations and improve consistency in aspects of teaching across the federation.
- Leaders provide valuable professional learning opportunities within each of the federation's schools and model teaching strategies to support staff development.

For example, they provide coaching sessions that help teachers and support staff strengthen their understanding of the school's approach to teaching literacy. This is beginning to improve consistency, for example in the provision for developing early reading skills.

- However, there remain elements of teaching across the school that require further attention. These include providing more effective and engaging approaches to develop pupils' writing, improving the teaching of mathematics and strengthening the provision for Foundation Learning.
- Leaders are beginning to define more clearly what effective teaching looks like across the federation. However, this is still at an early stage. They recognise the need to further strengthen opportunities for teachers to work across schools to share effective practice, refine their teaching and build confidence in meeting pupils' needs.
- Currently, teachers tend to rely too heavily on structured schemes, limiting opportunities for more flexible and creative approaches that would better engage pupils and help them make more progress with their learning.

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/6712173>

Yours sincerely



**Liz Miles**

Assistant Director