

Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy
Ffordd Nebo
Llanrwst
Conwy
LL26 0SD

09/02/2026

Dear leaders and staff

Interim Visit: January 2026

Thank you for your support with our interim visit on 14th and 15th January 2026. We enjoyed the opportunity to meet you, your staff and pupils. It was very interesting to hear about the improvement work the school has undertaken since the last inspection in January 2019.

During the visit, we had opportunities to:

- discuss your self-evaluation and improvement processes with members of the senior leadership team, in addition to a few middle leaders
- discuss the work the school is doing to develop pupils' reading skills across the subjects
- talk to a group of pupils from Years 7 – 11 and hear their feedback about the school
- observe lessons, some with members of the senior leadership team
- scrutinise the work of pupils in Year 8 and Year 9

Focus of visit

Improve the quality, incisiveness and ambition of self-evaluation and planning for improvement processes

It was interesting to hear about developments at the school to sharpen self-evaluation and planning for improvement processes. We heard about the wide range of evaluation activities including lesson observations, scrutiny of books and seeking the opinions of pupils and parents. It seems that the senior leadership team has sharpened the way in which they gather first-hand evidence in terms of the progress pupils make in lessons and

Estyn, Llys Angor, Heol Keen, Caerdydd,
CF24 5JW Ffôn: 02920 446446
ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru
www.estyn.llyw.cymru

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Estyn, Anchor Court, Keen Road,
Cardiff, CF24 5JW Telephone: 02920
446446 enquiries@estyn.gov.wales
www.estyn.gov.wales

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the effect of their pastoral systems on their well-being. The '360° scrutiny' process ensures that all teachers are included in the self-evaluation process. These processes allow leaders at all levels to identify the strengths and areas for improvement within their areas of responsibility.

The school's planning includes clear and relevant priorities. This planning includes specific actions, sensible monitoring arrangements and appropriate success criteria.

It would be useful for the school to consider:

- If the observation processes focus sufficiently on teaching
- If there is a clear enough link between specific actions and the desired outcomes
- To what extent does planning ensure robust accountability?

How does the school promote pupils' reading skills?

During the visit, it was useful to hear how leaders have placed considerable emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills across the curriculum. There is a 'Skills Website', where leaders have shared key information and resources to support staff in providing for skills. We heard how teachers have benefitted from training on strategies they can use to support pupils to improve their reading skills. As a result, they have trialled a number of methods, including adapting and introducing more challenging reading texts in their areas of learning.

From the sample of work seen and the lessons visited, we saw that teachers are beginning to use the 'Darllen deallus' ('Smart reading') method. This strategy places a useful emphasis on the importance of relevant vocabulary and is a means of fostering independence and resilience among pupils when they see and read text for the first time. In our meeting with pupils, they spoke positively about this development. It was also encouraging to hear pupils talking enthusiastically about their favourite authors.

It was interesting to hear about the way in which leaders identify those pupils who need support with reading at an early stage and provide interventions to improve pupils' confidence in reading aloud. Leaders have prioritised developing a culture of reading across the school. They have promoted the importance and benefits of reading for pleasure. For example, the reading challenge for Year 7 and 8 pupils and the presentations by some teachers talking about their favourite books in the morning assemblies for the school's younger pupils. We also heard about the way in which the school gives guidance to parents on how to support and encourage their children to read in the 'Rhannu' newsletter.

It would be useful for the school to consider the extent to which teachers in each department understand their role in promoting and developing pupils' reading skills?

Thank you once again for all of your support in planning and organising our visit. The school's [most recent core inspection report](#) and further information about the process and purpose of [interim visits](#) can be found on our website.

Yours sincerely



Lowri Jones

Acting Assistant Director