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Bassaleg School  
Forge Lane  
Bassaleg  
NP10 8NF

17/03/2026

Dear leaders and staff

**Interim visit:** February 2026

Thank you for the welcome the team received and for the helpful dialogue we exchanged during the interim visit to the school on 12 and 13 February 2026. We valued the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils and discuss the improvement work that the school has carried out since the core inspection.

During our visit, we had the opportunity to:

- Talk with pupils and hear their feedback about the school.
- Visit a sample of lessons across the curriculum to see pupils and staff undertaking their work.
- Undertake lesson observations and work scrutiny activities alongside senior leaders.
- Speak with senior leaders about their improvement work and how they have adapted approaches in the two areas of focus
- Speak with middle leaders about their work and hear about the benefits and challenges they are experiencing.

**Focus of visit**

**What steps are the school taking to strengthen its self-evaluation and improvement planning processes?**

During the visit, we heard how the school has reconsidered and redesigned its self-evaluation processes. It was interesting to learn how, after various stages of refinement, you have now created a model which aims to focus clearly on evaluating the impact of

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teaching on pupil progress. We heard about leaders' determination to create a live cycle of self-evaluation that is rooted in determining the impact of all aspects of the school's work. It was helpful to note that by placing teaching and learning at the centre of this cycle, you feel that all teachers contribute meaningfully to school improvement.

In our discussions, you explained how leaders make use of first-hand evidence to build a more accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. It was also useful to hear about your arrangements for enabling teams to regularly scrutinise pupils' work, share effective practice and reflect on the impact of teaching strategies on pupil progress.

We also noted the steps that have been taken to strengthen collaboration between senior and middle leaders. You explained how senior leaders triangulate evidence and model reflective practice whilst aiming to provide supportive scrutiny and guidance. Middle leaders described how the coaching approach from senior leadership is helping to promote constructive and reflective professional dialogue.

Overall, it was interesting to hear how self-evaluation is continuing to develop an ethos of openness and accountability across the school.

In discussions with leaders, we agree with your conclusion that it would be helpful to consider:

- How leaders could focus more closely on how teaching and assessment strategies are securing pupil progress for all groups of learners over time from first hand evidence?

### **How has the school strengthened its approaches to improving teaching?**

It was interesting to hear how your senior leaders have completely reframed the school's approaches to improving teaching. Leaders have realigned the Deputy Director of Standards role (DDOS's) to focus more closely on pedagogy and the quality assurance of practice at department level. Leaders and teachers outlined the evidence-informed four 'pillars of pedagogy' that underpin the school's professional learning programme. The regularly updated 'Pillar Pages' provide practical support and stimuli for teachers. It was interesting to hear teachers talk with obvious enthusiasm about the school's central aim of improving teaching, and about the pride and professional responsibility they feel when developing their practice.

During our visits to classrooms, we saw that areas of focus, such as questioning and metacognition, are evident in teachers' planning and in their lessons. Teachers also told us about the school's drive to enable their pupils to become successful, resilient and

rounded learners. These teachers were able to articulate clearly the part they play in realising this ambitious goal and how they value the support they are given to do so.

In discussion, leaders outlined aspects of teaching they have identified as requiring further refinement through their self-evaluation processes. We agree that they could consider:

- How best to develop pupils' vocabulary around learning so that they are better able to reflect on the impact of teaching and assessment on their progress?
- How to ensure more able pupils respond more independently to appropriate challenge?

Thank you again for the interesting and beneficial discussions we engaged in and 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/6804030>

Yours sincerely



**Lowri Jones**

Acting Assistant Director