



Report summary for parents and carers on Ysgol Penmaes

Date of inspection: January 2024

by Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh.

Summary

Ysgol Penmaes provides a strong support system for pupils' emotional well-being. Nearly all pupils feel that their concerns are always taken seriously by all members of staff. Teachers and support staff work collaboratively to prepare meaningful learning experiences that meet the needs of pupils. Over time, nearly all pupils make suitable progress and develop valuable skills that are appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.

The headteacher has worked with staff, governors, pupils and parents to create a vision for the school that is firmly based on creating 'successful, healthy, individuals and nurturing excellence' (SHINE).

Pupils feel safe and secure within the school environment. Incidents of bullying are rare. Nearly all pupils are aware of the support system available to them when they experience sadness or unhappiness. This includes knowing who to turn to if they need assistance. The school works well with parents and other agencies. As a result, attendance at the school has shown an improving trend over a three-year period.

The school works collaboratively with the local authority to ensure swift and effective handling of safeguarding concerns raised. The school has a strong commitment to child welfare and safety.

Effective teaching focusses on well-planned, individualised and meaningful learning experiences tailored to pupils' needs, supported by a variety of familiar resources to maintain engagement. Teachers engage well with pupils through simple, targeted questioning and provide them with ample thinking time to think. Teachers use resources like pictures effectively to aide expression of emotions and as a result, pupils' communication skills progress appropriately. Pupils' skills to work independently develop gradually, with tasks such as preparing for breaks and choosing activities independently. However, teachers do not always consider pupils' prior learning well enough, and lessons' slow pace and insufficient challenge limits pupils' progress. Quality assurance of teaching does not provide enough detail on areas for improvement to support teachers to further develop their practice.

Recommendations and next steps

We have made four recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Ensure that planning and teaching takes sufficient account of the needs and abilities of pupils and builds effectively on their prior learning
- R2 Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement planning for curriculum design and, assessment, focus clearly on improving teaching and learning
- R3 Continue to work with relevant partners to ensure that the hydrotherapy pool is repaired and commissioned for use as soon as possible
- R4 Continue to work with relevant partners to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the support provided by the school nursing service

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#).



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Publication date: 25/03/2024

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