



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: significant improvement**

**Cantonian High School
Fairwater Road
Fairwater
Cardiff
CF5 3JR**

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by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

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The monitoring team

Steven Pringle	Reporting Inspector
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Outcome of monitoring

Cantonian High School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in February 2015.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics, and improve pupils' numeracy skills

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, at key stage 4, performance has improved in many indicators. In the level 2 threshold, including English and mathematics, performance has improved by nearly 15 percentage points over the last two years and has been above modelled outcomes throughout this period. Performance in the capped points score has been above modelled outcomes for the last four years. In 2016, in many indicators, pupils make strong progress from previous key stages.

Performance in English improved in 2016 after a slight decline in 2015 and is now better than at the time of the core inspection. Since the core inspection, performance in mathematics has improved by more than 12 percentage points. In both subjects, 2016 performance compares well to that of similar schools.

At key stage 3, performance in the core subject indicator has improved since the core inspection.

At key stage 4, in 2016, the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals improved in all indicators. Their performance in English and the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics is now above the national average for this group of pupils, although it is slightly below in mathematics.

Most pupils have a positive attitude to their learning, maintain concentration well and make sound progress in their lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other, and support each other's learning effectively in pair or group work. However, a very few pupils do not listen well enough or maintain their focus throughout their lessons.

The majority of pupils write with suitable technical accuracy and structure their work appropriately. A minority write fluently at length for a suitable range of purposes, deploying varied and engaging language. However, a minority of pupils make frequent errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. These pupils do not structure extended pieces of writing sufficiently well or demonstrate a secure enough grasp of purpose or audience.

Many pupils use an appropriate range of strategies to locate relevant information from a variety of sources. They use inference and deduction well to interpret texts

and successfully analyse the techniques used by writers. However, a minority of pupils are not secure enough in their understanding of how to use inference to interpret texts.

In many cases, pupils make clear and articulate contributions to discussion activities and demonstrate a sound understanding of subject terminology. A few provide thoughtful and well-developed responses. However, a minority of pupils make only brief verbal contributions to discussion work.

Many pupils have sound number skills. They use these skills appropriately across the curriculum, for example when calculating measurements in design technology. However, a minority of pupils lack confidence in performing mental calculations and are not sufficiently accurate when constructing graphs. Many pupils demonstrate well-developed information and communication technology skills, for example when using spreadsheets to calculate profit margins.

Recommendation 2: Reduce fixed-term exclusions

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has introduced a wide range of strategies to improve behaviour. These strategies have had a significant impact on pupils' engagement with their learning and have been successful in reducing the level of fixed-term exclusions.

The school has implemented a clear framework of rewards and sanctions to promote positive behaviour. Staff have been provided with valuable training to help them develop positive relationships with pupils. This has been successful in ensuring that nearly all staff follow the school's behaviour policy consistently and that pupils and staff have a secure, shared understanding of the school's expectations regarding behaviour.

The school monitors pupils' behaviour closely and provides effective interventions for the most vulnerable pupils. It works well with external agencies to provide targeted support for these pupils.

Recommendation 3: Improve the quality of teaching across the school

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has focused appropriately on improving the quality of teaching. It has used a wide range of strategies to ensure that good practice is shared and that senior and middle leaders maintain a consistent focus on developing effective teaching. This has had a positive impact on many aspects of teaching, such as lesson planning and the monitoring of pupil progress.

In many cases, teaching is effective in promoting good progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding. In these lessons, teachers plan a variety of challenging activities and use carefully-prepared resources that engage pupils successfully. They set clear learning objectives and provide pupils with valuable verbal feedback about their progress. These teachers provide clear explanations and use questioning appropriately to monitor pupils' understanding.

In a minority of lessons, however, teachers do not plan effectively enough to secure strong progress in pupils' learning. Either the pace of learning is too slow, or insufficient time is provided for pupils to consolidate their learning. In these lessons, teachers do not use questioning effectively enough to probe and develop pupils' understanding.

In the majority of instances, teachers' written feedback pays appropriate attention to the technical accuracy of pupils' work. Teachers provide pupils with clear advice about how to improve their work, and ensure that they make suitable improvements. However, in a minority of cases, teachers do not give pupils sufficiently clear guidance about how to make improvements.

Recommendation 4: Comply fully with the statutory duty to review all statements of special educational needs at least annually

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school now complies fully with its statutory duty to review all statements of special educational needs at least annually.

Since the core inspection, the school has reviewed thoroughly its provision for pupils with additional learning needs and has undertaken a wide range of strategies to strengthen this aspect of its work. Individual education plans and pastoral support plans are planned carefully to meet pupils' needs and are used well by staff to support their teaching. Valuable partnerships with parents and external agencies are used effectively to support pupils.

The school monitors the progress of pupils with additional learning needs closely, and plans effective interventions to support their progress. This has had a significant impact on these pupils' outcomes.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen leadership arrangements to ensure greater accountability and improve the management of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has been effective in strengthening leadership arrangements. This has had a positive impact on many aspects of the school's work, including improving pupil outcomes at key stage 4.

Senior leaders hold middle leaders to account fully through robust line management arrangements. Regular meetings focus clearly on pupil progress and the quality of teaching. Leaders follow up rigorously on action points arising from these meetings. Performance management targets link closely to whole-school improvement priorities. However, in a few instances, these targets are not sufficiently precise or measurable.

The school's self-evaluation report draws upon a wide range of first-hand evidence and provides a suitably evaluative appraisal of the school's performance.

Departmental reviews are used well to identify areas for development and plan beneficial training. In many instances, lesson observations focus well on pupil standards and progress. However, a few lesson observations, and book scrutiny processes in general, do not focus consistently enough on the development of pupils' skills.

The school's improvement plan links well with self-evaluation findings. Progress against identified priorities is monitored rigorously by senior leaders and the governing body. Middle leaders use analysis of data well to identify appropriate areas for development. Departmental improvement plans link well with the findings of self-evaluation and most contain suitable success criteria and monitoring activities. However, in a very few instances, targets for improvement in these plans are not sufficiently precise.

Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and provide robust challenge to leaders at all levels. Their work has made an important contribution to improving outcomes and addressing financial challenges.

Recommendation 6: Resolve the budget deficit effectively

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has implemented an effective range of measures to reduce its budget deficit. It has carried out a robust review of non-essential costs to secure valuable savings. The headteacher and the local authority work together very closely to ensure that expenditure is used judiciously to support school improvement priorities whilst remaining within agreed spending limits.

The governing body scrutinises financial planning rigorously and supports the headteacher well in managing the budget. This has helped the school to reduce its in-year budget deficit for three consecutive years. The school has been successful in meeting the local authority targets for repayment ahead of schedule.

The school has been highly successful in attracting significantly increased numbers of pupils to Year 7, and this has had a positive impact on the school's financial position. However, the overall deficit remains significant.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.