

St Woolos Primary School  
Stow Hill  
Newport  
NP20 4DW

06/11/2024

Dear Tania Bowden

**Interim visit: October 2024**

A team of inspectors recently visited St Woolos Primary to consider how the school has progressed in addressing the recommendations from its core inspection in May 2023. Below is a summary of the progress against those recommendations.

Leaders and staff are collaborating well to work towards addressing the recommendations and have made good progress in improving digital and physical education provision. They acknowledge that there are aspects that they can continue to develop.

**Focus of visit**

**Improve pupils' digital and Welsh oracy skills**

- Leaders have collaborated effectively at all levels to promote the development of pupils' digital skills. Through this work, they have created a successful blueprint for continued improvement in other areas of the school's work.
- Professional learning for leaders has provided them with the necessary knowledge and skills to monitor, evaluate and improve the provision for pupils' digital and Welsh oracy skills. As a result, whole-school strategies in these areas are now more systematic and progressive. However, work to evaluate the quality of pupils' skills is at an early stage.
- Leaders have worked successfully with staff to upskill and build their confidence when teaching digital skills. For example, they have modelled effective teaching strategies. In addition, the school has provided opportunities for staff to share their expertise with others. This has begun to have a positive impact on provision for digital skills.
- The school has trialled a whole school creative approach to the development of pupils' digital skills successfully. Teachers planned a valuable range of opportunities for pupils to develop these through engagement with the local

community and within an authentic context for learning. This provided worthwhile opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills.

- Overall, most older pupils develop their digital skills well and apply their skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, they make effective animations and create purposeful voiceovers when producing a film of the history of the school.
- In younger classes, teachers focus on the use of digital resources as tools for pupils to develop other skills across the curriculum such as literacy and numeracy. In a few cases, support staff are deployed appropriately to help pupils to learn new digital skills. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils learn how to use search engines to research information about autumn. Most younger pupils develop their digital skills suitably.
- Work to address improvement in pupils' Welsh skills is at an early stage of development.
- Through links with outside agencies, staff have participated in a number of professional learning opportunities. Currently, this has had limited impact on staff confidence and the quality of Welsh teaching.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have daily opportunities to practise their Welsh skills. However, monitoring arrangements do not provide leaders with sufficient information to accurately determine the quality of learning in Welsh across the school.
- Leaders model spoken Welsh appropriately during the school day through events such as whole-school assemblies. In a few classes teachers make good attempts at encouraging pupils to use Welsh. However, overall, teachers do not consistently model the language effectively. Leaders recognise the need to provide increased professional learning opportunities for staff.
- The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to promote Welsh through its pupil leadership group, Y Criw Cymraeg. For example, they have led assemblies to promote Welsh activities such as the school Eisteddfod.

### **Improve provision for expressive arts, creativity and to support the development of pupils' physical skills.**

- Leaders have implemented a programme of professional learning for staff to support their teaching of physical skills. Across the school, teachers now provide regular opportunities for all pupils to engage in physical activity indoors and outside. These support the development of their stamina and fitness well. Provision for the development of the youngest pupils' gross and fine motor skills is strong.
- During PE sessions, staff model and demonstrate techniques, reinforce vocabulary and provide useful formative feedback to pupils to improve their co-ordination and the quality of their movements.
- Leaders have purchased resources to help improve staff knowledge and expertise in the expressive arts. In art and design, there has been a useful focus on identifying the progression of skills in different media, such as printmaking, drawing and painting. This is helping to raise expectations for pupils' artistic development and is building staff confidence in planning for purposeful learning.
- Provision for the expressive arts is currently variable in its effectiveness. Where teaching is most effective, there is a strong focus on developing pupils'

grasp of artistic techniques. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to experiment in a range of media and to make their own creative decisions. However, pupils do not always have the vocabulary to consider the techniques they use and reflect on their effectiveness.

- Staff provide a range of open-ended activities that promote pupils' creative play successfully. On a few occasions, older pupils make choices about how to present their learning during their topic work. However, the use of worksheets often restricts opportunities for them to develop their creative skills as well as they could.
- Leaders have been successful in securing grant funding to support access to the performing arts for all pupils. They are beginning to consider opportunities for pupils to perform and present for an audience, as part of a whole-school approach to the expressive arts.
- Overall, leaders have ensured that aspects of this recommendation, such as the development of pupils' physical skills, have improved. They recognise that provision to support pupils to make progress in their musical skills is at a very early stage.

The school'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/6802027>

Yours sincerely



**Liz Miles**  
Assistant Director