

Darrenlas Primary School  
Kingcraft Street  
Darrenlas  
Mountain Ash  
RCT  
CF45 3LT

12/03/2025

Dear Gemma Powell

**Interim visit:** February 2025

A team of inspectors recently visited Darrenlas Primary School to consider how the school has progressed in addressing the recommendations from its core inspection in May 2022.

During the visit the team had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, look at pupils' work, scrutinise evidence and talk to pupils, staff and leaders.

Below is a summary of progress against both recommendations. Leaders should use these findings to reflect on their successes and to support further improvements where needed.

**Focus of visit**

**Ensure that feedback and instructions are matched well to pupils' stage of development**

- Leaders and staff have made purposeful progress towards addressing this recommendation. Across the school, most teachers and teaching assistants provide pupils with timely and well-considered feedback that supports them to take the next steps in their learning.

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- Overall, teachers in the older classes circulate the classroom during lessons and talk readily with pupils about their learning. They ask beneficial questions that support pupils to clarify their understanding and provide relevant prompts that help pupils address misconceptions. In the best cases, teachers know their pupils extremely well and use a wide range of positive strategies and language to support and enhance pupils' learning and well-being.
- In the younger classes, staff are consistently positive language role models, and they frequently adapt their communication and teaching approaches well to meet pupils' needs. In general, they are skilled at knowing when to intervene and support pupils' learning through modelling and asking purposeful questions, and when to allow pupils to learn independently.
- Where appropriate, teachers provide pupils with helpful written feedback on their work. In literacy, teachers pose questions to extend pupils' learning and provide opportunities for pupils to correct their spelling and grammatical errors. In mathematics, teachers support pupils to refine their work and confirm their understanding through thoughtful questions, reminders and challenges. Overall, pupils' respond to these prompts purposefully and make the necessary adjustments.
- Many pupils across the school talk confidently about their work and understand how staff help them to improve their learning. In general, they are not afraid of making mistakes and recognise that this helps them learn.
- Across the school, there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning. From an early age, pupils begin to use success criteria capably to support and reflect upon their written work, and to identify the next steps needed to develop their work further.
- In many cases, teachers match activities to pupils' learning needs successfully. Where this is particularly effective, pupils are highly motivated, engage purposefully with their learning and make strong progress as a result.

### **Reduce the persistent absence of a very few pupils**

- Leaders, staff and governors promote good attendance diligently. They have established clear and effective systems that enable them to rigorously monitor and manage attendance. Consequently, the attendance of all groups of pupils is improving over time and the school has made good progress in addressing this recommendation.

- The school reviews attendance data robustly. Leaders identify trends and areas for improvement, as well as opportunities to celebrate success. They use this information sensibly to focus on classes and individuals where attendance is lower than expected. The school responds swiftly and effectively to any emerging needs, and the number of persistent absentees has decreased since the last inspection.
- Leaders and staff have a strong commitment to working closely with parents to promote and support good attendance. Designated staff build positive relationships with families by providing timely advice, guidance and signposting to additional services and support. Overall, their work successfully assists families to reduce any barriers they face in ensuring their child attends school regularly.
- Well-trained staff use a comprehensive range of valuable wellbeing and nurture approaches that help pupils fully engage in school life. For instance, they provide identified pupils with time to adjust and settle at the start of the school day in a sensitive and supportive way. Consequently, attending school is less daunting for these pupils.

Overall, leaders and staff have been rigorous and successful in their work to address the recommendations from the last inspection. The team would like to thank the school's leaders, staff and pupils for their positive approach to the interim visit, and for their warm welcome to the school.

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/6742144>

Yours sincerely



**Liz Miles**

Assistant Director