

Ian Mansell
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26/03/2025

Dear Ian Mansell

Interim visit: March 2025

A team of inspectors visited Pennar Primary School to consider how the school has progressed in addressing two of the recommendations from its core inspection in October 2022. Below is a summary of progress against these focus areas. Leaders should use these findings to support further improvements in these areas.

Overall, leaders and staff at the school have worked successfully to address recommendation two. They recognise the need to include recommendation one in future improvement plans. They have a suitable understanding of the school's current strengths and areas for improvement and have plans in place to continue to move the school forward.

Focus of visit

Build on the good practice across the school to ensure that all teaching is matched appropriately to pupils' developmental needs.

- Since the core inspection, there has been a significant change to the school's leadership roles. This has impacted on the school's capacity to develop a shared understanding of progression throughout the school and in a minority of lessons, activities do not match pupils' development needs well enough.

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- Senior leaders have planned beneficial opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues in other schools to improve aspects of teaching and learning. This has brought about improvements in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Senior leaders have established ‘teaching duos’. These provide worthwhile opportunities for teachers to observe their peers teaching and to engage in professional dialogue. This is in the early stages, and it is too soon for leaders to evaluate the impact of this on improving good practice across the school.
- Senior leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. They use this information effectively to highlight strengths and further areas for development. Senior leaders recognise that monitoring processes need to be strengthened, to ensure teachers plan lessons to meet the individual needs of all pupils.

Improve the provision for mathematics to ensure that teachers develop pupils’ skills systematically and can apply them in more relevant and challenging context.

- Leaders have planned appropriate opportunities for staff to develop their approaches to teaching mathematics through professional learning. They have introduced a scheme to support teachers to plan systematically for the development of skills. Teachers are beginning to adapt their teaching approaches to use the published scheme more flexibly, but this work is at an early stage.
- The school’s work with external partners enables staff to participate in ongoing dialogue with trainers. Leaders have identified next steps for professional development, such as further support with understanding effective early years pedagogy.
- The school has worked in collaboration with other providers to develop authentic learning experiences. The planned curriculum enables many pupils to transfer their knowledge and skills across the curriculum purposefully and at an appropriate level.
- Teachers in foundation classes create useful practical activities that engage pupils well. They do not always allow younger pupils enough freedom to explore concepts through play-based activities to ensure pupils have opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in different contexts.
- Older pupils benefit from opportunities to extend their learning and practice their skills in a range of planned activities both indoors and outdoors. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their mathematical understanding well and apply their numeracy skills confidently through purposeful and engaging projects.
- Leaders and teachers use personalised assessments and tracking tools to monitor pupils’ progress well. They discuss pupils’ broad needs during progress meetings.

However, staff rely too heavily on progression steps to plan mathematics lessons and do not always plan appropriately for individual pupils' next steps in learning.

- In a few classes teachers plan highly innovative learning experiences that enable pupils to merge their mathematical knowledge with their creativity and expressive skills. For example, in Years 2 and 3 they use the work of science-based artists to inspire their own art advocating for climate change.

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/6682392>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director