

Innes Robinson
Whitmore High School
Port Road West
Barry
CF62 8ZJ

26/03/2025

Dear Innes Robinson

Interim visit: March 2025

Thank you for your support during the interim visit to the school on the 4th and 5th of March 2025. We enjoyed the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils and hear about the improvement work that the school has carried out since the core inspection in March 2022.

During the visit we had the opportunity to:

- discuss with senior leaders the school's approach to self-evaluation and improvement planning;
- discuss with senior leaders the progress the school has made in addressing the recommendations from the last core inspection;
- talk with a small group of pupils from Year 8 and 9 to hear their feedback about the school;
- speak with middle leaders about how they evaluate and plan for improvement in their subjects;
- conduct joint lesson observations and work scrutiny with four of your leaders;
- visit a sample of lessons across the curriculum;
- scrutinise a sample of pupils' work and any relevant documents provided by the school.

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Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

Focus of visit

To what extent have leaders strengthened the provision for the development of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum?

The school demonstrates a sensible approach to the development of numeracy skills across the curriculum, with a particular focus on subjects where opportunities arise naturally, such as geography, science and technology. Across the curriculum, numeracy tasks are generally useful and aligned with the topics being taught. During the visit we discussed with leaders that the quality of numeracy provision in relevant subjects, particularly the level of challenge, needs to be strengthened further. We heard how the school has also provided professional learning opportunities around numeracy, particularly through mastery sessions for staff. During our meetings with senior leaders, they told us how the school makes use of individual pupil numeracy data to identify and track those with weaker basic number skills. Staff then use this information to plan targeted numeracy interventions aimed at improving the skills of pupils across the school.

We think it would be helpful for you to consider:

- How can the school ensure that the planning for numeracy is effectively co-ordinated?
- How can leaders ensure that numeracy tasks develop pupils' numeracy competency fully across the curriculum?
- How can the school ensure that the professional learning offer for staff around numeracy is effectively implemented in the relevant subjects?

How well do leaders evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and skills? How well do they use the information to plan for improvement?

During the visit, we met with a few senior leaders who told us how they regularly evaluate teaching using a range of evidence. They then use these evaluations to plan for improvements. Senior leaders had a sound rationale for each of the improvement priorities that they have identified. However, their plans do not include all the national priorities. From our joint activities with a few leaders, we noted that they were able to accurately evaluate the impact of teaching on learning.

From our meetings with senior leaders, we heard how the school has made progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. However, we agree with the school that further development of these areas needs to be prioritised.

We spoke to middle leaders who were able to discuss the strengths and shortcomings in their subjects. They explained that with the support of senior leaders, they carry out useful

quality assurance activities. We heard how they use this evidence to plan for and secure improvements. They also told us how senior leaders hold them to account which supports the effectiveness of their work.

It was interesting to hear how the school provides a range of beneficial professional learning opportunities to support the development of teaching and leadership. Additionally, we noted that the school uses effective processes to tackle underperformance.

We think it would be helpful for you to consider:

- How will the school further improve areas highlighted in the recommendations from the previous core inspection?
- How will the school ensure that its plans for improvement give sufficient attention to national priorities?
- How will senior leaders further develop middle leaders to independently evaluate the impact of teaching on learning in their areas of responsibility?

Thank you again for all your help in planning and organising our visit. We wish you well with your future developments.

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/6734068>

Yours sincerely



Catherine Evans
Assistant Director