



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

**A report on**  
**Treorchy Comprehensive School**

**Pengelli  
Treorchy  
Rhondda  
RCT  
CF42 6UL**

**Date of inspection: May 2024**

**by**

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

## About Treorchy Comprehensive School

Name of provider	Treorchy Comprehensive School
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	1525
Pupils of statutory school age	1212
Number in sixth form	312
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Secondary is 21.2%)	24.4%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Secondary is 14.8%)	3.0%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	2.7%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	07/03/2016
Start date of inspection	13/05/2024

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: [mylocalschool.gov.wales](https://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Overview

Treorchy Comprehensive School is an inclusive caring community with a clear focus on equity and supporting pupils' well-being. Leaders have ensured high levels of well-being and care, and pupils benefit from a broad range of support. Staff know their pupils well and work beneficially with outside agencies to address their needs.

The headteacher has made recent changes to the senior leadership team. However, although they work well together, roles and responsibilities are not equitable and there is a lack of clear, strategic leadership. Leaders gather suitable first-hand evidence such as learning walks and lesson observations, but they do not evaluate the effectiveness of their work well enough. As a result, they have not had enough impact on making the improvements required to important aspects of the school's work. These include the quality of teaching, attendance and behaviour, and the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills.

In about half the lessons, teachers plan a variety of activities to challenge pupils suitably and engage them in their learning. In these cases, pupils make at least suitable progress. In a very few lessons pupils make strong progress. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils and use questioning effectively to develop their understanding. However, in about half of lessons pupils do not make as much progress as they could. This is mostly due to a lack of suitable challenge and teachers' low expectations of what pupils can achieve.

The school provides a wide-ranging curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils which includes academic and vocational options. Pupils benefit from valuable learning experiences as part of their personal and social education (PSE). In addition, pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities and beneficial opportunities to develop their leadership skills. However, the school's provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills is at an early stage of development. In Tŷ Seren, staff know their pupils well. They work well to provide a curriculum that supports their individual needs and provides useful support and guidance. Staff at Tŷ Seren have created an inclusive environment where many pupils make good progress.

Many pupils are friendly and welcoming and enjoy positive relationships with staff and peers. However, a minority of pupils are passive in their learning and are easily distracted. A few pupils do not behave well enough in lessons and around the school and this impacts on their own progress and that of others. Despite leaders' efforts, pupils' attendance remains too low and the rate of persistent absenteeism is a concern.

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve the approaches used by all staff to support pupils' behaviour
- R2 Refine the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders to enable them to carry out their roles more strategically and be held to account for securing improvement

- R3 Improve the precision of self-evaluation and improvement planning
- R4 Improve teaching to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged well and make suitable progress in their learning
- R5 Strengthen processes to improve pupils' attendance
- R6 Improve the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills
- R7 Address the health and safety concerns shared with the school during the inspection

## What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress usually every four to six months.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Overall, pupils' progress is limited by shortcomings in around half of lessons. In a few cases, pupils make strong progress and a majority of pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make appropriate progress. They recall prior knowledge suitably and apply this to new situations. However, a minority of pupils do not make as much progress as they could and are too passive in their learning. This is most often due to shortcomings in teaching. In a few lessons, pupils make limited progress.

The majority of pupils listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and to the contribution of their peers. They engage suitably in class discussions and answer teachers' questions. However, they provide only brief underdeveloped verbal responses using a limited vocabulary. This is often because of poor questioning from teachers. A few pupils offer well-developed responses and explain and justify their opinions to the teacher's questions. A very few pupils are articulate and use a wide range of vocabulary. A few pupils do not listen well enough to their teachers' instructions and are reluctant to provide oral responses.

The majority of pupils identify and extract relevant information suitably from texts. A minority of pupils use inference and deduction appropriately. For example, they improve their understanding of characters in literary texts when they recognise Brutus' intent when speaking to the crowd in 'Julius Caesar'. The majority of pupils do not use a sufficient range of reading strategies across different subjects to support their learning and a minority of pupils do not demonstrate depth of understanding

when reading texts. When given opportunities, a few pupils read texts aloud with suitable expression.

Many pupils write for a suitable range of purposes for example, when writing exposition pieces on fast food or the impact of improved technology on cashless systems. They have a generally sound understanding of purpose. However, they frequently lack a sense of audience and make incorrect language choices, so their writing lacks the correct tone. A minority of pupils write confidently using relevant information to convey ideas logically and accurately. A very few pupils use a sophisticated vocabulary well. When given the opportunity, and with strong teacher support, the majority of pupils write at length and with accuracy, for example when writing a speech for the United Nations Climate Change conference, COP 28. However, the majority of pupils continue to make basic errors when writing independently. This includes a lack of structure and basic punctuation. A minority of pupils are too reliant upon their teachers to guide their writing.

The majority of pupils have secure basic number skills. In their mathematics lessons, they calculate two step equations with accuracy and identify the next term in a sequence and the  $n$ th term correctly. When given the opportunity, pupils use their prior knowledge suitably to solve problems in context. For example, in science lessons they use multi step processes to calculate the cost of electricity to run electrical items. A minority of pupils are unable to carry out basic calculations such as simple multiplication and division by multiples of 10. This limits the progress that they make. Most pupils can plan how to collect a sample of data during experiments. The majority make accurate measurements and record these suitably. The majority of pupils plot quadratic graphs correctly. However, a minority construct graphs poorly; these lack accuracy, include incorrect scales or have unsuitable lines of best fit. Pupils do not always analyse or interpret graphs when they have drawn them.

In their Welsh lessons, many pupils have an appropriate understanding of grammar. The majority structure written sentences well and are developing their ability to use more than one sentence pattern. They write simple paragraphs with a good level of accuracy using past, present and future tenses. However, the majority of pupils lack confidence in their spoken Welsh and provide only brief oral responses.

When given the opportunities, many pupils develop their digital skills well. In their ICT lessons, they develop a secure understanding of the principles of coding when they use programming languages. In a few other subjects, they use a range of software confidently, for example to create animations. Pupils use their creative skills well in their art lessons as they develop their ideas and investigate a wide range of media to create a variety of responses.

In Tŷ Seren, many pupils make good progress in their learning against their starting points. They recall prior learning suitably and apply this well to new situations. Pupils listen well and, when they speak, they are respectful, and reflective. Nearly all pupils are keen to share their thinking with each other and their teacher. They challenge each other well and offer each other solutions when they become stuck. At appropriate times, pupils work well independently.

In the sixth form, many pupils make secure progress in their learning. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work, are enthusiastic and engage well in lesson

activities. They listen well to explanations and participate willingly in class discussions, explaining their reasoning clearly.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Many pupils are courteous and friendly towards visitors. The majority feel safe in school and value access to safe spaces such as the Hafan and the Hive, where they benefit from appropriate support. Many pupils feel that bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively and nearly all pupils know where to report a concern.

Pupils appreciate and engage well with the broad range of extra-curricular activities. In addition, pupils value the leadership opportunities available to them including the Combined Cadets Force, Grŵp Gweithred yr Ysgol and the Diversity Group. They also develop their sense of being a responsible and thoughtful citizen through organising a 'pride' day and leading assemblies on the theme of diversity. In addition, the Criw Cymraeg has promoted appreciation and understanding of the Welsh language across the whole school community.

Pupils within the leadership groups feel that their views are valued and that the school reacts positively to their suggestions to bring about actions that benefits the wider school community. Examples include improving recycling arrangements and the school's toilet facilities. They appreciate the strong link between the leadership group's priorities and those of the local community such as the sixth form social media drive with local businesses and the 'Shack' that tackles period poverty. However, a minority of pupils are unaware of the work of the pupil leadership groups.

Many pupils behave appropriately in lessons though a few display particularly challenging behaviour around the site and internal truancy and poor punctuality impact negatively on pupils' learning. Many pupils settle promptly at the beginning of lessons and are ready to work. A few show resilience and persevere well when faced with challenging tasks. However, a minority of pupils are passive in their learning or have low levels of concentration and find it difficult to complete tasks independently. This is often as a result of shortcomings in teaching. A minority of pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work.

In the complex needs class, Tŷ Seren, nearly all pupils engage well in their learning, are enthusiastic and show pride in what they achieve. They have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy the work they do in mainstream classes. These pupils confidently share their thoughts and feelings and respect the views of others. They allow their peers and teachers to speak and react thoughtfully to what they say. Pupils enjoy the friendships they build with their peers inside and outside of Tŷ Seren. They have good relationships with the staff who teach them.

Between the academic years 2018-2019 and 2022-2023, the school's rate of attendance fell by a substantially larger amount than seen nationally. Last year it was well below that of similar schools. The rate of persistent absence is notably higher than the national average. The attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The school's attendance this year has improved compared with the same period last year.

## Teaching and learning experiences

Many teachers have good subject knowledge and are positive language models. They know their pupils well and understand clearly the importance of establishing a calm learning environment to help pupils engage with their learning.

In around half of lessons, pupils make at least sound progress in the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills. In these classes, teachers foster purposeful and productive relationships with pupils, which are underpinned by mutual respect and helpful classroom routines to support learning. However, in a similar proportion of lessons, pupils do not make as much progress as they should because of shortcomings in teaching or their inconsistent attitudes to learning.

Where teaching is suitably effective, teachers mostly plan appropriately for what they want pupils to learn. They provide a balanced variety of activities, which help to engage pupils, build suitably on their prior learning and maintain their interest. They provide clear explanations and check pupils' understanding before the lesson moves on. Occasionally, these teachers model effectively, and use their subject knowledge to encourage pupils to further their learning. They often ask suitably probing questions and allow pupils time to think and modify their verbal responses as required. The content of examination work mostly provides lessons at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form with a far more appropriate level of challenge than those in Key Stage 3 where it is often significantly less challenging.

In a very few lessons, where pupils make strong progress, they are often inspired by their teachers' enthusiasm. In these lessons, teachers have suitably high expectations of what pupils can do and challenge them accordingly. They explain difficult concepts well and use sharp, incisive questioning that tests pupils' thinking skills, probes their understanding and simultaneously challenges them to develop their verbal responses. There is a brisk pace, which matches the pace of learning, and pupils enjoy their learning.

Where pupils do not make as much progress as they should, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are often too low. In these lessons, teachers do not plan activities to ensure that pupils build their skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. Too often they present pupils with tasks to occupy them rather than to extend their learning. The quality of teachers' explanations is too variable, and they do not always ensure pupils' understanding. Occasionally, they do not address misconceptions well enough or in a timely manner. They do not consistently challenge pupils who disrupt learning nor when they are late to lessons. Often, they seek to placate disruptive pupils and keep them busy rather than challenge them to learn. These teachers do not challenge pupils of different abilities well enough, which leads to disengagement and off-task behaviour.

In the minority of cases, where teachers' written feedback is most effective, teachers plan appropriate time for pupils to reflect on their assessment and focus on improving their work. However, overall, teachers' written feedback is very inconsistent and often does not provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils are encouraged to take more ownership of the development of their work through, for example, 'purple pen' exercises, but their efforts are not always reviewed by teachers effectively enough. Teachers do not follow the school's marking code consistently,

which does not help pupils to reduce the number of basic errors in their writing. In a few lessons, where teachers make best use of verbal feedback, they often ask pertinent questions that encourage pupils to think about their work and, where relevant, make useful links with other topics.

Reports to parents are clear and the guidance provided makes them easy to understand. They contain useful information about pupils' progress and attitudes to learning, and provide individual targets for improvement.

Teachers in Tŷ Seren have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve and challenge them appropriately. They match the pace of lessons with the pace of pupils' learning sensitively and effectively. These teachers use questioning well to help pupils recall prior learning and to begin to deepen their understanding. They model language effectively to support pupils in their learning.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of its pupils well. There are a wide range of courses, offering both academic and vocational subjects in Key Stage 4 including courses with opportunities for learning outdoors, media studies and economics. In the sixth form, pupils can choose a variety of learning pathways according to their interests and aspirations, including opportunities to study eSports, further mathematics and criminology. More able and talented pupils benefit from workshops on developing confident communication skills and critical thinking. Pupils in Key Stage 4 who access an alternative provision follow a worthwhile adapted curriculum that meets their needs successfully.

In Tŷ Seren, pupils experience a rich and varied curriculum. Teachers and support staff thoughtfully plan programmes and activities to meet the individual learning needs of pupils.

The school's personal and social education (PSE) programme is well co-ordinated and offers valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and safe. It reflects the school's ethos of promoting well-being effectively. Pupils benefit greatly from the expert advice and support the school provides for making decisions about their future.

The school offers pupils worthwhile opportunities to experience and learn about Welsh history and culture. For example, in history, younger pupils learn about the work of Aneurin Bevan and in art they research the paintings of a local watercolour artist, Callie-Anne Healey, to inspire their own work. The school also celebrates and promotes diversity and respect and enables pupils to challenge stereotypes and prejudice well. For example, they consider the life of Walter Tull, the first black officer in the British Army in the novel 'Respect' by Michaela Morgan. There is a wide range of beneficial experiences, including educational trips and extra-curricular clubs that complement and enhance the learning of pupils. These include visits to Llangrannog, literary festivals and theatre trips. The worthwhile extra-curricular offer includes computer science club, the orchestra and choir and various sporting clubs.

The school has trialled, evaluated, and evolved its vision for the Curriculum for Wales. Curriculum leaders have developed worthwhile learning experiences that reflect the nature and context of the school. In the strongest examples, teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about their 'cynefin', or local area.



For example, in Year 7 geography lessons, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of their locality and Wales and create a travel guide. The school works closely with local primary schools and teachers are beginning to plan curriculum maps focusing on progressive learning experiences for pupils. However, this is in the early stages of development.

The school has provided useful professional learning and guidance for teachers on developing oracy and guided reading strategies. It uses standardised assessments suitably to identify gaps in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and those pupils who require additional support. However, planning for the progressive development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is at an early stage and has not had enough impact on pupils' progress. The school has developed worthwhile opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their digital competence skills, both in information and communication technology lessons and across the curriculum.

### **Care, support and guidance**

At Treorchy Comprehensive, the staff's dedication to the well-being of pupils is evident. They identify and address any concerns proactively and responsively. Their approach involves appropriate consultation with staff, pupils, and parents to identify pupils' support needs. They are quick to put in place helpful support plans or make necessary adjustments to the curriculum for pupils with persistent problems, demonstrating their commitment to each pupil's success.

The school has a comprehensive programme to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development during registration time and in health and well-being lessons in Year 7. Staff use the data on pupils' behaviour and attitudes and information from pupils' well-being surveys effectively to inform this curriculum. Pupils have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the themes covered such as on identity, heritage and culture.

Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as gaming club, Film Friday, the Scribbler's club and a range of physical and other sporting activities. Pupils also have opportunities to foster and celebrate their creative talents and build self-confidence through school productions. The extra-curricular offer is enhanced effectively by the Youth Engagement Programme (YEPS) available to pupils.

Reviews of pupils' behaviour and surveys of their views on diversity and inclusion have been used successfully to inform the school's approach to addressing any incidents of bullying and how the school develops the themes of diversity and inclusion. This has led to helpful refinements in the way that incidents are recorded and reported, training for staff and pupils, and changes to the way that diversity is celebrated through the curriculum. The Diversity group's involvement in this work is just one example of how the many pupil leadership groups have impacted the school's work and provided these pupils with meaningful opportunities to effect change in attitudes to inclusion and diversity.

Pupils with ALN benefit from a range of appropriate support that meets their social, emotional, behavioural, communication, and language needs. These pupils have suitable individual development plans (IDPs) and one-page profiles that are helpfully

accessible to all staff. IDPs include suitable longer-term targets and are reviewed annually.

The ALN team works effectively with a wide range of external agencies, such as the local authority inclusion team, occupational therapists and the neurodiversity team, to support relevant pupils. Many pupils with ALN have suitable interventions, such as for their literacy skills. Individual pupils' attendance and attitudes to learning, along with their immediate progress during these interventions, are tracked appropriately, and many pupils make sound progress.

The school has provided teachers with suitable training on ALN reform and introduced teaching strategies to support pupils receiving universal learning provision (ULP). These strategies are recorded appropriately. However, the support arrangements for pupils identified for ULP are not targeted precisely enough, and staff do not use these inclusive strategies in their classrooms well enough.

Tŷ Seren is a nurturing and supportive environment where staff have high expectations of their pupils. Staff know pupils well and skilfully adapt the provision in line with the specific needs of the pupils. Pupils in Tŷ Seren receive beneficial care, support, and guidance that helps them develop their confidence. This helps pupils to make good progress from their starting points. The well-being of pupils in Tŷ Seren is a priority. The Tŷ Seren team work effectively with outside agencies and parents to ensure that pupils are well supported.

The Hafan and Hive provide pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties access to a safe space where they can find beneficial support from well-being staff. This is predominantly as part of an agreed de-escalation plan when they struggle to cope in classrooms due to anxiety or mental health issues. Staff monitor the use of these spaces suitably to identify pupils who require short-term interventions to support them in developing effective regulation strategies. These evaluations have led to the development of alternative curriculum provisions for pupils to support them to remain in school. However, reviews of these aspects of the school's work do not always consider the impact on pupils' overall progress and engagement in their subject lessons well enough.

The school has implemented a wide range of strategies to improve attendance. Staff work suitably with parents and pupils to establish the causes of low attendance and agree on approaches to address these issues. Pupils value the rewards for good attendance. Leaders have worked well with partner primary schools to develop a consistent attendance policy across primary and secondary phases, including agreeing on a joint approach to approving or refusing school time holidays. Leaders analyse trends in data suitably to identify the impact of their interventions enabling them to sharpen their actions and identify next steps. This work has contributed to improving pupils' attendance. While the school has placed a suitable focus on the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals, attendance patterns of all groups of pupils, such as those with additional learning needs, are not analysed well enough. Overall, the school's approaches to improving attendance, punctuality and internal truancy have not had sufficient impact.

Arrangements to keep pupils safe are clear and well understood by nearly all staff and governors. The school responds to safeguarding concerns promptly and makes

the necessary referrals to outside agencies where relevant. It follows appropriate procedures to ensure the suitability of all staff who are in contact with pupils. The school's arrangements for digital security are robust and up to date. The school takes its responsibilities to support the well-being of particularly vulnerable pupils seriously and works well with a wide range of external partners to support these pupils. Staff work effectively in promoting a positive culture of safeguarding, which helps pupils understand how to keep themselves safe.

The school investigates promptly any incidents of alleged bullying and their Code of Respect is used consistently and effectively. The school's alternative curriculum arrangements provide worthwhile support to older pupils who display particularly challenging behaviours and are at risk of permanent exclusion. However, the school's approach to managing the disruptive behaviour of a few pupils is not having enough impact in addressing poor behaviour in lessons and around the school. While there are some helpful approaches and guidance, there is too much variability in how teachers adopt these processes. Incidents of poor behaviour affects how safe a minority of pupils feel in school and a minority of staff express their concerns about pupils' safety. The number of incidents of fixed term exclusion and pupils being referred to internal exclusion has risen considerably over the last year.

A few health and safety issues concerning the school site were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection.

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership has created a clear vision for the school based on a sense of community and 'Cynefin'. This vision is shared by all and is woven throughout the work of the school. Leaders place a strong emphasis on equity and inclusion. Whole-school initiatives such as the work to address the impact of poverty, promoting and celebrating diversity and inclusion are having a positive impact. Leaders at all levels work well to promote the school's safeguarding culture, but they have not been successful enough in improving the quality of teaching and learning nor the attendance and behaviour, or the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills.

Since her appointment, the headteacher has sought to manage an ambitious programme of change across the school. Overall, the senior leadership team is supportive of the headteacher's goals and share her aspirations. The school has recently restructured leadership to meet the priorities of the school better. This has improved team working and helped senior leaders to develop an understanding of whole-school issues. However, overall, individual senior leaders have too many substantial responsibilities and their roles overlap too much. This hinders the strategic leadership of a few important aspects of the school's work.

Many middle leaders are keen and enthusiastic about their roles and are clear about their leadership responsibilities. They work collegiately in their teams, for example in upskilling non-specialist teachers and in planning schemes of learning. Pastoral leaders work well together to promote the school's vision to foster pupils' well-being.

There are frequent and purposeful opportunities for leaders to meet with each other and with those they line manage. There are systems in place for line managers to

hold staff to account. The headteacher has tackled any instances of underperformance sensitively but robustly. However, overall, there are shortcomings in how leaders at all levels hold others to account for their work, in particular there is too little focus on improving teaching. Although the school has produced a helpful leadership handbook to support leadership across the school, senior leaders do not always engage sufficiently in coaching and modelling leadership behaviours in order to develop the skills of middle leaders.

The headteacher, together with the governing body, manages the school budget carefully. The Pupil Development Grant spending is focused appropriately, and the school has developed a variety of approaches to alleviate the impact of poverty. These are wide ranging and include individualised learning and well-being support, financial assistance for pupils to access the curriculum successfully, and work with partner primary schools.

Recently, senior leaders have integrated the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes sensibly. This is beginning to promote a wider understanding and sense of responsibility for these processes among leaders at all levels. Leaders carry out a range of appropriate activities to gather first-hand evidence about teaching, learning, and well-being, alongside analysing data. This information is used to establish suitable priorities in a few areas of the school's provision. These processes identify broad areas for improvement. However, leaders' evaluations are not specific or detailed enough to enable them to focus precisely on the aspects of provision that require the most urgent improvement.

Leaders take appropriate responsibility for different priorities and strategies to achieve these within specified timescales. However, the criteria the school uses to measure progress are often unclear. This makes it difficult for them to know how well they are working and to hold staff to account robustly. In addition, leaders do not monitor the progress towards meeting priorities closely enough.

Many middle leaders identify important strengths and areas for improvement within their teams, particularly in relation to curriculum development and broad aspects of learning, such as the need to improve pupils' oracy and independence. However, in general, senior and middle leaders are over-generous in their evaluations of teaching and do not have a clear enough understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching across the school. Overall, leaders do not evaluate provision or plan for improvement strategically, consistently or robustly enough to ensure sustained progress in learning and teaching.

There are many opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning. Whole school development events focus valuably on important elements of the school's vision. Staff value the range of opportunities for them to develop aspects of their practice. The school is a lead school for initial teacher education, which encourages those teachers involved to consider their practice and engage with research. This partnership working is also contributing to the school's aim to establish school-to-school working to promote school development. However, overall, professional learning is not planned strategically enough to support school improvement, especially to improve teaching across the school.

Governors are committed to and supportive of the school. They have a good understanding of national and school priorities. They provide helpful challenge to many aspects of the school's work, although they are not always clear about the precise aspects of learning and teaching that require improvement. They have a sound understanding of their responsibility to promote healthy eating and drinking and their role in promoting a culture of safeguarding.

Leadership of Tŷ Seren is assured, calm, and pupil centred. Staff are well informed and know the pupils and the complexity of their needs well. Staff work together well to identify the needs of pupils when they enter mainstream classes. They engage well with professional learning that benefits pupils and increases their own skills.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee, where appropriate
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/>)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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