



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

Report following monitoring

Level of follow-up: Special measures

**Brynmawr Foundation School
Rhydwr
Intermediate Road
Brynmawr
Blaenau Gwent
NP23 4XT**

Date of visit: July 2022

by

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

Outcome of visit

Brynmawr Foundation School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is maintaining the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn will re-visit the school in around four - six months' time to monitor progress against a sample of the recommendations.

Under the provisions of Section 39 (9) of the Education Act 2005, every annual report to parents prepared by the governing body under Section 30 of the Education Act 2002 must include a statement on the progress made in implementing the action plan.

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) Regulations 2015 state that an induction period may **not** be served in a school requiring special measures i.e. as described in grounds 6 or 8 in section 2 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (1). The presumption is that schools requiring special measures are not suitable for providing induction for newly qualified teachers, other than in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, schools requiring special measures should not normally appoint a newly qualified teacher (NQT) to their staff.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Improve pupils' standards across the school, including their literacy and numeracy skills

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit.

R2. Improve pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has continued to develop its approaches to support pupils' behaviour and well-being. This is having a positive impact on behaviour in classes and around the school. Most teachers develop positive relationships with pupils and manage classroom behaviour suitably. However, the school has not focused closely enough on the impact that improving teaching has on pupils' attitudes to learning. As a result, teaching does not always engage pupils sufficiently to develop positive attitudes to learning.

The school's behaviour policy is well understood by staff and pupils and generally pupils respond positively to these expectations. Leaders have recently revised the policy around rewards for good behaviour and attendance, but it is too soon to

evaluate the impact of these changes. The school has further developed its 'Reset' strategy sensibly to respond to incidents of poor behaviour in lessons. This ensures that pupils reflect promptly on their behaviour in sessions with designated members of staff. In addition, the school has improved its graduated 'Stage 2 and Stage 3' provision to make available worthwhile targeted support and intervention in response to the needs of individual pupils.

Pastoral leaders monitor behaviour and interventions for individuals' needs carefully. This helps the school to evaluate the impact of interventions on pupils and decide how best to support them further. The school is developing positive relationships with parents and guardians through regular meetings and communication. Staff also work beneficially with a range of outside agencies, including providing an on-site space to allow them to support vulnerable pupils.

Most pupils are courteous towards each other, staff and visitors to the school. They behave sensibly at break and lunch times and when moving around the school building. These pupils are punctual to lessons and settle quickly. However, a few pupils are rowdy when moving between classes and arrive late to lessons.

A majority of pupils have generally positive attitudes towards their work. They listen appropriately to their teachers' instructions and complete the tasks set. These pupils engage suitably with classroom discussions and are willing to contribute when asked questions or allowed opportunities to work in pairs or small groups. They concentrate suitably to complete short tasks. A minority of pupils do not settle well to independent work. These pupils tend to waste time and are slow to complete tasks. They struggle to maintain their concentration when listening to instructions and when working independently. This leads to pupils producing brief or incomplete work in class. A few pupils talk over the teacher or disrupt learning with off-task behaviour.

In a few lessons, teachers provide challenging tasks and probe pupils' thinking through effective questioning, and this helps pupils to become enthusiastic and eager to learn. They show diligence and persistence and are eager to develop the standard of their work.

R3. Improve the effectiveness of teaching to motivate, engage and challenge pupils to make good progress in lessons

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit.

R4. Strengthen leadership at all levels to improve leaders' ability to identify areas for development and to plan effectively for improvement

Since the monitoring visit in October 2021, senior leaders have continued to develop their sense of shared vision and direction. They hold twice-weekly meetings, focused alternately on strategy and day-to-day work, which has helped to bring greater clarity. There is now a coherent distribution of roles within the senior leadership team and lines of responsibility are well understood.

Senior leaders have undertaken worthwhile professional learning with external partners and this has enabled them to begin to identify specific areas for improvement and plan appropriately. Middle leaders have also benefited from support to improve their leadership, for example on how to coach members of their teams and how to hold difficult conversations. This includes recently leading faculty reviews, with the support of senior leaders and external partners. Senior and middle leaders use a range of suitable processes to gather first-hand evidence and evaluate provision and learning. They have improved pupil behaviour by developing systems that are well understood and introducing additional provision to support more vulnerable learners. However, overall, evaluations of teaching and learning are over-generous and do not consider sufficiently how provision impacts on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. This limits leaders' ability to plan precisely for improvement. Leaders do not always identify clearly enough the priorities for improving teaching or plan well enough to secure consistent improvements.

The school provides an appropriate range of professional learning opportunities for all staff, including those supported by external partners. Senior leaders have recognised the need to pause the number of new teaching strategies being introduced in order to consolidate those that are already in place.

Governors are supportive of the school. They have altered the governing body sub-committee structure this year to align more closely with the school's main priorities for improvement and this is helping them to focus their work appropriately.

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