



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: Significant Improvement**

**Ysgol John Bright  
Maesdu Road  
Llandudno  
Conwy  
LL30 1DF**

**Date of visit: July 2021**

**by**

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

## Outcome of visit

Ysgol John Bright is judged to have made sufficient 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 removing the school from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.

## Progress since the last inspection

### R1. Raise standards in English in key stage 4

Since the core inspection and especially since the last monitoring visit, the school has developed and implemented successful strategies to raise standards at key stage 4. Over the last year the school has provided suitable provision for pupils to continue their learning from home during to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has contributed towards maintaining pupils' literacy and numeracy skills as well as enhancing their information communication and technology (ICT) skills.

In most lessons, pupils settle to work promptly and make suitable progress. Many behave well and listen attentively and with respect to the teacher and their peers. A few pupils sometimes do not fully concentrate on their work.

Many pupils recall prior learning appropriately and build upon their knowledge and understanding suitably. In a few cases many pupils apply their knowledge and understanding well, for example where pupils, in geography, analyse the factors that contribute to flooding in the local area.

Most pupils speak confidently during class discussions. A minority of them provide well-developed spoken responses, but the majority only provide brief responses mainly due to the nature of teachers' questioning. Where given the opportunity, many pupils read for information suitably. Many pupils select relevant information appropriately from a variety of sources.

Most pupils take pride in the presentation of their written work. Generally, pupils write at length and in considerable detail on a broad range of topics and themes such as when they describe the Swansea Blitz during the second world war. Many structure their written work well with suitable technical accuracy, for example when comparing lyrics from pop songs by Harry Styles and Taylor Swift. A few pupils, including the more able, continue to make basic errors in their written work that are often not corrected by teachers.

Many pupils have sound numeracy skills and are comfortable when dealing with fractions and decimals, and when drawing and analysing graphs. They apply these skills appropriately in different subjects such as science and geography. Most pupils display good ICT skills, especially when they work online from home.

The last set of verified data in 2019 showed improvement in most performance indicators that also included English and English literature.

## **R2. Improve boys' performance in key stage 4**

Since the core inspection and last monitoring visit, the school has continued to concentrate on improving boys' performance by implementing a range of different strategies. These include engaging with the families of boys who may be disaffected and raising the aspirations of boys in general. This has led to improved attitudes to learning among boys and improvement in their behaviour. The school has adapted its provision at key stage 4 to include more options that are better suited to boys' needs and interests, for example applied science, as well as a wider range of vocational courses delivered at a local college. This has impacted positively on their engagement and wellbeing.

As seen in lessons and books, boys engage well with their learning. They show pride in their work and contribute extensively to class discussions. In addition, boys are more willing than girls to take risks when responding to teachers' questions without fear of failure.

In 2019, boys' performance at the end of key stage 4 improved in key indicators and compared favourably with that of boys in similar schools.

## **R3. Refine lesson planning to ensure that tasks and resources take due account of the full range of pupils' needs and abilities, particularly for more able pupils and those with individual education plans**

Since September 2018, the school has introduced a number of whole-school strategies to improve the quality of lesson planning and teaching. This includes suitable professional learning and coaching for teachers and useful opportunities for staff to collaborate within and across faculties when planning learning. Staff plan to implement these strategies over a five-year period where they consider how to support the development of pupils' learning from Year 7 to Year 11.

Since March 2020, the school has continuously adapted its provision in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have provided useful opportunities for staff to take part in professional learning for distance learning and to share good practice. Teachers use regular assessment tasks to identify which skills, concepts and understanding need further development. They adapt learning plans appropriately to take account of these priority areas. Faculties and departments continue to implement the school's established teaching policy to help them plan for face-to-face and distance learning. This has led to a coherent and consistent approach to planning and teaching during this challenging period.

In most lessons, teachers build and maintain positive working relationships with pupils. Many teachers provide careful and effective explanations when introducing new information. They make effective use of resources to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. These teachers use appropriate starter activities to engage pupils and help them make links to prior learning. In many instances, teachers question pupils suitably to check for understanding. However, often they do not use questions that follow up on pupils' responses that require them to elaborate well enough. In a few lessons, teachers talk too much and do not allow pupils opportunities to learn independently and to think for themselves. In a few subjects,

teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills including synthesising information from a range of sources.

Many teachers plan effective strategies to help pupils, engage with their learning and develop resilience, for example strategies to help them revise and divide work into manageable sections. They provide helpful examples and additional resources to enable pupils to succeed in their tasks. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils' learning and wellbeing. As a result, there has been an improvement in pupils' engagement and behaviour in lessons. In a few lessons, teachers provide tasks that challenge the more able pupils successfully.

In a few lessons where teaching is particularly strong, teachers plan work that builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding well. This results in pupils making strong progress in their thinking skills. Teachers use pertinent questions to encourage pupils to think deeply and challenge them to consider different perspectives. They provide feedback to individual pupils at suitable points in the lesson to ensure that pupils review their work and make further progress. In these lessons, opportunities to develop subject skills and literacy and numeracy skills are meaningful.

Generally, teachers provide suitable feedback on pupils' work. In a majority of cases, teachers set targets that help pupils improve their work and they ensure that pupils respond suitably. However, in a minority of cases, comments are brief or superficial and do not provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work. A minority of teachers do not highlight spelling mistakes consistently enough and, as a result, pupils often repeat the same mistakes over time.

#### **R4. Improve the focus and sharpness of self-evaluation and improvement planning**

Since the core inspection, and last monitoring visit, leaders have focused considerably on sharpening processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning. Leaders, teachers, and governors share the same aspirations of raising standards, improving the quality of teaching, and strengthening leadership at all levels. Overall, quality assurance and monitoring activities are well-planned, more consistent and purposeful than at the time of the core inspection.

The headteacher has provided clear direction, robust accountability and beneficial support to enable middle leaders to carry out their roles effectively. Over time, and in particular since the first national lockdown in March 2020, she has been successful in communicating with staff, promoting collaboration between faculties and supporting the wellbeing of the whole-school community. As a result, she has galvanised the staff, created an open, supportive ethos for professional learning and secured a safer, more caring environment than previously was the case.

Over the past three years, the school has provided purposeful training and professional development opportunities for teachers and leaders which has improved the quality of provision and leadership. There has been a substantial focus on improving teaching and the accuracy of teacher assessment. In addition, there has been a considerable drive to sharpen middle leaders' ability to analyse data from national and internal assessments. Teachers collaborate well within faculties to

standardise provision. For example, they produce common schemes of work, teaching resources and homework tasks. As a result of these improvements, leaders now have a more accurate and reliable understanding of pupils' standards and can identify strengths and weaknesses across individual classes and whole year groups.

Leaders have a planned schedule of suitable monitoring activities to quality assure the schools' work and in order to inform planning for improvement. These include lesson observations, looking at pupils' work in books and digital portfolios. Findings from these activities are shared regularly with staff and include useful evaluations on teacher assessment and pupils' attitudes to learning. However, leaders do not consider pupils' overall progress or their literacy and numeracy skills in enough detail. Overall, while there have been significant improvements, whole-school quality assurance activities focus on too narrow a range of themes, such as the volume of work that pupils produce and the quality of the presentation.

The school has comprehensive arrangements to gather the views of stakeholders. The headteacher promotes an open-door policy with regards to receiving feedback from parents. The school uses creative ways to seek parental views, for example through small, informal focus groups. Middle leaders also seek parental opinions following assessment points and discuss findings in faculty meetings. Leaders make suitable amendments to provision where there are common areas for improvement. Generally, leaders' response to findings from pupil questionnaires is suitable but this remains an area for development. For example, the use of pupil questionnaires by faculties to evaluate their work has not been fully developed.

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