



Report summary for parents and carers on Ysgol Dolafon

Date of inspection: November 2024

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

Summary

The recently appointed executive headteacher provides effective, compassionate leadership and knows the pupils, staff and families well. He is motivated to succeed for the benefit of pupils and the school's community. He has a clear vision to create a safe, happy and inclusive learning environment where the whole school community develops as 'One Big Family.'

All staff have effective working relationship with pupils which nurtures their well-being effectively. Pupils treat each other, staff and visitors with politeness and respect and, generally, they show appropriate attitudes to learning. Across the school, pupils' behaviour is good, and they feel proud of their school and its community.

Overall, many pupils make at least suitable progress that is in their learning. Many pupils have positive attitudes to Welsh and many make appropriate progress in learning the language. The wide range of pupil voice groups enables many pupils to become involved in discussions and decision-making.

Leaders and staff are beginning to develop a curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales, but this is at an early stage of development. As pupils move through the school, they develop good speaking and digital skills. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils develop a full range of literacy and mathematical skills systematically and progressively, particularly in reading and writing, over time.

The quality of teaching and teachers' feedback is inconsistent. Where teaching is most effective, teachers provide learning experiences for pupils that engage their interests suitably. However, teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to plan learning experiences to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Consequently, they do not always provide the correct level of challenge to develop pupils as independent learners. In addition, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough meaningful opportunities to improve their learning.

The executive headteacher has identified many of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and is beginning to bring about improvements. However, it is too early to see the positive impact of these improvements. Governors are valuable members of the school community and offer appropriate support and challenge to the school. Leaders undertake a suitable and clear program of activities to monitor and evaluate the school's work. However, leadership processes across the school are not yet embedded well enough. In general, evaluations of monitoring activity do not always ensure that all important areas for improvement are identified in a timely and effective way.

Recommendations and next steps

We have made four recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Strengthen leadership at all levels to use self-evaluation processes effectively to recognise and realise the school's priorities for improvement
- R2 Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, and that staff make purposeful use of assessment information to plan provision to challenge and support pupils' progress
- R3 Provide an engaging and purposeful curriculum that develops pupils' independence, mathematical and literacy skills progressively over time
- R4 Ensure consistency in the quality and use of pupil feedback to support and provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to respond and improve their work

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. A small team of Estyn inspectors will visit the school to monitor progress about 12-18 months after the publication of the inspection report.

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#).



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