

Pontarddulais Comprehensive School
Caecerrig Road
Pontarddulais
SA4 8PD

17/10/2025

Dear leaders and staff

Interim visit: October 2025

Thank you for your support with the arrangements for the interim visit to the school on 1st and 2nd October 2025. We valued the opportunity to meet with you, your staff and pupils and discuss the improvement work that the school has carried out since the core inspection.

During our visit, we had the opportunity to:

- Meet with pupils and hear their feedback about the school.
- Visit a sample of lessons across the curriculum to see pupils and staff undertaking their work.
- Undertake lesson observations and work scrutiny activities alongside senior leaders.
- Speak with senior leaders about your improvement work and how you have worked to address the recommendation that was given in the core inspection
- Speak with middle leaders about their work in these areas.

Focus of visit

The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes

During the visit, we heard how staff have continued to collaborate effectively with a clear focus on improving pupil outcomes. Leaders have successfully created a culture where all staff are involved in evaluating their practice and seeking ways to improve.

Estyn, Llys Angor, Heol Keen, Caerdydd,
CF24 5JW Ffôn: 02920 446446
ymholiadau@estyn.llyw.cymru
www.estyn.llyw.cymru

Mae Estyn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn y naill iaith neu'r llall yn cael yr un flaenoriaeth.

Estyn, Anchor Court, Keen Road,
Cardiff, CF24 5JW Telephone: 02920
446446 enquiries@estyn.gov.wales
www.estyn.gov.wales

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

The self-evaluation and improvement planning cycle is continuous and links well to both performance management and professional learning. Leaders carry out a comprehensive range of appropriate quality assurance activities, including lesson observations, learning walks, scrutiny of pupils' work, including their skills, and gathering pupils' views. They use data wisely to inform their evaluations and to pose questions about standards of learning and the quality of provision. Leaders use findings from these monitoring activities effectively to prepare suitable summaries of strengths and areas for improvement. This enables them to share effective practice or address areas for development, while using the information to plan improvement work and provide beneficial professional learning for all staff. Leaders were able to provide specific examples of aspects of teaching and learning that they have identified as needing improvement and how they have incorporated these into their improvement plans.

It was good to hear that all staff are involved in deciding which priorities will be part of the school's improvement work. Leaders continuously evaluate progress against improvement priorities, and these are reviewed and adjusted when necessary. Middle leaders understand their roles in driving improvements well. They produce useful termly SOAPs ('Subject on a Page') which identify the main priority for short-term action. Area improvement plans include both these priorities and suitable actions to contribute towards whole-school areas for development.

We feel that it would be good for leaders to consider:

- When planning for improvement, do leaders always ensure that success criteria focuses on the desired impact on pupils' learning and well-being?

The school's work to develop opportunities to gather and use the views of pupils to inform self-evaluation at a subject area level

During our visit it was helpful to hear how leaders have strengthened the use of pupil voice within subject areas to inform their self-evaluation and improvement planning. Pupils continue to play an integral part in shaping whole-school priorities, with curriculum ambassadors and pupil governors contributing meaningfully to discussions with staff and governors. In our discussions with staff and pupils, we heard how middle leaders now regularly use end-of-topic questionnaires to gather pupils' views on teaching and learning. In addition, it was interesting to hear how the school is piloting the use of pupil focus groups at a subject area level. Middle leaders have successfully integrated pupil voice findings into their termly 'Subject on a Page' evaluations. Importantly, we heard from pupils how their feedback has led to tangible changes, such as a more structured approach to extended writing in history and more opportunities to develop cultural understanding in international languages. Pupils told us how they value the input they have in improving teaching and learning.

We feel that it would be good for leaders to consider:

- Do all middle leaders analyse pupil voice findings closely enough, in order to identify the specific areas for further improvement?

Thank you again for all your help to plan and arrange our visit. The school's latest 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: [Pontarddulais Comprehensive School - Estyn](#)

Yours sincerely



Lowri Jones

Acting Assistant Director