



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

**From:**  
**Sent:** 20 September 2016 13:57  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Response to Freedom of Information request

Dear

Thank you for your email to Estyn requesting under the Freedom of Information Act a copy of the most recent monitoring report on Llandrindod Wells High School and a copy of each of the previous monitoring reports completed after the 2014 inspection.

Please find attached the monitoring reports for Llandrindod High School that refer to visits in June 2015, October 2015, March 2016 and June 2016.

Yours sincerely

**Estyn**

**Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru**

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

**Cyfeiriad:** Llys Angor, Heol Keen, Caerdydd, CF24 5JW

**Address:** Anchor Court, Keen Road, Cardiff, CF24 5JW

**Gwefan/ Website:** [www.estyn.llyw.cymru/](http://www.estyn.llyw.cymru/) [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all*

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**

**Llandrindod High School  
Dyffryn Road  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 6AW**

**Date of visit: June 2015**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Vaughan Williams	Reporting Inspector
Alwyn Thomas	Team Inspector
Christine Hooper	Team Inspector
Karen Newby-Jones	Team Inspector

## Outcome of monitoring

Llandrindod High School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2014.

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

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards at key stage 4, particularly in mathematics and science**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school has focused its strategies to improve standards at key stage 4, in particular to improve the performance of pupils in mathematics and science. These strategies include reallocation of staff to target groups, parent involvement and well attended pre-school sessions. The most recent school assessment information and unverified data indicates that both subjects are improving but performance remains well below the school's challenging targets.

In over a half of lessons, pupils make strong progress and recall prior learning well. Many pupils work effectively in groups. The majority of pupils write extended pieces of work effectively with a good standard of spelling and grammar. These pupils use subject specific terms well in their written and oral responses. The majority of pupils acquire and develop the skills needed to improve their learning well.

In just under a half of the lessons, pupils do not make enough progress. In these lessons, a minority of pupils find the work too easy and therefore do not remain on task for significant periods. A few pupils are reluctant to listen, offer undeveloped answers and lack confidence in attempting written tasks. Many pupils are overly dependent on the teacher and, as a result, use a limited vocabulary and are unable to structure sentences and paragraphs independently. A very few pupils behave poorly and disrupt the learning of others.

In science, most pupils use appropriate skills in gathering data. They present this information well in relevant graphs and tables. Within mathematics lessons, a majority of pupils use appropriate resources well, for example, to measure lines of symmetry of different shapes. However, in these lessons, the majority of pupils are unable to use their mental calculation skills appropriately to solve simple everyday problems.

### **Recommendation 2: Address underperformance of specific groups of pupils, particularly of boys at key stage 4**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school has developed useful tracking systems and started to track the performance of groups of learners closely.

The school monitors the performance of boys and girls through regular internal assessments. Unverified data shows that the performance of boys is improving but they do not show a significant improvement when compared with the girls in the school. The strategies to address the underperformance of boys lack detail and have not been implemented effectively. In general, from lessons and books, teachers have lower expectations of boys than they do of girls.

The school monitors the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals at key stage 4 carefully. However, it does not monitor and track the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals well enough in key stage 3.

Since the core inspection, the school has produced a comprehensive policy to address the needs of the more able and talented pupils. It has identified these pupils according to their academic achievement or a specific talent. However, the strategies for improving the performance of this group of pupils are still in development. In many lessons, specific planning to extend the more able pupils is weak.

### **Recommendation 3: Improve the co-ordination and planning for progression in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school has identified and mapped suitable opportunities to deliver literacy and numeracy skills in subjects at key stage 3 and key stage 4. This provides the school with a helpful summary of provision to support the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. However, middle leaders and teachers do not use this summary well enough to plan for progression in skills.

The school does not use outcomes of national tests well enough to identify areas for development or set specific priorities for improvement in literacy and numeracy at key stage 3. As a result, the school does not have an accurate enough picture of its strengths and areas for development in its provision for skills to plan comprehensively for the implementation of the literacy and numeracy framework.

In key stage 3, core subjects have updated schemes of work and many lesson plans address aspects of the literacy framework. Work to incorporate strands from the numeracy framework is more limited. In particular, teachers' lesson plans do not take enough account of the age-related expectation statements of the literacy and numeracy framework.

Observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work by the school do not identify well enough the strengths and areas for development in the quality of skills provision, the feedback given to pupils or the standard of skills.

The school continues to focus appropriately on staff training to develop teaching and learning strategies, for example, to build pupils' capacity to write in a variety of text types. However, these strategies are not used well or widely enough to have an impact on pupils' standards across many subjects.

Teachers do not have consistent expectations about how pupils should respond to marking and feedback. Consequently, a minority of pupils continue to make basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar in their written work.

The school has appropriate provision for the reporting of literacy and numeracy in key stage 3. However, plans for assessment and tracking of these skills are in the early stages of development.

The school is currently reviewing the leadership and coordination of skills provision as part of its strategy to build leadership capacity. However, it is unclear how this will improve on the current structure of literacy and numeracy coordinators.

#### **Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of teaching and assessment**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school places a stronger focus on improving teaching.

The school now undertakes a more structured cycle of lesson observations and the responsibility for these is starting to be more widely distributed amongst middle and senior leaders. The outcomes of the observations provide documented evidence of the strengths of teaching and areas that need further development. This information is starting to give leaders a better understanding of the profile of teaching across the school and the strengths of individual teachers. It assists them appropriately to focus on areas of greatest need.

Since the core inspection, the school has provided a range of development activities to support all teachers to improve their teaching skills. Although the school has introduced processes aimed at improving teaching, these are very recent and several activities have not started. Currently, there are few opportunities to share good practice in teaching.

In just over half of the lessons, teachers form strong working relationships with their pupils that are conducive to learning. These lessons are well structured and planned and they provide appropriate challenge to pupils of all abilities. In these lessons, teachers use oral feedback well to enable the pupils to make good progress.

Although the school has given a higher priority to improving the quality of teaching, in just under half of the lessons observed, planning is still not effective enough to motivate and sustain the interest of pupils. In these lessons, the pace is too slow, tasks lack variety and challenge and there is too much teacher direction. As a result, pupils do not make enough progress. These are similar shortcomings to those identified during the core inspection. In a few lessons, teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour effectively.

Most teachers regularly mark pupils' work and most books have examples of teachers employing the feedback strategy that the school has adopted. Many teachers write useful comments on 'what went well' and suggest suitably precise comments on how the work would be 'even better if'. However, the quality of written feedback remains inconsistent across the school. In a few books, it is poor and pupils are unable to respond appropriately to bring about improvements.

Arrangements to monitor the extent to which pupils improve their work in response to the marking are not sufficiently robust. Senior and middle leaders do not monitor this aspect well enough to improve standards.

Assessment data is collated and analysed appropriately. Nearly all staff have received useful training to enable them to use data more effectively.

**Recommendation 5: Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels to ensure clear direction and high expectations in all areas of the school's work**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, senior leaders have made slow progress in communicating the strategic direction clearly and effectively to all staff. As a result, there is inconsistency in teaching across the school and in ensuring high expectations within and across departments.

Following the core inspection, the school has introduced a software programme that allows leaders to analyse pupils' targets and examination data. It provides an extensive range of tools for managing pupil progress. However, the introduction of this programme is too recent to provide leaders with clear enough and useful outcomes.

Many middle leaders are able to use other target setting programme data appropriately to identify targets for individual pupils based on their prior attainment. However, there have been anomalies from one data tracking point to the next in the use of the pupil progress tool. The school does not quality assure the use of these programmes or the quality of the information used in tracking progress. Overall, the quality of middle leadership remains inconsistent in setting high expectations to those in their department.

Most leaders are committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Strategies initiated by the leadership team to provide support and training in strengthening middle leadership include visits to other schools to identify good practice. Many governors have taken part in training on their role in self-evaluation and school improvement processes but it is too early to measure their impact on improving standards. However, the school's actions to support those departments where the quality of leadership is less secure are limited.

**Recommendation 6: Increase accountability at all levels for improving standards and quality of provision, especially through rigorous line management**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the headteacher has restructured the leadership team and many staff now have different and more balanced responsibilities. The school has strengthened the senior leadership team by recently appointing a deputy headteacher whose role is to focus on quality assurance and school improvement.

With the support of the local authority, the school has delivered useful governor training on how to raise standards through monitoring progress closely. However, the performance management of staff has not developed since the core inspection and targets are still not precise or challenging enough.

The frequency with which line management meetings occur between senior and middle leaders has been too variable. However, the recent inclusion of a link governor with many departments in this process is a positive feature. In these cases, the link governors have a better understanding of the key issues for improvement. A minority of line management and department meeting minutes lack rigour. They do not indicate actions, timescales or the staff responsible to ensure improvements in standards and provision. As a result, a minority of middle leaders are not held to account well enough to improve the quality of teaching within their departments.

#### **Recommendation 7: Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school is starting to implement strategies aimed at strengthening self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements.

The school makes better use of data in the current self-evaluation report to identify areas for improvement. A regular programme of lesson observations undertaken by senior leaders feeds into the performance management process. To date, this refined procedure has not had a positive impact on the quality of teaching.

The school has updated its self-evaluation report since the core inspection. The current report is informative. However, it is too descriptive and is not sufficiently objective and evaluative. It does not identify strengths or weaknesses explicitly.

The current departmental self-evaluation reports contain a detailed analysis of performance data. However, evaluations of teaching and leadership lack detail and do not always draw on first hand evidence such as lesson observations and work scrutiny.

Departmental development plans link closely to the post inspection action plan and follow the same format. They focus on the same areas for improvement, however, many make little reference to specific issues that may be pertinent to that particular department, or additional action points to meet the particular development needs of that subject. Overall, the rigour, consistency and detail of departmental development plans varies too much and they contain limited information to help secure improvement.

## **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.



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Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Report following monitoring  
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Llandrindod High School  
Dyffryn Road  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 6AW**

**Date of visit: October 2015**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Lowri Jones	Reporting Inspector
Robert Davies	Team Inspector
Farrukh Kahn	Team Inspector
Gareth Kiff	Team Inspector
Anthony Mulcahy	Team Inspector

## Outcome of monitoring

Llandrindod High School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2014.

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

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards at key stage 4, particularly in mathematics and science**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection in 2014 there have been improvements in performance in most of the key indicators at key stage 4 and particularly in the indicators that include English and mathematics.

Provisional data for 2015 shows that performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics has improved by 15 percentage points since the core inspection. Performance in this indicator is above modelled outcomes in 2015, having been below in each of the last three years. When compared with similar schools based on eligibility for free school meals, the school is placed in the top 25% of similar schools, having been in the bottom 25% at the time of the core inspection. Performance has been well below the average for the family of schools for the last three years but is now in-line with that average for 2015.

Based on provisional data for 2015, performance in the capped points score has improved slightly since the core inspection. When compared with similar schools based on eligibility for free school meals, the school is placed in the upper 50% of similar schools in 2015. However, performance remains below the average for the family of schools.

Since the core inspection, performance in the level 2 threshold has also improved. This provisionally places the school in the lower 50% of similar schools in 2015, having been in the bottom 25% in each of the last three years. Performance is slightly below the average for the family of schools.

In 2015, provisional data indicates that performance in mathematics, and in science, has improved. Performance in mathematics places the school in the upper 50% of similar schools based on free-school-meal eligibility after being in the bottom 25% the previous year. Despite the improvements in science, the performance in 2015 places the school in the bottom 25% of similar schools.

There is a trend of sustained improvement in English. Provisional data for 2015 places the school in the top 25% of similar schools based on eligibility for free school meals.

Despite the improvements at key stage 4, standards at key stage 3 and attendance and behaviour have declined since the core inspection.

The standard of pupils' work, seen in books and lessons is very similar to that seen during the last monitoring visit. In around half of lessons, most pupils recall prior learning well and apply this effectively to new situations. In these lessons, many pupils make strong progress. They speak confidently and listen well. Many pupils work well in groups and are very supportive of each other. A majority of pupils produce well-organised extended writing and express their ideas clearly and accurately. In a very few lessons, nearly all pupils demonstrate high levels of motivation and produce verbal and written responses of a very high quality.

As was the case in the last monitoring visit, pupils do not make enough progress in around half of lessons. In these lessons, most pupils do not complete enough work. A minority of pupils do not focus on their work well enough and a very few pupils exhibit poor behaviour. Many pupils make many spelling, grammar and punctuation errors in their written work. A majority of pupils do not have the knowledge and skills to enable them to move on in their learning independent of the teacher.

**Recommendation 2: Address underperformance of specific groups of pupils, particularly of boys at key stage 4**

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the performance of groups of pupils has been too variable.

Provisional data for 2015 shows that the performance of boys and girls at key stage 4 has improved in all key indicators since the core inspection. Girls continue to perform strongly and better than the average for the family of schools in most indicators. Boys' performance in English has improved by 15 percentage points since the core inspection and is above the average for the family of schools. However, despite improvements, the performance of boys in most indicators remains below the average for the family of schools.

The gap between the performance of boys and girls has decreased in nearly all indicators since the core inspection. However, girls continue to perform better than boys at key stage 4. This is particularly so in mathematics, where the gap between the performance of boys and girls has increased significantly. At key stage 3, the gap between the performance of boys and girls in all three core subjects and in the core subject indicator is bigger than at the time of the core inspection, particularly in English and science.

The performance of pupils eligible for free school meals has declined in both key stages since the time of the core inspection. The school does not track the progress of all pupils eligible for free school meals thoroughly enough.

The performance of more able pupils has remained strong. However, at key stage three, very few pupils gain the higher levels in the core subjects. In around half of lessons, more able pupils are not challenged or extended enough. This was also the case during the last monitoring visit.

The school has recently appointed members of staff to focus on the achievement of specific groups of pupils. They include a coordinator to focus on the performance of boys and of more able pupils, and a pastoral support member of staff to work with pupils from more deprived backgrounds. Strategies to address the underperformance of groups of pupils have not had enough impact and planning for further support lacks sufficient detail.

### **Recommendation 3: Improve the co-ordination and planning for progression in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills**

No judgement applied

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has appointed co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy. This has strengthened the leadership of these skills across the school.

The co-ordinators have analysed the outcomes of the 2015 national literacy and numeracy tests to assess the standards of all key stage 3 pupils' skills and to evaluate the impact of intervention programmes for those with weaker skills. However, the school has not used this analysis well enough when setting priorities for development. As a result, some important areas for development, such as the improvement of pupils' spelling, are missing from the action plan.

The literacy co-ordinator has liaised well with subject leaders to review and agree departmental action plans to support the development of pupils' literacy across the curriculum. These plans set suitable targets and timescales for amending schemes of work to include activities and targets linked to the development of pupils' literacy skills. The numeracy co-ordinator has worked closely with the subject leader for mathematics and a small number of other subject leaders to identify opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning skills. However, planning for the development of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Senior leaders now include a suitable focus on the provision for literacy in quality assurance activities. For example, they now look for evidence of extended writing activities in book reviews. This provides an accurate picture of the quality and coverage of literacy rich tasks set for pupils across the curriculum. As a result of this monitoring, the number of subjects setting extended writing tasks has increased since the last monitoring visit.

Teachers' assessment of literacy rich tasks provides pupils with useful advice on their levels of performance and how to improve their work. However, when assessing other tasks, teachers are not consistent in the use of the literacy marking codes and do not have high enough expectations about how pupils should respond to marking and feedback. Consequently, a majority of pupils continue to make basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar in their written work.

### **Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of teaching and assessment**

No judgement applied

Since the last monitoring visit, senior leaders have improved systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. They now undertake regular focused learning walks and useful book reviews alongside a more structured cycle of lesson observations. The outcomes of these activities provide senior leaders with a useful understanding of the quality of teaching across the school.

The school works well with a small range of partners to provide regular training for staff in aspects of teaching and learning identified as priorities. However, there continue to be few opportunities for teachers to share and learn from good practice. In addition, not all teachers are aware of the priority areas for improvement in teaching across the school. Provision of training to support the individual development needs of staff is not in place.

In around half of the lessons, teachers plan activities that provide appropriate challenge to pupils of all abilities. In these lessons, teachers set clear objectives, use questioning skilfully and give detailed feedback to pupils. As a result, pupils engage well and make good progress.

In lessons where teaching is less effective, the pace is too slow, tasks lack variety and challenge and there is too much teacher direction. As a result, pupils do not make enough progress. These are similar shortcomings to those identified during the core inspection.

The school has continued to work on improving assessment across the school. A minority of teachers provide consistently good feedback to pupils on how to improve their work. In addition, pupils spoken to during the monitoring visit noted that teachers' marking is more frequent and the advice given is more helpful. However, the school's expectations and strategies for assessment and marking are not communicated clearly to staff and, overall, the quality of assessment remains too variable between teachers. In too many instances written comments are overly positive and do not identify important mistakes such as spelling and grammatical errors. A few teachers do not mark pupils' work often enough. In addition, in around half of books pupils do not follow up on advice well enough.

The school has developed its processes for tracking pupils' progress across subjects and year groups by capturing assessment data on a more regular basis. However, it is too early to see any impact of this change.

**Recommendation 5: Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels to ensure clear direction and high expectations in all areas of the school's work**

No judgement applied

The restructured senior leadership team has well-defined roles and responsibilities and they work together appropriately. This has supported improved pupil performance at key stage 4. However, inequitable workloads have resulted in a lack of monitoring in some key areas such as standards at key stage 3, attendance and

exclusions.

A few middle leaders have benefitted from useful support and training to develop their leadership skills. However, arrangements to improve the leadership skills of all leaders are at an early stage of development.

The school's target setting process is inconsistent and targets have not been set for all aspects of the school's work for this academic year or next.

The governors have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Since the last monitoring visit subject link governors have attended all departmental data review meetings. This is improving their understanding of departmental performance. However, the reports from governors following school visits vary in quality.

Currently, the school does not have a suitable induction programme to meet the individual needs of newly qualified teachers.

**Recommendation 6: Increase accountability at all levels for improving standards and quality of provision, especially through rigorous line management**

No judgement applied

Since the last monitoring visit, line management meetings between senior and middle leaders are more frequent. They are now calendared and have common agendas. The meetings provide useful support and challenge to middle leaders. However, it is too early to see any impact of this change.

The school has developed a suitable policy to support the development of teaching and learning. This provides teachers with helpful support as required. However, this is a recent development and has not had time to impact positively on teaching.

Lesson observation forms record clearly the strengths and areas for development in both standards and teaching. This allows the school to have a useful overview of the areas which need further improvement.

The school's amended performance management policy outlines clearly the arrangements for monitoring staff progress against objectives and providing training and support. However, these records continue to lack sufficient detail.

Governors have considered appropriately the school's post inspection action plan. However, they do not consistently challenge the school well enough.

A local authority improvement board has been set up to provide challenge and direction for the school. However, it is too early to see what impact this has had.

**Recommendation 7: Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements**

No judgement applied

Since the last monitoring visit the school has continued to refine its systems and processes for improving quality across the school. This has supported the improvement of standards at key stage 4.

The school has continued to carry out useful lesson observations and work scrutiny. This provides senior leaders with a generally accurate picture of the standard of pupils' work and the quality of teaching across the school. Furthermore, the school has collaborated well with the regional consortium to review aspects of its work in areas such as leadership, mathematics and science. Findings from these reviews are beginning to be used to plan improvements.

The school has recently identified further areas outside of the post inspection action plan that need improving, such as attendance and behaviour. As a result, the school has started to put measures in to place to address these important aspects.

Departmental self-evaluation reports now include an analysis of recent performance data. In many cases, the analysis carried out by departments is detailed and identifies key areas for improvement. However, there is too much variation in the format and quality of data analyses between departments. As a result, in a minority of reports, important information such as benchmark comparisons is sometimes missing. Furthermore, as identified during the last monitoring visit, departmental evaluations of pupils' progress in learning and the quality of teaching lack detail and do not consistently draw sufficiently on findings from activities such as lesson observations and work scrutiny.

Departmental development plans are aligned well to the post inspection action plan. However, these plans do not currently include any additional subject specific priorities and necessary actions.

Currently the school does not take enough account of the views of pupils and parents.

The school has not evaluated sufficiently the progress it has made in addressing the recommendations from the core inspection. In addition, it has not updated its self-evaluation report or post inspection action plan since the last visit. As a result, important aspects that need improving, such as the progress pupils make in lessons and their basic literacy skills, are not being highlighted clearly or addressed with sufficient rigour. The school's lack of monitoring and evaluation of its progress against the recommendations from the core inspection is an important shortcoming.

## **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.



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**

**Llandrindod High School  
Dyffryn Road  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 6AW**

**Date of visit: March 2016**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Karen Newby Jones	Reporting Inspector
Rob Davies	Team Inspector
Andrew Hurley	Team Inspector
Delyth Lloyd Gray	Team Inspector

## Outcome of monitoring

Llandrindod High School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2014.

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

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

### **Induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) (providers in special measures only)**

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. 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.

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.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards at key stage 4, particularly in mathematics and science**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

In the last monitoring visit we commented fully on pupils' performance from 2015 data. The school demonstrated an overall trend of improvement at key stage 4. However, standards at key stage 3 and attendance and behaviour have declined since the core inspection.

The standard of pupils' work seen in books and lessons has improved slightly since the last monitoring visit. In a majority of lessons, most pupils recall prior learning well and apply this effectively to new situations. In these lessons, many pupils make worthwhile progress. They respond with confidence when questioned and listen well to the teacher and to each other. A majority of pupils write accurately and fluently across the curriculum, and express their ideas effectively. Many pupils work well in groups and support each other helpfully in their learning.

In a minority of lessons, pupils do not focus on their work well enough or sustain their concentration. As a result, too many pupils do not make enough progress. In these lessons, many pupils develop their numeracy skills but do not apply these in a

beneficial way. A minority of pupils make too many spelling, grammar and punctuation errors in their written work.

**Recommendation 2: Address underperformance of specific groups of pupils, particularly of boys at key stage 4**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

During the last monitoring visit we commented fully on pupils' performance from 2015 data, for more able pupils, those pupils eligible for free school meals, as well as the performance of boys.

In 2015 the performance of boys and girls at key stage 4 has improved in all key indicators since the core inspection. However, despite improvements, the performance of boys in most indicators remains below the average for boys in the family of schools.

The school has explored a range of ideas to improve the performance of boys and of more able pupils. In particular, it encourages teachers to plan a wider range of engaging activities. This approach has not currently had sufficient impact on standards in lessons or books. In around half of lessons, a minority of boys find it difficult to sustain their concentration and a minority of more able pupils are still not suitably challenged.

The school has identified groups of boys in a few year groups who are at risk of underperformance and is monitoring their progress suitably. Likewise, the school is monitoring the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals. Planning for intervention to support these groups is still at an early stage and evaluation of impact is not yet in place.

**Recommendation 3: Improve the co-ordination and planning for progression in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has built well on its work in extending literacy provision across the curriculum. For example, many pupils have useful opportunities to write extended responses in most subject areas. The use of literacy feedback sheets is well established across the curriculum and provides a useful focus to improve pupils' skills.

The literacy co-ordinator has worked closely with heads of department to review literacy provision and evaluate standards through work scrutiny exercises. However, the findings of these reviews lack detail and do not focus sufficiently on pupil standards.

The numeracy co-ordinator has worked well with heads of department to identify opportunities for numeracy tasks across the curriculum. Many departments are now

planning for numeracy tasks and a few are offering a better range of numeracy opportunities than seen at the last visit. However, teachers have received insufficient guidance and support in this aspect. As a result, numeracy activities in lessons are not always appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils across the curriculum.

The numeracy co-ordinator has developed feedback sheets for different types of numeracy tasks, similar to those in use for literacy. It is too early to see the impact of these in developing the quality of provision or pupils' numeracy standards.

The school analyses suitably national tests and other skills testing to tailor interventions for pupils with weak numeracy and literacy skills. However, the school has not used these analyses to adapt the provision well enough for all pupils across the curriculum.

#### **Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of teaching and assessment**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has adapted its processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, involving both senior and middle leaders in reviewing lessons. This is improving middle leaders' understanding of the quality of teaching in their departments. However, there has not been sufficient training to develop fully the capacity of leaders to evaluate and to provide effective feedback.

The school has worked well with other partners to develop teaching practices and have shared some approaches in appropriate school meetings. However, there are too few opportunities for teachers to share and learn from good practice.

In the majority of lessons where teaching is strong, teachers plan activities that are varied, engaging and offer clear challenge to all pupils. They include opportunities for independent learning and develop resilience in pupils to work things out for themselves. They use questioning well to probe and develop pupils' skills and understanding.

In a minority of lessons, teaching is less effective. In these lessons there is insufficient challenge offered in the task selection, questioning or in the expectations of pupils. The pace of these lessons does not match the pupils' learning needs, tasks are not varied enough and consequently pupils do not develop their skills well enough. In a few lessons, when pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the tasks set, teachers respond disproportionately when pupils do not remain engaged.

In most books marking is up to date. In a majority of instances, teachers provide pupils with good quality feedback on their work. A minority of pupils respond productively to this advice. However, in a minority of cases, teachers' comments do not identify areas for improvement in pupils' work well enough, and often comments are too positive. Overall, a minority of pupils respond well to teachers' feedback.

The school's processes for tracking pupils on a more regular basis have been delayed. This is impeding the school's ability to monitor pupils' progress closely enough.

**Recommendation 5: Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels to ensure clear direction and high expectations in all areas of the school's work**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has taken positive steps to improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels. The roles of the senior leadership team are well defined. However, there is too much imbalance in their responsibilities and workload. This limits the capacity of leaders to drive improvement in important areas such as standards and teaching.

Governors have developed a clearer understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Their role as a critical friend of the school has developed well since the last visit. Governors play a valuable role in supporting and challenging curriculum leaders through their close involvement with the majority of subjects.

The school has provided useful training to support the work of middle leaders, for example in the use of data. As a result, leaders have a more accurate and current picture of pupils' standards. The school has developed appropriate school-to-school links in order to develop leadership. A few leaders have participated in beneficial visits to other schools. However, school strategies to share good practice in leadership and to support weaker leaders remain underdeveloped. Middle leaders draw suitably on evidence from regular work scrutiny to evaluate standards in teaching and learning in their subject areas. However, their contribution to the evaluation of standards through lesson observations is inconsistent.

**Recommendation 6: Increase accountability at all levels for improving standards and quality of provision, especially through rigorous line management**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has continued to make improvements in increasing accountability at all levels since the last visit. There is increased rigour in the way senior leaders hold many middle leaders to account for standards in their subject areas. Calendared line management meetings between senior and middle leaders share a common agenda and focus appropriately on pupils' standards. However, the frequency of these meetings remains too variable and therefore middle leaders across the school are not held to account consistently enough.

Departmental meetings focus appropriately on aspects of standards and provision. The minutes of these meetings are not shared with line managers routinely. This means that a minority of senior leaders are not fully aware of the work of their link departments.

A minority of minutes from meetings do not indicate timescales for actions, success criteria or the staff responsible and therefore do not bring about improvements quickly enough.

The school's performance management policy now outlines clearly the arrangements for monitoring staff progress against objectives and providing training and support. Performance management targets focus appropriately on important areas such as improving standards in teaching and learning.

Since the last visit, the governing body has strengthened its role in holding the school to account through more rigorous and regular scrutiny of the development of the post inspection action plan.

### **Recommendation 7: Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, self-evaluation activities are becoming more embedded. Findings from activities such as lesson observations and book scrutinies are becoming more established routines of the school's work. The views of pupils, parents and staff are beginning to be used more effectively to inform school and departmental priorities. In addition, the school has made appropriate use of the findings from external reviews.

However, there are important aspects of the school's work in this area that remain weak. These are:

- the analysis of performance by non-core subjects at key stage 4 and outcomes in the sixth form (in the self-evaluation report)
- the evaluation of pupils' progress in learning and skills gathered from lesson observations and work scrutiny
- the overall quality of departmental evaluation reports and improvement plans, including the departmental targets
- the processes to capture and evaluate the views of pupils.

### **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.

The school needs to strengthen the arrangements for the induction of newly-qualified teachers appointed after the school was judged to be in need of special measures.



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**

**Llandrindod High School  
Dyffryn Road  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LA1 6AH**

**Date of visit: June 2016**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Karen Newby Jones	Reporting Inspector
Bethan Whittall	Team Inspector
Andrew Hurley	Team Inspector
Stephen Davies	Team Inspector

## **Outcome of monitoring**

Llandrindod High School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2014.

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

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

### **Induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) (providers in special measures only)**

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. 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.

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. Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards at key stage 4, particularly in mathematics and science**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

During the last two monitoring visits, we commented fully on pupils' performance from 2015 data.

The school continues to have a clear focus on raising pupil standards. It has undertaken a range of suitable actions to address the shortcomings noted in previous monitoring reports. Overall, the standard of pupils' work is similar to that observed in earlier visits. However, there are a few improvements, particularly in the writing skills of a majority of pupils seen in lessons and books across the curriculum.

In a majority of lessons, pupils make suitable progress. In these lessons, nearly all pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and engage well with tasks. These pupils recall prior learning well, and a majority apply their understanding successfully to new contexts. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to their peers, and

many pupils work productively in pairs and groups. Many pupils maintain their concentration successfully throughout their lessons. The majority of pupils make clear and thoughtful verbal contributions to class discussion and group work, using a broad vocabulary that includes a secure grasp of subject terminology.

In a minority of lessons, pupils' progress is less secure. In these lessons, pupils do not demonstrate sufficient independence in their learning or engage well enough with the tasks set. These pupils lack confidence when answering questions and give brief verbal responses.

Many pupils write accurately and use subject specific terms with confidence. A majority produce well-structured extended writing for a range of purposes. A few pupils produce sophisticated and thoughtful analyses of a range of source materials. However, a minority make too many basic errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar and do not structure extended pieces of writing well enough.

Many pupils have sound number skills, and apply these skills well across the curriculum, for example in science. However, a few pupils are less precise in their measuring and data handling work when applying their skills to new contexts.

**Recommendation 2: Address underperformance of specific groups of pupils, particularly of boys at key stage 4**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

During the last monitoring visit, we commented fully on pupils' performance from 2015 data for more able pupils, those pupils eligible for free school meals, as well as the performance of boys.

In lessons, many teachers use a suitable range of strategies to improve the performance of all groups of pupils and in particular that of boys and of more able pupils. The focus remains on ensuring that teachers include activities to engage all pupils in their learning. However, these approaches have not led to significant improvements in the standards seen in lessons or books since the last visit. In a minority of lessons, a few boys find it difficult to sustain an interest in their learning.

The school has recently put in place strengthened, suitable intervention plans for boys at risk of underperformance. It has amended suitably its monitoring of the performance and behaviour of boys, those eligible for free school meals and the more able.

**Recommendation 3: Improve the co-ordination and planning for progression in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has continued to develop suitably literacy opportunities across the curriculum, especially for extended writing. The school has also planned to increase the range of numeracy tasks undertaken across the curriculum. However, the quality and effectiveness of these opportunities varies too

much.

In many cases, teachers offer relevant feedback to pupils to support their literacy progress. However, there is too much variation in the quality of this feedback across departments.

The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators' involvement in whole-school review of books and the analysis of test data has provided a helpful overview of strengths and areas for development in provision. However, leaders at all levels do not ensure that action plans are implemented consistently enough across the school. As a result, improvements in provision and standards are not swift enough.

The school continues to use data suitably to identify pupils requiring extra support for literacy and numeracy. It has sustained the use of beneficial interventions that enable these pupils to make sound progress.

#### **Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of teaching and assessment**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has put in place a relevant plan to address shortcomings in the quality of teaching. However, actions within the plan are too imprecise. This is because the school does not have a clear overall picture of the quality of teaching. The support and challenge provided for teachers has not improved sufficiently the quality of teaching across the school.

In the majority of lessons where teaching is strong, teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of most pupils. This helps pupils to make successful progress in subjects as well as in their literacy and numeracy skills. In these lessons, teachers have suitably high expectations of most pupils and good working relationships with them. This serves to create a positive learning environment. Teachers challenge pupils to work independently, question effectively, and make useful links to prior learning. Pupils with additional needs are well supported through the purposeful deployment of teaching assistants.

In a minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, activities are too teacher led. In these lessons, teachers do not challenge or monitor pupil progress well enough. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and contributes to a loss of pupil focus and low-level disruption to learning.

The school continues to take appropriate actions to improve its assessment practices. In most cases, marking is up to date, regular and has an appropriate focus on the accuracy of pupils' writing. In many subjects, teachers give pupils clear verbal feedback and written guidance on how to improve their work. Many pupils respond well and improve the content and the technical accuracy of their work accordingly.

In a minority of subjects, written feedback to pupils is too inconsistent. In these areas, teachers' comments are unclear and in a very few cases too positive, which does not help pupils to develop their work sufficiently.

**Recommendation 5: Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels to ensure clear direction and high expectations in all areas of the school's work**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has recently undergone a significant change in the structure of the senior leadership team. The acting headteacher has shared clearly her vision for the school and has concentrated, in the short amount of time she has been in post, on building an effective senior team. However, at the time of this visit, leadership has not had enough impact upon important areas of the school's work such as the quality of teaching overall including the consistent support for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

The school continues to address suitably areas for improvement noted in the previous visit. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders have been re-defined, which has tackled effectively the imbalance seen previously. The school is working appropriately with partners to build the capacity of the new senior leadership team. However, the focus of this work is not sufficiently specific to the aspects that need the greatest improvement.

Governors continue to develop their role as critical friends of the school. They challenge robustly and support well the acting headteacher and curriculum leaders.

**Recommendation 6: Increase accountability at all levels for improving standards and quality of provision, especially through rigorous line management**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has undergone significant changes in the leadership structure, which is having a positive impact on the culture within the school. However, in this short time, strategies to ensure all leaders understand their roles and responsibilities, carry them out effectively, and challenge underperformance robustly remain underdeveloped.

The senior leadership team is continuing to focus appropriately on securing the accountability of middle leaders. The school has agreed a useful school calendar detailing all quality assurance procedures, data collection points, and line management and departmental meetings.

Line managers meet regularly with middle leaders with a broadly common agenda. There is an appropriate template to minute the meetings and they focus usefully on pupil progress. However, departmental meetings do not consider standards and provision suitably or revisit improvement plans routinely. The senior team do not monitor the outcomes of these meetings thoroughly enough.

Departmental meetings lack consistency in their regularity, with a few departments not having held a formal meeting since the last monitoring visit. Departmental meetings are variable in quality. Meetings do not result in specific action points, lack suitable time scales and remain too concerned with administrative issues.

## **Recommendation 7: Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning arrangements**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has made a few useful refinements to its self-evaluation activities. As a result, it has a clearer view of the areas that need to be improved.

The analysis of non-core subjects at key stage 4 and outcomes from 6th form are now included in the self-evaluation report. However, the school self-evaluation document is still not fully up to date in many other sections.

The school has not suitably updated its improvement plan since the last visit. The plan still does not include clear and measurable targets and success criteria, and timescales are often vague, with no milestone evaluations.

There have been no focussed lesson observations of the quality of teaching and learning, other than learning walks, since the last monitoring visit. This has limited the school's capacity to improve standards and provision.

The school monitors appropriately the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils through the scrutiny of pupils' books. However, planned actions following the most recent audit have not been implemented fully. The school is not sharing well enough the good practice it identifies through its monitoring activities in order to improve standards and quality of provision. As a result, practice remains similar to that seen in the previous visit.

Most departmental self-evaluation reports and development plans follow a common template. However, there remains too much inconsistency in the quality of evaluation and precision of planning for improvement.

### **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.