



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

A report on

**Lliswerry High School
Nash Road
Newport
NP19 4RP**

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by

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

About Lliswerry High School

Lliswerry High School is an English-medium 11 to 18 mixed comprehensive school in Newport. Currently, there are 830 pupils on roll, including 111 in the sixth form.

Around 30% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average of 16.4%. Around half live in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. The proportion of pupils that have a special educational need is around 30%, which is above the national average of 22.9%. Around 2.4% of pupils have statements of special educational needs. This figure is similar to the average of 2.2% for Wales as a whole. The school was last inspected in April 2013.

The school has pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Nearly 40% are not from a White British background, and around a third of pupils speak English as an additional language. Only a very few pupils are fluent in Welsh.

The headteacher has been in post since 2017. The senior leadership team is made up of a deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and two associate assistant headteachers.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

Lliswerry High School provides an inclusive, caring environment for pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds. Leaders at all levels are committed to supporting all pupils' wellbeing and progress in order to help them reach their potential. The school's support for pupils who have English as an additional language is particularly effective.

In the majority of cases, teachers use their detailed knowledge of individual pupils to plan engaging, demanding lessons that help pupils to make sound progress. A minority of teaching does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to further their knowledge, understanding and skills. The school does not have a strategic enough approach to the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum.

Leaders monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing carefully, and this has enabled them to make a positive impact on, for example, rates of attendance. Overall, leadership has not had a consistent enough impact on important aspects such as the quality of teaching and the standards pupils achieve.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards across the school
- R2 Strengthen the co-ordination of and provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills
- R3 Improve the effectiveness of teaching and assessment
- R4 Strengthen the precision and impact of improvement processes
- R5 Manage finances robustly to address the budget deficit

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

In lessons, the majority of pupils make sound progress in the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills. These pupils recall their prior learning appropriately and apply it to new contexts successfully. For example, pupils use their understanding of ratios to solve real life problems.

The majority of pupils make suitable contributions to class and group discussions and explain their ideas clearly, such as when they explore the impact that education has on mental health. A minority make only brief, underdeveloped responses and do not use a sufficiently wide vocabulary.

The technical accuracy of the majority of pupils' writing is secure. Around half write suitably in a range of formats, such as when explaining how to prevent the spread of microbes or describing different types of seismic waves. A minority show a clear awareness of purpose and audience, for example when writing a formal letter to the headteacher asking for changes to the school uniform or a speech to the American government petitioning for changes to the gun laws. In a minority of cases, pupils make frequent basic errors, and produce only brief, underdeveloped writing.

The majority of pupils read to extract information from a range of texts with suitable confidence, such as when examining the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental impact of fairtrade. A minority use inference and deduction usefully to enhance their understanding of characters and their actions in literary texts such as 'Heroes' and 'An Inspector Calls', and when reading about the British government's use of propaganda and censorship in World War 2. A few synthesise information well from historical sources when discussing the impact of hunger marches in Jarrow and the Rhondda Valley. However, a minority of pupils do not use a sufficient range of reading strategies to support their learning.

The basic number skills of the majority of pupils are sound. When given the opportunity, they apply these skills appropriately across the curriculum, for example when planning the budget for a trip abroad. A minority of pupils plot and interpret graphs successfully, such as when comparing the GDP and infant mortality rate in EU countries. However, in the majority of cases, pupils create graphs that are inaccurate and presented carelessly, and they do not interpret them.

Pupils develop their creativity appropriately across the curriculum. For example, they use digital photography to investigate forced perspective, and create a range of imaginative and original products in design technology. When given the opportunity, pupils use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills suitably across the curriculum, such as when they use spreadsheets to explore the key features of population growth.

The majority of pupils can construct basic sentences and short paragraphs in Welsh, and have a suitable understanding of tense. However, in general, pupils lack confidence in speaking Welsh. A minority of pupils gain a level 2 qualification in Welsh.

At key stage 4, the school's overall performance in 2016 and 2017 was positive, although performance across the various indicators was mixed in 2018. In 2019, performance in many indicators was well below expectations. Pupils eligible for free school meals did not perform as well their counterparts in similar schools. Many pupils achieve the skills challenge certificate at level 2.

In the sixth form, nearly all pupils organise their learning well. They demonstrate considerate and productive group work skills, teasing out problems and working with each other purposefully, for example when composing mission statements as part of the Skills Challenge. The majority have well-developed research skills, allowing them for example, to analyse in detail the care requirements of elderly people in health and social care. Outcomes in both A levels and vocational subjects were below expectations in 2017 and 2018. However, they improved in 2019 and saw pupils in general make good progress from the previous key stage.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Most pupils feel safe in school and believe that the school deals well with any issues they have. They are polite and courteous towards each other, staff and visitors to the school and arrive promptly to lessons, ready to learn. In class, many pupils maintain their concentration well and work diligently. They demonstrate tenacity and resilience when attempting demanding tasks. These pupils exhibit a genuine interest in their work and support each other's learning well when undertaking pair or group work. A few pupils lose their concentration too easily.

Many pupils have a positive attitude towards healthy lifestyles. The majority take regular exercise through participating in the broad range of sporting activities on offer at lunchtimes and after school, for example dance, dodgeball or basketball. Pupils also participate enthusiastically in a range of other extra-curricular activities such as textiles, photography and performing arts clubs, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

The school council includes a diverse range of pupils, including those with special educational needs. It has contributed beneficially towards, for example, the school behaviour and rewards policy. Many pupils develop well as ethical, informed citizens and are involved in raising money for different charities. For example, pupils collected plastic bottle tops to support a project to make available around 450 polio vaccinations for children in other countries.

In the sixth form, pupils are respectful towards one another and take a great deal of pride in their school. They appreciate the inclusive and diverse nature of the school and help promote its values through helping younger pupils, for example in maths and sports coaching, and providing valuable support for those who have English as an additional language. Almost all sixth form pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards their studies.

Pupils' attendance has shown an improving trend over the last three years and compares well to that in similar schools. In addition, rates of persistent absence are well below those in similar schools. However, the rate of fixed term exclusions is high.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

In the majority of cases, teaching is effective in developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. However, shortcomings in a minority of lessons limit the progress that pupils make.

In general, teachers develop strong working relationships with their pupils and know them well. In the majority of instances, teachers use their secure understanding of pupils' prior learning to plan sequences of activities that build well on each other and promote a brisk pace of learning. These tasks are supported successfully by carefully prepared resources. In these lessons, teachers provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge. They monitor progress closely and intervene swiftly to address any misconceptions.

In a minority of cases, teachers focus too much on the tasks they want pupils to complete rather than what they want them to learn. They do not provide an appropriate level of challenge for pupils of different abilities. They allow either too much or too little time for pupils to complete activities, and they do not monitor progress closely enough. This has a negative impact on the pace of learning. In these lessons, teachers do not use questioning well enough to involve all pupils or to develop their thinking.

Teachers provide pupils with useful verbal feedback in the majority of cases. A minority use 'close the gap' tasks effectively to help pupils improve their work. However, there is too much variation in how effectively feedback is used to support progress. In particular, many tasks involving peer or self-assessment are irrelevant and superficial, and have little or no impact on the quality of pupils' work.

The school provides a balanced and relevant curriculum that builds appropriately on pupils' experiences from previous key stages. At key stage 4 and in the sixth form, there is an appropriate range of academic and vocational courses.

The school adapts its curriculum suitably to meet the needs of individual and groups of pupils. This includes the recent introduction of a themed curriculum to support Year 7 pupils moving into their new school. The school also supports the progress and wellbeing of vulnerable pupils through strengthened provision with external partners to offer relevant learning experiences, as well as opportunities to gain formal qualifications. There is specific support for the most able pupils including a visit to Oxford University through the Seren network and participation in engineering and pharmacy taster days. The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outside the classroom such as a trip to Auschwitz to enhance their understanding of the Holocaust and theatre trips to support those following performing arts courses.

There are suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about Welsh history and culture across the curriculum, such as studying Welsh landscapes in art and considering the effects of tourism in Wales. The school also holds an Eisteddfod for Years 7 and 8, and a few pupils attend Welsh acquisition visits to Glan Llyn and Llangrannog. Opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their Welsh language skills outside of Welsh lessons are underdeveloped.

The majority of teachers provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to practise and consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills, and the school has been successful in encouraging more pupils to read for pleasure. However, there are limited opportunities for them to develop reading skills such as inference, deduction and synthesis, and too few relevant opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing for different purposes and audiences. A few subject areas offer pupils suitable opportunities to develop their ICT skills. However, overall, there is an insufficiently strategic approach to the planning, co-ordination and evaluation of provision to ensure pupils develop their skills progressively. There is appropriate support for those pupils with weaker literacy and numeracy skills.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Lliswerry High School is a caring community that promotes inclusivity and wellbeing successfully. It provides worthwhile support and guidance to pupils with special educational, emotional, health and social needs. It caters especially well for pupils who have English as an additional language.

The school gathers useful data systematically to track and monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of different groups of pupils. This has had a positive impact on rates of attendance. It also helps the school to identify pupils in need of support.

Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are a strength. The school identifies individual pupils' needs through effective transition processes that use a range of assessment information and include regular monitoring of progress. Individual education plans contain relevant targets and strategies to promote achievement and progress. The highly effective language acquisition department provides bespoke plans to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language access mainstream classes when appropriate and fulfil their potential.

The school collaborates well with a comprehensive range of external agencies to enhance curricular provision and to help develop the resilience of all pupils. This includes, for example, specific specialist support for LGBT pupils.

The school has recently revised its behaviour policy. The new policy fosters a positive culture around behaviour and has had a beneficial effect on most pupils' ability to manage their own behaviour and develop positive attitudes. Strategies to encourage pupils to recognise and take remedial action to improve their behaviour are at an early stage of development.

There are appropriate opportunities for pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make decisions about the life and work of the school. The highly inclusive school council is successful in allowing pupils to influence decision-making at a school level.

There are well planned transition arrangements and positive relationships with local primary schools to help Year 7 pupils settle well. For example, the school provides valuable opportunities for cluster primary schools to profit from staff expertise and equipment to deliver physical education lessons.

The school's personal and social education programme provides comprehensive experiences to help pupils understand the importance of their lifestyle choices on mental and physical wellbeing. It also develops their understanding of equality and diversity well. In addition, the school enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness appropriately, through worthwhile assemblies and 'Fairtrade Fortnight'. There are appropriate arrangements within the school to promote healthy eating and drinking. Activities in form time and physical education lessons support these arrangements well. The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupil involvement in the local community and in worldwide charitable fund raising. For example, pupils contribute to a local food bank and support the 'Show Racism the Red Card' campaign.

The school engages appropriately with parents through a variety of approaches. This includes a range of workshops on topics such as preparation for examinations and managing their children's use of social media. Parents receive informative reports commenting on pupil progress in subjects and attitudes to learning.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

The school has developed a suitable range of strategies to strengthen leadership at all levels. These approaches contribute beneficially to pupils' wellbeing and personal development. Over time, however, leadership has not had a sufficiently consistent impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and on improving pupils' skills.

The headteacher provides assured and reflective leadership. He articulates a clear vision for an inclusive and aspirational learning community that supports all pupils to realise their potential and prepares them well for their future lives. The headteacher has strengthened the capacity of the senior leadership team, for example by appointing two associate assistant headteachers and refining roles and responsibilities helpfully. This is helping to delegate leadership responsibilities more widely and is contributing to supporting developments in key areas of the school's work.

There are suitable line management arrangements. Fortnightly meetings between senior and middle leaders, as well as calendared team meetings address key school priorities appropriately. In particular, there is a clear focus on reviewing pupils' progress and wellbeing. Through these meetings, leaders support colleagues and monitor progress against improvement priorities appropriately. Meetings at all levels identify agreed actions, as well as relevant responsibilities and timescales. These approaches are contributing usefully to strengthening leadership at all levels. In a few instances, leaders do not manage their teams effectively and ensure suitable accountability. In addition, the role of a few middle leaders in supporting pupils' academic progress is at a very early stage of development.

Leaders carry out an appropriate range of evaluative activities. This gives them a generally sound understanding of the main strengths and areas for development in their area of responsibility. However, leaders often focus too much on compliance with school policies rather than evaluating clearly the impact that their provision has on pupils' progress. As a result, they do not always identify sufficiently precisely the areas for improvement in teaching and assessment.

The governing body provides valuable support and appropriate oversight of the school's work. Governors have a broad understanding of the school's performance and the quality of teaching and learning. However, they do not provide the school with a sufficient degree of challenge.

The school manages the performance of staff appropriately, ensuring personal objectives reflect the school's priorities. There are suitable arrangements to ensure that staff have relevant professional learning opportunities to support these objectives. This includes useful opportunities for staff to share good practice. However, the school does not evaluate these activities robustly. The school addresses underperformance suitably.

Spending decisions are linked clearly to the school's improvement priorities. They are determined collaboratively between the school's business manager, headteacher and governors. They use the budget, grants and local authority capital investment funding successfully to promote a well-resourced, engaging, learning environment. The school uses its resources, including the pupil development grant appropriately to support the wellbeing and attendance of vulnerable pupils.

The headteacher and business manager meet regularly with the local authority to monitor and amend plans to reduce the substantial budget deficit. The school has an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers as well as support staff to deliver the curriculum and to support pupils effectively.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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