



Report summary for parents and carers on Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School

Date of inspection: October 2022

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

Overview

Lewis Girls' School offers pupils a wide range of exciting learning experiences, both within and outside of the classroom. Many pupils really enjoy coming to school and are conscientious learners. Most behave very well in lessons and around the school and have well-developed social skills.

Most teachers foster positive working relationships with pupils and many plan their lessons well. As a result, pupils in these lessons make good progress in their subject knowledge and understanding, as well as in their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. However, pupils do not make as much progress in their ability to communicate in Welsh as they should. There is a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' well-being and the curriculum contributes well to pupils' ethical, social, and cultural awareness. There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to express their views in active pupil groups that have an extensive influence on school life.

Staff in Lewis Girls' School are caring and there is a strong sense of 'belonging' among pupils. The well-being team offer pupils useful guidance in order to help them understand how to keep themselves safe. Staff collaborate beneficially with a wide variety of outside agencies to support pupils and their families. However, pupils' attendance, especially of those eligible for free school meals, is lower than it was before the pandemic.

The school has robust arrangements to quality assure and seek feedback about its work. Leaders listen carefully to pupils' views and respond to them positively, making changes where appropriate. In addition, there is a comprehensive programme of professional learning for teaching staff. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate, innovate and share practice to support their professional practice and benefit from opportunities to work with partners outside of the school. These arrangements have helped secure improvements in teaching and learning, while contributing to a positive and caring learning environment.

The headteacher is passionate about the school and is supported ably by the rest of her senior leadership team. Together, they provide strong leadership and promote a positive vision for pupils underpinned by high expectations for their academic progress and well-being. However, the leadership of additional learning needs (ALN) is not structured well enough which doesn't maximise the potential in this area of the school's work.



Recommendations

- R1 Improve the provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills and their knowledge of Welsh culture
- R2 Strengthen the provision for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance, particularly for those eligible for free school meals
- R3 Revise the leadership of additional learning needs, so that it ensures a strong strategic direction and supports the full implementation of the ALNET act

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to broadening pupils' horizons and professional learning, for dissemination on Estyn's website.



School context

Name of provider	Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School
Local authority	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Number of pupils on roll	671
Pupils of statutory school age	572
Number in sixth form	99
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Secondary is 18.5%)	20.7%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Secondary is 23.0%)	12.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	1%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/10/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/11/2014
Start date of inspection	03/10/2022

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Publication date: 05/12/2022