



Report summary for parents and carers on Risca Community Comprehensive School

Date of inspection: September 2022

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

Overview

The headteacher and senior leaders provide supportive and compassionate leadership, which has helped to develop a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff. Leaders demonstrate clear commitment to the school community and staff and pupils feel valued, supported and respected.



The school has a wide range of strategies in place to support the well-being of all pupils, including those that have additional learning needs and those who require emotional support. Pupils who attend the Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) centre, make good progress in relation to their abilities and recognised needs. It is a supportive environment where pupils with profound needs develop a wide range of skills and an extremely positive attitude towards learning.



Overall, many pupils have positive attitudes to school life and feel safe. Many pupils behave well in school and a majority are enthusiastic to learn. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils do not listen attentively enough, are slow to settle to work and lack concentration to persevere with tasks. They make appropriate progress in lessons but there is too much inconsistency in how effectively teachers plan to promote strong progress. Overall, activities in these lessons do not provide enough challenge for pupils. The expectations of a minority of teachers are also not high enough in terms of behaviour.



In Key Stage 4, there is a wide range of interesting courses from which pupils can choose, considering pupils' aspirations and needs. There is a bespoke curriculum for vulnerable learners and a tailored curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils attending the ASC. There is a range of valuable extra-curricular experiences available for pupils to enrich their learning experiences further.

Leaders remained committed to supporting the well-being of pupils and staff throughout the pandemic and have a desire to secure improvements. Although leaders gather information about the school's work, evaluation and improvement processes are not precise enough. They have not had enough impact to drive the improvements needed in teaching, learning, provision for pupils' skills and attendance. Leaders do not have a clear enough strategic vision for improvement that is understood by all staff.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and a caring ethos towards all pupils. However, there are a number of health and safety issues concerning the school site.

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen self-evaluation processes so that leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the school's areas for development and can plan for improvement precisely
- R2 Improve the effectiveness of teaching to provide sufficient challenge and ensure progression
- R3 Develop cohesive provision for the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum, particularly their literacy and numeracy skills
- R4 Strengthen provision to improve pupils' attitudes to learning and attendance
- R5 Address the health and safety issues identified during the inspection

What happens next

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



School context

Name of provider	Risca Community Comprehensive School
Local authority	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Number of pupils on roll	657
Pupils of statutory school age	657
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%)	20.2%
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%)	19.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	8
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	1.7%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2009
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	18/03/2014
Start date of inspection	26/09/2022

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