



Report summary for parents and carers on Argoed High School

Date of inspection: September 2023

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

Overview

Ysgol Uwchradd Argoed is a close-knit and caring community. The inclusive and nurturing nature of the school ensures that most pupils feel safe, behave well and take pride in their school. The positive working relationships between pupils and staff, and the pastoral care the school provides for its pupils are notable strengths. Pupils know that there is a trusted adult to whom they can turn if they need support. As a result, most pupils have good levels of well-being and are developing well as considerate, well-rounded citizens who have positive attitudes to learning.

The school's curriculum is well planned and meets the needs and aspirations of nearly all pupils. Pupils at the learning resource base are well catered for and integrate successfully with the mainstream provision for substantial periods of the school day. Pupils with additional learning needs make sound progress. This is due to the considerable efforts of staff to ensure that these pupils are provided with the necessary support to succeed, though processes to record, track and monitor standards of well-being and provision for ALN are not currently robust.

The school is well led. The headteacher has a clear vision and is highly respected by the school community. He is ably supported by leaders at all levels. Leaders have a secure understanding of the school's general strengths and areas for improvement. They plan well for improvement, and this has led to improvements in important areas of the school's work, such as the quality of teaching, and pupils' behaviour and attendance. However, self-evaluation activities do not always focus closely enough on the impact of provision and therefore leaders do not have the detailed information necessary to plan for further improvement. There are clear lines of accountability and staff at all levels have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. The governing body offers strong support and suitable challenge to leaders. Together with the headteacher and business manager, governors manage resources effectively.

The school's professional learning offer is well planned and is having a positive impact on the practice of staff, particularly in terms of teaching practice. In many instances, teaching is effective in ensuring that pupils make secure progress in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders have established a strong culture for reading at the school. Many pupils have good literacy and digital skills with pupils developing these skills well in their English, and ICT lessons, though there are not enough high quality opportunities for pupils to develop these skills across the curriculum. The provision to develop pupils' numeracy skills is underdeveloped.

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen self-evaluation processes so that they always focus on the impact of provision
- R2 Improve the cross-curricular provision for the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital skills
- R3 Strengthen processes to track and monitor pupils' well-being and the quality of provision for ALN

What happens next

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



School context

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| Name of provider | Argoed High School |
| Local authority | Flintshire County Council |
| Language of the provider | English |
| Type of school | Secondary |
| Religious character | None |
| Number of pupils on roll | 504 |
| Pupils of statutory school age | 502 |
| Number in sixth form | No |
| 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 20.2%) | 17.5% |
| 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 17.8%) | 22.9% |
| Date of headteacher appointment | 01/09/2017 |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable) | 01/01/2016 |
| Start date of inspection | 25/09/2023 |

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