



# Report summary for parents and carers on Dylan Thomas Community School

**Date of inspection: February 2024**

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

# Overview

Staff at Dylan Thomas Community School offer pupils consistently high-quality care support and guidance. The school has an inclusive, family feel and there are strong working relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils understand the school's rules well, and behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good. Most pupils really enjoy coming to school and feel well-supported. Leaders ensure that all pupils, whatever their background have access to beneficial cultural and educational experiences.

Senior leaders are passionate about giving pupils the very best chances in life. They ensure that pupils receive beneficial opportunities to take part in a wide variety of cultural, sporting and academic experiences. A notable strength of the school is the way in which staff develop pupils' understanding of the Welsh language and Welsh culture. The school offers pupils a broad range of subject choices in Year 10 and Year 11. However, the school's work to develop its curriculum including ensuring continuity from Year 6 to Year 7 with its partner primary schools is in its infancy. Across the curriculum, staff do not ensure that pupils develop their literacy, particularly reading, and numeracy skills well enough.

In the majority of cases, teachers have suitably high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They plan engaging lessons that ensure pupils make secure progress. In a minority of cases, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils and plan lessons that keep them busy but do not ensure progress.

The school has two specialist teaching facilities (STFs), one for pupils with moderate and significant learning needs and a second for those who have autism. There is consistently high-quality teaching in the STFs. As a result, pupils in these facilities, make a great deal of progress in their social and academic skills.

Leaders at all levels carry out a wide range of self-evaluation activities. Planning for improvements in pupils' wellbeing has been successful. However, leaders do not evaluate the quality of teaching in light of its impact on pupils' progress closely enough. As a result, they do not have a precise enough understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching.

# Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures, ensuring that leaders evaluate the quality of teaching by its impact on learning
- R2 Address the shortcomings in teaching identified in this report
- R3 Improve planning for curricular continuity between Year 6 and Year 7 and the progressive development of literacy and numeracy skills across subjects

## What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will work with the local authority to review the school's progress. This is the lightest touch of follow-up, as it is not statutory.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to its innovative approach to developing pupils' understanding of the Welsh language and Welsh culture, for dissemination on Estyn's website.



# School context

Name of provider	Dylan Thomas Community School
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Number of pupils on roll	641
Pupils of statutory school age	641
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 21.2%)	51.5%
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 14.8%)	39.6%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.9%
Date of headteacher appointment	03/07/2023
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	07/04/2016
Start date of inspection	05/02/2024

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