



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Westbourne School
4 Hickman Road
Penarth
Vale of Glamorgan
CF64 2AJ**

Date of inspection: October 2012

by

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



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with section 163 of the Education Act 2002. The main purpose of inspection under this section is to report on compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003. In schools that provide non-maintained nursery education, this report also satisfies the requirements of Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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Context

Westbourne School is a co-educational independent school for pupils from three to 18 years of age. The school is situated in the town of Penarth in the Vale of Glamorgan. It was founded in 1895 and since 2006 the proprietor has been Montague Place Limited.

The school is organised into two sections. The junior school caters for nursery through to Year 5 pupils and the senior school for pupils in Year 6 through to Year 13. There are currently 154 pupils on roll, of whom 60% are boys. There are 61 pupils in the junior school and 93 in the senior school.

The majority of pupils live in Penarth, Cardiff and the surrounding areas of South Wales. Increasingly, the school is attracting students from around the world as a result of its International Baccalaureate Organisation World School status.

About 20% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Around 15% of pupils receive support in learning English as an additional language. Two pupils have a statement of special education needs and a further 7% of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. Lessons are taught in English. The school does not aim to make pupils bilingual in English and Welsh.

The school has a mixed-ability intake. New pupils may join the school at any stage depending on the availability of spaces. Prior to entry, prospective pupils usually spend two days visiting the school and are assessed on their literacy and numeracy skills. Almost all pupils in the junior school transfer to the senior school. The school requires pupils who wish to join the sixth form to have five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C or to have successfully completed the school's own pre-International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme course.

Over the past four years, the school has implemented several significant changes. These include the introduction of a sixth form, the expansion of the senior school site and accreditation by the International Baccalaureate Organisation to deliver its Diploma Programme.

The school describes its principal aim as: 'Academic excellence in a global society.'

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The current performance of Westbourne School is good because:

- pupils of all ages and abilities make particularly good progress during their time at the school;
- overall performance in public examinations at key stage 4 and post-16 is high;
- teachers know their pupils well, have high expectations of them and monitor their progress carefully;
- pupils behave exceptionally well and exhibit a high level of respect for fellow pupils and staff, which enables them to make best use of learning opportunities;
- older pupils make an outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of younger pupils, especially as role models in the sixth form;
- particularly strong partnerships with parents impact positively on pupils' standards and wellbeing; and
- the school's strong community, sense of purpose and inclusive ethos underpin all aspects of school life and contribute significantly to raising the aspirations and improving outcomes of all pupils.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher, senior staff and the proprietor provide the school with clear strategic direction;
- staff use the school's tracking system effectively to challenge pupils to produce work of the highest quality of which they are capable and monitor their progress towards improvement closely, dealing with any issues of concern rapidly;
- the proprietor knows the school very well and challenges the school robustly to bring about improvement; and
- the school has a strong track record of implementing significant changes successfully to improve provision and benefit pupils' standards and wellbeing.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

The quality of education provided by the school

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Although the school meets most/almost all of the regulatory requirements for this standard, in order to comply fully with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- have regard to any National Assembly guidance on health and safety responsibilities and powers of schools by providing emergency lighting. [3(4)]

The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The provision of information

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Recommendations

- R1 take steps to comply fully with the regulations for registration;
- R2 improve the quality of teaching and assessment by promoting best practice more widely;
- R3 improve opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum;
- R4 strengthen the co-ordination of skills within the curriculum, to include planning for appropriate progression from the junior school to the senior school; and
- R5 further develop self-evaluation procedures, in particular to take greater account of first-hand evidence from lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work.

What happens next?

Since the inspection report notes that the school does not meet one or more of the standards required for registration, the National Assembly for Wales will require the proprietor to submit an action plan within a specified period of time. This plan must set out the steps that the school will take to meet the standards and the timescale within which it will complete each step.

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what action the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents at the school.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Across the school, pupils have a wide range of abilities. Overall, they make very good progress by the time they leave school at the end of key stage 4 or the sixth form. Many pupils make particularly good progress relative to their prior attainment.

Standards in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are good overall. In 2011, based on teacher-assessed tests linked to National Curriculum levels, all pupils in the junior school achieved the expected levels at the end of key stage 1 (level 2) and key stage 2 (level 4). Pupils' attainment in a range of standardised tests show that over time almost all pupils make fairly rapid progress in English, reading and mathematics. Those pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress over time.

At key stage 4, pupils' performance in GCSE examinations is high when compared with national averages. In 2011, almost 90% of Year 11 pupils attained the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics and the core subject indicator. Over the last three years nearly all pupils attained the level 2 threshold with almost 40% of all GCSE entries awarded the highest A*/A grades. These are strong outcomes.

At post-16, the overall pass rate in the International Baccalaureate Diploma has improved steadily over the last three years. In 2011, the pass rate was above the worldwide pass rate and the average points per pupil was almost 2.5 points above the average points score worldwide.

Over the past three years, no pupils have left school without a qualification and at the end of the sixth form almost all pupils have moved on to higher education.

Across the school, there are no significant differences between the relative performance of boys and girls. Pupils with additional learning needs and particularly those learning English as an additional language make good progress.

In both the junior and senior schools, pupils progress well in nearly all lessons. They build successfully on their previous learning to further develop their knowledge, understanding and a wide range of skills.

In the junior school, pupils achieve good and sometimes very good standards in their literacy skills. Pupils speak with confidence and present their ideas clearly. They listen well to each other and respond positively when working in small groups or pairs. Pupils' writing skills develop appropriately through the junior school. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils write well for a range of purposes, using a form of presentation and language appropriate to the task. They have good understanding of basic punctuation and grammar, although too often they lack confidence in attempting spellings for themselves and rely too heavily on the teacher to provide them with the correct information. Generally, pupils read fluently by the end of key

stage 2. They are able to analyse a range of text types, locate facts from text and come to their own conclusions.

Across the senior school, generally pupils develop their literacy skills well. They listen attentively and make effective oral contributions in lessons. Almost all pupils speak confidently and use appropriate technical terms in different subjects to describe their work. Most pupils write thoughtfully for a range of purposes. They take care with presentation and write well-structured extended passages. However, too often pupils of all ability levels make careless errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

As pupils progress through the school, they develop strong numeracy and thinking skills, which they apply to good effect in new and unfamiliar contexts to support their learning. They eagerly seek information to understand new concepts and how they can improve their work.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Pupils demonstrate a high level of health and wellbeing. Most have an excellent understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in maintaining good health. This is true of even the youngest pupils in the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe and confident in the school's environment. In all phases of the school, pupils work extremely well together.

Pupils behave exceptionally well, both in classes and around the school. They have a well-developed sense of respect for fellow pupils and adults. This contributes to a strong climate of mutual support and a particularly effective learning environment. Pupils respond very well to the school's useful system of rewards and sanctions.

Pupils in all sections of the school successfully fund-raise for local and world-wide charities and older pupils are involved in a wide range of community activities. For example, the majority of pupils in the senior school take part in community service for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. All sixth form students participate in an extensive range of community activities in and beyond the school as part of the International Baccalaureate Diploma.

Older pupils make an outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of younger pupils in the school. For example, sixth form students mentor younger pupils, as well as organising extra-curricular activities and providing reading support for them. This contribution, together with the example set through the consistently high-level skills and study habits that sixth form students display, has a particularly positive impact on the attitudes and progress of pupils throughout the school.

Attendance, at about 95% over the past three years in both the junior school and the senior school, is high. There have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The curriculum in both the junior and the senior schools meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. Pupils benefit from a

wide range of well-planned learning experiences and a well-balanced curriculum. The small class sizes allow learning to be tailored successfully to individual needs. For example, there is considerable flexibility in providing modern foreign language GCSE courses, such as Russian and Arabic, for more able pupils.

Learning experiences ensure that pupils of all abilities are able to engage successfully and attain high standards. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their communication and numeracy skills and provision for sixth form students to develop their skills is very strong. However, in key stage 1 through to key stage 4, co-ordination of provision for the development and progression of skills, particularly pupils' information and communication technology skills, is under-developed.

The curriculum is supported effectively through a range of valuable educational visits, which extends pupils' learning well. The school offers a successful extra-curricular programme, which includes language, musical, sporting and creative activities, and there is a high take-up by pupils.

Pupils have a strong awareness of global citizenship and sustainability. For example, the school has obtained the bronze and silver Eco-Schools' Awards and pupils regularly support projects in developing countries.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching in many lessons across the school is good or better. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and establish constructive professional relationships with pupils that foster productive learning.

In most lessons when teaching is good, the high expectations and effective use of well-planned activities challenge pupils of all levels of ability to extend their learning. In a few lessons where teaching is particularly effective, the questioning and wide range of stimulating activities challenge pupils to think for themselves, to experiment with different ideas and solutions and to reason and offer explanations for their answers. In these classes, pupils develop a depth and breadth of understanding, make rapid progress and achieve very high standards. However, in a small minority of classes the slow pace and lack of challenge result in pupils not making enough progress.

Teachers know their pupils extremely well and monitor their progress carefully. All teachers make effective use of the school's tracking system to monitor and report on progress in class work and homework on a monthly basis. Pupils in the senior school understand how this system is linked to all aspects of their work and, together with their subject and pastoral staff, use the reports well to set realistic targets for improvement. Staff monitor pupils' progress closely and deal promptly with any issues of concern. This system contributes effectively to pupils' high standards of attainment.

Teachers mark books regularly and most provide helpful comments on how pupils can improve. Generally, pupils follow-up actions for improvement. However, across the school there is too much variation in how teachers correct errors in spelling,

punctuation and grammar. As a result, standards of these aspects of pupils' work are not consistent enough.

Reports to parents are clear and provide helpful information about their child's progress and how they can improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a high level of support and guidance for pupils. The effective pastoral support system and the open culture of the school encourage pupils and parents to raise any issue of concern with confidence that the school will deal with these issues quickly.

The school's personal and social education programme, form tutor periods and assemblies make a sound contribution to the spiritual and moral ethos of the school and the social and cultural development of pupils. These arrangements encourage pupils to take a responsible and active role in the life of the school and foster values of honesty, fairness and respect.

The school has comprehensive arrangements for managing the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Staff are well informed of these arrangements through the regularly updated staff handbook. The cohesive arrangements for specialist external support as well as for careers education ensure that the school meets the needs of individual and different groups of pupils well.

Teachers show a high level of care towards pupils and provide effective individual support to challenge them systematically to produce work of the highest quality. For example, the school's induction and transition arrangements and monthly grade tracker system involve staff, pupils and parents working together to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils.

The school provides appropriate support for pupils who have additional learning needs. This includes very good support for pupils new to the school who learn English as an additional language. This support helps these pupils to make rapid progress.

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

Learning environment: Good

As an International Baccalaureate Organisation World School, the school promotes the ethos of inclusivity very effectively. All pupils are treated as individuals and there is a strong emphasis on recognising and celebrating diversity, which is supported well in programmes of study. The school draws on the knowledge and experiences of the international pupils in its community particularly well to support other pupils' learning about different cultures, faiths and traditions.

The school is a supportive environment where there is a strong sense of mutual respect between pupils and staff. All pupils have equal access to all areas of the school's provision.

The recently built reception area and school hall enhance the learning environment and impact positively on pupils' learning experiences. Classrooms generally have sufficient resources to support effective learning. The school makes particularly good use of local sports facilities to support both the formal curriculum and extra-curricular activities. However, in a small minority of teaching rooms the lack of space and limited access to information and communication technology equipment restricts the range of activities pupils can undertake.

Throughout the school, wall displays support pupils' learning effectively. The grounds are free of litter and the outside space, although not extensive, is used well.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The headteacher and senior staff provide effective leadership. They work well together as a team. The school's senior leaders and other staff have a shared vision based on providing high-quality education and a supportive learning environment. As a result, pupils achieve high standards and have excellent levels of wellbeing.

The headteacher, senior staff and the proprietor provide the school with clear strategic direction. Over the past three years, they have successfully led the school through significant changes, including establishing a sixth form and introducing the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. Throughout this period, they have communicated well with staff, pupils and parents to maintain the strong family and community ethos of the school.

Over the last year, the leadership team has been extended and roles and responsibilities revised to reflect the curriculum changes and the addition of the sixth form. These revised leadership responsibilities have improved the monitoring of pupil progress and the sixth form has quickly developed as a strong part of the school with consistently good outcomes.

Staff have detailed job descriptions, understand their roles and responsibilities well and receive clear direction from line managers. There are regular team meetings at which an appropriate balance of discussion about improving teaching and learning and day-to-day issues takes place.

Staff and senior leaders within the different sections of the school work together effectively. The close liaison between the academic and pastoral teams about progress in class, completion of homework, behaviour and support needs contributes significantly to pupils' achievement and wellbeing.

The proprietor provides effective support to the headteacher. The proprietor plays an active part in monitoring outcomes and in challenging the school to improve. The proprietor also provides extensive business management support to the school to help bring about improvements.

The school complies with almost all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Improving quality: Good

Since the school's last inspection, the headteacher, senior leaders and the proprietor have implemented successfully a range of initiatives that have improved outcomes and enhanced provision. As well as establishing a sixth form, these improvements include the introduction of baseline assessment from key stage 1 through to key stage 3; and a consistently used tracking system that has enabled staff to plan effectively to meet pupils' individual needs.

The school has appropriate procedures for evaluating its work. Senior staff analyse data well to track and monitor performance at individual pupil level and to identify any significant trends within subjects. Leaders take good account of the views of staff, pupils and parents. The school uses a range of evidence on which to base its evaluation of the quality of teaching and the standards pupils achieve. However, this process does not always draw well enough on first-hand evidence, such as lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work.

Leaders and managers identify suitable priorities for improvement that link well to the outcomes of self-evaluation. Staff have received useful training to help them achieve targets within the school improvement plan. The current improvement plan sets out a range of actions that the school will carry out over the course of the year but does not include enough detail about how progress will be monitored or success measured.

Staff teaching the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme are particularly well supported by opportunities for continual professional development. For example, many have taken part in international seminars, which has improved their practice and the outcomes for pupils.

All staff are involved regularly in peer observations. This has helped them to reflect on their own practice and share ideas well with colleagues. The headteacher has established effective links with other schools and these arrangements have improved moderation procedures within the junior school.

The school has made appropriate progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a wide range of partners. These partnerships impact positively on pupils' wellbeing and provide valuable educational opportunities. They also help the school to build its capacity for continuous improvement.

There are particularly strong partnerships with parents who feel that they are well informed about developments and can easily approach the school with any questions or concerns.

The close working relationship with the sister schools of the Montague Place Limited community has led to a number of benefits for the school. These include opportunities to share good practice, collaborative planning and resourcing arrangements. The success of this partnership is most evident in the standards and teaching in the junior school.

Over the past three years, a significant development for the senior school has been membership of the International Baccalaureate Organisation. As a result, staff have access to high-quality teacher networks and pupils have attended world student conferences. The standards attained in the sixth form in particular are evidence of the beneficial impact of this partnership.

Where appropriate, the school liaises effectively with local service providers in order to meet the learning and support needs of pupils. The school also works effectively with other agencies, such as Careers Wales and the local police, to provide pupils with valuable additional support and wider opportunities.

Resource management: Good

The school has an appropriate number of staff who are deployed effectively to make good use of their specialist skills and expertise. The internal and external accommodation is largely suitable and there are generally sufficient learning resources.

The proprietor and headteacher have a good knowledge of current and future resource needs. The school's spending decisions and financial planning link appropriately to identified areas for improvement. For example, the considerable investment made to train staff to deliver the International Baccalaureate Diploma has benefited pupils' standards of wellbeing and helped to improve outcomes.

The school makes effective use of its resources to provide good outcomes for pupils and provides value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

There is no commentary on the pupil questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Responses to discussions with learners

During the inspection discussions took place separately with a group of learners from each key stage and the sixth form.

Overall, the learners gave a positive response to nearly all questions asked.

All pupils agree that they feel safe in school. They believe that incidents of bullying or aggression are very rare and that if they occur that this is usually resolved very effectively.

All pupils feel that they are doing well and agree that staff help them to learn and make good progress. They believe that staff respect them and their backgrounds and they know who to ask for help when they need it.

Nearly all pupils agree that pupils behave well, the school encourages them to be healthy and they have enough resources for their work.

Most senior school pupils agree that they are encouraged to take responsibility and are helped to be ready for their next stage of learning. They feel that the school takes account of their views, although key stage 4 learners feel less well consulted.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Estyn received 20 responses to the parent questionnaire, which represents just over 10% of the total number of parents.

Of the parents that responded, most gave a positive or very positive response to many questions.

All parents consider that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. They state that their children were helped to settle in well when they started at the school and that staff expect them to work hard and do their best.

Nearly all parents are satisfied with the school and feel that their children make good progress. They believe that their children like school, that they feel safe in school and that the school's pupils behave well.

Many parents feel that the school is well run, that teaching is good and that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. They say that homework reinforces learning and that they are well informed about their child's progress.

Nearly all parents consider that their children are well prepared for moving on to the next school or college or work. Most parents believe that their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular need

Nearly all parents feel comfortable about approaching the school to discuss matters about their child's education and wellbeing and most parents understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Nearly all parents agree that their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise. Many parents consider that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including trips or visits.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Denise Wade	Reporting Inspector
Liz Miles	Team Inspector
Sue Haliwell	Team Inspector
Eleanor Davies	Team Inspector
Lesley Turner	Peer Inspector
Paul Scudamore	Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003: 3 and 5
Kenneth Underhill	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms

Core subject indicator (CSI)	This relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
Level 1	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.
Level 1 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.
Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh first language and mathematics	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics
Level 2 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This represents a volume of learning equivalent to two A levels at grade A* to E.
Average wider points score	This includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age, for example at aged 16 or at aged 18.
Capped wider points score	This includes the best eight results from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at aged 16.
Proprietor	The term 'proprietor', as defined in the Education Act 1996, means the person or people responsible for managing an independent school and can include a sole proprietor, governing bodies, trustees or directors. The ways that independent schools are governed and owned varies a great deal. A proprietor or trust may own a school or the school may have a governing body that appoints a headteacher. Some schools have a combination of these.