



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Report following monitoring  
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**Ysgol Emrys Ap Iwan  
Faenol Avenue  
Abergele  
Conwy  
LL22 7HE**

**Date of visit: March 2017**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Jayne Edwards	Reporting Inspector
Tony Sparks	Team Inspector
Pamela McClean	Local authority representative

## Outcome of monitoring

Ysgol Emrys Ap Iwan is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2013.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is increasing the level of follow-up activity.

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about 12 months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

## Progress since the last inspection

### Recommendation 1: Improve standards in key stage 4

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

Since 2013, performance in key indicators has fluctuated. Performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics and the capped points score has been below modelled outcomes for the last two years. In 2016, the school's performance is well below that of similar schools in almost all indicators.

In 2016, performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics improved following a dip in 2015. However, the school remains in the bottom 25% of similar schools for the second consecutive year. Since the time of the core inspection, performance in the capped points score has fluctuated and now places the school in the bottom 25% of similar schools following one year of placing it in the upper 50%. Performance in the level 2 threshold fell significantly in 2016 due in part to a sharp decline in science. This decline places the school in the bottom 25% of similar schools. Performance in the level 1 threshold declined slightly in 2016, placing the school in the upper 50% of similar schools following three consecutive years of placing it in the top 25%.

In 2016, performance in English improved and is now higher than it was at the time of the core inspection. This improvement places the school in the lower 50% of similar schools having placed it in the bottom 25% in the previous year. Following a steady decline in mathematics, performance improved slightly in 2016 but remains lower than at the time of the core inspection, and places the school in the bottom 25% of similar schools.

Since 2013, the performance of both boys and girls has fluctuated. However, in 2016 the performance of both boys and girls is below the averages for boys and girls in similar schools in almost all indicators.

In 2016, the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals improved considerably in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics and in English. These pupils performed better than the average for pupils in similar schools in these indicators.

In 2016, many pupils made less progress than expected from previous key stages. However, the school continues to ensure that no pupil leaves Year 11 without a recognised qualification.

### **Recommendation 2: Improve literacy and numeracy skills, particularly writing**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has introduced a range of beneficial approaches to improve the standards of pupils' literacy skills. These have led to steady improvements in literacy skills at both key stages. Recently, the school has taken suitable measures to improve the standard of numeracy skills, particularly for pupils who require additional support. However, these measures have not had enough impact on standards, particularly at key stage 4.

The school has developed a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to undertake interesting and worthwhile extended writing tasks across the curriculum. This helps pupils of all abilities to develop extended responses to a range of texts. The school has recently introduced a number of appropriate whole-school initiatives to engage key stage 3 pupils with strategies to improve and practise their numeracy skills. A majority of key stage 3 pupils respond positively to the increased focus on literacy and numeracy and are able to show how they use their skills suitably in appropriate contexts across the curriculum.

Carefully targeted interventions support pupils with weaker literacy and numeracy skills well. This helps these pupils to make suitable progress. More able pupils have useful opportunities to engage in appropriate enrichment experiences, for example through links with a local university, but the proportion of pupils achieving five A\*-A at key stage 4 has declined steadily since 2013.

The school monitors the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills suitably through an appropriate range of methods, including test scores, literacy specific work scrutiny and feedback from completion of literacy and numeracy tasks in lessons. However, lesson observations do not focus sufficiently on the progress that pupils make in literacy and numeracy.

### **Recommendation 3: Improve the quality of teaching**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has extended its staff development programme to improve the quality of teaching. This includes appropriate training for teaching assistants in the school. The programme provides a useful framework for professional dialogue, the sharing of best practice and consistent approaches to lesson planning. However, this has not had sufficient impact on outcomes, particularly at key stage 4.

The school has extended its schedule of lesson observations to include middle leaders in useful shared observations with senior leaders. As a result, the consistency of judgements about the quality of teaching is beginning to improve. However, a majority of lesson observation records do not focus sufficiently on pupil progress or on the improvement priorities in the school's self-evaluation report.

The school is beginning to develop a suitable overview of strengths and shortcomings in teaching. However, a minority of lesson observation records do not identify how teachers can improve precisely enough.

The school has focused appropriately on improving the quality of written feedback from teachers and of pupil response. Teachers have a clear knowledge of pupils' progress and understanding.

#### **Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of middle leadership**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has provided useful training opportunities and coaching to support the development of middle leadership. The quality of middle leadership overall is better than at the time of the inspection. However, although this has contributed to improved attendance for all pupils, it has not led to enough improvement in pupil outcomes, particularly at key stage 4.

The school has introduced a more consistent approach to line management meetings including a clearer focus upon the standards that pupils achieve. While this makes middle leaders more accountable, many of the actions from these meetings are not precise or robust enough. This contributes to the pace of improvement not being timely enough.

Many middle leaders have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities and those of their teams. They make generally appropriate use of pupil performance data when reviewing examination outcomes. However, a majority of middle leaders do not evaluate the impact of teaching on standards well enough.

Since the core inspection, the school has introduced suitable performance management systems and generally dealt with any underperformance appropriately. However, a majority of performance management targets relating to pupil progress are not sufficiently precise.

#### **Recommendation 5: Improve the use of the outcomes of self-evaluation in departmental planning for improvement**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the core inspection, the school has introduced a more systematic approach to self-evaluation and improvement planning. This has contributed suitably to improvements in the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals. However, it has not had enough impact on raising pupil outcomes overall, particularly at key stage 4.

The improved self-evaluation processes include an annual departmental review of examination performance, consideration of pupils' views and a clearly understood schedule of lesson observations and work scrutiny. Generally, this provides a solid basis for improvement planning at departmental level. However, a majority of lesson observations and work scrutiny do not focus well enough on pupils' learning, the progress they make and the progressive development of their skills. As a result, around half of curriculum leaders' evaluation of teaching and assessment is not sufficiently comprehensive. This makes the precise identification of strengths and areas for development more difficult.

Departmental improvement plans reflect whole-school priorities well and many link suitably with their self-evaluation. Senior leaders now have useful opportunities to quality assure these plans, although a minority of the actions designed to bring about the improvements required are frequently not precise or robust enough.

### **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.