



Ysgol Gyfun

Porthcawl

Comprehensive School



INSPECTION REPORT

Highlights 2020

www.porthcawlschool.co.uk

Headteacher's Introduction to the Inspection Report 2020



The governors, headteacher, staff, and pupils of Porthcawl Comprehensive School are delighted to share with you the publication of a very positive report from our Estyn Inspection of Spring 2020.

We are proud that the inspection team said that Porthcawl Comprehensive School "is a caring community that supports pupils successfully to become ethical and informed citizens.

The senior leadership team provides strong strategic direction for the school. Overall, leaders know their school well and set ambitious aims for their pupils.

Staff know their pupils very well and use this information effectively to provide timely support and guidance. In many cases, teachers plan appropriately and deliver engaging lessons. Strong support from staff has contributed well to positive outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 4.

Pupils are able to participate in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. A wide range of pupil-led groups provides exceptional opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills.

The school's comprehensive provision for health, wellbeing, social and moral development is enhanced effectively by contributions from a wide range of partners. Pupils are also given valuable opportunities to shape the school's curriculum and enrichment programme. Combined with the school's provision for personal development, this work supports high levels of wellbeing."



Highlights

As a school we have assembled this brochure to share with you the success of our Inspection 2020. A copy of the full report may be obtained from:

- **The School**
- **The Estyn website** www.estyn.gov.uk
- **The School website** www.porthcawlschool.co.uk

This brochure contains excerpts taken from the **Estyn Inspection Report** on Porthcawl Comprehensive School.

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The Inspection

During each inspection, inspectors aim to make judgements on 5 inspection areas:

1. **Standards**, including progress overall, progress of specific groups and standards and progress in skills.
2. **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning.**
3. **Teaching and learning**, including quality of teaching, breadth and balance of curriculum and provision for skills.
4. **Care, support and guidance**, including tracking, monitoring and provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding.
5. **Leadership and management**, including quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, self-evaluation, professional learning and use of resources.



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

The Judgements

Excellent

Very strong, sustained performance and practice.

Good

Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement.

Adequate and needs improvement

Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement.

Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

Important weaknesses outweigh strengths.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Leadership and management	Good





1. Standards: *Good*

- Pupils make strong progress in many lessons in their knowledge, understanding and skills. They recall prior learning well and apply their knowledge securely to new and unfamiliar situations.
- When given the opportunity, many pupils respond clearly, fluently and with confidence to questions posed by teachers. They show a strong grasp of subject terms.
- The majority of pupils extend their answers well when asked probing questions by teachers. Many listen well to teachers and their peers.
- Most pupils extract information from texts successfully. Many use a suitable range of strategies to read for meaning or locate specific facts. Many infer deeper meaning well when analysing the writer's intention and a minority make detailed and comprehensive observations about the texts that they read. They explain their interpretations and identify nuance highly effectively.
- Most express their ideas clearly and write well for a wide range of purposes.
- Many pupils apply their algebraic skills accurately, for example when exploring straight line graphs. Across the curriculum, many pupils apply basic number skills effectively to calculate in suitable contexts.
- In general pupils construct a range of graphs suitably across the curriculum.
- Many pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills well.
- Many pupils develop their physical skills effectively.
- They develop their creativity well.
- Many pupils are able to pronounce Welsh correctly. They apply their knowledge of the language independently to write suitable descriptive paragraphs about their local area.
- In 2018 and 2019, outcomes were stronger and above or well above expectations in most indicators. The performance of pupils eligible for free school meals compares well to that of their counterparts in similar schools in 2019.
- The average wider points score has improved well in 2019 and is now higher than in similar schools after being below in the previous two years.





2. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: *Good*

- Most pupils feel safe around the school and that the school deals well with incidents of bullying. Nearly all pupils are courteous and respectful towards their peers, teachers and other adults.
- Most pupils arrive punctually to lessons and settle well to their learning. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Most have a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards their learning. They participate well in group and paired work. Many pupils work conscientiously on their own.
- Most pupils are aware of how to make healthy lifestyle choices and how these contribute to their physical and mental wellbeing. Many pupils take advantage of the beneficial range of sport and fitness activities.
- High proportions of pupils participate enthusiastically in community and arts activities.
- Many pupils develop their leadership skills well through participation in the broad range of opportunities for them to make a difference to the life and work of the school.
- They have a strong understanding of how their particular responsibilities make a contribution to the school.
- Most pupils are aware of the importance of being ethically, informed citizens.





3. Teaching and learning experiences: *Good*

- The school offers a wide range of subject choices that meet the needs, aspirations and interests of pupils well.
- The school provides an extensive range of trips and visits to enhance pupils' learning.
- Worthwhile collaboration with the local college enables the school to broaden its offer at key stage 5.
- The school provides pupils with beneficial opportunities to consider their future careers.
- As part of its work in preparation for the Curriculum for Wales, teachers are developing imaginative approaches to planning pupils' learning.
- Nearly all teachers have strong subject knowledge. They manage classroom behaviour well. Most know their pupils very well and many establish strong and productive working relationships with them.
- Staff have developed effective partnerships with colleagues in primary schools to ensure that teachers' planning builds coherently from key stage 2 to key stage 3.
- In nearly all lessons, teachers offer pupils useful verbal feedback and guidance. These help pupils to improve their work.
- Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Welsh culture suitably.
- The school provides useful opportunities to develop pupils' ICT skills across many areas of the key stage 3 curriculum.
- There is a useful detailed policy to support departments in their work to develop pupils' literacy skills. Subject areas have identified suitable opportunities for developing literacy in worthwhile contexts. There are beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills within many subjects at key stage 4, including effective use of exam questions to develop pupils' ability to respond successfully to extended questions.
- There are beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.



4. Care, support and guidance: *Excellent*

- The school has strong arrangements to promote pupils' personal development. It has a clear rationale for provision that focuses on ensuring that pupils are happy, settled and developing as responsible, confident and independent young people.
- Staff plan carefully how curriculum provision, extra-curricular activities and pupil leadership opportunities support pupils' health, wellbeing and their personal development. Staff involve pupils very well in the development of this provision.
- The school provides valuable curriculum opportunities to help pupils make healthy lifestyle choices in its key stage 3 'Health and Wellbeing Curriculum' and personal and social education programme in key stage 4. This is well supported by the comprehensive training of staff in related aspects by specialist organisations. Most pupils are enthusiastic participants in the weekly wellbeing walk, physical education lessons and extracurricular sports. The school offers pupils an interesting and varied range of physical activities.
- The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.
- The health and wellbeing curriculum, personal and social education programmes, religious education lessons, assemblies and registration period provision are comprehensive. They are well planned to support pupils' personal, spiritual, and moral development and their cultural knowledge and understanding.
- There are valuable opportunities for pupils to participate in the arts and develop as creative and confident individuals.
- Older pupils receive valuable careers advice and guidance and support for making choices and decisions about their next stage of learning. The school works well with the local college and Careers Wales to provide appropriate specialist advice and plan the next steps for pupils with special educational needs.
- Leaders offer pupils valuable opportunities to express their views and to influence the school's work. There is a very wide range of leadership groups.
- A particular strength is the way that the school ensures that pupils are prepared for their role.
- Further, the anti-bullying ambassadors received external training and subsequently provided training for all staff at the school.
- The school's systematic tracking of pupils' progress in learning and wellbeing enables staff to identify and respond promptly to underperformance and any concerns. Valuable systems for mentoring pupils provide purposeful support alongside successful interventions for individuals and groups of pupils. The pastoral team, student support centre staff and partnerships with a wide range of external agencies provide extensive support for pupils to promote their health and wellbeing. These arrangements have a positive impact on outcomes, attitudes to learning and attendance.
- There are effective arrangements to support pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and other vulnerable groups. Pupils are supported effectively when moving from primary school through frequent visits and the 'helping hands' programme. Staff use a range of information well to identify the needs of pupils, to set targets and to identify and implement strategies to support learners who require additional support. The learning support team provide all members of staff with a detailed and useful description of pupils' individual needs through 'one-page profiles' and individual development plans. These include beneficial strategies to help staff support pupils' progress in lessons. Pupils, parents and professionals review these strategies regularly to support pupils learning, and their emotional and social needs effectively.
- The school communicates appropriately with parents and provides useful opportunities for parents to develop their understanding of how to support their children, for example during valuable information evenings at each transition stage.



5. Leadership and management: *Good*



- The headteacher has a clear strategic vision for the school. He communicates this well to staff, pupils and parents in the school's mission statement, 'to provide a caring and disciplined learning environment based on mutual respect in which all pupils develop their talents to the full'. The headteacher's strong and decisive leadership over the past seven years has ensured high standards of pupil achievement, behaviour and wellbeing. The headteacher is ably supported by two deputy headteachers. They work together well to provide a clear direction for the school and a healthy, safe and secure environment that ensures the wellbeing of pupils and staff. They set high expectations for themselves, staff and pupils.
- Senior leaders ensure that the work of the school contributes to key areas in the national priorities, such as developing approaches to the Curriculum for Wales.
- As a group, pastoral and academic leaders are very supportive of the senior leadership team. Many understand their roles well and their responsibility to improve teaching and standards.
- The school has established clear and robust line management arrangements. There are regular and effective meetings to monitor and evaluate the school's progress on delivering its strategic priorities.
- Governors are well informed of the school's performance and support the headteacher and SLT well in delivering the school's strategic priorities. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Processes for self-evaluation are well-established and comprehensive. The school ensures that all stakeholders, including parents and pupils, contribute their views to self-evaluation.
- Middle leaders evaluate the progress of pupils regularly. As a result, faculties know their pupils well, and staff are able to intervene to support individual pupils towards achieving their learning goals.
- There are clear links between self-evaluation processes and improvement planning. Overall, senior leaders identify clear and useful areas for development.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for the professional learning of staff. These include helpful whole school training days, opportunities to attend external training and events, visits to other schools and productive working groups of teachers.
- The governors, business manager and senior leaders manage the school's finances effectively.
- The school makes effective use of grant funding to support pupils and to improve teaching and learning.



A caring and disciplined learning environment based on mutual respect in which all pupils develop their talents to the full.



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