



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

A report on

Ysgol Panteg

**Station Road
Griffithstown
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 5JH**

Date of inspection: September 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Panteg

Name of provider	Ysgol Panteg
Local authority	Torfaen County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	408
Pupils of statutory school age	310
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	47
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	27.0%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	18.7%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	2.5%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	31/05/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	25/09/2023
This school is a lead school for initial teacher education.	

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Ysgol Panteg is a familial, inclusive and homely community where the 'Panteg Four' values to commit to being kind, to being a co-supportive family, to being fired up and ambitious is prominent in the school's activity. Staff promote the importance of good behaviour, courtesy and respect successfully. There is a caring sense and ethos towards all pupils. Staff create an exceptionally warm and safe learning environment where pupils feel that they are valued.

Since being appointed, the headteacher has established rigorous processes across the school to ensure consistency in teaching and learning, which has had a positive effect on pupils' skills. There are detailed systems in place to track the educational progress and well-being of all pupils, and staff provide a wide range of purposeful support to meet pupils' needs.

Across the school, pupils develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills robustly. They listen attentively to adults and their peers and discuss their work confidently by using Welsh phrases that derive from the school's detailed grammar scheme. However, there are not always given purposeful enough opportunities to expand their skills to the best of their ability.

Staff work together highly effectively to meet pupils' needs. They are good language models and encourage pupils to take pride in their Welshness. However, at times, staff over-direct learning, which hinders pupils' ability to develop as independent learners.

A notable aspect of the school's work is the way in which leaders communicate effectively with parents and carers to ensure the involvement of the whole community in pupils' education. Leaders are also passionate about staff's professional development and ensure purposeful opportunities for them to receive further training.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure regular opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility for their learning and develop to become independent learners
- R2 Ensure an appropriate level of challenge to support pupils to expand their skills to the best of their ability

What happens next

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

Main findings

Learning

During their time at the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who are eligible for free school meals, make good progress in their skills from their starting points.

Across the school, most pupils listen well to each other and adults. The youngest pupils follow simple instructions and respond purposefully to questions, for example when making fossils from salt. By Year 2, they use natural Welsh syntax successfully when presenting weather forecasts for the whole of Wales. Many pupils at the top of the school respond maturely to the views of others in both languages and listen respectfully to each other's oral presentations.

Many pupils' reading skills are developing well. The youngest pupils are beginning to use an appropriate range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words. By Year 2, many pupils use their reading skills with increasing confidence, for example when following instructions on how to find ingredients to bake gingerbread characters. Many of the older pupils read with increasing accuracy in Welsh. Most read intelligently in various contexts in English. They use intonation and expression when reading aloud. The school's older pupils also develop their higher-order reading skills appropriately to gather and collate information in both languages from various sources.

Most of the youngest pupils' early writing skills are developing successfully. They begin to form letters and match sounds and letters from an early stage. In Year 2, they begin to write in an appropriate range of contexts for different audiences, which include developing a storyboard while planning a scientific investigation on the process of making chocolate. By Years 5 and 6, many have an increasing understanding of grammar, which includes the correct use of verbs and mutations. Most pupils develop their extended writing skills successfully in a range of genres, which include writing an interesting historic report on the Great Pyramid of Giza.

Many pupils develop number skills soundly across the school. The youngest pupils begin to identify numbers and use their numeracy skills in different contexts, for example by counting conkers to create a visual graph and by using non-standard measurements to estimate confidently how much liquid there is in bottles of mouthwash. By Year 2, they develop a good range of mathematics skills and make sound progress, for example when measuring ingredients and comparing the temperature in Wales and China. As pupils move through the school, they build on their skills beneficially; for example, many in Year 3 use their number skills effectively when experimenting with yeast to bake bread. By the end of their time at the school, many pupils develop a beneficial range of mathematical skills soundly, for example by calculating the missing angles in a variety of 2D shapes and by solving the missing numbers in algebra. However, they are not always given purposeful enough opportunities to stretch their skills to the best of their ability.

Most pupils develop their digital skills appropriately for different purposes. The youngest pupils, for example, use a variety of programs confidently to enrich their

learning effectively. They control a programmable toy to link countries with their flags as part of their theme work and their coding skills are beginning to develop. By the end of their time at the school, they apply their digital skills to a suitable standard across the curriculum, for example by using their coding skills to develop a game to guess the animals for pupils in the reception class. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of spreadsheets.

Many pupils show positive attitudes to physical activities. They enjoy physical education sessions and apply themselves purposefully to developing their skills. For example, Year 1 pupils improve their fitness by taking part in a sports number treasure hunt and are able to explain confidently why the heart rate increases during physical exercise.

Many pupils' creative skills develop soundly and there are valuable experiences for them to create artwork and music. For example, Year 4 pupils use their understanding of line and tone to create skilful pictures that express the story of 'Goodnight Mister Tom'.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils feel safe within the school's caring and inclusive community. They are confident that staff listen and respond promptly when they have concerns or need support. Most show pride in their school and the 'Panteg Four' values have been embedded. As a result, pupils are able to speak confidently about the importance of being kind, ambitious, fired up and the importance of family. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's expectations in terms of behaviour; therefore, nearly all pupils are polite and courteous towards staff and visitors.

Most pupils are very aware of how to access the school's innovative provision to promote their own well-being. Comprehensive programmes support pupils and put them in a more positive place to learn. Across the school, most pupils develop robust emotional resilience through opportunities to discuss their feelings, which develops their confidence and self-image successfully.

Most pupils participate enthusiastically in a variety of physical activities and enjoy accessing fitness equipment during break time, which is accessible to all pupils. This has a positive effect on most pupils' fitness and well-being and they are aware of the need to make healthy choices at school, such as eating fruit and drinking water.

Through their awareness of the values that are promoted, most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of moral and knowledgeable citizenship. They have a strong sense of fairness and equality and have created a Panteg rights charter to ensure equal opportunities for all. Older pupils develop the ability and willingness to share and express an opinion on subjects such as 'being a citizen of my country' and show empathy towards people that are in need.

Most members of groups are proud of their roles and take their duties seriously. Representatives work enthusiastically on a variety of activities and make a valuable contribution to the school's life and work. For example, the school council has helped to establish 'Caban y Coed' to develop outdoor learning activities at the school. Meanwhile, the eco council has established an eco-house where they recycle school

uniform. As a result, pupils are aware of the importance of promoting sustainability effectively within the school community.

Through the work of the pupils who are digital leaders, most pupils have a sound awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe online. A good example is the way in which these leaders have created a series of online safety rules for pupils about the importance of keeping personal details private, online bullying and digital footprints.

Many pupils develop positive attitudes to learning from their first period at the school and show an interest in their learning. They listen well to presentations and work effectively as individuals, in pairs and in small groups. For example, when building a shelter from the Second World War on the school's playing field, pupils work together enthusiastically and enjoy sharing ideas with their peers when problem-solving.

Most pupils respond appropriately to staff feedback within lessons and, as a result, have a sound understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. In the best practice, pupils take time out when evaluating their success criteria and set targets for the next step in their learning.

Across the school, many pupils are beginning to develop as skilled and creative contributors. For example, when taking part in 'Pasbort i Bobman' ('Passport to Everywhere') activities, pupils in the reception class learn how to wash dishes and make a sandwich, while the school's older pupils learn about budgets and how to write an application letter. As a result, pupils begin to engage with new experiences and ideas in practical ways and many pupils develop effective life skills. However, across the school, during lessons in which teachers provide too much support and guidance, pupils can lose interest and do not develop their independent learning skills effectively enough.

Teaching and learning experiences

Leaders have a clear vision for providing a broad, rich and balanced curriculum for pupils, which is embedded skilfully in learning activities. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to contribute their ideas towards their learning, which often leads to exciting activities to engage their interest.

Staff have developed and implemented a 'Clwb Clebran' literacy scheme to enrich pupils' oral and written skills highly effectively. Staff present familiar gestures skilfully to pupils, and then encourage them to use them in different contexts across the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils develop philosophical questions and express their views maturely on the over-use of technology in their day-to-day lives.

Visitors are invited to the school regularly to enrich pupils' experiences. For example, an actor from a local theatre company came to take part in a question-and-answer session about the novel 'Goodnight Mister Tom'. This increases pupils' commitment to their work, reinforces their theme work and gives them good ownership of their learning.

Provision for personal and social education develops pupils' understanding of their well-being and their identity successfully. For example, Year 6 pupils apply their

numeracy and problem-solving skills to plan a scientific investigation to discover the effects of smoking on the body and share their findings effectively in the form of a digital presentation.

Most teachers manage their classrooms effectively, promote good behaviour and encourage pupils' engagement. The classes have outdoor areas that are accessible to pupils. However, teachers do not always make purposeful use of the areas to enrich pupils' experiences and encourage their independence and creativity.

Teachers plan lessons appropriately and ensure that activities are interesting and respond appropriately to the range of ability within the classes. They work together effectively to improve teaching and learning by planning and tailoring experiences that build on pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills as they move through the school. However, across the school, there is a tendency for staff to over-direct learning, and the over-use of worksheets hinders pupils' progress in becoming independent and achieving to the best of their ability.

Across the school, assistants support learning effectively and there is an excellent working relationship between staff and pupils. They treat all pupils equally and promote diversity well. This contributes beautifully to the sense of family that flows throughout the school community and provides them with a supportive learning environment.

Teachers and teaching assistants are strong language models for pupils. They encourage pupils to use and refine their language regularly in a variety of daily activities. For example, they provide purposeful tasks during registration periods to address common grammatical errors in pupils' work. This, in turn, makes a positive contribution towards improving the quality of their written skills in both languages across the areas of learning.

Teachers use probing questioning techniques regularly to confirm the knowledge and understanding of many pupils. They ensure that their lessons have a brisk pace, which leads to appropriate commitment among pupils. Assessment for learning strategies are sound across the school. Teachers present clear educational aims and success criteria effectively for lessons. In the best practice, they provide a useful pause for pupils to review their progress. Across the school, teachers provide pupils with valuable and constructive written feedback. As a result, this provides them with clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

The school has detailed procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in the areas of learning as they move through the school. Leaders analyse pupils' performance thoroughly and this information is used effectively to provide robust interventions. As a result, teachers use information that derives from assessments well to plan the next steps in learning.

Care, support and guidance

Teachers and assistants work together purposefully to promote and develop pupils' well-being. They place a high priority on ensuring that they address the needs of each pupil. There are robust and highly effectively arrangements to support the emotional, health and social needs of nearly all pupils. Staff forge a solid relationship

with pupils, which promotes beneficial attitudes towards their well-being and has a very positive effect on the behaviour of nearly all pupils. For example, pupils are able to report any concerns on a daily basis and staff respond to them in a timely manner. There are mindfulness sessions for pupils to equip them to use calming strategies in the classroom.

There is highly effective provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). The ALN team has rigorous processes to identify and support pupils' educational and well-being needs. Staff are completely clear about the internal processes for supporting pupils, in addition to how to receive more support, where necessary. A notable example of these processes is the way in which the diagnostic team meets on a monthly basis to discuss the needs of pupils and staff referrals. Following the meetings, they provide advice for support staff and refer pupil to specific interventions. As a result of planning provision skilfully, pupils receive support that meets their needs successfully.

Staff have thorough arrangements for tracking the progress of pupils with ALN, which relate to their targets in their individual development plans and their progress from their starting points. As a result, most pupils who need additional support with their learning or well-being make good progress. The ALN co-ordinators work effectively in partnership with the learning assistants, other schools and external agencies to provide effective support for learners. The school has been diligent in addressing the requirements of ALN reform. Staff communicate purposefully with staff and carers regarding ALN arrangements, for example by providing families with further assistance on how to support pupils with dyslexia.

Provision promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development successfully. Arrangements for collective worship provide suitable opportunities to support pupils to learn about issues relating to various beliefs, in addition to reflecting on fundamental questions following the 'Llonyddwch Llun' meditation. Staff help pupils to understand and promote children's rights locally and to begin to understand the needs of others as members of a diverse world.

Staff provide purposeful opportunities that encourage pupils to participate in the creative arts to nurture their expressive ability successfully. A good example of this is the way in which pupils have weekly music lessons and by providing opportunities to take part in the school's performance of 'The Wizard of Oz'. The school develops pupils' understanding of their identity, heritage and culture in an increasingly suitable way through studies in the local area and by promoting Welshness by listening to Welsh music.

Staff promote the importance of healthy eating and encourage physical fitness through a range of activities, which include swimming, fitness lessons and clubs. The playing fields and the park allow staff to organise and provide a range of activities that contribute well to pupils' well-being and enjoyment in physical education activities and during break times. Provision also promotes pupils' understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices and the importance of keeping fit effectively.

There are suitable opportunities for pupils to participate in decisions, for example through their school councils and by expressing their views effectively about what they would like to learn within their class themes.

Staff promote a culture of safeguarding effectively and the arrangements are not a cause for concern. The procedure for reporting concerns about pupil safeguarding is robust and staff make timely referrals to external agencies, where appropriate. The school has rigorous processes for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Leadership and management

The inspirational headteacher leads the school extremely effectively and has succeeded in creating and establishing a clear vision, which has been shared with the whole school community. The basis of the vision is to ensure the best in terms of education and well-being for all pupils at the school. Leaders and staff work together successfully to make this a reality. The school is a happy, familial and friendly community.

The standard of communication by the school is a strong feature and has a positive effect on educational standards and the commitment of parents to the school. The headteacher's regular 'blog' helps parents to keep track of events within the school and suggests healthy activities for pupils and adults. Parents receive valuable information about the school's work, including written reports that provide comprehensive information about their children's progress, together with useful targets for improvement. The views of parents are important to the school and a strong partnership has been established, which helps the school community to flourish.

Staff and governors work and communicate with each other effectively. The headteacher has high expectations for himself, pupils and staff. Leaders have developed an effective team of staff who are completely committed to the school's values and to promoting the well-being of pupils and staff. They are completely clear about their roles and responsibilities. Leaders strengthen the school's leadership by creating deputies for key roles to ensure that succession is managed well and provides valuable professional development for staff.

The headteacher manages the school's finances carefully with the experienced support of the governing body. There is a clear plan in place to ensure that expenditure supports the school's strategic objectives. A good example of earmarking expenditure is the provision of intervention sessions for pupils with emotional and social needs, and holding literacy support sessions for pupils. The pupil development grant is used appropriately to provide support programmes for pupils and to ensure that all pupils attend specific school trips. As a result, pupils are able to take advantage of beneficial educational opportunities that have a positive influence on their standards and well-being.

Governors are proud of the school and know it well. They support the school effectively and fulfil their roles conscientiously. They have an understanding of national priorities and implement their responsibilities to ensure that pupils learn about healthy eating and drinking appropriately.

The school has robust and comprehensive self-evaluation processes. Leaders and staff work effectively with governors by undertaking a variety of appropriate monitoring and evaluation activities. They have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Actions for improvement are identified

clearly and refined through an effective process of engaging with a good range of stakeholders, including pupils. A clear timetable sets out the responsibilities of all members of staff and monitoring reports are analysed in detail to ensure that standards improve continuously.

Leaders have created a positive culture and ethos to promote and support the professional learning of all staff. They provide rich opportunities for them to undertake a good range of professional learning, which responds robustly to their individual requirements and the school's priorities. Good examples of the training provided are trauma training to support pupils with emotional and social difficulties. The school is a lead school for initial teacher education. Staff are supported effectively to improve their teaching skills and achieve their career aspirations; for example, assistants training to become senior assistants or staff training to become teachers. Arrangements for managing staff performance are clear and comprehensive and they have purposeful targets and effective monitoring procedures in place to monitor progress.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body/members of the management committee through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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