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13th November 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

Estyn Interim Visit - October 2024

As explained in a previous letter, a team of inspectors from Estyn attended Porthcawl Comprehensive School to complete an 'Interim Visit' in October 2024.

Between 2024-2030, all schools in Wales will receive a 'Core Inspection' and an 'Interim Visit'. Interim visits are part of Estyn's new inspection framework and were introduced from September 2024. The purpose of an interim visit is to support a school with their self-evaluation and improvement plans. Interim Visits are not intended to draw overall conclusions about the effectiveness of a school, they are carried out to support leaders to review progress since the last core inspection and to consider their next steps for improvement.

The following links provide further details about the 'Interim Visit' completed at Porthcawl Comprehensive School:

[Core inspections and interim visits - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

[Inspection explained \(parents and carers\) - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

Following our last Core Inspection (February 2020) we received three recommendations and during this Interim Visit (October 2024) Estyn looked at the improvement work we have completed to date for two of our three recommendations. The following statements were made by Estyn.

Recommendation 3: Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement planning so that processes focus consistently on the impact of teaching and learning.

Following the Interim Visit in October 2024 Estyn state:

"During the visit, we heard about the substantial amount of work undertaken by senior leaders to revise the processes for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. There is now a stronger focus in this work on learning and teaching. Teachers are supported to improve their practice with a helpful professional learning offer. This includes useful support material for developing teaching. The 'Porthcawl Pedagogical Principles' provides a beneficial framework for evaluation and is helping teachers to develop a shared understanding of the school's strategic approach to teaching and learning".

"Senior leaders are providing middle leaders with helpful support and guidance to involve them more fully in self-evaluation. Middle leaders value this collegiate approach to improvement across the school. They are clearer about how the work in their areas of responsibility supports whole-school priorities".

Recommendation1: Reduce the variation in the quality of teaching and assessment, in particular with regard to the development of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum.

Following the Interim Visit in October 2024 Estyn state:

“Senior leaders are considering their approaches to developing teaching and assessment to align helpfully with their ambitions to develop a ‘Curriculum for Porthcawl’. They have collaborated with staff to develop a set of pedagogical principles, which aim to improve consistency and create a culture of high-quality teaching and learning”.

“A newly appointed team of teaching and learning champions are working alongside middle leaders to further improve the quality of teaching and learning. The champions have focused suitably on delivering professional learning in line with the school’s pedagogical principles. They have also developed useful resources, such as the teaching and learning toolkit, to support teachers in developing their practice”.

“Leaders support departments helpfully to provide pupils with opportunities to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. The school has focused on developing a reading culture. For example, staff and pupil literacy leads are working well together to promote the benefits of reading for pleasure”.

Following an Interim Visit, Estyn identify helpful points for a school to consider as they continue their improvement work. Further information about this, and further details about our Interim Visit can be accessed via the published link on the Estyn website: [Interim visit letter Porthcawl Comprehensive School 2024](#).

Many thanks for your continued support.

Cofion cynnes / Kind regards,

M. Stephens

Headteacher/Pennaeth