



Report summary for parents and carers on Ysgol Hen Felin

Date of inspection: December 2023

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

Overview

Ysgol Hen Felin is a happy school where pupils feel safe and secure. Staff develop highly effective relationships with pupils, based on a strong understanding of their individual needs. A strong safeguarding culture underpins all aspects of the school's work.

Nearly all pupils make strong progress towards their individual targets during their time at the school. Nearly all pupils make positive progress in developing their communication, digital and physical skills. They gain relevant accreditation or qualifications and progress to appropriate placements when they leave the school. Nearly all pupils demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes to their learning.

Pupils are at the heart of school life. They are involved in important decision making, but also make decisions about their school experiences throughout the school day. For example, the well-established pupil voice groups, such as the 'criw cymraeg', provide pupils with beneficial opportunities to influence the work of the school.

A notable strength of the school is the wide range of internal interventions to support pupil well-being and skills development, for example, through links with communication specialists, physiotherapy, behaviour and well-being teams.

Staff use information gathered through multidisciplinary working effectively to plan relevant learning experiences which engage pupils successfully. The curriculum offer is broad and meets the needs of pupils well as they move through the school. Moving from developing key communication skills, to participating in work experience placements in the community.

The school learning environment is bright, welcoming and well-maintained. For example, outdoor play areas have a range of resources which support pupils to develop their social, communication and physical skills successfully. However, over time, the number of pupils at the school has increased and a few classes are crowded.

Leaders have established highly effective monitoring processes to oversee the work of the school. They have developed a dedicated team of staff, who collaborate successfully to move the school forward. Nearly all staff have a strong understanding of their role and participate meaningfully in school self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Recommendations

- R1 Work with the local authority to ensure that learning environments within the school can accommodate the number and needs of the pupils effectively**

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the work of the well-being centre and the distributed leadership approach, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

School context

Name of provider	Ysgol Hen Felin
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Maintained Special
Number of pupils on roll	233
Pupils of statutory school age	198
Number in nursery classes	7
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Maintained Special is 46.8%)	57.2%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Maintained Special is 100.0%)	100.0%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.86%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	02/02/2015
Start date of inspection	11/12/2023

Ysgol Hen Felin is a day, community special school situated in of Rhondda Cynon Taf. It provides for 233 pupils aged from 3 to 19, nearly all with statements of special educational needs, individual development plans (IDPs) or equivalent. Pupils' needs include, severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) or visual impairment (VI).

Pupils are taught in 22 classes. There are 22 full time teachers and 75 learning support assistants.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2018.

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