



## Whitchurch High School School Self-evaluation Report 2022 - 2023



<b>Standards</b>	
<p>How effective are standards at Key Stage 4?</p>	<p><b>Key Stage 4</b> 2023 examination outcomes should lie between 2019 and 2022 based on national outcomes and have therefore been considered with this in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes at 5A*-A remain strong and outperformed the 3-year average 2017-19 which was itself high and all results in the last 5 years.</li> <li>• Outcomes at Level 2+ remain strong and outperformed the 3-year average 2017-19 which was itself reasonably high and sat just below 2022 outcomes and above 2019 outcomes.</li> <li>• Outcomes at Level 2 remain fairly strong and are sitting between 2019 and 2022 outcomes, although nearer to 2019. They are slightly below the 2017-19 average.</li> <li>• Outcomes at Level 1 are not as strong as elsewhere and remain below pre- and mid-covid outcomes although are comparable with 2022.</li> <li>• The Capped 9 Points Score (C9) outcomes are above 2019 and comparable with 2021 and 2022. The average learner grade in the last five years as indicated by C9 has been C in all five years.</li> </ul>
<p>How effective are standards at Key Stage 5</p>	<p><b>A Level</b> 2023 examination outcomes should lie between 2019 and 2022 based on national outcomes and have therefore been considered with this in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes at A*/A remain strong and have outperformed the 3-year averages pre-covid. This indicator also sits between 2019 and 2022 outcomes.</li> <li>• Outcomes at A*/B remain fairly strong and have outperformed the 3-year averages pre-covid. This indicator also sits between 2019 and 2022 outcomes.</li> <li>• Outcomes at A*/C have outperformed the 3-year average pre-covid but fall slightly below (0.6%) 2019 outcomes.</li> <li>• Outcomes at A*/E are below the 3-year average pre-covid and below 2019 outcomes.</li> <li>• An ALPS 1-year T score of 2 indicates an overall strength of outcomes.</li> </ul> <p><b>AS Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes at A remain fairly strong and have outperformed the 3-year average pre-covid. This indicator also sits between 2019 and 2022 outcomes.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes at A/B remain fairly strong and have outperformed 3-year average pre-covid. This indicator also sits between 2019 and 2022 outcomes.</li> <li>• Outcomes at A/C remain fairly strong and have outperformed the 3-year average pre-covid. This indicator also sits between 2019 and 2022 outcomes.</li> <li>• Outcomes at A/E are slightly below the 3-year average pre-covid. This indicator is marginally lower than pre-covid outcomes.</li> <li>• ALPS 1 year T score of 3 confirms the overall strength of outcomes although we must be mindful of scores of 4 in the Red Teaching and Quality indicators.</li> </ul>
<p>How do standards of different groups of learners compare?</p>	<p><b>Key Stage 4</b> <b>Disadvantaged/Non-disadvantaged</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners has increased significantly between 2018 and 2023. At 5A*/A outcomes for disadvantaged learners declined dramatically when CAGs (2020) and CDGs (2021) were applied. The 2022 outcomes – though slightly improved - remained much lower than for learners who are not eligible for free school meals. In 2023 outcomes fell again.</li> <li>• The trend for disadvantaged learner outcomes at Level 2+ is more volatile over the 5-year period from 2019-23 with outcomes in 2023 below that of 2019 and this achievement gap remains a significant concern.</li> <li>• At Level 2 and Level 1 there has been a steady decline in outcomes for disadvantaged learners over this period with outcomes in 2023 again below 2019.</li> <li>• C9 for disadvantaged learners has also fallen since 2019.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gender</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls’ outcomes have seen a slight improvement in some indicators (5A*/A, L1, English and Science L2) compared to 2022 and the C9 Score sits between 2019 and 2022. Boys’ outcomes have seen a slight decline on 2022 (except for L2+) but again the C9 Score sits between 2019 and 2022. This suggests that boys performance at this level needs improvement but the turbulence of the last few years must not be ignored and boys performance sits much higher than in 2019 in almost all indicators.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Stage 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys’ outcomes are significantly below girls in the majority of indicators at both AS and A2 level; a trend not mirrored nationally. This may have been partly a product of a more flexible entry policy adopted in light of the impact of covid.</li> </ul>

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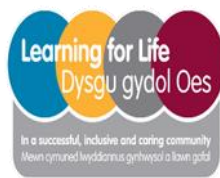


<p>How do standards of different faculty areas compare?</p>	<p><b>GCSE</b> Using ALPs scores as our benchmark guide, the following is noteworthy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of subjects achieved an ALPS score of 3 or more. A few subjects registered an ALPs score of 5 or lower. These were: Electronics (5); Media Studies (5); Welsh (5); Psychology (5) and Sociology (5).</li> <li>• In terms of residual scores, Digital Technology (-10) scores very low and does cause concern. Other concerns exist with residuals in Media (-2.2); German (-4.7); Sociology (-2.1); Psychology (-6.2); Electronics (-2) and Computer Science (-4).</li> </ul> <p><b>AS Level</b> Using ALPs scores as our benchmark guide, the following is noteworthy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minority of AS subjects achieved a subject score of 3 or higher (Art Photography; PE; German; RS and History achieved a score of 2).</li> <li>• A few AS subjects achieved a score below 5: Economics (7); Criminology (6); Sociology (6); Geology (8) and Welsh* (7).</li> <li>• In terms of residuals: Economics registered a notably lower score.</li> </ul> <p><b>A Level</b> Using ALPs scores as our benchmark guide, the following is noteworthy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over half of A Level subjects achieved a subject score of 3 or higher (Art Photography*, Further Maths* and German* scored a 1).</li> <li>• Five subjects scored below a 6: Media* (7); ICT (7); Welsh* (7); Electronics (9) and Criminology (8). Physics, Skills Challenge, Economics and English Language &amp; Literature scored a 6.</li> <li>• In terms of residuals Physics, Welsh*, Electronics, ICT and English Language &amp; Literature register notably lower scores.</li> </ul> <p>*very low learner numbers.</p>
	<p><b>Areas for Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that learners across the ability spectrum – especially those at Level 1 - have access to and achieve suitable qualifications.</li> <li>• To ensure that learners receive the most accurate guidance and support in choosing Key Stage 4 options and that fewer of these learners fail to achieve at least a GCSE equivalent grade in their chosen subjects.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that learners across the ability range, particularly those targeting C grades and below achieve these target grades.</li> <li>• To ensure support programmes (including mentoring) are focused on improving outcomes for those targeted to achieve C grade and below.</li> <li>• To ensure appropriate and robust levels of support for disadvantaged learners in order to afford them the best possible opportunity of attaining outcomes commensurate with their ability.</li> <li>• To ensure appropriate guidance and support is in place to address the gender gap at AS and A2 Level through mentoring and support programmes focused on underachieving boys.</li> <li>• To ensure that Technologies subjects raise standards such as to improve comparative learner outcomes.</li> <li>• To ensure that Social and Economic Studies subjects in particular raise standards such as to improve comparative learner outcomes at post-16.</li> <li>• To ensure that outcomes in Electronics and Geology improve.</li> </ul>	
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<b>Well-being, equity and inclusion?</b>	
<p>How well do we promote good physical and mental health? How well do we develop healthy attitudes and behaviours?</p>	<p>The school is developing a restorative approach to dealing with instances of behaviour to further enhance learner and teacher relationships. Thus, supporting the whole school behaviour policy. A whole school inset has taken place on restorative approaches, and this is an area of continuous development and monitoring.</p> <p>The wellbeing support across the school is comprehensive and effective. The Progress and Wellbeing Teams interact effectively in order to identify learners in need of interventionist support and actions are implemented appropriately with learners directed towards the support package most appropriate to their needs. The programme of interventions available – along with key partnership work with outside agencies – benefits several hundred learners annually. There are over 20 different means of support available which allows for flexibility and guided responsiveness according to need. The wellbeing officer for years 10 to 13 is the school link to the Schools in Reach Team and regular prioritisation meetings are held with relevant professionals to ensure individual needs of vulnerable learners are met across the school.</p> <p>In respect of Skodel, we have now received 22, 627 responses to our surveys. The increase since last year has been largely from year 7 to 9 learners. When we first ran Skodel our wellbeing score was measured at -19%. This was well short of the Global Index score which is set at 10%. This low score was recorded in the early days of lockdown. Our well-being score now sits comfortably at 22.9% thus suggesting notable improvement. Our school population is broken down into the following scores: 12% of those that answered the surveys answering negatively; 53% answered fairly neutrally and 35% answered positively. Our top three positive drivers are Happy, Motivated and Grateful. Our top three negative drivers are Angry, Sad and Worried. Learners who select negative drivers frequently do not actually back it up with anything to follow up on.</p> <p>In respect of our support for Young Carers, we have now been awarded “Beyond the Basics”. The next award is the final step.</p> <p>High numbers of learner involvement in learner voice activities as well as associated evidence of actions undertaken as a result of these activities suggests a positive ethos of engagement and participation developed by the school and accessed by our learners. Most learners are involved in a wide range of such activities, allowing them to make valuable contributions to the life of the school and the wider community, including recruitment of senior positions,</p>

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reviewing teaching and learning and helping to formulate the school's curriculum vision via 'Alex'. All learners are able to participate in surveys to inform faculty reviews, as well as a sample being involved in focus groups to make recommendations on teaching and learning in curriculum areas. Learners are routinely involved in providing feedback to internal review processes. The school engages with the SHRN survey and outcomes from this are used to develop the curriculum across the school to further enhance the health and wellbeing of all learners.

'Elevate' mentoring for Key Stage 4 learners was established in 21/22 and this continued in 22/23 with our year 10 learners being mentored by our year 12 learners, representing a further embedding into the life of the school.

A broad programme of extra-curricular activities (sport/drama/music etc) accessed by high numbers of learners is also an indicator of how well we develop healthy attitudes and behaviours. Two school productions took place in 22/23 (one whole school and one involving years 7 to 9) and a range of musical concerts also took place. The school has a successful link to Cardiff Blues academy for example in the sixth form and learners go on to representative levels in a wide range of sports. High levels of participation in school sports indicates that positive messages relating to physical wellbeing are being effectively promoted across the school.

Most learners, therefore, have a thorough understanding of how to keep healthy by eating well and taking part regularly in physical exercise. This is reinforced by our Food and Nutrition curriculum in years 7 to 9. Our Wellbeing and Reflection sessions also reinforce these key messages.

Care, support and guidance is well coordinated and contributes successfully to learner wellbeing. These include health and wellbeing support, including encouraging active involvement in sporting activities in both curricular and extra-curricular time.

Learner spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed. All learners participate in Wellbeing and Reflection sessions exploring these issues throughout the academic year. The Relationships Wellbeing and Health curriculum has developed to further promote these sessions. Material delivered in these sessions has been developed in response to outcomes from surveys with both teaching colleague and learners.

The school is a very happy and caring environment where learners are happy and feel safe. There is respect between most learners and staff and most learners and learners. Respect for people from all backgrounds is expected and the school challenges stereotyping in all aspects of its work.

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The school is currently at the scoping stage of the Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing process (WSAEMW) which has involved all stakeholders. The school is working closely with the implementation lead from Heathy Schools in order to complete the school evaluation tool (SET).

The usual proxy indicators for this area of school life continue to be skewed in the post-covid environment. Whole school attendance is nearly 5% lower than pre-covid rates and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners is too high at nearly 9% with the gap particularly concerning in Year 11. Fixed Term Exclusions have remained broadly in line with 21-22 figures but are still higher than pre-covid levels. This, coupled with increasing numbers of learners being referred into our ACE provision (RTL from September 23), indicates that high level behavioural issues became more prevalent in 21/22 than was the case in 18/19 and that this trend has continued into 22/23. It is also a concern that disadvantaged learners are statistically over-represented in FTE figures. We are pleased to note that the average length of exclusion has reduced still further which indicates the success of our ACE and restorative provision. Permanent exclusions remain low with only 2 being issued in this academic year. Unfortunately, there is no benchmark data available so comparisons are internal only.

	<b>22/23</b>	<b>21/22</b>	<b>18/19</b>
<b>Number of exclusions</b>	168	174	108
<b>Number of days lost to exclusion</b>	209.5	207	200
<b>Average length of exclusion</b>	1.25	1.18	1.85
<b>Number of learners excluded</b>	68	66	60
<b>Exclusions per 1000 learners</b>	68	72	46

How effective is our approach to equity and inclusion?

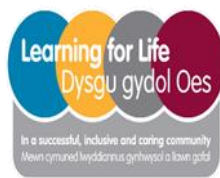
Provision and outcomes in Ty Calon are of the very highest quality. Learners with Severe and Complex Learning Difficulties are properly and fully catered for and are included as far as is possible in the life of the school.

Learners with learning deficits in the mainstream have access to successful support interventions and/or are taught in our Boost Group which affords them more individualised access to their teachers and Teaching Assistants. The original premise for establishing the Boost Group, though, has drifted over time and it is now our view that these learners would be better served outside that group and with full access to all other support systems in the school.

Teaching Assistants are effectively deployed across the school to ensure that learners with ALN are properly supported whilst being encouraged to develop as independent learners.

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The recent introduction of a support hub for pupils with ALN in Upper School has been a positive development.

All learners have equality of access to curriculum opportunities. Extra-curricular activities which are gender and age appropriate are fully available to all.

Our Bespoke Curriculum has allowed targeted learners to access a curriculum which most effectively serves their needs. The previous success of this initiative has allowed mainstream Key Stage 4 classes to be more settled also. However, it has become increasingly evident that this is a hugely expensive resource which benefits only a small number of learners.

There has been strong progress regarding the implementation of the ALN Act across the whole school.

- All governors and teaching staff have been given a presentation regarding the implementation of the ALN Act.
- The school's website is fully up to date with advice for learners and parents relating to the ALN Act.
- The school's Pedagogy forum group have trialled practices linked to the ALN bill under the guise of universal provision.
- IDPs are in place for relevant learners in year 10, 11 and year 7 who were on the SEN register at School Action +.

In terms of Ty Calon

- 45 learners from Ty Calon were enrolled on D of E in September 2022. 20 achieved Bronze Awards and 25 learners are on target to achieve Silver Awards.
- Social communication skills are applied effectively across the curriculum. All pupils made expected progress against their Social Communication and Literacy Targets.
- All teachers are using the appropriate Emotional Regulation strategies for learners. All classrooms display self-regulation techniques relative to the learners. This approach effectively supports all learners in the classroom.
- All teachers are successfully using Tuff Table activities or multisensory learning approaches most of the time. This has a positive effect on all learners in the classroom.

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### Areas for development

- Covered walkway to be constructed in lower school.
- MUGA operational in upper school.
- To develop a more consistent restorative approach to support positive relationships and learning environments.
- To use the data from the scoping stages of the WSAEMW to input this into the SET.
- To return attendance figures to 95%+ as per 2019.
- To reduce instances of high level behavioural issues.
- To increase engagement with SKODEL post 14.
- To achieve the Young Carers panel 3 award.
- To fully implement all elements of the ALN act.
- To roll out ALN hub to Lower School and embed the ALN hub in Upper School.
- Raise awareness and expertise of universal provision in the classroom.
- To give staff and students opportunities to have input into school improvement strategies linked to wellbeing and personal development.

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<b>Learning Experiences</b>	
<p>How well do school leaders, staff, learners and the wider school community understand the expectations, purposes and principles of the new curriculum for Wales?</p>	<p>We have deferred formal introduction of the new Curriculum for Wales until September 2023. There is an excellent organisational understanding of the new curriculum which has been promoted and underpinned through INSET, focus groups, cross-phase collaboration and learner voice activities. The introduction of 'Alex' as our learner-centric vision of what the Whitchurch curriculum should aspire to has been extremely valuable in focussing and channelling curriculum planning. Governors have been appraised of developments throughout and a sub-group contributed to 'Alex'. The Governing Body has, at sub-committee and Full GB level, ratified the high level curriculum plan. Curriculum plans have been trialled and are well-placed for implementation in September.</p>
<p>How well does our curriculum support and develop learners' knowledge, skills and understanding?</p>	<p>We provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements with a broad range of appropriate subjects and pathways being offered to learners. At post 16 level all pathways to post 18 education are accessible through the range of subjects on offer. The post 16 offer is widened further along with increased flexibility as a result of the close partnership work with other schools. Recent introductions of EPQ and Criminology Certificate/Diploma have been popular.</p> <p>A digital version of the ILPP has been created utilising the notebook function within Microsoft Teams. The pathway plan now takes students right through from year 7 to 11, with a clear focus on skills and qualities lower down the school, building to more career specific support as students move through the school. Wellbeing tutors have all been trained on the use of the digital notebook version. A 36% uplift in positive feedback on ILPPs with new remodelled versions indicates improving learner satisfaction.</p> <p>Low learner numbers opting for Languages post 14 and post 16 has been disappointing.</p> <p>Ty Calon continues to offer high-quality specialised provision to learners with severe and complex learning difficulties. Recent developments in SALT and a Foundation Group have proven to be highly effective. This has been enhanced by the work of an increased cohort of Higher Level Teaching Assistants.</p>

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	<p>We have a comprehensive programme of literacy and numeracy intervention support for learners who experience learning deficits in these key areas. These include Numeracy Intervention in years 7 to 9, Spelling, Reading and Comprehension intervention in years 7 to 9 and Emotional Wellbeing intervention in years 7 to 11 through FSM intervention support workers. Careful and focused targeting of learners, implementation of recovery schemes and rigorous monitoring of progress all combine into a programme in which most learners make at least expected progress.</p> <p>The school offers a wide, varied and successful range of extra-curricular activities. These are well attended and have a positive impact on learners' wellbeing, sporting, musical and creative achievements.</p> <p>The wide range of learning experiences focus well on developing future careers, for example through activities such as options launch events, transition days, employer interviews, visits to careers fairs, Pathways Plans, university open days, Seren partnership, Oxford residential and in-house higher education fair. An enrichment programme has also been developed for learners at post 16 level with a range of external speakers, many of whom talk through opportunities at post 18.</p> <p>The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is developing in popularity with post 14 learners with the Bronze award completed with mainstream learners and the Bronze and Silver completed with learners in Ty Calon.</p> <p>Transition from years 6 to 7 is highly effective, especially for vulnerable learners in mainstream and in Ty Calon. We have excellent partnership arrangements with our cluster primary schools and make effective transition arrangements for the relatively high numbers of learners we take from outside of the cluster.</p> <p>There is effective provision for learners with ALNs, both in mainstream and Ty Calon. Learners in Ty Calon are given a bespoke curriculum aimed at developing their work and life skills.</p>	
<p>How effective is teaching and learning?</p>	<p>Learners demonstrate strong progress in many lessons through both the quality of their task completion and through various assessment for learning opportunities. Lesson observations demonstrate that teachers provide sufficient time for pupils to work independently and to discuss and think about their learning, with the demonstrate phase of</p>	

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learning being twice the length of the activate phase on average. Similarly, learner talk and independent learning takes twice the lesson time of teacher talk.

Questioning is effective in furthering the progress of learners in many lessons. Open questions are more dominant than closed questions and targeted no-hands-up questioning is a more common strategy than the use of hands-up questions. In many lessons, questions deepen the thinking of learners, often using probing Socratic questioning, mini-whiteboards, think-pair-share and similar strategies. In some lessons, questioning does not give sufficient opportunity for thinking and engagement, relying too heavily on hands-up and often closed or lacking persistent probing. Questioning sometimes fails to involve a minority of learners. As a result, skills and knowledge are not consolidated well enough for too many learners in these lessons.

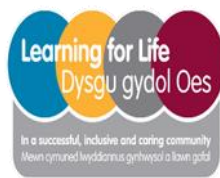
In many lessons, challenge is appropriate for the learners. In lessons where this is not the case, learning is too teacher-led and there are not sufficient opportunities for learners to learn independently, to offer or respond to feedback or to have a consistent and appropriately-matched level of challenge in the tasks set. In many of these lessons, the pace of learning is either too fast or too slow for the needs of the learners.

In nearly all lessons, teachers activate learning well, for example in modelling the key vocabulary, or in utilising effective learners' responses. These lessons feature a strong mutually respectful learning atmosphere which promotes a positive mindset in most learners.

The principles of the 4 Purposes of the Curriculum are becoming embedded in the work of the school despite the deferral. We remain confident that our pedagogical approach is entirely consistent with the 4 Purposes and associated key principles. The adoption of whole school pedagogical protocols and principles (the continuum and DRICE) have been embedded within most lessons to varying degrees. and many teachers utilise engaging teaching approaches. The learning continuum is evident in most lessons but more time needs to be spent on the consolidation phase in a minority of lessons in order to aid the embedding of learning. The connect phase of learning is stronger generally but sometimes needs to connect prior and new learning more meaningfully. Most teachers exhibit high expectations of their learners and insist on high standards of work and behaviour. Nearly all teachers implement the school's behavioural policies rigorously.

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	<p>In many lessons, most learners develop thinking skills such as analysis or reasoning, problem solving or creativity effectively. In these lessons, nearly all learners remain engaged, concentrate well on the tasks set and are usually very enthusiastic about their learning experiences. A few learners do not develop thinking skills sufficiently, due to a lack of resilience.</p> <p>In many lessons, many learners make clear progress in key subject specific skills, often through working independently or in useful group work, explaining their ideas or developing questions. A few learners lose focus on their learning in a number of ways: they do not listen well enough, do not concentrate sufficiently or engage in low-level talk which distracts them from making progress.</p> <p>In many lessons, nearly all learners remain engaged, concentrate well on the tasks set and are usually very enthusiastic about their learning experiences. Their behaviour is very good. Most subjects provide useful opportunities for learners to use and develop their skills.</p> <p>The school identifies and develops learners with weak literacy skills with an effective range of helpful interventions in years 7 to 9.</p> <p>Mathematics lessons provide opportunities for learners to practise procedural skills and apply aspects of the framework in a context to develop reasoning skills.</p> <p>The school identifies and develops learners with weak procedural skills with effective interventions in years 7 to 9 with interventionist support.</p> <p>Digital leaders and coders are developed well through extra-curricular clubs within the IT curriculum area. However, opportunities for learners to build on their ICT skills, in subjects other than ICT, remain underdeveloped and inconsistent in areas of the curriculum.</p> <p>Many subject areas took part in competitions added to the Eisteddfod this year giving a far more collaborative and cross curricular approach to Welsh and Welsh culture.</p>	
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	<p>'Shwmae' day was celebrated with Welsh food tasting, a KS3 Welsh quiz, bilingual canteen and many subject areas used the week to incorporate Welsh culture into their lessons and further promote the use of the Welsh language. The use of Welsh by learners and staff across the curriculum is improving. This remains inconsistent. Most learners in 2023 were entered for the GCSE Welsh qualification.</p> <p>The introduction of CAT testing in Key Stage 3 has begun to be utilised as a means of identifying learning needs at whole school and individual learner level. There is currently limited evidence of its impact at Faculty level.</p>	
	<p><b>Areas for Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that Alex remains at the heart of all school improvement.</li> <li>• Greater focus on careers and work-related experiences within curriculum areas.</li> <li>• Further develop the approach to progression of skills across the curriculum.</li> <li>• Raise numbers of learners opting for Languages in particular.</li> <li>• To increase consistency in quality of application of DRICE principles and the continuum, especially Assessment for Learning in the classroom.</li> <li>• To further develop teacher understanding and use of Cognitive Science in the classroom.</li> <li>• To embed principles of CRAFT in curriculum planning.</li> <li>• To develop widespread common language of classroom practices.</li> <li>• To finalise plans for full implementation of Curriculum for Wales in September 2023 fully embedding the 4 Purposes of the Curriculum in the culture and language of the school.</li> <li>• To establish more consistently successful development of learners' skills.</li> <li>• To give staff and students opportunities to have input into school improvement strategies linked to teaching and learning, assessment and progression, skills, curriculum.</li> </ul>	

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<b>How effective is teaching and learning?</b>	
<p>How well does professional learning, collaboration and innovation support learners' well-being and progress?</p>	<p>There is a wide range of professional learning, including Focus Teams and INSET days for all staff. All TLR holders, and other staff on a voluntary basis, were members of CfW Focus Teams last year. Each Focus Team was led by a member of SLT with an option for another TLR holder to co-lead. These teams focussed on six areas of CfW, including the three areas of progression and assessment, cross-curricular competences, moral and cultural themes, and Pedagogy. Starting last year, the members of each team are using opportunities such as INSET and School Improvement Forum (SIF) meetings to disseminate practice and ideas to all teachers.</p> <p>A School Improvement Forum was introduced this year to replace our middle leaders meetings and to complement the new TLR structure. This in its infancy but is already proving to be a more agile and effective vehicle for school improvement planning.</p> <p>The new TLR structure has become assimilated extremely quickly and has significantly improved collaboration across subject areas. The new posts of Assistant Progress Leader (APL) have increased capacity in terms of our wellbeing support. The new Faculties and APLs need further embedding with slightly clearer lines of responsibility and accountability.</p> <p>INSET this year was largely focussed on our continuing preparation for CfW, including curriculum design, progression and assessment, DCF, and moral and cultural themes. Distributed leadership was encouraged by TLR holders' involvement in leading sessions.</p> <p>The school has robust and effective performance management procedures which ensure that professional learning is bespoke and derived from support required to meet PM objectives. The strong focus on teaching and learning and learner outcomes within performance management ensures an impact on learners' progress.</p> <p>Compulsory training has been complemented by a full programme of optional after-school training. The training, which has been well-attended, has covered aspects such as pedagogy, leadership, wellbeing and research and enquiry. We are a Lead School in partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University and have drawn on our close relationship to develop both PGCE trainees and our own teachers.</p> <p>Other training opportunities have included bespoke leadership training for middle leaders as well as optional leadership training open to any staff in order to build leadership capacity. This opportunity has been long-standing</p>

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and evolved last year into a programme built around our subscription to Leadership Matters. Evidence of success in our developing leaders can be found in the internal appointments to SLT during the Spring Term as well as colleagues' success in reaching shortlists for leadership roles in other schools. In addition, an SLT secondee has led the development of a research and enquiry approach to developing pedagogy. This has been driven through training of colleagues from across the school, through the humanities faculty and also the work completed with PGCE student teachers.

Collaboration with other schools has included our Humanities, Mathematics and Language faculties working with feeder primary schools, including reciprocal visits, to further a shared understanding of CfW and especially progression across these academic areas. One of our Deputy Headteachers acted as a SIG Convenor, sharing our practices with other schools and learning from these SIG partners. Regular primary heads meetings have also been used to focus on sharing the CfW journey.

An SLT secondee has completed the National Professional Enquiry Project in respect of embedding Research and Enquiry and the curriculum leader for Sports and Fitness was the consortium lead practitioner for Physical Health.

The school forms part of an effective informal collaborative group with 3 other North Cardiff schools which is convened by one of our Deputy Heads. This, in turn, has a sub-group of senior leaders from all 4 schools who share good practice in curriculum development and, latterly, pedagogical initiatives.

Furthermore, the school has invested in online learning modules, and Leadership Matters. This has become embedded as a central plank of in-house leadership.

This wide range of provision has continued to develop the school as a learning community at all levels.

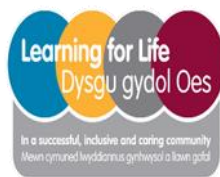
The school is embedding an improving range of processes and opportunities to ensure that good practice is shared in and outside school. SLT lesson observation processes have been to secure paired observations and to include TLR holders and peer faculty leaders. This has enabled much more extensive professional dialogue around pedagogy. In addition, SIF meetings and Focus Group meetings offer extensive opportunities to share practice on a range of issues. Additionally, the school has been invited to become a Lead Practitioner school in the training of ITT learners, as well as having a minority of curriculum areas involved in developing excellent practice as lead practitioners for their subjects.

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	<p>The work of the Progression and Assessment focus team is driving whole school policies on progression and assessment. Our new whole school assessment model for learners in years 7 and 8 from September 2023 has been developed and trialled with the team. This reports on progress and learning behaviours and aligns with the 4 purposes. The group has developed approaches to progression and assessment that have complemented existing practices and led to the creation of the common Whitchurch progression model which supports consistency in approaches. This work needs further embedding in the year to come.</p> <p>Our Business Forum has been established with partnership work ongoing. Faculties are in the early stages of establishing small scale projects in collaboration with their allocated Business for delivery within the curriculum for Wales. Ty Calon has developed a range of enrichment activities through the forum and the computing curriculum area has involved students in a range of workshops including a Microsoft Tech Day and DigiGirlz. This is embryonic but developing.</p>	
	<p><b>Areas for Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To further develop a comprehensive programme of internal self-evaluation.</li> <li>• To embed principles of progression and reporting under CfW.</li> <li>• To develop the research and enquiry model across the school.</li> </ul>	

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<b>How effective is leadership?</b>	
<p>How well does the school's vision influence its work?</p>	<p>The Headteacher and senior leaders provide the school with cohesive direction. They have a clear strategic vision for the school based on improving learner outcomes and provision. The school undertook an extensive consultation with staff, parents, governors and learners recently to ensure that the embedding of our curriculum vision and TLR structure is securely founded on shared principles.</p> <p>The school's capacity for setting and subsequently achieving challenging and realistic targets for themselves and those they manage has further improved this year. Targets are set for all learners and most colleagues were set performance management targets in good time in the last academic year. This is reflected in the sustained external examination outcomes and in successful developments in teaching and learning.</p> <p>The school has a well- planned cycle of meetings and there is a focus on improving outcomes and provision. A rigorous system for monitoring the work of middle leaders strengthens accountability. This and the more effective use of data by leaders at all levels has allowed the school to absorb and assimilate the challenges of the covid years as well as implement strong procedures for the return to a more regular school environment.</p> <p>The school engages in many highly effective professional partnerships both informal and formal. These include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIG</li> <li>• ITE lead partner with Cardiff Met</li> <li>• ASPIRE training on behalf of CSC</li> <li>• Careers Wales</li> <li>• North Cardiff Schools Group</li> </ul> <p>The governing body is knowledgeable and challenges and supports appropriately. Governors show a strong commitment and determination to sustain necessary improvements.</p> <p>The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures have resulted in a more thorough approach, greater accountability and challenge. This is beginning to have an impact on standards although accurate measures of these have been made difficult by the turbulence of the last few years. There are a few areas of inconsistency.</p>

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	<p>There is a systematic cycle of self-evaluation and planning for improvement. As a result, most leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Variation in the quality of evaluation has decreased, but remains a focus for improvement</p> <p>There are good aspects of the school's self-evaluation report and in department's self-evaluation reports. Lesson observation has been developing to have a stronger focus on learner progress and has become more evaluative supplemented by a pilot of evidence-based lesson observations.</p> <p>The school and Faculty Improvement Plans have clear priorities and appropriate targets and are based on the outcomes of self-evaluation, school and national priorities. The introduction in 22/23 of Progress Team Improvement Plans has established a strong base for aligning our wellbeing evaluative and planning processes with those of our academic teams.</p> <p>Improvement planning has been effectively targeted at key areas.</p> <p>The school regularly engages with learners and parents and feeds this into self-evaluation. There is still developmental work to be done on routinely feeding back the outcomes and impacts of these consultations.</p> <p>Communication with parents is very good in Ty Calon where the daily use of DoJo to communicate successes within the base. Learners write a letter fortnightly to sum up what they have achieved. Parents Showcase evenings and Parental workshops have further improved communications with parents.</p>	
<p>How well does leadership influence and improve learning and teaching?</p>	<p>There have been significant developments in the quality of learning and teaching in recent years. The WHS continuum, DRICE, AfL, Blended Learning and support for learners with ALN have all become increasingly embedded in the pedagogical life of the school. This is borne out by continuing strong performance in examination outcomes.</p>	
<p>How well does leadership support staff and</p>	<p>In terms of financial resources, the school is in a budgetary surplus position for the first time since 2013 although the significant in-year deficit is a warning sign against complacency. The surplus situation now allows/has allowed us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engage in long-overdue Estates Development</li> <li>• to subsidise subjects with low learner numbers at Key Stages 4&amp;5</li> </ul>	

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<p>use resources effectively?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to boost our wellbeing support systems</li> <li>• to finance a wholesale TLR restructure</li> <li>• support educational initiatives such as GCSE Pod</li> <li>• rationalise support staff teams to best complement the work of the school</li> <li>• provide substantial training opportunities</li> </ul> <p>The learner-teacher ratio is higher than local and national averages which is a reflection of careful budgeting of staffing. It also indicates our willingness to support minority subjects.</p> <p>Colleagues are well supported via: wide and comprehensive accessibility to training; a non-contact arrangement of PPA+1; very few instances of teaching outside subject specialism; almost exclusively positive Leave of Absence regime; access to a HR specialist; delivery of flu vaccine in school etc.</p> <p>Significant developments of the school site in recent years have been carefully planned in liaison with the Local Authority in order to most effectively meet the curriculum requirements in a high quality learning environment. The Estates Team have worked extremely effectively in ensuring excellent new facilities with outstanding value for money.</p>	
<p>How effective are systems, policies and procedures in the school in realising the school's strategic vision?</p>	<p>The school's strategic vision permeates all systems, policies and procedures and all policies are developed and considered by the relevant bodies prior to adoption.</p> <p>The TLR structure that was implemented from September 2023 following consultation with all stakeholders is supporting greater consistency within and across faculty areas, although it is recognised this will take time to become fully embedded. For example, close working within the humanities faculty led to the implementation of 'Silent Solo, Turn and Talk' across the whole school from September 2023. The senior leadership team works closely to drive school improvement but at times the strategic roles are not clearly enough defined to maximise impact.</p> <p>School systems are designed to support the school improvement cycle fully. All members of SLT line manage faculty and progress leaders and hold fortnightly formalised Standards of Achievement and Improving Learning meetings (SAILs) which have common agendas and are aligned to the school improvement plans. These ensure that middle leaders are challenged and supported in their role. In addition to these, the School Improvement Forum (SIF) which is made up of SLT, Faculty Leaders, Progress Leaders and Curriculum Leaders, meet regularly to further drive</p>	

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school improvement priorities. In the last few years the focus of these meetings has been on the new curriculum and the teaching and learning priorities that will support this. In addition to this core teams meet fortnightly with the AHT Student Achievement to drive standards in core subjects and focus on individual learners and groups of learner's progress. Progress team meetings also take place regularly to identify concerns and actions in relation to maximising progress and supporting the wellbeing of individual learners and groups of learners.

The school's self-evaluation processes have been further developed and now encompass whole school reviews, faculty reviews and progress reviews. Whole school reviews involve all key stakeholders and outcomes are shared and acted upon through the school systems that exist (SIF, SAILs etc.) and feed into school improvement priorities. Middle leaders have been supported through this process, with training provided, to develop their strategic leadership. For example Faculty leaders and Progress leaders are expected to develop improvement plans that align with whole school priorities and then develop a faculty/progress review programme that focuses on a key question identified via the FIP/PIP.

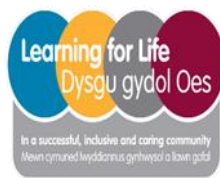
Focus groups have run across the school for many years and for the last two years these were focused on whole school priorities linked to the introduction of CfW. These groups were led by a member of SLT, alongside a TLR holder. All TLR holders were members alongside any colleague who wished to be part of them. These groups have driven whole school policies and impacted on the strategic direction of the school. For example 'The Whitchurch Progression for Alex Model' was developed by the work of the Progression and Assessment focus group and the work of the Equity Belonging and Relationships focus group has supported the development of the whole school reflection programme.

Performance management is used to support school improvement with one individual priority linked to school improvement priorities. Alongside this the professional learning programme is linked to outcomes from the performance management cycle and priorities that emerge from the whole school review process.

The governing body supports and challenges the school to ensure that systems, policies and procedures are robust and meet statutory guidelines. Various sub committees of the governing body also exist to support this process and ensure that all governors have a strong understanding of the strategic direction of the school. Governors have been involved in learning observations as part of the school review cycle to develop their understanding of the working life of the school further.

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	<p><b>Areas for development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop SAILs agendas to ensure that they are more responsive to the priorities that emerge as we move through the academic year.</li><li>• Ensure that decisions, actions and impact are recorded in high quality strategic minutes at all meetings.</li><li>• Ensure that there is consistency across faculties in self-evaluation processes.</li><li>• Restructure the roles within the leadership team to ensure there is a greater focus on strategic school improvement.</li><li>• Further involve governors in the school self-evaluation process.</li></ul>	
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