



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

## Report of visit

**Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**Ysgol Y Foel**

**Ffordd Y Llan  
Cilcain  
Mold  
Flintshire  
CH7 5NW**

**Date of visit: February 2013**

**by**

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



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**The monitoring team**

Eleanor Davies	Reporting Inspector
Richard Lloyd	Team Inspector
Dilwyn Jones	Local authority representative

## **Outcome of monitoring visit**

Ysgol y Foel is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2011.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from any further follow-up activity.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards of thinking and independent learning skills across the school**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has made good progress in addressing this recommendation. It provides an environment where pupils use their thinking skills well to flourish as independent learners.

Developing pupils' thinking permeates the curriculum, which is broad and balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. Teachers plan collaboratively to provide enriching and stimulating learning experiences that are matched well to pupils' individual abilities. The thematic approach used in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 includes strategies that develop thinking and link learning to what pupils have done previously. This enables pupils to gain a strong understanding of the aspects of study and ensures that the essential skills are embedded into all aspects of everyday practice. 'Floor books' provide sound evidence of the improvements the school has made.

A recent 'Super Thinking day' developed pupils' ability to use and select appropriate strategies independently. A 'Super Thinking day' floor book provides good evidence of the breadth and depth of thinking activities undertaken by pupils.

The planning for genuine opportunities for pupils to work independently in medium and short term planning has impacted on pupils improving their ability to lead learning.

### **Recommendation 2: Provide learning experiences that consistently challenge all pupils, particularly the more able**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has made very good progress in addressing this recommendation. Teachers plan and deliver the curriculum effectively to provide suitable challenge for

nearly all pupils. Planning builds systematically on previous learning experiences. The school uses information from tracking systems and standardised tests well to plan learning experiences that meet pupils' individual needs. There is a clear focus on providing suitable challenge for the more able pupils. Teachers make valuable evaluations of the impact of challenge in their lessons on pupil outcomes.

Pupils' work in response to the rich variety of challenging experiences is often of a very good standard in a range of contexts across the curriculum. Pupils' records of attainment reflect the quality of provision well. In 2012, all key stage 2 pupils achieved the higher than expected level 5 in all subjects. In the Foundation Phase, around half of pupils achieved the higher than expected outcome 6 in language literacy and communication and mathematical development.

**Recommendation 3: Develop a comprehensive overview of planning for skill development to ensure continuity and progression across phases and areas of learning**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has a clear and effective system to plan for skill development both within subjects and across the curriculum. Teachers use the tracking system well to identify the next steps for pupils' learning and collaborate effectively during the planning process. They identify extensive opportunities for skill development and create plans that enable pupils to develop their skills progressively as they move through the school.

Teachers deliver the curriculum through a range of suitable topics and themes. They produce suitable medium and short term plans based on models provided by the local authority. They adapt these well to match the interests and needs of pupils.

The school has a clear focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills. There are ample opportunities for pupils across all phases to apply their numeracy skills in interesting ways. The school has made particularly good progress in developing this aspect of provision. Teachers use assessment for learning strategies to good effect to enable pupils to reflect on their learning experiences and suggest improvements to their work. Overall, pupils' apply their skills purposefully to produce work of a consistently high standard in a range of contexts across the curriculum.

**Recommendation 4: Provide appropriate support at an early stage for pupils identified as needing additional help with literacy and numeracy**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has effective arrangements for identifying pupils with additional learning needs. Teachers carry out thorough initial assessments when pupils first join the school and they then monitor their progress systematically. The school has recently begun to use an electronic tracking system to monitor pupils' progress. This

provides additional evidence to identify the need for any intervention. The school has a good range of learning materials to assist pupils who need additional support in both literacy and numeracy and they use these well to provide support that is well matched to the needs of individual pupils.

Teachers keep parents well informed about pupils' progress and what they can do to help pupils at home. Pupils also know what they have to do to improve the standard of their work in order to reach their targets.

### **Recommendation 5: Address underperformance in teaching more rigorously**

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The standards of teaching and assessment have improved and are now consistently good. The school's managers have introduced useful new procedures for monitoring of lessons and books as part of performance management. Monitoring records show that pupils are challenged consistently to work to levels that they are capable of reaching. Managers have provided teachers with good opportunities to learn about good practice. For example, teachers observe each other teaching and have also visited other schools to see good practice.

The new planning formats introduced by managers are used by all teachers. These have a clear focus on differentiation and skill development and have also helped to improve the quality of teaching.

The school's leaders and managers, including governors have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges that it faces. They have worked together well to address the weaknesses in provision identified in the inspection.

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.