



CABINET – 5TH JUNE 2024

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF ESTYN INSPECTION OUTCOMES UNDER THE NEW COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (CIF) – JANUARY 2022 TO MARCH 2024

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet Members of the judgements made by Estyn inspection teams of Caerphilly schools from January 2022 – March 2024 (where published).
- 1.2 To seek members' views on the Estyn outcomes and the Inspection Profile across Caerphilly Schools.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The schools included in this report were inspected from January 2022 onwards. Each of them was inspected under the arrangements for inspections that came into effect from 1 January 2022, with the first two terms being considered pilot arrangements.
- 2.2 The report identifies the schools and the dates on which the inspections took place, together with any associated follow up category. This cumulative report includes outcomes already reported between January 2022 and March 2023.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet:
 - 1) note the content of the report
 - 2) comment on the Estyn Outcomes and the Inspection Profile across Caerphilly Schools

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility for monitoring educational outcomes within its schools and members should be made aware of the outcomes of inspections

in Caerphilly schools.

5. THE REPORT

Previous Estyn Common Inspection Framework (Sept 2017 onwards)

- 5.1 From September 2017 schools in Wales were inspected under the Common Inspection Framework (CIF). This judged schools under 5 Inspection Areas (IA):
1. Standards
 2. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning
 3. Teaching and learning experiences
 4. Care, support and guidance
 5. Leadership and management
- 5.2 There was no separate judgement on 'current performance' and 'prospects for improvement'. The previous 4-point judgement scale remained, but its wording was amended to focus on actions to be taken to support improvement:
- Excellent – Very strong, sustained performance and practice
 - Good – Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
 - Adequate and needs improvement – Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
 - Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement – Important weaknesses outweigh strengths
- 5.3 There were 3 follow-up categories of support, as the previous Local Authority monitoring has ceased as an Estyn category. The last two remained as statutory categories:
- Estyn Review
 - Significant Improvement
 - Special Measures

Estyn Common Inspection Framework (From 1 September 2022)

- 5.4 The new inspection framework commenced on 1 September 2022, however in the Spring and Summer of that year a small number of pilot inspections took place. This report therefore includes information from 1 January 2022.
- 5.5 Estyn's new approach to inspection in schools and Pupil Referral Units across Wales, no longer focuses on a grading, detailing instead how well providers are helping a child to learn. This means that inspection reports will no longer include summative gradings (e.g. 'Excellent', 'Good' or 'Adequate').
- 5.6 A key overview of findings is included in each report headline focusing on a school's strengths and areas for development. Estyn also produce a separate report summary for parents/carers which allows access to the key information they need about an inspection quickly.
- 5.7 Estyn's new approach aligns with the personalisation of the new curriculum for Wales. Inspections also involve more in-person discussions, placing less emphasis on achievement data. They intend that their new inspection approach will make it

easier for providers to gain meaningful insights that help them to improve without the spotlight on a judgement. Additionally, to reflect the Welsh Government's decision to no longer require statutory teacher assessment at the of various stages of education, Inspection Area 1 was renamed from Standards to Learning, to reflect the broader range of holistic evidence required about learner outcomes and progress.

- 5.8 There is, however, no change to the statutory categories of special measures and significant improvement. The category of Estyn Review is also retained.
- 5.9 Estyn have reduced the notice period for inspections from 15 to 10 working days. Estyn have committed to continue to work with partners and stakeholders to gather views as they look to further evolve our inspection framework, including moving towards more regular inspection across providers.
- 5.10 Comparisons over time with the previous framework are not possible, given that there are no judgements for the 5 Inspection Areas to compare.
- 5.11 It is also to be noted that this is a sample of judgements that are available for a proportion of Caerphilly schools, not for a full Estyn cycle. At the time of writing reports were available for 34 in total, comprising 28 primaries, 4 secondaries, a through school, a PRU, with one further school awaiting publication of their report.

Caerphilly

- 5.12 The following Caerphilly schools have been inspected since January 2022, under the New Framework. Follow up category, the only summative data available is included in the table below (No Follow Up, Estyn Review, Significant Improvement, Special Measures)

| School | Phase | Inspection Date | Follow-Up Category * = Estyn Case Study |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili | Primary | Feb-22 | No Follow Up |
| Aberbargoed Primary | Primary | Jun-22 | Estyn Review |
| Bryn Primary | Primary | Jun-22 | No Follow Up |
| Risca Comprehensive | Secondary | Sep-22 | Significant Improvement |
| Cefn Fforest Primary | Primary | Oct-22 | No Follow-Up |
| Crumlin High Level Primary | Primary | Oct-22 | Special Measures |
| Lewis Girls' Comprehensive | Secondary | Oct-22 | No Follow-Up (*) |
| Ysgol y Lawnt | Primary | Oct-22 | No Follow-Up |
| Markham Primary | Primary | Nov-22 | No Follow-Up (*) |
| Pontllanfraith Primary | Primary | Nov-22 | Estyn Review |
| Glanynant Learning Centre | Special | Dec-22 | Significant Improvement |
| Fleur-de-Lys Primary | Primary | Feb-23 | No Follow Up |
| Pengam Primary | Primary | Feb-23 | No Follow Up |
| St Helens Catholic Primary | Primary | Mar-23 | No Follow Up |
| Blackwood Comprehensive | Secondary | May-23 | No Follow Up (*) |
| Tynewydd Primary | Primary | May-23 | Estyn Review |
| Idris Davies 3-18 School | All | May-23 | No Follow Up |
| Upper Rhymney Primary | Primary | Jun-23 | No Follow Up |
| Machen Primary | Primary | Jun-23 | No Follow Up |
| St Gwladys Bargoed School | Primary | Jun-23 | No Follow Up (*) |

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| Hengoed Primary | Primary | Jun-23 | No Follow Up |
| Coedybrain Primary | Primary | Jul-23 | No Follow Up |
| Ysgol Cwm Derwen | Primary | Nov-23 | No Follow Up |
| Ystrad Mynach Primary | Primary | Nov-23 | No Follow Up |
| Park Primary | Primary | Nov-23 | No Follow Up (*) |
| Gilfach Fargoed Primary | Primary | Nov-23 | No Follow Up (*) |
| Cwmfelinfach Primary | Primary | Nov-23 | No Follow Up (*) |
| Ysgol Ifor Bach | Primary | Dec-23 | No Follow Up |
| Pantside Primary | Primary | Dec-23 | No Follow Up |
| Tiryberth Primary | Primary | Dec-23 | No Follow Up |
| Ty Sign Primary | Primary | Jan-24 | Significant Improvement |
| Newbridge School | Secondary | Jan-24 | No Follow Up |
| Derwendeg Primary | Primary | Feb-24 | No Follow Up |
| Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary | Primary | Feb-24 | No Follow Up |
| Brynawel Primary | Primary | Mar-24 | Not published at time of writing |

5.13 A range of case studies are now available on the Estyn website [Improvement resources search | Estyn](#)

5.14 The following case studies have been completed by Caerphilly Schools.

| School | Estyn Case Studies |
|----------------------------|--|
| Lewis Girls' Comprehensive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of professional learning on teaching and learning, curriculum development, and leadership Direct Link Broadening pupils' horizons and developing a culture of belonging Direct Link |
| Markham Primary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively engaging the school community Direct Link |
| Blackwood Comprehensive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and improving learners' digital competence skills at Blackwood Comprehensive School Direct Link Developing a culture of self-evaluation and continuous professional learning at Blackwood Comprehensive School Direct Link |
| St Gwladys Bargoed School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How St. Gwladys Bargoed School develops pupils' independence in the early years and how this continues as pupils move through the school Direct Link |
| Park Primary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a cohesive team for a successful federation Direct Link |
| Gilfach Fargoed Primary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a cohesive team for a successful federation Direct Link |
| Cwmfelinfach Primary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to developing pupils' |

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| | independent learning skills highly effectively, especially as confident writers, for dissemination on Estyn's website (not yet published). |
| Idris Davies 3-18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leadership of effective school support for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. |

5.15 Estyn inspections of schools are informative for the LA and the EAS in a number of ways. Although they report on a school in a specified period of time, they can be helpful in confirming that the school is receiving appropriate support and challenge and as a means of triangulating judgements which were made prior to the inspection. Where schools are a cause for concern, recommendations made by Estyn will be the focus for intervention and the tracking of progress made. If the school is placed in a statutory category, then the LA can invoke powers of intervention immediately. Where excellent practice is identified, then schools can be asked by Estyn to produce case studies which are then shared with other schools, via publication on the Estyn website.

5.16 The table below summarises the recommendations for each Caerphilly school inspected.

| School | Recommendations |
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| Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili | <p>R1 Provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum.</p> <p>R2 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners.</p> |
| Aberbargoed Primary | <p>R1 Address the standards of teaching and low expectations for pupils in Years 3 to 6.</p> <p>R2 Create opportunities to develop pupils' independent skills and further challenge pupils in Years 3 to 6.</p> <p>R3 Ensure that senior leaders robustly monitor and evaluate learning and teaching to identify key areas for improvement.</p> <p>R4 Develop the roles of leaders at every level to secure improvement.</p> |
| Bryn Primary | <p>R1 Focus self-evaluation and improvement work more sharply on what pupils know, understand and can do.</p> <p>R2 Improve pupils' confidence and ability to speak in Welsh, both in lessons and around the school.</p> <p>R3 Ensure that teachers' feedback addresses errors in pupils' learning more robustly.</p> |
| Risca Comprehensive | <p>R1 Raise standards and improve performance at key stage 3 and key stage 4.</p> <p>R2 Improve the achievement of more able pupils.</p> |

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| | <p>R3 Strengthen approaches to co-ordinate and implement teaching in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum to improve pupils' skills.</p> <p>R4 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment.</p> <p>R5 Refine the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders to focus on raising standards and improving teaching.</p> <p>R6 Improve self-evaluation procedures to inform development planning, and to set clear and appropriate priorities and targets for improvement</p> |
| Cefn Fforest Primary | <p>R1 Raise standards in Welsh.</p> <p>R2 Increase opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn.</p> |
| Crumlin High Level Primary | <p>R1 Establish and maintain effective leadership and governance to support school improvements.</p> <p>R2 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment practices across the school.</p> <p>R3 Improve pupils' extended writing skills.</p> <p>R4 Improve pupils' numeracy skills.</p> <p>R5 Ensure that the provision for Welsh improves pupils' oracy skills.</p> |
| Lewis Girls' Comprehensive | <p>R1 Improve the provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills and their knowledge of Welsh culture.</p> <p>R2 Strengthen the provision for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance, particularly for those eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>R3 Revise the leadership of additional learning needs, so that it ensures a strong strategic direction and supports the full implementation of the ALNET act.</p> |
| Ysgol y Lawnt | <p>R1 Improve pupils' Welsh reading skills.</p> <p>R2 Share best practice in teaching across the school.</p> |
| Markham Primary | <p>R1 Improve outdoor provision to enrich all pupils' learning experiences.</p> <p>R2 Improve attendance.</p> |
| Pontllanfraith Primary | <p>R1 Develop and implement effective evaluation and improvement processes.</p> <p>R2 Ensure that teaching supports pupils to develop the full range of skills progressively as they move through the school and that pupils have opportunities to use these skills in their work across the curriculum.</p> <p>R3 Develop effective partnerships with parents.</p> |
| Glanynant Learning Centre | <p>R1 Strengthen improvement planning by ensuring self-evaluation activities focus on pupil progress and the standards they achieve.</p> |

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| | <p>R2 Ensure that all members of the management committee and the local authority have a good understanding of the PRU's strengths and areas for development.</p> <p>R3 Improve attendance and pupils' engagement in full-time education.</p> <p>R4 Improve pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills.</p> <p>R5 Ensure that teachers' feedback enables pupils to know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve.</p> |
| Fleur-de-Lys Primary | <p>R1 Improve teaching and assessment to ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately and that learning activities meet their developmental needs</p> <p>R2 Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and effectiveness as learners</p> <p>R3 Improve pupils' speaking and extended writing skills</p> <p>R4 Strengthen school improvement processes to ensure that leaders provide suitable challenge for staff on the impact their teaching makes on pupils' progress</p> |
| Pengam Primary | <p>R1 Improve teaching and assessment to ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately and that learning activities meet their developmental needs</p> <p>R2 Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and effectiveness as learners</p> <p>R3 Improve pupils' speaking and extended writing skills</p> <p>R4 Strengthen school improvement processes to ensure that leaders provide suitable challenge for staff on the impact their teaching makes on pupils' progress</p> <p>R5 Improve attendance of pupils, particularly those pupils eligible for free school meals</p> |
| St Helens Catholic Primary | <p>R1 Ensure that teachers' feedback targets the next steps in pupils' learning effectively</p> <p>R2 Provide more opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how they organise and present their work</p> |
| Blackwood Comprehensive | <p>R1 Raise standards, particularly in key stage 4</p> <p>R2 Plan more effectively for the progressive development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills</p> <p>R3 Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and written feedback</p> <p>R4 Strengthen leadership arrangements and improve the rigour and consistency of self-evaluation and improvement planning to secure sustained improvements in pupils' standards</p> |

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| Tynewydd Primary | <p>R1 Improve pupils' ability to write at length across a range of curriculum areas</p> <p>R2 Increase opportunities for pupils to develop independence and creativity in their learning</p> <p>R3 Ensure that senior managers and governors are involved at all stages of self-evaluation and planning for improvement</p> |
| Idris Davies 3-18 School | <p>R1 Improve attendance and reduce the levels of persistent absenteeism</p> <p>R2 Strengthen the planning for the progressive development of pupils' literacy, in particular writing and advanced reading skills</p> <p>R3 Address the specific areas for improvements in teaching and assessment identified in the report</p> <p>R4 Ensure sufficient time for personal and social education in key stage 4</p> |
| Upper Rhymney Primary | <p>R1 Challenge all pupils through consistent and effective teaching</p> <p>R2 Plan effective progression in pupils' numeracy and digital skills as they move through the school</p> <p>R3 Ensure that the quality of teachers' feedback targets the next steps in pupils' learning across the school</p> <p>R4 Improve the resources and outdoor learning opportunities for younger pupils</p> |
| Machen Primary | <p>R1 Improve opportunities to develop pupils' deeper understanding and application of skills across the curriculum, especially when engaged in independent learning</p> <p>R2 Ensure consistency in the quality and use of pupil feedback to support pupils to make improvements to their work</p> <p>R3 Extend opportunities for pupils to develop their creative and problem-solving skills in purposeful, real-life activities</p> |
| St Gwladys Bargoed School | <p>R1 Address the safeguarding issues identified by the team during the time of the inspection</p> <p>R2 Further develop the evaluation of pupils' learning, improvement work and grant spending</p> |
| Hengoed Primary | <p>R1 Ensure that the new leadership practices improve the consistency and effectiveness of teaching across the school</p> <p>R2 Provide better opportunities to promote pupils' independent skills</p> <p>R3 Improve the strategic leadership of the governing body</p> |
| Coedybrain Primary | <p>R1 Improve pupils' digital skills</p> |

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| | <p>R2 Develop pupils' independent skills</p> <p>R3 Develop the outdoor provision for pupils under seven years old</p> |
| Ysgol Cwm Derwen | <p>R1 Ensure consistency in teaching practices across the school</p> <p>R2 Plan jointly to improve pupils' numeracy and extended writing skills</p> <p>R3 Improve the quality and provision of outdoor learning experiences, particularly for the youngest pupils</p> |
| Ystrad Mynach Primary | <p>R1 Provide opportunities for pupils to take ownership of their learning and to develop their thinking and problem solving skills independently</p> <p>R2 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills</p> |
| Park Primary | <p>R1 Ensure that teaching and learning experiences develop pupils' digital and mathematical skills coherently and systematically</p> <p>R2 Provide opportunities that support pupils to think for themselves and extend their independent learning skills</p> |
| Gilfach Fargoed Primary | <p>R1 Ensure that teaching and learning experiences develop pupils' digital and mathematical skills, coherently and systematically</p> <p>R2 Share the strong practice across the school to support pupils to think for themselves and extend their independent learning skills</p> |
| Cwmfelinfach Primary | <p>R1. Improve pupils' reading skills in Welsh and their use of Welsh outside of formal sessions</p> <p>R2. Improve opportunities for pupils to consider and to respond to the feedback from teachers in more detail</p> <p>R3. Develop the role of governors in the self-evaluation process"</p> |
| Ysgol Ifor Bach | <p>R1 Develop pupils' independent writing skills</p> |
| Pantside Primary | <p>R1 Sharpen self-evaluation processes to focus more clearly on the impact of teaching on learning</p> <p>R2 Improve teaching to ensure that all pupils are challenged effectively</p> <p>R3 Refine the curriculum to ensure that pupils make systematic progress in developing their knowledge and skills across all Areas of Learning and Experience</p> |
| Tiryberth Primary | <p>R1 Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement processes to ensure that they focus precisely on the quality of teaching and progress in learning</p> <p>R2 Improve pupils' reading skills</p> <p>R3 Continue to improve attendance</p> |

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| Ty Sign Primary | <p>R1 Improve self-evaluation and school improvement processes so that they focus on the school's immediate needs and fully include all staff and governors</p> <p>R2 Improve attendance and punctuality</p> <p>R3 Ensure that all staff engage in high quality and strategically planned professional learning that supports whole school improvement, in particular by addressing inconsistencies in teaching</p> <p>R4 Develop a whole-school understanding of, and plan for, progression in the curriculum to improve the progress pupils make as they move through the school</p> |
| Newbridge School | <p>R1 Strengthen strategic planning to improve important aspects of the school's work, including the development of pupils' Welsh language skills, raising attendance and ensuring well-being support is joined up and proactive</p> <p>R2 Sharpen self-evaluation processes to ensure timely progress against specific targets</p> <p>R3 Develop the governing body's role as a critical friend of the school</p> |
| Derwendeg Primary | <p>R1 Sharpen self-evaluation processes to focus more keenly on the quality of teaching and learning</p> <p>R2 Improve teaching to provide suitable challenge to all pupils and develop their independence as learners</p> <p>R3 Strengthen the curriculum to provide richer opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills and knowledge</p> |
| Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary | <p>R1 Further develop a whole-school shared understanding of progression to ensure that teachers' planning and feedback meet the needs of all pupils</p> <p>R2 Improve pupils' independent learning skills, including opportunities for them to reflect on and make decisions about their learning, and use teacher feedback appropriately to understand their next steps in learning</p> |

5.17 During this period there are also a number of schools that have were originally inspected under the previous arrangements and have since had monitoring visits. Since January 2020, the following schools have had monitoring visits, with the dates and status being listed.

| School | Original Inspection Date | Original Inspection Date | Follow up Visit Date | Current Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Ysgol Bro Sannan | Oct-19 | Significant Improvement | Mar-22 | Removed from SI |
| Ysgol Gilfach Fargoed | Oct-19 | Significant Improvement | Jun-22 | Removed from SI |

- 5.18 In addition, the following schools that were placed in a follow up category have since been removed by Estyn.

| School | Original Inspection Date | Original Inspection Outcome | Follow up Visit Date | Current Status |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aberbargoed Primary | Jun-22 | Estyn Review | Dec-23 | Removed form Estyn Review |
| Pontllanfraith Primary | Nov-22 | Estyn Review | March-24 | Removed form Estyn Review |

- 5.19 The schools that have been removed from an Estyn statutory category have been supported to do so by both the Local Authority and the EAS. Support and where required specific intervention are initially co-ordinated through a Post Inspection Action Plan conference.

Conclusion

- 5.20 This report provides members with information on the outcomes of Estyn inspections in Caerphilly Schools. Given the significant change to the framework, to date approximately one third of Caerphilly schools have been inspected. We will continue to provide members with annual updates on the profile of inspection outcomes.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1. There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only therefore no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This work is funded through the EAS Business Plan, therefore there are no specific financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

- 10.2 The Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee considered the report on the 20th May 2024. Members received an overview of the process and the level of engagement between Estyn and Schools over the past few years was explained.
- 10.3 Reference was made to the progress by Crumlin High Level Primary school which has made satisfactory progress and has now been removed from special measures. This was a testament to the hard work by the Head Teacher and all the staff. Officers stated that they were delighted with the result.
- 10.4 Members were advised that it was pleasing to see the representation from Caerphilly schools in the Estyn report and examples of strong practice which will be shared.
- 10.5 The Estyn recommendations set out within the report will be examined to look for commonalities and themes to help with future strategic planning.
- 10.6 The Scrutiny Committee noted the report

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

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Consultees:

- Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
- Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
- Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Environment and Economy
- Gareth Jenkins, Interim Director for Social Services
- Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
- Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
- Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
- Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
- Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
- Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
- Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
- Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
- Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
- Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
- Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
- Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.
- Members of the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee

[Link to Estyn Inspection Process](#)