

DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND SKILLS  
**Consultation Document**  
– **School Information**

**Consultation on the proposal to transform special education in the Vale by:**

- **Increasing the capacity of Ysgol Y Deri to accommodate an additional 150 pupils; and**
- **Constructing a new school building on the preferred site located in Cosmeston, Penarth for September 2023 which would operate as an additional site under the management of Ysgol Y Deri.**



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# Introduction

## Background

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils within the Vale have every opportunity to attain the best possible outcomes. In order to achieve this ambition it is essential that we ensure schools remain sustainable, reflect the needs of our local communities, and are equipped with the best possible learning environments.

The Council is committed to ensuring that consultations are meaningful, relevant and appropriate for the communities that are involved, and the Council has a duty of care to ensure that proposals are clear, transparent, and reflective of those affected. This is a vision that can only be realised by working in partnership with schools, governors, parents and the wider communities we all serve.

The proposal is to transform specialist education by;

- Increasing the capacity of YYD to accommodate an additional 150 pupils; and
- Constructing a new building on the preferred site located in Cosmeston, Penarth for September 2023, which would operate as an additional site under the management of YYD.

This proposal is considered under section 2.3 of the School Organisation Code (2018) and the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Management Committees etc.) (Wales) Regulations 2014.

## Purpose of this document

To provide an overview of the schools affected by this proposal, including:

- background information about the school/s;
- the most recent assessments of the school/s' buildings and facilities; and
- the most recent assessments of the school/s' educational performance.

The information is divided by school and has been used to inform the "Implications of the proposal" section of the consultation document (from page 12).

## School buildings and facilities assessment

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has a vision to provide the best possible facilities for children and young people in the Vale to support their learning. One of the methods used to judge school buildings and facilities is a condition survey. A condition survey involves a visual assessment of all exposed parts of the buildings to identify significant defects and items of disrepair.

The Council surveys and categorises its school buildings on a 4-point scale from good to bad.

Table 1 – Condition Grading System	
Grade	Description
Good	Performing as intended and operating efficiently.
Satisfactory	Performing as intended but exhibiting minor deterioration.
Poor	Exhibiting major defects and/ or not operating as intended.
Bad	Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure.

The Council also regularly monitors accrued backlog maintenance noting recommendations from the latest condition survey and accounting for building works which have subsequently been carried out.

## Educational performance assessment

The Vale of Glamorgan Council works closely with the governing bodies of schools to ensure that standards are robust, that teaching and learning is of a high quality, and that leadership and governance is strong. Performance is monitored using two systems; the Estyn report from inspections and Welsh Government’s categorisation of schools.

The Council works with two organisations in order to monitor the performance of schools and to support school improvement;

- Estyn is the office of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales. It is a Crown body, established under the Education Act 1992. Estyn is independent of the National Assembly for Wales but receives its funding from the Welsh Government under section 104 of the Government Wales Act 1998. Estyn inspects quality and standards in education and training providers in Wales.
- The Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES) was established in September 2012. The Local Authority works with the Consortium to support and challenge all schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Schools are inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of an inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils.

### Estyn Report

In September 2017 a new Estyn School Common Inspection Framework was introduced for all schools across Wales. Estyn evaluates a provider’s effectiveness using the following four-point judgement scale:

Table 2 – Estyn Inspection Criteria

Judgement	What the judgement means prior to September 2017	What the judgement means post-September 2017
Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very strong, sustained performance and practice</li> <li>• Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very strong, sustained performance and practice</li> </ul>
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement</li> <li>• Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement</li> </ul>
Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement</li> <li>• Strengths outweigh areas for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement</li> </ul>
Unsatisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important weaknesses outweigh strengths</li> <li>• Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important weaknesses outweigh strengths</li> </ul>

### **Welsh Government categorisation of schools**

In 2014, Welsh Government introduced a new categorisation system for schools; this was revised in September 2017. Categorisation considers each school's standards alongside the school's capacity to improve in order to determine the level of support required. Organisations such as the CSCJES and the school improvement service then work with schools' leaders to identify provide and/or broker any support required for further improvement.

The categorisation system is described below:

<b>Table 3 – Welsh Government Criteria</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>What the category means</b>
Green	A highly effective school which is well run has strong leadership and is clear about its priorities for improvement.
Yellow	An effective school which is already doing well and knows the areas it needs to improve.
Amber	A school in need of improvement which needs help to identify the steps to improve or to make change happen more quickly.
Red	A school in need of greatest improvement and will receive immediate, intensive support.

To determine the support category as explained in the table above, schools are placed in one of four groups for ability to bring about improvement (A-D) with A being the highest for improvement capacity. The revised categorisation system introduced in September 2017 does not use a standards grade.

Of the 45 primary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan, 26 are categorised as green, 17 as yellow, and 2 amber.

Of the 8 secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan, 3 are categorised as green, 4 as yellow, and 1 amber.

**PRUs do not form part of the statutory categorisation process.**

For further information about the categorisation scheme, please see Welsh Government's parents' guide to the National School Categorisation System:  
<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150119-parents-guide-en.pdf>

# Ysgol Y Deri



## Background information

Ysgol Y Deri is located in Penarth and opened in 2014 following the amalgamation of Ysgol Erw'r Delyn, Ysgol Maes Dyfan and Ashgrove School. The school forms part of Penarth Learning Community with St Cyres Comprehensive School, which is a mainstream secondary school.

All pupils have statements of special educational needs for severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. Pupils are drawn from the Vale of Glamorgan as well as from the neighbouring local authorities of Cardiff, Newport, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Swansea.

**Table 4 – Ysgol Y Deri information**

School name	Type	Language	Age range	Capacity
Ysgol Y Deri	Special	English	3 – 19	N/A

The 20/21 delegated special school budget is £32,921 per pupil, which is the highest for any school within the Vale due to the complex needs of pupils.

## School buildings and facilities

Ysgol Y Deri (YYD) is located on a site in Penarth which it shares with a mainstream school, St Cyres. The site is referred to as “Penarth Learning Community”.

The building was identified by the Council’s condition survey undertaken in 2019 as “Good” in both condition and suitability.

## Educational performance

**Estyn Report (October 2016)**

The inspection report for Ysgol Y Deri can be found at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Ysgol%20y%20Deri.pdf>

## Summary

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing	Good
Learning experiences	Good
Teaching	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Learning environment	Excellent
Leadership	Excellent
Improving quality	Good
Partnership working	Excellent
Resource management	Good

Ysgol Y Deri is a residential special school maintained by the Vale of Glamorgan local authority. The school opened in November 2014 following the amalgamation of Ysgol Erw'r Delyn, Ysgol Maes Dyfan and Ashgrove School. The school shares a site and facilities with a mainstream secondary school.

All pupils have statements of special educational needs for severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders.

Pupils are drawn from the Vale of Glamorgan as well as from the neighbouring local authorities of Cardiff, Newport, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Swansea. Nearly all pupils have English as their home language. Thirty-five per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals.

The headteacher has been in place since the school opened.

The school's current performance is **good** because:

- Nearly all pupils make strong progress in developing their learning, social and life skills
- Pupils access a broad range of relevant learning experiences that are well matched to their needs, interests and abilities
- There are highly effective arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour
- Teaching is good

The school's prospects for improvement are **good** because:

- Leaders and managers have a strong commitment to school improvement
- There is a suitable management structure and clear lines of accountability
- The school has highly effective partnerships, which impact positively on pupils' wellbeing and outcomes
- All staff access high quality professional development opportunities that link well to school priorities

**Recommendations:**

- R1 Ensure that teaching across the school is consistently good or better
- R2 Improve the quality of individual education plans to match targets more closely to the needs of pupils identified in statements of special educational needs

Table 6 - Estyn areas of inspection results for Ysgol Y Deri		
Estyn Area of Inspection	Grade	Key Points
Standards	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils who attend Ysgol Y Deri have a wide range of needs, which include autism, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Nearly all pupils make strong progress in their learning in relation to their needs and abilities.</li> <li>• Pupils with complex physical and medical needs make strong progress across the school. They use assistive technology skilfully to communicate their needs and personal choices.</li> <li>• Nearly all pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, severe and moderate learning difficulties make valuable progress in their learning, social and life skills.</li> <li>• Pupils that are more able gain a range of level 1 and 2 qualifications in courses that match well with their needs and interests. Over the last two years, nearly all pupils moved on to further education, employment or adult service provision.</li> <li>• It is not appropriate to compare standards that pupils achieve at the school with national averages or to analyse trends in overall performance over time because of the wide range of pupils' special</li> </ul>

		educational needs.
Wellbeing	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many pupils develop a suitable understanding of healthy eating and the benefits of exercise. Nearly all pupils, including those with complex needs, participate regularly in physical activities including dance, surfing and cycling. They develop their team skills effectively through sports such as boccia and tag rugby.</li> <li>• Pupils with restricted movement engage well in a valuable range of activities to improve their co-ordination and physical responses. These include hydrotherapy, physiotherapy and rebound therapy programmes.</li> <li>• Many pupils feel safe and know whom to talk to if they have concerns. Many pupils attend school regularly.</li> <li>• Most pupils behave very well around the school and in class.</li> <li>• Most pupils engage well in lessons. They concentrate well on their tasks and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.</li> </ul>
Learning experiences	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school provides a broad and balanced range of relevant learning experiences that meets requirements and the needs of nearly all pupils well. Curriculum options in the 14-19 age range are extensive. These include valuable opportunities for pupils to gain relevant qualifications and work-based skills that prepare them well for future life.</li> <li>• Provision to develop pupils' communication skills is effective. For example, assistive technology and the integrative approach to therapies are very successful in providing pupils with the skills they need to access learning. This is a particular strength of the school.</li> <li>• Arrangements to support pupils at risk of disengaging are highly effective.</li> <li>• The school places a high priority on improving pupils' skills progressively... Provision for ICT is a particular strength.</li> <li>• The school makes appropriate provision for pupils to learn about sustainable development.</li> </ul>
Teaching	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff at Ysgol Y Deri establish nurturing relationships with pupils. Staff know their pupils well and have a comprehensive understanding of their individual needs and abilities.</li> <li>• In nearly all lessons, teachers have good up-to-date subject knowledge and high expectations of all pupils.</li> <li>• In many lessons, teachers make sure that tasks are suitably challenging.</li> <li>• Across the school, a minority of teachers use the Welsh language sufficiently during morning registration and in lessons.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school uses a wide range of assessment data to monitor and track pupils' progress in learning and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
Care, support and guidance	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has an appropriate range of policies and procedures to promote pupils' health and wellbeing effectively. These include suitable arrangements to develop pupils' understanding of healthy eating and regular exercise through a wide range of activities that link well to pupils' abilities and interests.</li> <li>The school promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well through the curriculum, assemblies and other activities.</li> <li>The school provides helpful guidance and support to older pupils and their parents about careers, further education options and other services.</li> <li>The school has developed strong relationships with external agencies, such as social services, health professionals and local charities, which provide useful support and advice to staff about individual pupils' needs.</li> <li>The school has appropriate arrangements for identifying and monitoring pupils' additional needs. These include specialist intervention programmes to develop pupils' self-esteem and improve pupils' communication and behaviour.</li> <li>All pupils have an individual education plan. Generally, these identify suitable long-term goals.</li> </ul>
Learning environment	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has a highly positive and inclusive ethos, which helps pupils to develop self-esteem and grow in confidence. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of school life regardless of the complexity of their varying needs, abilities and backgrounds.</li> <li>The modern, purpose-built school provides an exceptional learning environment that meets the needs of learners extremely well. For example, it has a therapy pool, a wide range of sensory rooms and a well-equipped gymnasium to meet the therapeutic needs of pupils. Provision is further enhanced through the availability of a multimedia room, television-recording studio, a life skills flat and professional kitchen. These resources are highly effective in developing pupils' social and life skills.</li> <li>The school shares the site with a mainstream secondary school and there are effective arrangements in place for pupils of all needs and abilities to access extensive outdoor sports facilities including an all-weather pitch and climbing wall. The school makes effective use of its own grounds to enrich pupils' learning experiences and support their wellbeing. For example, there are play areas accessible from ground floor classrooms with fully accessible play equipment, a small animals area where pupils care for guinea pigs and chickens and raised beds for growing vegetables.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching areas have an extensive range of high quality digital resources that provide stimulating interactive learning experiences for pupils of all abilities.</li> </ul>
Leadership	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The headteacher and senior leadership team have worked skilfully and imaginatively to bring three very different schools together through a process of amalgamation.</li> <li>Senior leaders demonstrate the capacity to implement and manage change effectively.</li> <li>Systems to analyse pupil performance information are sophisticated and highly effective.</li> <li>There are effective arrangements to distribute leadership opportunities to staff at all levels. For example, 'Micro' and 'Speed' training sessions enable staff to share effective practice with colleagues in sharp and focused professional development sessions.</li> <li>Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities successfully.</li> </ul>
Improving quality	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has well-established systems for self-evaluation that involve the beneficial use of first-hand evidence. These arrangements ensure that the school analyses nearly all aspects of its work and has a very good understanding of its strengths and areas that require further improvement.</li> <li>There are many opportunities for staff to contribute to self-evaluation work, for example to improve the schools' provision for personal and social education. The school considers the views of pupils and acts upon these appropriately.</li> <li>School improvement processes are highly effective and involve all staff successfully.</li> </ul>
Partnership working	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders have established high quality strategic partnerships with other schools, the health board and the local community that have an important impact on pupils' outcomes and wellbeing.</li> <li>The exceptional joint working arrangements with the health board ensures that pupils access a wide range of specialist services that are highly effective in meeting the health, communication and physical needs of pupils.</li> <li>The use of shared resources with the adjoining mainstream school ensures pupils' access to a wider range of facilities. For example, a few older pupils who are more able, access specialist teaching and facilities at the mainstream school. This has improved their outcomes in subjects delivered across both settings. Teachers benefit from jointly moderating work with mainstream colleagues.</li> <li>Staff at Ysgol Y Deri provide valuable specialist advice and training for colleagues in other schools.</li> <li>There are strong links with a wide range of local businesses. These provide pupils aged 14-19 with stimulating off-site learning experiences and help to develop pupils' social skills and understanding of the world of work.</li> </ul>

Resource management	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has a very good range of experienced, specialist teachers and support staff, who are deployed effectively.</li> <li>All staff access an extensive range of well-planned continuing professional development opportunities, to enhance their skills and knowledge. As a result, they support the individual needs of pupils well.</li> <li>Teachers have appropriate planning, preparation and assessment time. This enables them to be fully effective in providing pupils with a wide variety of stimulating and interesting learning experiences.</li> <li>The school has a good range of high quality resources that staff use skilfully to support and improve the learning and wellbeing of all pupils.</li> </ul>
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### Welsh Government categorisation of schools

The categorisation for Ysgol Y Deri can be found at:

<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/School/>

Publication Date	Standards Grade	Improvement Capacity	Overall Category
January 2020	N/A	A	Green
January 2019	N/A	A	Green
January 2018	N/A	A	Green
January 2017	N/A	A	Green

### January 2020 National Categorisation Report

Summary of key points raised in the national categorisation report

Area of Inspection	Key Points
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards in the school are very good and most pupils make good or excellent progress relative of their low starting points and additional learning needs.</li> <li>In primary classes, 82% of pupils either achieve or exceed their target. In numeracy, 84% of pupils either achieve or exceed their target. In ICT, performance against targets is slightly lower with 70% achieving or exceeding their</li> </ul>

targets. In PSE, most pupils perform very well with 85% achieving or exceeding their targets. These results are the strongest over the last three years.

- In KS3, over 80% of pupils achieve or exceed their target in literacy. In numeracy, pupils' performance is not as strong with 70% achieving or exceeding their target. 81% of pupils achieve or exceed their target in ICT whilst in PSE, just under 70% achieve their target.
- In KS4, progress is reported to be significantly weaker than the previous year. In literacy, under 40% achieve or exceed their target. In numeracy, less than 10% are reported to achieve or exceed their target. Approximately 40% achieve or exceed their target in ICT and in PSE, 60% achieve or exceed. The school has fully reviewed this information and triangulated data with other quality assurance measures such as lesson observations, work scrutiny and IRIS Connect. The anomaly is explained as a recording error which the school has targeted for further scrutiny throughout the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Performance in Key Stage 5 is very strong, with most pupils (90%+) achieving or exceeding their targets in literacy, numeracy, ICT and PSE.
- Pupil's wellbeing is assessed twice a year using the very effective Leuven Scale or adapted NBar. Using these scales, most pupils record average to very good levels of wellbeing. Data from these assessments is used effectively for pupils to access a broad range of interventions. These interventions are very high in quality and meet pupil's needs well. As a result, 8.3% more pupils are assessed to have very good levels of wellbeing and no pupils have poor wellbeing.
- All pupils leave the school with a range of appropriate qualifications. This individualised and tailored approach to accreditation is a strength of the school and the school's ethos of aspiration ensures that all pupils who are able are entered into a challenging qualification e.g. GCSE.
- The school coordinates annual effective 'options' and 'leavers' events which ensures most pupils and parents have up to date information. As a result, all pupils secure appropriate destinations and from the 25 leavers – one went to mainstream, 17 entered onto employability and life skills training, five went to specialist residential college and two into day services.
- There are no differences between the performances of learners in any vulnerable group. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls.
- Attendance levels are good at 89.45% which is marginally above the national average for special schools.
- There have been eight fixed term exclusions; five of them relate to one pupil and the other three relate to two pupils. A large range of therapeutic interventions have been put in place. The school's provision for dealing with trauma related difficulties is developing at an outstanding rate.
- With the exception of the three pupils above, there have been few incidents of Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI).



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour is consistently good. There is an effective behaviour team which assist staff in the management of severely challenging behaviour. There is a range of therapeutic interventions which give proactive advice for behaviour. As a result, the environment is calm and orderly.</li> </ul>
Improvement Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of leadership and management is judged as excellent. There is a large leadership team in the school which operates very effectively. They enjoy the freedom given to them but fully understand the accountability structures which underpin their leadership.</li> <li>• There is a clear vision which is shared by the majority of school stakeholders and permeates the life of the school. This vision is encapsulated by the strap line 'Diversity in Harmony' and the school is clearly committed to celebrating pupils who are differently able. As a result, the school is aspirational and strives for the very best outcomes for pupils. For example, the school arranges a number of fully inclusive educational visits for example skiing and Calvert Trust.</li> <li>• The school vision clearly focusses on the wellbeing needs of pupils as its top priority. The school is leading the way with its provision for ACEs and becoming trauma informed. The school is supporting local mainstream schools with this agenda. From September 2019, the local authority behaviour service and the Autism Outreach services (staff based at Ysgol Y Deri) have amalgamated to create an Engagement Service. This developing service offers mainstream schools advice and guidance on supporting pupils with a range of challenges from autism to trauma related difficulties.</li> <li>• The senior leadership team (SLT) was judged as excellent for strategic leadership by Estyn who were also very impressed by the work undertaken to bring three schools together so effectively.</li> <li>• There is a clear strategic plan to support progress towards the school vision. Although the SIP wasn't available at the categorisation meeting, it is due for governor ratification before half term. However, the headteacher and senior leaders are very clear on the improvement priorities which are very aspirational and clearly focus on improving outcomes for pupils.</li> <li>• Leaders demonstrate a very strong capacity to plan and implement change and sustain improvement successfully in nearly all respects. The school is a key driver in Welsh Government's ALN transformation and has worked very successfully with partner schools, agencies and broader stakeholders. For example, the school's provision for therapies such as Occupational Therapy is outstanding.</li> <li>• The SLT have all been involved in the development and implementation of national and local initiatives. .This places the school at the forefront of developments in the special school sector.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is timetabled, efficient, strategic, accurate, systematic and well established. Data in a variety of forms is used well by the senior leaders to evaluate strengths and areas for improvement. The monitoring, evaluation and review cycle is triangulated, well understood and includes robust systems for quality assurance including formal lesson observations, peer and self-evaluations, work scrutiny and use of video tracking. Information from these processes is used well to target support and ensure high impact.</li> </ul>

- Processes to track pupils' progress, identify needs and provide support are robust and effective in all cases. This information informs professional discussions with the SLT and the whole staff so as to improve practice, alter targets and provision in order to improve the outcomes of pupils. The school is currently reviewing these processes to ensure it focusses on 'what matters' for its learners.
- Moderation is firmly embedded internally and the school participates in all the external moderation exercises.
- There are a range of highly effective interventions in place across the school. These include 'The Launch Pad', sensory processing interventions and positive behaviour/wellbeing groups. The impact of these interventions are well monitored and evaluated. The school is slightly concerned that budget constraints may limit the scope of these interventions in the future
- Performance management arrangements are robust, reliable and efficiently implemented by SLT. Most staff are fully engaged in identifying the aims and priorities for their own Professional learning. This ensures they stay up to date with information and that their teaching continually improves. Systems such as IRIS Connect and Continua are used well to encourage self-reflection. The school is engaging well with other special schools to broaden the network and influence of these systems across the sector.
- Staff absenteeism has been reduced and staff are learning how to work collaboratively following the merger of three special schools.
- There are good structures for regular dialogue and sharing knowledge across the school. For example, 'speed dating' style professional learning sessions are held regularly for staff to drop into. The uptake is high and the impact evaluated as successful.
- There is a well-coordinated approach to professional learning which uses a range of sources (including ICT) well. Professional learning is focussed appropriately on the learners' wellbeing and academic needs. This approach, coupled with a strong ethos of challenge and support within the school generates a culture where staff are beginning to challenge their views and practices in order to continually improve. As a result, the school is highly aspirational for its pupils.
- The headteacher and senior staff are committed to developing the school using Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) methodology. There is a strong culture of enquiry where many members of staff feel safe to take calculated risks in teaching and learning. The school supports new initiatives well and senior leaders are encouraging staff to think aspirationally. For example, the school's provision for assistive technology is exceptional.
- The school has an appropriate and sustained emphasis on improving the quality of teaching. Senior leaders use a range of performance measures to understand strengths and areas for improvement in relation to teaching. For example, the school understands that the retirement of several highly skilled ASD practitioners needs a robust succession plan.
- SLT regularly meet with staff to discuss performance data and set meaningful improvement targets. Staff regularly discuss with SLT whether actions have had the desired outcomes and if not, they change course as necessary. The school judges teaching to be at least good with many examples of excellent practice.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders and staff have a relentless focus on raising standards. Targets reflect high expectations for the future achievement of all pupils and these are met consistently. The improvement priorities are clearly based on accurate and continuous self-evaluation/assessments.</li> <li>• School leaders endeavour to ensure that the organisations actions are consistent with its values. For example, many members of SLT arranged and attended a recent residential educational visit.</li> <li>• Leadership is distributed well and potential is nurtured through a coaching and mentoring philosophy. As a result, leadership within the school is highly effective and is well placed to manage the significant change facing schools presently.</li> <li>• The school is well equipped to manage change and has a clear track record in this area. There are robust plans to ensure ALN readiness with all necessary toolkits are being implemented well. The school has piloted the new IDP and given feedback to Welsh Government. There is also a clear curriculum realignment strategy although the school has been working thematically for some time. The school is focussing on ensuring the curriculum teaches the things ‘that matter’. For example, members of SLT are currently developing an innovative life skills framework. However, the school would benefit from working with staff to exemplify the four purposes and ensure these areas sit at the heart of all school operations.</li> <li>• There is a comprehensive curriculum policy that has ensured that that staff are supported as they develop their teaching skills. Nearly all staff have a shared understanding of the characteristics of excellent and good teaching.</li> <li>• The school has worked very successfully with other schools and other partners to enhance significantly their own and others capacity to bring about improvement. Most recently the school has supported a primary resource base and moved it from failing to good which was confirmed by an Estyn inspection. The school also shares its ICT expertise to support other schools in their improvement journey.</li> <li>• Governors have a very good understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement and are highly effective in supporting and challenging the school’s performance. The school has effective plans in place to develop the sophistication that governors need to support the school more robustly through such activities as learning walks. This work should be recorded securely, analysed and acted upon over the next year.</li> </ul>
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to refine the curriculum offer in response to Curriculum for Wales</li> <li>• Scrutinise the performance of pupils and quality of teaching in KS4 classes</li> <li>• Continue with the roll out of trauma informed schools training – gain accreditation and disseminate knowledge</li> <li>• Continue to relentlessly focus on pedagogy by linking with schools across the sector</li> <li>• Complete review of MER activities – full review of the effectiveness on standards and against a changing landscape.</li> <li>• Engage formally with SLO methodology for change and continue to drive a culture of enquiry.</li> </ul>