

Report summary for parents and carers on Castell Alun High School

Date of inspection: March 2025

Summary

Ysgol Castell Alun is a welcoming and inclusive community which provides its pupils with valuable opportunities to develop as respectful and conscientious individuals. Most pupils behave exceptionally well and show particularly positive attitudes towards learning, enjoying constructive working relationships with staff. Many pupils work diligently in lessons and show high levels of pride in their work.

Many pupils make secure progress in their learning, while a minority make strong progress. In most lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan well for learning. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, they question pupils expertly to encourage them to think deeply and inspire a love for the subject. In a few lessons, pupils do not make suitable progress. In these lessons teachers do not question pupils well enough or do not consider precisely enough how to support pupils from across the ability range.

Pupils benefit from worthwhile opportunities to use and develop their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills across the curriculum. However, the coordination and consistency of planning to help pupils develop these skills progressively is an area for further development.

The curriculum is broad, engaging and meets pupils' needs. It includes valuable provision to support pupils to develop their understanding of health and well-being and helps pupils develop their Welsh language skills well. Extra-curricular opportunities are wide-ranging and inclusive, and leadership opportunities such as the well-being ambassadors and the "Cyngor Cymraeg" help pupils influence school life.

The school places great emphasis on pupils' well-being and personal development. There are effective anti-bullying measures, and excellent support for pupils' emotional, social, and academic needs. Pupils' opinions are valued, and they benefit from extensive opportunities to play an active role in shaping the school's direction. The transition from primary to secondary school is carefully managed, ensuring pupils feel confident and supported from the start.

Leadership has secured some important improvements to the work of the school. For example, rates of attendance, including those of pupils eligible for free school meals, improved well last year. Arrangements for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are robust and collaborative leading to a shared understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. In addition, governors provide helpful challenge in their role as critical friends to the school.

Recommendations and next steps

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

R1 Improve the consistency of teaching by sharing the best practice that exists within the school

R2 Strengthen the consistency and coordination of how pupils' skills are progressively developed across subjects

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

Full Report

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#)

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Publication date: 30/05/2025