

Engaging all pupils in the Welsh language



At Greenfield Special School, senior leaders have embraced the challenge to improve pupils' Welsh language skills. As a result, nearly all pupils make extensive progress in relation to their needs, abilities and starting points.

Number of learners: 178

Age range: 3-19

Date of inspection: March 2017

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.

Hide **More info**

Information about the school

Greenfield School is a special school maintained by Merthyr Tydfil local authority. There are 178 pupils on roll aged from 3 to 19. All pupils have statements of special educational needs for severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The headteacher and the senior leadership team have been in post since September 2014.

Context and background to sector-leading practice

The headteacher and the senior leadership team have a clear strategic direction for the school and provide pupils with positive and high quality learning experiences. They promote a culture of high aspirations and expectations for all staff and pupils. Senior leaders embraced the challenge to improve pupils' Welsh language development and encourage the regular use of the language. These ambitious improvements became strategic priorities for the staff and governors of the school.

Nature of the strategy or activity identified as sector leading practice

The starting point for planning these improvements was the outcomes of the school's own quality assurance processes. These processes highlighted the need for a change of culture, full staff buy-in and increased staff confidence if the school was to achieve its ambitious targets. As a result, over the last three years, the school has placed particular emphasis on extending the opportunities for staff and pupils to learn Welsh, to use their Welsh language skills confidently and proudly around the school and to promote worthwhile opportunities to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales.

Thank you for accepting cookies

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.

Hide **More info**

Culture and ethos

Leaders at all levels at Greenfield School promote a highly inclusive and caring community that values and supports all of its pupils and staff. The school motto 'opening doors to the future' permeates through all aspects of its work successfully. Leaders have developed a positive culture of continuous improvement throughout the school and the attitude towards the Welsh language is outstanding.

All staff have a thorough understanding of the school's strategic direction and values in relation to Welsh language development and reflect these well through their own work. This helps to promote the very positive ethos at the school and contributes to extensive progress that nearly all pupils make in their Welsh language skills in relation to their needs, abilities and starting points.

Staff training and support

The school's highly effective and well-established quality assurance and performance management arrangements enable senior leaders to identify individual and whole school professional development needs well. These link well with the school improvement plan and the professional development opportunities on offer for all staff, including the wide range of support staff working within the school. Welsh language training is tailored to the needs of the school and the individuals. The school invested heavily in initial whole school training to introduce basic Welsh words and phrases. Staff were supported to attend further courses to develop their confidence and improve the quality of spoken Welsh around the school. There are highly valued mentoring and coaching arrangements in place for all staff, including supply staff. As a result, staff practise their Welsh language confidently with colleagues and pupils.

Teaching and assessment

Thank you for accepting cookies

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.

Hide **More info**

At Greenfield School, no pupils are disapplied from Welsh. Teachers plan interesting and engaging tasks in lessons that are well matched to pupils' needs, abilities and starting points. There are extensive opportunities for pupils to practise their Welsh skills in lessons and around the school.

To develop pupils' Welsh language skills further, the school recognised the need to track pupils' progress in Welsh more effectively. As a result, staff are developing a robust data tracking system to monitor the small steps of progress they make over time. This innovative system is used well by staff to plan for progression and provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able pupils. Staff and pupils, where appropriate, set aspirational targets for improvements in Welsh and these are monitored effectively by senior leaders as part of the quality assurance cycle. Robust procedures for tracking pupil progress have enabled the senior leadership team to identify continuously the professional development needs of all staff. This supports staff to deliver suitably challenging lessons that meet the wide range of needs within the school.

What impact has this work had on provision and learners standards?

The values and identified priorities have helped create a positive culture and ethos at the school. Nearly all pupils make strong progress in their learning from their starting points and in relation to their individual needs and abilities.

Nearly all pupils make extensive progress in their Welsh language skills in relation to their needs, abilities and starting points. They recognise and use Welsh words confidently to greet staff, visitors and each other. A minority of pupils use a wide range of phrases to describe their feelings, talk about what they are learning and find out information about visitors. A few pupils can extend on their answers and ask probing questions in Welsh confidently. Pupils use their Welsh language skills confidently and proudly around the school.

Thank you for accepting cookies

You can now hide this message or find out more about

Hide **More info**

Links: <http://www.greenfield.merthyr.sch.uk/>

Thank you for accepting cookies

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.

Hide **More info**

