



Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to share with you our Yellow School Categorisation 2018-2019

We are now categorised as a 'Yellow' school which means that we have made very good progress over the last 18 months. The school requires less external support in order to keep on improving. The school is now judged to be '**effective**'. As many of you will be aware, in January 2017, following an extensive external review by the EAS (Education Achievement Service), the school was categorised Amber, with some aspects requiring significant and urgent improvement, E.g. Provision for ALN. Our Estyn inspection in October 2017, recognised that rapid progress had been made over a period of 6 months and judged all areas of the school at that time to be 'adequate'. We were placed in Estyn review, as the changes made needed to embed, meaning that we had 12-18 months to demonstrate progress against all of the Estyn recommendations. We are currently awaiting the outcome of our Estyn Progress Review, submitted in December 2018, which we should know by the end of this term.

Whilst our overall category is 'Yellow', I have included some extracts from our Categorisation report below. As you will see, we are already well on our way towards meeting some of the requirements for the 'highly effective' practice required of green schools, such as *having a well run school, with strong leadership and the capacity to support other schools*. We will continually strive towards improving standards in the school and giving your children the best possible education in our improvement journey towards excellence.

I am exceptionally proud of the school team and the children in making this rapid improvement from Amber to Yellow over the last 18 months - 2 years.

Thank you to all of our families and our community for your support and helping us in many ways, to be the best that we can be.

Extracts from 2018-2019 Categorisation Report

On Leadership and the capacity to improve...

- A strength of the school is the jointly created mission, vision and aims which permeate the life and work of the school and have been instrumental in developing the professional learning culture that exists within the school...
- ***There is a relentless drive towards continual reflection and improvement.*** The school has made excellent use of the new professional standards with staff, who reflect upon their own practice against these. ***This innovative practice has been shared with other school across the region.***

- **Leadership including governance is good with some evidence of excellent practice around the school.**
- Governors are more involved in the life of the school e.g. attendance at school events and trips and through participation in reviewing pupils work, and through attendance at regional training events...
- **Leaders are highly effective and responsive to the outcomes of self-evaluation activities.**
- The school newsletter is used to regularly update families about progress.
- **Leaders ...engage in disciplined, informed professional enquiry within the school and beyond, this is a strength of the school and has supported the school in developing as a learning organisation well placed to engage fully with curriculum reform.**
- The school has planned well for and made effective use of its Pupil Development Grant.
- The school provides good opportunities for all pupils to use and apply IT skills through **purchasing a range of digital learning resources, which are used effectively to improve pupils' digital skills.**
- Professional learning opportunities have been provided for almost all staff, who are now able to offer a wider range of interventions e.g. ELSA and Thrive.
- **Non-contact time for the ALNCo has improved the quality of planning, provision and tracking for vulnerable learners...**

On Teaching, Learning and Pupil Progress...

- **The school is making strong progress in developing pupils' skills across the curriculum.** Planning for skills has a high priority and pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills both inside and outside of the classroom and in real life contexts.
- **Therefore, pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing, numeracy and ICT are good.**
- **Throughout the school, pupils Welsh skills are improving and are at least satisfactory.** In Foundation Phase, almost all pupils understand and can use simple phrases and Welsh words...
- End of year outcomes **in KS2 show an improvement in pupils Welsh skills.**
- There has been strong improvement in pupils use of Welsh around the school, from a relatively low baseline.
- **The quality of teaching in foundation phase is a strength of the school** with very effective use made of the learning environment to support high levels of pupil engagement and independence in their learning.
- **Well-being and attitudes to learning are improving and are good in nearly all classes.** Almost all pupils demonstrate resilience, confidence and perseverance and remain on task when engaged in challenging learning activities and when working independently.
- **They respond to the high expectations of the teacher and generally have high expectations of themselves.** They work hard to produce outcomes of a good standard given their previous knowledge and understanding.

Further Information on School Categorisation can be found here:

Welsh Government

<https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-01/national-school-categorisation-system-guidance-for-parents-and-carers.pdf>

Extract from Wales online (Explanation of the colour rating)

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE

- * Well run school with strong leadership
- * Clear about priorities for improvement
- * A track record in raising standards
- * Has the capacity to support other schools

4 days support

EFFECTIVE

- * Already doing well
- * Knows the areas needed to improve
- * By identifying the right support and taking action has the potential to do even better

IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

- * Needs help to identify the steps to improve
- * Changes to be made through discussions with regional improvement service and local authority
- * Will receive full package of support

15 days support

IN NEED OF GREATEST IMPROVEMENT

- * Will receive immediate, intensive support
- * Progress will be closely monitored to make sure needed improvements happen as quickly as possible

Estyn recommendations December 2017

R1 Improve pupils' speaking skills in both English and Welsh.

R2 Raise the standards of pupils' reading and ICT skills.

R3 Adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils consistently.

R4 Ensure that the newly established leadership team implement improvement priorities successfully.

R5 Improve the ability of governors to challenge school leaders effectively.

Uniform:

Please can I remind you that children should not wear coloured trainers to school. They should wear **black shoes** or **plain black trainers** only. Please ensure that if they wear trainers, that they are plain black, with black soles only. Thank you for your co-operation.



Health and Safety

Please remember that the school grounds are a no smoking zone, **which includes vaping**. Please refrain from smoking or using any type of e-cigarette within the school grounds or outside classrooms. Staff will ask you to put vapes away, so please use them outside the school grounds only.

Dates for your Diary

February 2019

11.02.19 - 22.02.19	Welsh Focus Fortnight in school.
22.02.19	2:00pm-3:00pm Open Doors - for families to visit classes to showcase learning from this first half term. LAST DAY OF ½ term
NB SCHOOL EISTEDDFOD on 22.02.19 - Postponed to 08.03.19	
25.02.19 -01.03.19	SCHOOL CLOSED HALF TERM

March 2019

04.03.19	Start of second half term NURSERY only closed (NURSERY STAFF TRAINING) Digital Leaders Apple Store Visit - Letter to follow from Mrs Banks
05.03.19	Year 2 Techniquet Visit (Science Show). Letter to follow
05.03.19	Netball Competition Year 5, 6
07.03.19	World Book Day. Letter to follow. Children will not need costumes. 6:00-7:00 PTA Bingo Night - Details to follow from Mrs Powell
08.03.19	School Eisteddfod - Letter to follow from Criw Cymreig 2:00pm -3:00pm Open Doors for Families - Pop Up Art / Eisteddfod Gallery

11.03.19	School STEM Focus Fortnight. Letter to follow British Science Week
19.03.19	9:00-10:00 Class Assembly Year 5. Families invited. 9:00-9:15 Refreshments provided 9:15 Class Assembly To finish: Short session led by Mrs Evans on how we teach reading in school, so that you can use similar strategies when helping your children at home.
21.03.19	2:00-3:00 Cwtch and Book Afternoon - Y1 and Y2 Come and find out how we teach reading in school so you can help your child at home.
22.03.19	Swimming Gala Year 3, 4, 5, 6
25.03.19 And 26.03.19	Parent Consultations - Reception to Year 6. Letter to follow
26.03.19	9:00-10:00 Class Assembly Year 6. Families invited. 9:00-9:15 Refreshments provided 9:15 Class Assembly To finish: Short session led by Mrs Evans on how we teach reading in school, so that you can use similar strategies when helping your children at home.
27.03.19-29.03.19	Nursery Parent Consultations
27.03.19	Mother's Day Stall -PTFA
29.03.19	Mother's Day Stall -PTFA

April 2019

02.04.19	9:00-10:00 Class Assembly Year 4. Families invited. 9:00-9:15 Refreshments provided 9:15 Class Assembly To finish: Short session led by Mrs Evans on how we teach reading in school, so that you can use similar strategies when helping your children at home.
03.04.19	Year 2 Science Show at Llanhilleth Institute. Parents, community and Governors invited for 1.30pm start. Year 2 will use this as their Class Assembly.
05.04.19	Afternoon Nursery 1:30pm-2:30pm only April Rising 3 Transition Visits 2:45pm-3:30pm
09.04.19	9:00-10:00 Class Assembly Year 3. Families invited. 9:00-9:15 Refreshments provided 9:15 Class Assembly

	To finish: Short session led by Mrs Evans on how we teach reading in school, so that you can use similar strategies when helping your children at home.
12.04.19	2:00-3:00 Cwtch and Book Afternoon - Reception Come and find out how we teach reading in school so you can help your child at home.
12.04.19	End of Term
15.09.19 -26.09.19	SCHOOL CLOSED EASTER HOLIDAYS
29.04.19	Start of Summer term April Rising 3 intake start

May 2019

06.05.19	SCHOOL CLOSED MAY BANK HOLIDAY
07.05.19 - 14.05.19	National Test Window. *No term time holiday absences will be authorised on test dates
07.05.19	National Reading Test 9:15am Year 2 - Year 6 pupils
08.05.19	9:00-10:00 Class Assembly Year 1. Families invited.
08.05.19 09.05.19	National Numeracy Procedural Test Year 2 - Year 6 pupils Tests will be taken throughout the 2 days.
10.05.19	National Numeracy Reasoning Test 9:15am Year 2 - Year 6 pupils
14.05.19	Athletics Year 3, 4, 5, 6
14.05.19	9:00-10:00 Class Assembly Reception. Families invited.
24.05.19	Last day of half term
27.05.19 -31.05.19	SCHOOL CLOSED HALF TERM

June 2019

03.06.19	INSET DAY 4 - SCHOOL CLOSED
04.06.19	Start of second half of term
06.06.19	Cricket Year 5/ 6
13.06.19	Athletics Final Year 3/ 4/ 5/ 6
27.06.19	Transition Day - Children will spend the day in their new classes for September 2019

	Y6 moving to ALC Transition Day
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July 2019

19.07.19	End of Term
22.07.19	SCHOOL CLOSED INSET Day No.5 (Twilights sessions taken in lieu)