



Report summary for parents and carers on Howell's School

Date of inspection: February 2024

by Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

Overview

Howell's School is an extremely happy school community built upon a culture of kindness and the humble pursuit of excellence. Collectively, senior leaders, governors and staff have fostered an environment which values learning, opportunity and growth.

During their time at the school, many pupils make exceptional progress compared to their peers nationally. Pupils' performance in public examinations is consistently significantly above national norms, with the school's results being among the strongest in the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST). Nearly all pupils leave the school with the academic and life skills which prepare them extremely effectively for their future destinations and ambitions.

Across the school, nearly all pupils display curiosity and conscientiousness in their work. Their behaviour is exemplary. Most pupils persevere and develop high levels of resilience, either through problem solving or active participation in a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils have extensive opportunities to celebrate and discover other cultures and regularly raise money to support local and international charities. The school supports pupils to appreciate and understand the wider world, whilst developing as highly confident and courageous learners.

Teachers are passionate and committed, and know their pupils extremely well. Trusting, positive and supportive relationships are a hallmark of the school. Teachers are highly knowledgeable and use their expertise to build relevant links across the curriculum. Senior school teachers have a strong understanding of the requirements to achieve highly in public examinations. Across the school, staff have the highest expectations, which they apply alongside the school motto to 'work hard and be kind'.

Senior leaders operate and lead the school highly effectively, seamlessly blending professionalism and compassion. Governors, both at Trust and a local level, provide effective oversight and strong pastoral support. Consequently, staff feel empowered and continuously drive the high standards of learning, well-being and belonging at the school.

The school complies with all of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Recommendations

R1 Continue to refine quality assurance approaches to identifying aspects of teaching that would benefit from further improvement

Compliance with the regulations for registration

Independent school inspections are governed by the Education Act 2002 and related regulations: the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003. These regulations require an independent school to meet an appropriate standard in the following areas:

The quality of education provided by the school

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The suitability of proprietors and staff

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The provision of information

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

The manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school meets the regulatory requirements for this standard.

What happens next

Estyn advises the proprietor to amend its current development plan to show what actions the school intends to take in response to the recommendations. It is also advisable to circulate this plan, or a summary of it, to all parents/carers at the school.

School context

Name of provider	Howell's School
Proprietor	The Girls' Day School Trust
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Independent all age
Residential provision?	No
Number of pupils on roll	661
Pupils of statutory school age	Need to clarify with school number in Sixth Form
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	09/02/2015
Start date of inspection	05/02/2024
At the time of inspection, the long-serving Principal was absent from school due to illness.	

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