

## NQA Award

### Summary of Visit

Wow, what a school!

There can be no doubt that Pentrepoeth Primary School is a healthy school and fully deserving of its National Quality Award. During the achievement visit it became very apparent that the concept of the healthy school and the protection and promotion of the physical and mental wellbeing of everyone connected to the school are fully and completely embedded in the life and culture of the school.

Throughout the school there is a consistent enthusiasm for, and commitment to the wellbeing of everyone connected to the school – learners, parents / carers, and all staff. It was very clear from this NQA visit that the ethos and approach to health and wellbeing is comprehensive, thorough, and shared consistently by all staff members and the wider school community.

There is a very strong sense of purpose at Pentrepoeth Primary School, with the desire to promote everyone's wellbeing at the core of that purpose. This results in the school having absolute clarity on where to place its focus and effort. Consequently, learners are in an environment where they can flourish and achieve.

There is strong leadership for wellbeing from the Headteacher Mr Dean Taylor, as well as the senior leadership team and the school governors.

Mention must be made of the work of Mr Jon Willmore in leading the Healthy School programme at Pentrepoeth Primary School. The work undertaken by him and his colleagues in preparing for the NQA Visit was exemplary in nature.

At Pentrepoeth there is a huge commitment to the promotion of a positive ethos and a secure environment. The vision, mission and aims are to create a caring, respectful, open environment for success and opportunity for all to flourish. This approach is based on the 24 School Values that shape and inform practice and behaviour with the school code being founded upon manners, respect and kindness.

Learners and staff at Pentrepoeth have developed a positive behaviour system to be used across all classes, highlighting positive behaviour as green behaviour. All learners aim to remain 'green'. Systems are in place to address orange and red behaviour through a restorative approach, which is very rarely used as behaviour is excellent. Pentrepoeth is an inclusive school where there are equal opportunities for all, and differences are celebrated.

Huge emphasis is given to the learner voice and at the heart of this is the work of the CROESO team, the members of which work closely with staff. It was very encouraging to meet members of the group and to hear their views on their experience at Pentrepoeth – all of which were very positive!

Learners described feeling at home at Pentrepoeth and they were able to describe how their ideas are listened to. They described what they would do if they needed help or had a concern or a worry. There are a range of ways a concern could be expressed, promoting a learner-centred approach to wellbeing. One learner described school as a place where ideas become reality and a place where everyone matters. The teachers were described as caring for everyone's wellbeing.

There is a strong sense of mutual respect for all at Pentrepoeth. Mental and emotional wellbeing is underpinned by corporate policies and learner friendly policies. There is a strong sense of family and a whole school open door policy. The PASS survey is used to support and promote wellbeing in school.

Staff feel well supported and describe regular opportunities for discussion and support is regularly offered. Staff model excellent relationships and respect for one another with this being very evident in the conversations we had.

It was very clear that staff are happy and really feel valued at Pentrepoeth. Staff socials are organised regularly, and staff voice is frequently collected. Ideas that are put forward are taken into consideration including ways of smarter working and improved working conditions as well as ideas on whole school development and improvement. Mr Dean Taylor was described as an empowering headteacher, enabling staff to thrive and flourish. Staff feel supported and want to go above and beyond.

Parents we spoke to describe a culture of support for emotional and mental health and of wellbeing for all. A school that nurtures and cares, providing a grounding education and celebrating differences, challenging social norms, and nurturing healthy, confident individuals.

It was very positive to see that the governing body is involved in every aspect of school life, from training to policy development, curriculum teams, learning walks, clubs, and celebrations as well as their more traditional role of governance.

The way that health and wellbeing is delivered across the curriculum is one of the standout features of the NQA Verification Visit to Pentrepoeth Primary School. The portfolio of evidence clearly showed how in both the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 health and wellbeing is seamlessly linked and truly integrated to the taught curriculum. There were many examples of how opportunities to link health and wellbeing to subjects / topics that do not normally cover wellbeing have been fully taken. This repeatedly reinforces to the learners the importance of looking after themselves and remaining healthy.

It is clear that the school has made great progress over recent years in terms of the way that health and wellbeing is promoted throughout the school. This is underpinned by the way the school has integrated its programme of health and wellbeing actions into the new curriculum in Wales. This has resulted in still further momentum and greater sustainability so far as the health and wellbeing programmes and activities are concerned.

The school has taken a number of steps to enhance parental engagement and it was noticeable that family and community involvement in the life of the school are strong. It was also notable that the school has very good links with the community and local community groups, which add to the richness of the learner experience in school. An important feature of steps taken by the school to involve parents is the Annual Parent Consultation Questionnaire which provides an opportunity for parents to comment on school related issues.

Mention must be made of the school's provision during the Covid 19 pandemic. Mr Taylor and the leadership team made the early decision to open their own Hub for the learners of Pentrepoeth, to avoid them having to commute to access provision in other schools. During this time staff were on site daily and several families were invited to join Hub provision, enabling them access to education, care, and food. Provisions were put in place to ensure that all learners were seen or heard regularly, and staff made home visits. This effort was positively praised by members of the parent/carer community, staff, and the governing body during the NQA visit. Communication was described as excellent. Software was provided for all learners to enable access to digital learning. Priority was placed around the emotional health and wellbeing of learners daily with activities to promote physical activity and fun. Staff went above and beyond to communicate messages of kindness, and support, putting smiles on as many faces as they could.

It was a very great privilege to be part of the NQA visit and to see at first-hand the wide variety of ways in which the health and wellbeing of the whole school community at Pentrepoeth Primary School is being protected and promoted and it was wonderful to see the truly comprehensive manner in which this is being achieved. The level of hard work and effort of everyone involved is exceptional. We would like to thank all those who took time to prepare information for our visit; to all who made themselves so available to us; and to everyone for making us feel so welcome.

It was a privilege to visit your school.