

Report summary for parents and carers on Abersychan Comprehensive School

Date of inspection: May 2025

Summary

Abersychan Comprehensive School has recently been through a period of transition, with the appointment of a new headteacher in January 2024 and a number of changes to leadership roles and responsibilities. Throughout this time of change, the new headteacher has demonstrated a clear vision for and a strong commitment to school improvement, focused on securing effective leadership, good quality teaching and improved outcomes for pupils. This vision is well understood by most stakeholders, and leaders are beginning to bring about some improvements in these important areas. However, there remains too much variation in the effectiveness of leadership, the impact of teaching and how well leaders self-evaluate and plan for improvement.

In lessons, the majority of pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those in the Learning Resource Base (LRB), engage appropriately in their learning and make suitable progress in their knowledge and understanding. A few, when inspired by carefully planned teaching, make strong progress. In a minority of cases, however, pupils' progress is limited by shortcomings in teaching, in particular a lack of challenge. In addition, the strategic planning for the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped. This means that pupils do not develop their literacy, numeracy, digital or Welsh language skills as well as they could.

The school has implemented a range of useful strategies to promote positive attitudes to learning and support pupils' well-being. In general, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, and are respectful to their peers, teachers and visitors. The school provides beneficial provision to support those pupils most at risk of disengagement. However, a minority of pupils do not show sufficient independence and resilience in their learning. Strategies to improve pupils' attendance have not had enough impact, and the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals remains a particular concern.

Leaders at all levels are committed to securing the best possible outcomes for all pupils. They have developed a generally sound culture of safeguarding across the school, although a safeguarding issue was brought to the school's attention during the inspection.

Overall, leaders do not hold staff to account, evaluate their provision or plan for improvement well enough.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Address the safeguarding issue identified during the inspection
- R2 Strengthen the impact of leadership, in particular by ensuring that processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning are consistently rigorous and robust
- R3 Improve the effectiveness of teaching so that pupils make consistently strong progress
- R4 Improve attendance, in particular that of pupils eligible for free school meals
- R5 Strengthen the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills across the curriculum

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. A small team of Estyn inspectors will visit the school to monitor progress about 12-18 months after the publication of the inspection report.

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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