



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Abersychan Comprehensive School  
Incline Road  
Abersychan  
Pontypool  
Torfaen  
NP4 7DF**

**Date of inspection: October 2016**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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**Publication date: 20/12/2016**

## Context

Abersychan Comprehensive School is an English-medium 11-16 co-educational school in Torfaen. There are 866 pupils on roll compared with 935 when the school was last inspected in 2009.

Around 25% of pupils are eligible for free school meals compared with the Welsh average of 17.1% for secondary schools. Nearly all pupils come from homes where English is the main language. Very few pupils say they speak Welsh at home. The proportion of pupils who come from ethnic minority groups is around 1%. Very few pupils have English as an additional language.

The school's intake represents the full range of ability. Approximately 36% of pupils are identified on the special educational needs register. This is significantly higher than the national average of 25.1%. Just less than 3% of pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is similar to the average for Wales as a whole of 2.4%. The school houses a special needs resource base local authority provision for learners with moderate learning difficulties; this currently has 30 pupils across two key stages, 19 of whom have statements.

The current headteacher came into post in September 2015. The senior leadership team is comprised of one deputy, four assistant headteachers and a business manager.

The individual school budget per pupil for Abersychan Comprehensive in 2016-2017 means that the budget is £4,765 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the secondary schools in Torfaen is £4,765 and the minimum is £4,028. Abersychan Comprehensive is first out of the six secondary schools in Torfaen in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

### Current performance

The following positive features were identified at the school:

- The performance of the pupils eligible for free school meals in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics has generally been in line with averages for similar schools over the last three years
- At key stage 3, the proportion of pupils who achieve the core subject indicator has increased rapidly and is now generally in line with the proportion in similar schools
- In a minority of lessons, teachers plan suitable activities that engage pupils' interests

However, current performance is judged to be unsatisfactory because:

- Pupils' outcomes at key stage 4 are too low in most subjects
- The performance of boys and progress of pupils with additional learning needs are particularly weak at key stage 4
- Attendance rates are too low and persistent absenteeism is high
- A minority of pupils do not remain focused in lessons and demonstrate poor behaviour
- The rates of fixed term exclusions are too high
- Teaching does not offer appropriate challenge for a minority of pupils
- A minority of pupils do not have suitable opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- The headteacher has generally brought about higher expectations over the last year and increased levels of accountability across the school
- There is a clear management structure and most staff understand their roles and responsibilities
- The school has appropriate systems in place to manage the performance of staff
- The school has acted decisively to tackle some long-standing issues, such as staff absenteeism
- Governors understand their role and provide appropriate challenge to the school

However:

- The leadership of wellbeing and additional learning needs in the school is not strong enough
- A minority of leaders do not have high enough expectations for pupils' outcomes and the monitoring of pupils' progress is poor
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning does not always identify areas for improvement precisely enough and, as a result, priorities are not sufficiently specific, or actions robust enough, to bring about the improvements required

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Raise standards at key stage 4, and for pupils with additional learning needs
- R2 Improve attendance and behaviour
- R3 Strengthen the quality of teaching and the provision for skills
- R4 Strengthen the provision for additional learning needs
- R5 Improve leadership across the school, and in particular the leadership of wellbeing
- R6 Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning

### **What happens next?**

#### **Significant improvement**

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 which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress about 12 months after the publication of this report.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Unsatisfactory

#### Standards: Unsatisfactory

At key stage 4, pupils' performance has been below or well below that of pupils in similar schools in many indicators over the last few years.

Performance in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics has been well below modelled outcomes in two of the last four years.

Performance in the capped points score has been weak over time and remains well below that in similar schools. This is due to pupils' poor performance in most subjects, and particularly in English language.

Performance in mathematics and science generally improved over the last few years until 2016 when outcomes in both fell. In contrast, performance in English has been in decline since 2014.

Boys' performance in both English and science at key stage 4 is weaker than that of girls, and very poor when compared to that of boys in similar schools. The performance of the pupils eligible for free school meals in the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics has generally been in line with that of similar schools over the last three years. However, in 2016, performance deteriorated and only a few of these pupils achieved the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics.

Many pupils with additional learning needs make poor progress compared with similar pupils. Performance of more able pupils is also weak, with a decline over time in the proportion of pupils achieving five A\* or A grades at key stage 4.

At key stage 3, the proportion of pupils who achieve the core subject indicator has increased rapidly in 2016 and is now generally in line with proportions in similar schools.

At the end of Year 11, most pupils remain in full-time education either in a school or further education college. Very few pupils are reported as not being engaged in education, employment or training.

At key stage 4, a minority of pupils achieve a level 2 short course qualification in Welsh, and standards are in line with those of similar schools. No pupils have been entered for the full course recently. At key stage 3, performance in Welsh second language at level 5 or above has improved sharply. It is now generally in line with that in similar schools. Many pupils are able to use greetings in Welsh and make simple enquiries of visitors.

In a majority of lessons, most pupils make appropriate progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills. In these lessons, pupils have suitable recall of previous learning, work well together and generally have a positive attitude to learning. A very few pupils make strong progress and evaluate their work beneficially.

In a majority of lessons, where the teaching is engaging, pupils listen attentively and maintain focus on their tasks. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils lack concentration and do not listen well enough to their teachers or their peers. As a result, they do not make sufficient progress.

In most lessons, pupils speak clearly and make valuable contributions to class discussions. In these lessons, a majority are articulate and able to express themselves suitably. A very few lack the confidence to contribute their ideas in class.

When offered the opportunity, many pupils read aloud clearly and confidently. Most pupils extract relevant information from text effectively. A few pupils use skills of inference and deduction well.

In a minority of subjects, many pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences and express themselves clearly. These pupils organise their writing well, and use a wide vocabulary, including subject specific terms, accurately. However, a minority have a weak command of grammar. Many pupils make frequent spelling errors. They also have poor presentational skills.

Many pupils are developing their numeracy skills well. In a few subjects, pupils can use these skills to draw suitable graphs and perform basic calculations. However, pupils do not use their numeracy skills frequently enough in subjects other than mathematics. This limits pupils' progress in their ability to use this skill in a variety of different contexts.

A minority of pupils develop their ICT skills suitably in a few subjects across the curriculum. For example, they create graphs and charts effectively, research information and use ICT packages beneficially to present their work for different audiences and purposes.

### **Wellbeing: Unsatisfactory**

Most pupils feel safe in school and many believe that staff respond well to any incidents of bullying. A majority of pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and regular exercise. However, pupils' attendance is too low when compared with rates in similar schools and a minority of pupils exhibit poor behaviour in lessons. Only a minority of pupils participate regularly in a range of extra-curricular sporting activities offered by the school.

Attendance rates have remained steady over the last three years. However, the attendance rates are below modelled outcomes and this has placed the school in the bottom quarter of similar schools based on eligibility for free school meals for the last three years. The attendance rates of pupils eligible for free school meals are also below the average for similar schools. Rates of persistent absenteeism are consistently high when compared with local authority and national figures.



The behaviour of a majority of pupils in lessons and around the school is good. These pupils are polite and show respect towards one another, to their teachers and to other adults. They also show a positive attitude towards their learning. However, a minority of pupils do not remain focused in lessons and poor behaviour hinders their progress and that of others. The rate of fixed term exclusions is too high.

Only a few pupils are involved in making decisions about the school. The school council has been involved in contributing towards a limited number of school initiatives, such as designing the anti-bullying posters. A few pupils are involved in successful community projects for example the Community First Youth Forum.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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**Learning experiences: Adequate**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for nearly all pupils. Leaders have recently revised the options process, which now provides most pupils with a suitable range of courses, including relevant vocational options at key stage 4. However, as places on these courses are limited in number, a few pupils cannot follow their first choice pathway. Furthermore, a few pupils with additional learning needs are not able to follow courses matched to their needs.

A suitable transition programme makes beneficial links with local primary schools. The school also offers a relevant range of within school and extra-curricular activities, which both enhance and support learning. These include a wide variety of sports, a brass band, 'reading buddies' and revision sessions.

The school has mapped out opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum appropriately. However, the planning for the development of these skills across the school is underdeveloped. As a result, there are not enough worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop skills such as extended writing in lessons.

Recently, the school has made improvements to its provision for Welsh. It has introduced a range of valuable opportunities to develop pupils' skills in Welsh and their appreciation of Welsh culture and history, for example when commemorating the anniversary of the Aberfan disaster.

Leaders have established valuable activities, which help pupils to develop their understanding of education for sustainable development and global citizenship. For example, pupils involved in the eco group have recently campaigned successfully to secure improvements to the school's recycling waste services.

**Teaching: Adequate**

In a majority of lessons, teachers have high expectations of all pupils and plan a suitable range of activities. They prepare worthwhile resources, which motivate pupils and engage their interest. These teachers offer pupils helpful guidance, and are good language models. As a consequence, in these lessons, pupils make appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding. In many lessons, teachers make appropriate use of praise and encourage less confident pupils to participate. These teachers check pupils' understanding frequently.

In a minority of lessons, the opportunities planned lack appropriate challenge. In addition, a very few teachers do not ensure that pupils get on with their learning quickly enough. In most lessons, teachers do not use information from individual education plans well enough, so that the work matches the individual needs of all pupils.

Positive relationships between teachers and pupils create a calm and purposeful learning environment in many lessons. Many teachers apply the school's behaviour policy appropriately when necessary. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not manage the behaviour of a minority of pupils well enough, so the learning of the class is disrupted.

Most teachers mark work regularly and many provide useful and meaningful written comments for pupils on how to improve their work. Many teachers encourage pupils to follow up on this feedback by improving specific aspects of their work.

The school's system for monitoring pupils' performance is improving. However, teachers' assessment of pupils' performance has not been accurate enough. This means that pupils in danger of under-achieving were not identified precisely, or soon enough.

Annual reports provide useful information about pupils' work for parents.

### **Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory**

The school's provision for personal and social education is suitable and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development beneficially. There are sound arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. However, the school's actions have not been successful in securing necessary improvements in attendance or behaviour. In addition, the school has not made suitable provision for pupils with additional learning needs. The provision to develop healthy attitudes to diet and exercise among its pupils has not had sufficient impact.

The school works well with partner primary schools to ensure any barriers to learning are removed, and pupils settle quickly when they join the school. Transition activities are particularly beneficial in meeting the pastoral needs of more vulnerable pupils. Guidance and support for pupils making option choices at the end of key stage 3 are limited, and therefore contribute to a few pupils following unsuitable courses.

Strategies to improve attendance have been revised recently. However, these approaches are at an early stage of implementation. As a result, attendance rates remain too low and persistent absence remains too high.

The school has a newly adopted behaviour policy. However, leaders have not ensured that the system is effective, or that all staff implement it consistently or confidently. As a result, the school does not deal with the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils effectively. The 'Learning to live' centre meets the majority of needs of those very few pupils with identified behaviour needs well. However, the provision in this centre is not being monitored thoroughly enough to ensure that it addresses all their requirements.

The resource base provides pupils with a safe environment that promotes positive attitudes to learning and offers valuable support for pupils with specific learning needs. However, the arrangements for identifying, supporting and monitoring pupils with additional learning needs across the school are not robust enough. As a result, pupils with additional learning needs do not make enough progress.

The school meets the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship and the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Learning environment: Adequate**

The school promotes an inclusive and positive ethos built around its mission statement of 'Learning to Live'. The school promotes equality well and successfully challenges stereotypical attitudes. The personal and social education provision helps pupils to develop their understanding of equality and diversity appropriately.

The school is a welcoming environment where a majority of pupils display positive attitudes towards their work and enjoy learning. However, a minority of pupils are less enthusiastic about their studies.

The school buildings are in a suitable state of repair. However, a few areas of the school's accommodation, in particular the toilets, are poorly maintained. There are satisfactory learning resources throughout the school. There is a well-equipped learning resource centre with a suitable range of books and computer equipment. The well-appointed facilities for music and drama strengthen the creative arts provision. Sporting facilities are sufficient and all pupils have equal access to this provision.

There are interesting displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors, which provide a stimulating and positive learning environment.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### **Leadership: Adequate**

Since being appointed in September 2015, the headteacher has communicated a consistent vision for raising pupils' outcomes to staff and pupils. This has generally brought about higher expectations and increased levels of accountability across the school. However, these improvements have not had time to impact on outcomes in key stage 4.

Accountability systems in school have improved. For example, meetings between leaders are now scheduled on a regular basis and have common agenda items. As a result, line management and other meetings focus appropriately on raising outcomes and improving provision. Key action points identified through these meetings are beginning to be followed up more consistently. The headteacher acted swiftly and decisively to challenge underperformance by staff, although this did not result in improved outcomes for pupils in the last academic year.

Over the last academic year, the headteacher has restructured the senior leadership team to focus more appropriately on the needs of the school. Leaders' roles and responsibilities are clearer and, generally, more balanced. However, the strategic co-ordination of pupils' wellbeing and additional learning needs is not strong enough. As a result, systems and processes for recording and monitoring attendance, dealing with poor behaviour and supporting pupils with additional learning needs are weak.

The school has strengthened its performance management arrangements and staff's targets align with whole school priorities. This means that staff are now held to account for their roles and the school is able to plan more effectively for professional development opportunities. However, there is too much variation in the degree of challenge set for staff in their targets. In addition, many of the school's main key indicator and subject targets at key stage 4 are not sufficiently challenging.

A majority of curriculum and pastoral leaders provide secure leadership in their areas and offer appropriate provision and support for pupils. However, in a minority of areas, expectations for pupils' outcomes are not high enough and the monitoring of pupils' progress and coursework is poor. As a result, too many pupils do not achieve their full potential.

Governors are fully committed to supporting the school and understand their roles well. Their involvement in self-evaluation, planning and the work of middle leaders is improving and they provide appropriate challenge to the school.

### **Improving quality: Unsatisfactory**

The school's arrangements for evaluating the effectiveness of its work and planning for improvement have recently been strengthened. As a result, many leaders have an increasingly secure understanding of the school's main strengths and areas for development. However, self-evaluation and resulting improvement planning have not had enough impact on important aspects such as pupil outcomes, attendance and behaviour.

The school has a suitable programme of self-evaluation activities. This includes regular book scrutiny, lesson observations and increasing consideration of parental views. Leaders also analyse a suitable range of data appropriately and make helpful comparisons with the performance of similar schools.

The school's self-evaluation report broadly identifies appropriate strengths and areas for improvement and draws on a suitable range of evidence. However, a few significant shortcomings have not been identified in the report and a few important aspects have not been evaluated thoroughly enough. For example, the report does not refer to the decline in standards in English or to standards in non-core subjects at key stage 4. In addition, the school does not take sufficient account of pupil views. As a result, the report does not give a wholly realistic or accurate picture of the school's performance.

The whole-school development plan focuses suitably on improving standards, provision and leadership. Many of the shortcomings identified through self-evaluation are addressed appropriately. However, the plan is too broad and activities are not prioritised well. In addition, many of the targets are not suitably challenging.

Middle leaders have had useful training in self-evaluation and improvement planning skills. As a result, many departmental self-evaluation reports broadly identify appropriate strengths and weaknesses and are generally evaluative. Many of these leaders analyse data in detail and the majority make sound use of findings from lesson observations and work scrutiny. However, progress leaders are not involved in evaluating the effectiveness of their work or planning for improvement in their area of responsibility.

Many departmental improvement plans reflect suitably the areas for improvement identified through self-evaluation and generally link appropriately to the whole-school priority to improve standards.

Despite improvements, the quality of departmental self-evaluation and improvement planning is too variable. Most reports and plans have shortcomings in a few areas. For example, a minority of reports do not identify important weaknesses and consequently do not address these in their improvement plans. A minority of reports are too descriptive and do not make sufficient use of findings from lessons and books.

The school has recently improved its arrangements for monitoring progress against the whole-school and departmental development plans. However, the school's review and evaluation processes over time have not been sufficiently rigorous or regular.

The school has made limited progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. Most recommendations remain a priority for the school.

### **Partnership working: Adequate**

The school has developed a suitable range of partnerships that enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Effective partnerships with partner primary schools enable pupils to settle in to the school quickly and successfully. There is a well-established programme of valuable activities, which include regular visits by Year 5 and Year 6 pupils and joint concerts. Pupils identified as requiring additional help are supported suitably before and during their transition. However, partnership working with primary schools has not been effective in ensuring progress in pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Partnerships with a local college and other work related learning providers have provided worthwhile opportunities for a few key stage 4 pupils to study courses that are appropriate to their needs and interests. There are suitable arrangements in place to monitor the quality of most of this provision.

The school has developed a range of productive partnerships with the local community. These include valuable opportunities for pupils to undertake work experience with local employers and numerous activities where pupils support the community through helpful charity work. These include creating the Abersychan community garden and preparing hampers for the elderly.

The school has strengthened its partnership with parents. In response to concerns, the school has improved its arrangements and now communicates with parents regularly through a variety of methods. In addition, the school organises maths workshops for pupils and their parents in the local community. The school has also established the 'Friends of Abersychan' group to increase parental involvement in the life of the school.

### **Resource management: Unsatisfactory**

Teachers are suitably qualified and are deployed appropriately to make best use of their subject expertise. However, during the last academic year, staff absenteeism was exceptionally high. As a result, too many lessons were not taught by specialist teachers. This was to the detriment of pupils' learning, and also contributed negatively to the general ethos and standard of behaviour around the school. During the last year, the school adopted effective steps to reduce staff absenteeism and introduced better provision to cover staff absences.

The school provides suitable professional development opportunities for teaching and support staff. Senior and middle leaders have received appropriate training to develop their leadership skills. In addition, the school has established beneficial links with a number of schools to learn from best practice in areas such as attendance, middle leadership and provision for pupils in the school's special needs resource base. However, professional development activities have not impacted consistently on improving outcomes for pupils.

The school manages its resources efficiently and the governing body scrutinises the school's use of resources well through its finance subcommittee. Expenditure is allocated appropriately to the school's strategic priorities. However, the school's use of its Pupil Deprivation Grant has not improved the outcomes for pupils disadvantaged by poverty.

In light of the outcomes achieved by pupils, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

# Appendix 1

## 6784070 - Abersychan Comprehensive

Number of pupils on roll	861
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	25.4
FSM band	4 (20%<FSM<=30%)

### Key stage 3

	School				Family average (2016)	Wales average (2016)
	2013	2014	2015	2016		
<b>Number of pupils in Year 9 cohort</b>	190	172	157	185		
<b>Achieving the core subject indicator (CSI) (%)</b>	79.5	72.1	68.8	84.3	82.5	85.9
Benchmark quartile	1	4	4	2		
<b>English</b>						
Number of pupils in cohort	190	172	157	185		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	85.8	80.2	74.5	87.0	86.9	89.2
Benchmark Quartile	1	3	4	3		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	44.2	37.8	46.5	44.9	45.8	56.2
Benchmark Quartile	1	2	2	3		
<b>Welsh first language</b>						
Number of pupils in cohort	.	.	.	.		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	.	.	.	.		92.0
Benchmark Quartile	.	.	.	.		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	.	.	.	.		57.2
Benchmark Quartile	.	.	.	.		
<b>Mathematics</b>						
Number of pupils in cohort	190	172	157	185		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	86.3	80.2	80.3	90.8	88.6	90.1
Benchmark Quartile	1	4	4	1		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	59.5	43.6	49.7	50.8	53.0	62.7
Benchmark Quartile	1	3	3	3		
<b>Science</b>						
Number of pupils in cohort	190	172	157	185		
Achieving level 5+ (%)	93.2	86.6	81.5	94.1	91.3	92.8
Benchmark Quartile	1	3	4	2		
Achieving level 6+ (%)	56.8	47.7	36.9	58.4	55.9	62.9
Benchmark Quartile	1	2	4	2		

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

. Denotes the data item is not applicable.

\* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

The benchmarks for Welsh are calculated using all schools that have pupils taking Welsh first language qualifications, and are based on the number of entries and do not include Welsh second language qualifications.

**6784070 - Abersychan Comprehensive**

Number of pupils on roll 861  
 Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average 25.4  
 FSM band 4 (20%<FSM<=30%)

**Key stage 4**

	School				Family average (2015)	Wales average (2015)
	2012	2013	2014	2015		
<b>Number of pupils aged 15</b>	188	205	189	193		
<b>Percentage of 15-year-old pupils who:</b>						
<b>Achieved the level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics</b>	30.3	33.7	49.2	48.7	51.1	57.9
Benchmark quartile	4	4	2	3		
<b>Achieved the level 2 threshold</b>	63.3	65.4	68.3	74.1	78.9	84.1
Benchmark quartile	3	3	4	3		
<b>Achieved the level 1 threshold</b>	89.4	89.3	92.1	94.3	95.8	94.4
Benchmark quartile	3	4	4	4		
<b>Achieved the core subject indicator (CSI)</b>	30.3	34.1	49.2	45.6	46.7	54.8
Benchmark quartile	3	3	1	3		
<b>Average capped wider points score per pupil</b>	304.1	296.5	308.4	327.2	333.1	343.5
Benchmark quartile	3	4	4	4		
<b>Average capped wider points score plus per pupil</b>	298.5	292.2	305.0	324.4	327.9	338.7
Benchmark quartile	.	.	.	.		
<b>Achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-A</b>	9.6	6.8	12.2	12.4	10.2	16.6
Benchmark quartile	.	.	.	.		
<b>Achieved A*-C in English</b>	46.3	42.0	56.6	53.4	61.7	68.6
Benchmark quartile	4	4	3	4		
<b>Achieved A*-C in mathematics</b>	35.6	46.8	54.0	64.2	58.7	64.4
Benchmark quartile	4	3	3	1		
<b>Achieved A*-C in science</b>	57.4	80.5	83.1	83.4	83.5	84.0
Benchmark quartile	3	2	3	3		
<b>Number of pupils aged 15 who entered Welsh First Language:</b>	.	.	.	.		
<b>Of those who entered Welsh First Language:</b>						
<b>Achieved A*-C in Welsh</b>	.	.	.	.		75.2
Benchmark quartile	.	.	.	.		

Includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

Includes results for 15-year-old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age. Ages at the start of the academic year.

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

The average capped wider points score is calculated using the best 8 results from all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales for each pupil.

For pupils entering Welsh First Language, the best grade of Welsh language and literature is taken. The denominator for this indicator is the number of 15 year olds who entered Welsh First Language, rather than the total number of 15 year olds.

. Denotes the data item is not applicable.

\* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

The benchmarks for Welsh are calculated using all schools that have pupils taking Welsh first language qualifications, and are based on the number of entries and do not include Welsh second language qualifications.



**6784070 - Abersychan Comprehensive**

Number of pupils on roll	861
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	25.4
FSM band	4 (20%<FSM<=30%)

**Key stage 4 - performance of pupils eligible for free school meals**

	School				Family Average (2015)	Wales Average (2015)
	2012	2013	2014	2015		
Number of pupils aged 15 eligible for free school meals	36	41	54	37		
Percentage of 15-year-old pupils eligible for free school meals who:						
Achieved the level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	8.3	29.3	24.1	35.1	28.4	31.6
Achieved the level 2 threshold	27.8	46.3	42.6	59.5	64.3	69.4
Achieved the level 1 threshold	77.8	78.0	81.5	91.9	90.8	89.4
Achieved the core subject indicator (CSI)	8.3	31.7	24.1	35.1	26.4	29.3
Average capped wider points score per pupil	240.8	247.5	249.8	296.6	299.0	303.7
Average capped wider points score plus per pupil	232.7	243.9	245.7	292.7	291.6	296.4
Achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-A	0.0	7.3	3.7	13.5	4.7	4.3
Achieved A*-C in English	11.1	31.7	31.5	43.2	40.4	45.1
Achieved A*-C in mathematics	11.1	36.6	27.8	45.9	37.4	39.2
Achieved A*-C in science	30.6	68.3	63.0	78.4	74.3	74.4
Number of pupils aged 15 who entered Welsh First Language:	.	.	.	.		
Of those who entered Welsh First Language:						
Achieved A*-C in Welsh	.	.	.	.		51.5

Includes all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales.

Includes results for 15 year old pupils, in maintained schools and independent schools, achieved during the academic year and any examinations taken at earlier age. Ages at the start of the academic year.

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

The average capped wider points score is calculated using the best 8 results from all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales for each pupil.

For pupils entering Welsh First Language, the best grade of Welsh language and literature is taken. The denominator for this indicator is the number of 15 year olds who entered Welsh First Language, rather than the total number of 15 year olds.

. Denotes the data item is not applicable.

\* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

More information is available on the Welsh Government website, My Local School, in the link below.

<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/index.html?lang=eng>

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	
I feel safe in my school	242	74 31%	148 61%	19 8%	1 0%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ysgol.
		44%	52%	4%	1%	
The school deals well with any bullying	242	62 26%	109 45%	53 22%	18 7%	Mae'r ysgol yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
		26%	57%	15%	3%	
I have someone to talk to if I am worried	241	84 35%	127 53%	25 10%	5 2%	Mae gen i rywun i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw i'n poeni.
		38%	52%	8%	1%	
The school teaches me how to keep healthy	242	49 20%	110 45%	62 26%	21 9%	Mae'r ysgol yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
		23%	56%	18%	3%	
There are plenty of opportunities at school for me to get regular exercise	240	101 42%	113 47%	22 9%	4 2%	Mae digonedd o gyfleoedd yn yr ysgol i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		44%	45%	9%	2%	
I am doing well at school	242	97 40%	122 50%	18 7%	5 2%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		32%	61%	5%	1%	
The teachers help me to learn and make progress and they help me when I have problems	242	78 32%	140 58%	20 8%	4 2%	Mae'r athrawon yn fy helpu i ddysgu a gwneud cynnydd ac maent yn fy helpu pan fydd gen i broblemau.
		38%	55%	6%	1%	
My homework helps me to understand and improve my work in school	240	48 20%	115 48%	52 22%	25 10%	Mae fy ngwaith cartref yn fy helpu i ddeall a gwella fy ngwaith yn yr ysgol.
		20%	53%	22%	5%	
I have enough books and equipment, including computers, to do my work	240	111 46%	114 48%	13 5%	2 1%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
		45%	46%	7%	1%	
Pupils behave well and I can get my work done	238	14 6%	116 49%	76 32%	32 13%	Mae disgyblion eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
		10%	56%	27%	6%	

		Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	
Staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect		237	65 27%	105 44%	54 23%	13 5%	Mae staff yn trin pob disgybl yn deg ac yn dangos parch atynt.
			29%	50%	17%	5%	
The school listens to our views and makes changes we suggest		241	30 12%	101 42%	83 34%	27 11%	Mae'r ysgol yn gwrandao ar ein barn ac yn gwneud newidiadau rydym ni'n eu hawgrymu.
			16%	53%	25%	5%	
I am encouraged to do things for myself and to take on responsibility		241	83 34%	142 59%	13 5%	3 1%	Rwy'n cael fy annog i wneud pethau drosaf fy hun a chymryd cyfrifoldeb.
			35%	59%	5%	1%	
The school helps me to be ready for my next school, college or to start my working life		239	78 33%	132 55%	23 10%	6 3%	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu i mi fod yn barod ar gyfer fy ysgol nesaf, y coleg neu i ddechrau fy mywyd gwaith.
			36%	54%	9%	2%	
The staff respect me and my background		240	81 34%	124 52%	29 12%	6 2%	Mae'r staff yn fy mharchu i a'm cefndir.
			37%	53%	7%	2%	
The school helps me to understand and respect people from other backgrounds		240	83 35%	125 52%	27 11%	5 2%	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu i mi ddeall a pharchu pobl o gefndiroedd eraill.
			36%	56%	7%	1%	
Please answer this question if you are in Year 10 or Year 11: I was given good advice when choosing my courses in key stage 4		62	11 18%	26 42%	16 26%	9 15%	Atebwch y cwestiwn hwn os ydych ym Mlwyddyn 10 neu Flwyddyn 11: Cefais gyngor da wrth ddewis fy nghyrsiau yng nghyfnod allweddol 4.
			28%	51%	16%	5%	
Please answer this question if you are in the sixth form: I was given good advice when choosing my courses in the sixth form		20	4 20%	3 15%	5 25%	8 40%	Atebwch y cwestiwn hwn os ydych chi yn y chweched dosbarth: Cefais gyngor da wrth ddewis fy nghyrsiau yn y chweched dosbarth.
			28%	50%	15%	7%	

## Responses to parent questionnaires

Denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
Overall I am satisfied with the school.	143	23 16%	101 71%	14 10%	5 3%	6	Rwy'n fodlon â'r ysgol yn gyffredinol.
		43%	50%	5%	1%		
My child likes this school.	145	36 25%	97 67%	9 6%	3 2%	4	Mae fy mhentyn yn hoffi'r ysgol hon.
		47%	48%	4%	1%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school.	144	41 28%	92 64%	10 7%	1 1%	5	Cafodd fy mhentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn yr ysgol.
		51%	45%	4%	1%		
My child is making good progress at school.	143	40 28%	85 59%	16 11%	2 1%	6	Mae fy mhentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn yr ysgol.
		46%	49%	5%	1%		
Pupils behave well in school.	123	9 7%	66 54%	37 30%	11 9%	26	Mae disgyblion yn ymddwyn yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		24%	60%	12%	3%		
Teaching is good.	138	18 13%	102 74%	15 11%	3 2%	10	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		34%	59%	6%	1%		
Staff expect my child to work hard and do his or her best.	146	50 34%	90 62%	5 3%	1 1%	3	Mae'r staff yn disgwyl i fy mhentyn weithio'n galed ac i wneud ei orau.
		51%	46%	3%	1%		
The homework that is given builds well on what my child learns in school.	135	27 20%	90 67%	17 13%	1 1%	14	Mae'r gwaith cartref sy'n cael ei roi yn adeiladu'n dda ar yr hyn mae fy mhentyn yn ei ddysgu yn yr ysgol.
		32%	56%	9%	2%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	129	22 17%	82 64%	16 12%	9 7%	20	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		35%	52%	10%	3%		
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	131	24 18%	91 69%	13 10%	3 2%	18	Caiff fy mhentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		35%	56%	8%	1%		
My child is safe at school.	139	29 21%	97 70%	8 6%	5 4%	10	Mae fy mhentyn yn ddiogel yn yr ysgol.
		43%	53%	3%	1%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs'.	110	21 19%	72 65%	13 12%	4 4%	37	Mae fy mhentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		37%	52%	9%	2%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Strongly Agree Cytuno'n gryf	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	Strongly disagree Anghytuno'n gryf	Don't know Ddim yn gwybod	
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	143	41 29%	80 56%	19 13%	3 2%	6	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		34%	51%	12%	3%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.	142	44 31%	81 57%	10 7%	7 5%	7	Rwy'n teimlo'n esmwyth ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r ysgol, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		43%	48%	7%	2%		
I understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.	129	23 18%	90 70%	11 9%	5 4%	19	Rwy'n deall trefn yr ysgol ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		31%	56%	11%	2%		
The school helps my child to become more mature and take on responsibility.	136	26 19%	100 74%	6 4%	4 3%	11	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu fy mhlentyn i ddod yn fwy aeddfed ac i ysgwyddo cyfrifoldeb.
		38%	55%	6%	1%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to the next school or college or work.	106	12 11%	71 67%	20 19%	3 3%	43	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol nesaf neu goleg neu waith.
		32%	55%	11%	2%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	133	25 19%	95 71%	11 8%	2 2%	15	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		37%	51%	10%	2%		
The school is well run.	139	20 14%	92 66%	20 14%	7 5%	8	Mae'r ysgol yn cael ei rhedeg yn dda.
		42%	50%	5%	2%		

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Karen Newby Jones	Reporting Inspector
Michelle Gosney	Team Inspector
Lowri Jones	Team Inspector
Robert Davies	Team Inspector
Peter Trevor Lewis	Lay Inspector
Mr David Cole	Peer Inspector
Charlotte Leaves (Assistant Head)	Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

### Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

## Glossary of terms

### Key stage 3 terms

#### The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 3 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 7 in the main).

The core subject indicator in key stage 3 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh <sup>1</sup>
- mathematics
- science

By the end of the key stage 3, at the age of 14, pupils are expected to reach level 5 and more able pupils to reach level 6 or above.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 5) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

### Key stage 4 and sixth form terms

Core subject indicator (CSI)	This relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
Families of schools	These have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include nine other schools with similar proportions of pupils: eligible for free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.
Level 1	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade D to G.
Level 1 threshold	This represents the equivalent of five GCSEs at grade D to G.
Level 2	This represents the equivalent of a GCSE at grade A* to C.

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<sup>1</sup> This indicator does not include Welsh second language qualifications.

Level 2 threshold including English or Welsh <sup>1</sup> and mathematics	This represents the equivalent of five GCSEs at grade A* to C including English or Welsh <sup>1</sup> and mathematics.
Level 2 threshold	This represents five GCSEs at grade A* to C or their equivalent.
Level 3	This represents the equivalent of an A level at grade A*-E.
Level 3 threshold	This is the equivalent of two A levels at grade A* to E.
Average wider points score	This includes all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the relevant age, for example at the age of 16 or at the age of 18.
Capped wider points score	This includes the best eight results from all qualifications approved for use in Wales at the age of 16.
Benchmarking groups	Schools are grouped together according to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in order to compare their performance with similar schools in different indicators.
Modelled outcomes	This is a prediction of a school's mean performance based on the statistical relationship between the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and a particular indicator.