



**Report summary for parents and  
carers on  
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School**

**Date of inspection: March 2023**

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

# Overview

Ysgol Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School is a caring environment where staff work productively to promote the school's vision of 'nurturing success'. The headteacher shares her vision effectively and has led with commitment to improve pupils' outcomes in examinations in both Key Stages 4 and 5.

Most pupils feel safe and free from bullying as part of the caring community, where senior leaders collectively promote a positive culture of safeguarding. The school provides a range of support for pupils' well-being and to assist them with their learning. However, the strategic leadership of well-being and pastoral support is not clear enough. As a result, leaders do not plan strategically or consider the impact of their work to support pupils' well-being and behaviour and additional learning needs well enough. In addition, work to improve attendance has not had a sufficient impact, particularly for pupils eligible for free school meals, or in reducing persistent absenteeism.

In lessons, most teachers have positive relationships with pupils and foster a calm learning environment where pupils generally engage well. The majority of teachers plan engaging activities that provide pupils with at least a suitable level of challenge. Many teachers ask suitable questions to test pupils' recall and understanding of tasks. As a result, in lessons, many pupils make suitable progress and the majority make good progress in their subject knowledge and understanding. However, the majority of pupils do not make enough progress in developing their skills. This is generally because teaching focusses too heavily on exam preparation and not enough on helping pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding in suitable contexts, or because lessons do not challenge them sufficiently.

Overall, pupils in sixth form make strong progress and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They engage well in lessons and are keen to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils in these year groups take on active leadership roles and enjoy looking out for younger pupils in the school.

The school provides a generally suitable curriculum for its pupils. This includes a suitable offer of vocational courses for GCSE and A level. However, the curriculum narrows for pupils in Year 9. This, together with too great a focus on examination technique, limits their opportunities to develop their skills. Overall, the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills is not sufficiently planned or coordinated.

Leaders are committed to improving pupil outcomes and to ensuring that all pupils enjoy attending Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School. Senior and middle leaders work productively together to track and monitor pupils' progress and consider appropriate interventions to help those at risk of underachieving. Although they engage in a range of self-evaluation activities, they do not evaluate the quality of teaching and learning sufficiently. This means that they have too positive a view of these important aspects and therefore do not plan for improvement in them precisely enough.

# Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen evaluation and improvement processes, including enabling pupils to have a voice about aspects of the school's work
- R2 Improve the strategic leadership of well-being and pastoral support
- R3 Strengthen the provision for and co-ordination of the progressive development of pupils' skills
- R4 Strengthen provision to reduce persistent absence and improve attendance, in particular, that of pupils eligible for free school meals

## What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.



## School context

Name of provider	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Secondary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	1319
Pupils of statutory school age	1134
Number in sixth form	185
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Secondary is 20.2%)	15.1%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Secondary is 17.8%)	8.0%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	1.8%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2006
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/02/2016
Start date of inspection	20/03/2023

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