



Report summary for parents and carers on Gowerton School

Date of inspection: December 2024

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

Summary

All members of Gowerton School community are valued, supported and respected. Leaders and staff at all levels have worked collaboratively to ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding is central to the school's work. Care, support and guidance are a strength of the school and have a positive impact on, for example, pupils' well-being.

Many pupils are friendly and welcoming and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They are engaged in their learning and sustain concentration well. A few are too easily distracted and have difficulty sustaining concentration. The majority of pupils make appropriate progress in lessons. However, a minority of teachers do not always plan lessons that consistently challenge and meet the needs of all pupils.

Leaders and staff are committed to developing their Curriculum for Wales, and there are useful opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy, digital and Welsh language skills. Although leaders pay appropriate attention to several key national priorities, there remains significant work to be done to see the required impact on aspects such as the progressive development of pupils' literacy skills and the quality of teaching.

The headteacher has developed a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff and considers pupil and staff well-being carefully. Although leaders work well together, roles and responsibilities are not equitable, there is a lack of clear, strategic leadership and they do not hold staff to account fully. They do not have a sufficiently rigorous approach to gathering evidence from activities such as learning walks and book reviews and are therefore unable to plan for improvement effectively.

Effective provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) helps them to make suitable progress against their individual targets. The specialist teaching facility (STF) provides a caring environment. Staff are successful in supporting pupils to make strong progress from their starting points, particularly in relation to their social and communication skills. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, although the cost of the curricular offer in the sixth form is not evaluated closely enough. The school provides a suitable programme of creative, sporting and cultural extra-curricular opportunities for pupils during and after school hours as well as a wide variety of educational visits and enrichment activities, which complement the curriculum.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Refine the roles and responsibilities of all senior leaders and ensure that they are held to account robustly**
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation processes so that leaders have an accurate view of the school's areas for development and plan for improvement precisely**
- R3 Improve the quality of teaching to address the shortcomings identified in the report**
- R4 Improve the provision for the progressive development of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum, in particular reading and writing**
- R5 Improve attendance**

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.

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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