

**Report summary for parents  
and carers on Abertillery  
Learning Community**

**Date of inspection: March 2025**

# Summary

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Most teachers at Abertillery Learning Community develop positive working relationships with pupils and create calm and supportive classrooms. Many use positive approaches effectively, which helps pupils to behave well and engage purposefully with their learning. In many classes, including the Complex Needs Resource Bases (CNRBs), staff provide clear instructions and suitable support, which ensures that pupils know what is expected of them. Overall, the school provides a caring and inclusive environment. Staff prioritise pupils' well-being and offer helpful support through strong partnerships with external agencies.

In a majority of sessions, teachers plan activities that support and challenge pupils successfully. As a result, pupils often demonstrate positive attitudes, participate enthusiastically, and make appropriate progress. Many primary-aged pupils develop suitable literacy and numeracy skills, and a few make strong progress in reading and writing. However, the school provides too few opportunities for pupils of all ages to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. The upper school's provision for the Welsh language is underdeveloped.

In a minority of sessions, teachers do not provide enough challenge or engaging activities. This limits pupils' opportunities to develop independence and thinking skills. In these cases, teachers overuse worksheets or talk for too long, meaning that pupils spend less time on meaningful tasks. As a result, pupils rely too much on teacher guidance and do not make sufficient progress, particularly in the upper school.

The school's curriculum reflects its community well and includes relevant themes such as local mining history. There is a clear vision for Curriculum for Wales, with a focus on developing pupils' life skills. Many pupils understand the importance of attending school, and attendance has improved notably. The pupil Senedd offers valuable leadership opportunities, although a minority of older pupils are less aware of its impact.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and has high expectations for herself and the entire school community. Leaders take clear responsibility for their areas, using data suitably to evaluate and improve performance. Senior leaders help others develop their evaluation skills. However, planning for improvement often lacks precision, limiting progress in teaching and skills development.

# Recommendations and next steps

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## **We have made four recommendations to help the school continue to improve:**

- R1 Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils of all abilities make suitable progress, particularly in the secondary phase
- R2 Provide meaningful challenging opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills
- R3 Ensure that leaders identify clear and specific actions when planning for improvement, particularly in relation to improving teaching
- R4 Ensure that the school meets the statutory requirement for pupils to study Welsh up to the age of 16

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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