

Report summary for parents and carers on Bedwas High School

Date of inspection: 19/01/2026

Summary

Bedwas High School provides a supportive environment where most pupils feel safe. Many pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and benefit from positive relationships with staff. Most pupils are courteous, respectful and behave well in lessons and around the school. In the majority of lessons, pupils make adequate progress. In these lessons, teachers have secure subject knowledge, make use of well-established routines and provide clear explanations.

In a minority of lessons, low expectations, weak planning and overly scaffolded or heavily teacher-led tasks impede learning. In these lessons, questioning does not extend pupils' thinking, the pace of learning is slow, and pupils often become passive, reducing their independence and sustained engagement. As a result, a minority of pupils make only limited progress.

The curriculum offers a broad range of relevant learning experiences, including worthwhile enrichment activities and appropriate academic and vocational pathways. The school promotes Welsh culture and identity well, with purposeful whole-school events and positive partnership work with primary schools. However, the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills is underdeveloped. Opportunities for the development of these skills in meaningful contexts across the curriculum are limited.

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to pupil well-being and have established a range of thoughtful and effective interventions which have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour, engagement and attendance. The school supports transitions effectively, providing helpful guidance as pupils join the school and move on to post-16 education, employment or training. Partnerships with a wide range of external agencies enhance pupils' well-being, for example through work experience for those at risk of exclusion. Whilst the attendance of pupils has improved, the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals remains too low.

The school's senior leadership capacity has reduced considerably. As a result, the remaining leaders carry an overly broad range of responsibilities, which limits their ability to provide clear strategic direction. Ongoing financial pressures further restrict the school's ability to strengthen leadership capacity. Professional learning does not focus closely enough on the aspects that require the most improvement, and the quality of line-management support for middle leaders is too variable. As a result, persistent weaknesses remain in teaching, skills development, self-evaluation, and planning for improvement.

Furthermore, whilst governors are committed to the school, their ability to provide effective support and challenge has been limited by an extended period without meetings.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Improve the quality of teaching to enable pupils of all abilities to make good progress
- R2 Review the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders to enable them to provide the necessary strategic direction
- R3 Strengthen arrangements for self-evaluation, improvement planning, professional learning and line management of senior and middle leaders
- R4 Strengthen the provision for and the coordination of the progressive development of pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills
- R5 Ensure governors fulfil their roles fully and are able to challenge and support senior leaders in improving important aspects of the school's work
- R6 Work closely with the local authority to provide robust financial management

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

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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