

Report summary for parents and carers on Aberdare Community School

Date of inspection: 26/01/2026

Summary

Pupils and staff are proud to belong to Aberdare Community School. The headteacher, has driven the committed focus on well-being, building positive relationships and a strong safeguarding culture. As a result, many pupils behave well and most feel safe and happy in school.

The school provides a generally broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils, including those in the sixth form and the local authority specialist classes. This curriculum is enriched through a wide range of worthwhile extra-curricular clubs and visits. There is a wide range of valuable opportunities for pupils, particularly for those in the sixth form, to contribute to the life of the school. This promotes a strong sense of community. However, the strategic leadership of, and planning for, the provision for the progressive development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are underdeveloped.

In the majority of lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and make suitable progress. In these lessons teachers plan appropriate tasks to engage pupils and sustain their concentration. However, in a minority of cases pupils do not make enough progress. This is usually due to shortcomings in teaching, in particular teachers' expectations of what pupils can do being too low, not using questioning well enough to deepen pupils' thinking and their explanations often lacking clarity.

Leaders are committed to providing the best opportunities and experiences for pupils at Aberdare Community School. However, many lack strategic planning skills and do not hold staff, or one another, to account well enough. Although they undertake a suitable range of self-evaluation activities, leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work on pupils' progress with sufficient rigour or accuracy. As a result, they do not identify key areas for improvement clearly, and their improvement planning lacks precision.

Leaders have reorganised roles and introduced new strategies to strengthen its work on improving attendance. Despite these developments, pupils' attendance remains too low, especially that of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Strengthen strategic leadership and accountability at all levels
- R2 Improve the quality and impact of teaching so that it supports all pupils to make strong progress
- R3 Improve the leadership of and provision for the progressive development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills
- R4 Strengthen the rigour and precision of self-evaluation and improvement processes
- R5 Improve attendance

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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