

Ebbw Fawr Learning Community

Cymuned Ddysgu Ebwy Fawr

Acting Headteacher/Penaeth Dros Dro: Saul Graydon

www.ebbwfawr.co.uk
11 April 2016

To the Parents/Carers of Pupils of Ebbw Fawr Learning Community

Dear Parent/Carer

Following our recent Estyn inspection we are pleased that the report recognises many of the strengths of Ebbw Fawr Learning Community. I wish to thank the many parents who contributed to the Estyn process, either through your completion of the questionnaire or by attending the parents' meeting with the inspectors. The report has now been published and is available on the school website www.ebbwfawr.co.uk or Estyn's website, www.estyn.gov.uk. Alternatively, please contact the school should you require a paper copy, which will be sent to you free of charge.

In relation to the primary phase, the report praises:

- the consistent improving trend in performance with standards being judged as good. In particular the inspectors commented that in the Foundation Phase and at the end of key stage 2 pupils' performance place the school generally above the average for similar schools.
- pupils' standards of reading, writing, numeracy and Welsh
- the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals and pupils with additional learning needs who "make very good progress"
- our learners' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons
- the pupils as being happy and confident
- the positive ethos within the primary phase
- pupils' attendance and punctuality
- the care, support and guidance offered by the school and the positive impact this has on pupil wellbeing.
- the quality of teaching and assessment
- the range of learning experiences offered that meet the needs of all learners
- the inclusive approach and positive working relationships between pupils and staff
- the worthwhile and creative partnerships which the school has established

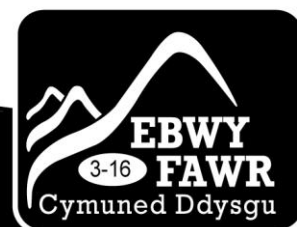
In relation to the secondary phase, the report praises:

- the upward trend in the proportion of pupils who achieve the core subject indicator (level 5 or higher in each of English, Maths and Science) at the end of key stage 3; performance in relation to this indicator has placed the school above the average for similar schools throughout Wales in two of the last three years
- the consistent improving trend in performance in nearly all key performance indicators in key stage 4 over the last three years
- the performance in the level 2 threshold, including English and Mathematics which has placed Ebbw Fawr in the upper half or top quarter of similar schools across Wales since 2013
- the performance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, which has been above comparators for the last two years
- the performance in Welsh, which is a strength of the school.
- the performance of pupils with additional learning needs who "make very good progress". As a school we are committed to maintaining these high outcomes and we are working hard to support our learners' achievements

Learning to Achieve Together | Yn Dysgu I Gyflawni gyda'n gilydd

Primary Phase/Cyfnod Cynradd: Strand Annealing Lane, Ebbw Vale NP23 6AN T: 01495 357755

Secondary Phase/Cyfnod Uwchradd: Lime Avenue, Ebbw Vale NP23 6GL T: 01495 354690



The report also states that:

- most pupils demonstrate good behaviour during lessons and generally sustain an appropriate level of concentration during tasks
- many pupils contribute successfully to their local community
- most pupils' attendance compares favourably with similar schools
- the school provides a wide range of beneficial extra-curricular provision.
- there is a coherent structure of leadership groups at many levels with clear lines of accountability
- the valuable contribution that support staff make to the life of the school
- there are innovative initiatives to improve communication with parents, including our Ebbw Fawr 'app' and informative website
- the work of governors 'make a valuable contribution to the life of the school'
- the school has worthwhile and creative arrangements for partnership working, which contribute towards many beneficial opportunities for pupils. This includes effective links with partner primary schools to help pupils make a smooth transition to secondary school

The school is described as having an inclusive ethos with positive working relationships existing between pupils and staff. The inspectors found that there has been a strong focus on creating a culture of teamwork based on our mission statement 'Learning to Achieve Together'. The report states that this has contributed well to overall improvement in performance at all key stages.

The current performance and prospects for improvement for Ebbw Fawr Learning Community are judged to be adequate, which is defined by Estyn as 'strengths outweigh areas for improvement'. The inspectors have made a number of recommendations for improvement, which are already included in our plans for the coming months and have involved consultation with pupils and staff. These include:

- improving the implementation of our procedures within the secondary phase in response to any incidents of bullying which occur;
- improving older pupils' independent learning and oracy skills;
- improving the quality of teaching, especially within the secondary phase;
- ensuring that our self-evaluation and improvement planning processes draw upon all of the evidence that we collect;
- reducing the rate of fixed term exclusions, and
- ensuring that requirements for a daily act of collective worship are met, especially in the secondary phase.

All at the school are fully committed to achieving excellence in all aspects of our work and we are determined to build on the strong practice which is in place. We look forward to meeting with Estyn once more in 2017 to show the progress we have made in building on the positive strengths recognised in the report.

We will update you regularly over the coming months in relation to the actions that we are taking to respond to the inspectors' recommendations and the impact that those actions are having. We are keen to develop our partnership further and to this end we invite you to provide any suggestions or comments that you may have, either via email or via your son / daughter. Should you wish to discuss the inspection report and the school's response, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school and I will be delighted to meet with you.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Davies
Chair of Governing Body

Mr S Graydon
Acting Headteacher