



## Report summary for parents and carers on Ebbw Fawr Learning Community

**Date of inspection: November 2023**

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

# Overview

Staff in Ebbw Fawr Learning Community are committed to the school's vision of creating a safe, secure and caring environment to ensure that pupils are 'learning to achieve together'. This vision is communicated clearly by the headteacher who is a strong role model that has high expectations of himself and others. Leaders work well with each other and succeed in creating an ethos across the school sites that encapsulates the 'Ebbw Fawr Way' of being 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'.

Promoting pupil well-being is central to the school's work and it has an extensive range of provision to support pupils in an inclusive and supportive environment. This contributes towards its pupils feeling safe in school and displaying a positive attitude towards their work and school life. A positive feature of the school is the numerous opportunities it provides for pupils to take on leadership roles.

Most teachers plan and adapt work that meets the needs of nearly all pupils. They engage pupils in their learning, provide valuable experiences that relate to their everyday lives and successfully remove barriers to learning. As a result, most pupils in primary phase and many pupils in the secondary phase, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals make at least suitable progress over time. Whilst there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy and reading skills, they do not write at length often or purposefully enough.

Teachers promote positive behaviour well and there are robust arrangements to promote good attendance. The Ebbw Vale Engage ('EVE') programme ensures that a few pupils in danger of disengagement attend regularly and benefit from alternative off-site provision. Although attendance at the time of the inspection remains lower than before the pandemic it has improved significantly over the last few months. The learning resource base (LRB) successfully supports secondary pupils with a range of significant additional educational needs to make sound progress and attend school regularly.

Leaders mitigate the effect of poverty on pupils' attainment and well-being effectively. They monitor and evaluate the school's work carefully and implement changes effectively. They use the opinions of pupils and parents well to make improvements to provision, especially for pupils' well-being. However, when evaluating teaching, leaders do not always consider the impact on pupils' progress well enough

# Recommendations

We have made 2 recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1** Sharpen self-evaluation processes to focus more specifically on the impact of teaching on learning
- R2** Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills and write at length for authentic purposes

## What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the impact of the whole school approach to remove barriers to learning, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Statutory compliance

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including use of the pupil development grant.

The school's arrangements for site security do not give any cause for concern.

# School context

Name of provider	Ebbw Fawr Learning Community
Local authority	Blaenau Gwent
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	All age school
Religious character	Not applicable
Number of pupils on roll	1381
Pupils of statutory school age	1315
Number in nursery classes	40
Number in sixth form	Not applicable
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in All age schools is 21.6%)	28.1%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in All age schools is 11.0%)	11.4%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.6%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	1.4%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	08/02/2016
Start date of inspection	27/11/2023

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