

Annual Report

2021-22

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"We can learn all about our world in the investigation areas." Harrison (Y2)



1. Foreword by Suzanne Williams, Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to report that 2021/22 has been a milestone year for Abertillery Learning Community. The school had its follow up review from Estyn in the Spring Term, and it was recognised that the school has made strong progress and is no longer in need of significant improvement. As a result, we can create a school plan that will drive improvement , deliver success for all our pupils and ensure that we attract the best staff.

The school leadership team has continued to strengthen leadership and accountability across the Learning Community with key appointments made over the academic year.

We have seen a continual improvement in our school results . Our Year 11 class of 2022 outcomes show significant improvement on previous years. 88% of all our pupils left with 5A*-G and 17% achieved 5A-A*. We will continue to support our pupils to achieve the best results and are focused on providing new subjects and vocational qualifications to meet the needs of all our pupils.

Through careful restructure, we have strengthened the pastoral team to build capacity and offer increased support to our pupils. We have worked to ensure pupil and staff wellbeing remains a top priority for the Governing Body. This has become more important as we support the return of pupils following the pandemic.

We launched our new curriculum, "TAITH" following consultation with pupils, parents and key stakeholders at the end of the Summer Term. We have made a strong start in developing the new curriculum which will be rolled out over the next few years starting with our youngest children in September 2022.

We have continued to be involved in events within the local community and support local causes. We have been working closely with businesses in our local community to ensure our pupils leave with the skills necessary to work in our community. We launched our THALES Suite on our secondary campus, so our pupils can develop skills in cybersecurity working with staff from THALES.

We will continue to work in partnership with Blaenau Gwent Council to ensure we have the necessary resources and the best facilities. We have seen a year on year increase in pupils wanting to attend our school and need to ensure we build additional capacity.

I would like to thank the local community for their support and best wishes over the last year. This has meant a lot to the me and the head-teacher. It is reassuring that as we develop and build relationships that we can encourage our pupils to be proud and active member of the community.

Without our brilliant staff the Governing Body could not present such a positive Annual Report. We would like to thank them and recognise their commitment and hard work.

Finally, as Chair of Governors, I would like to thank those governors who have completed their term of office and welcome new governors. Many of those leaving have been on the Governing Body since the new school opened in 2016 and have given hours of their time to getting the school to where it is today. If you are interested in becoming a governor, an up-to date list of governors can be found on our web site along with any vacancies.

2. Details of the Annual Parents' Meeting

Details of the Annual Parents' Meeting

Under the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 the Governing Body is no longer required to hold a meeting for the purpose of using the attached positive report. However, if 5% of parents wish to request a meeting in writing then one can be convened.

Our experience from previous years indicates that parents / carers contact members of the Governing Body freely during the course of the year and this more informal approach works well.

The headteacher provides strong leadership across the school and is committed to securing high quality teaching and provision for all pupils. With the full support of the senior leadership team, she has established useful cross-phase working and ensured that this is central to effective strategic planning across the school.

Estyn 2022

3. Members' Details

2. Members' Details

The Governing Body, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher share responsibility for the strategic management of the school, acting within the framework set by National legislation and have separate and particular responsibilities for the selection and management of staff. The internal management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher. The full Governing Body meets at least once a term and additional sub-committees meetings are held half termly to discuss specific issues. The minutes of Governing Body meetings are available from the clerk to governors. The Governing Body for our school for the forthcoming year will be:

Community Gov appointed by GB/Cymunedol, penodwyd gan BLI

Suzanne Williams, Rebecca Jarrett, Vacancy

Headteacher/Pennaeth

Meryl Echeverry

LA Appointed/Penodwyd gan yr ALI

Vacant

Richard Bevan, Darryl Tovey, Martin Cook, Debbie Field

Parent Representative/Cynrychiolydd Rhiant

Charlotte Clark, Ian Probert, Lucy Fryatt, Helen Evans, Sarah Jones, Lian Daniels

Teacher Representative/Cynrychiolydd Athrawon

Patrick Devine, Jemma Welch

Support Staff Representative / Cynrychiolydd Staff Cymorth

Kim Evans

Governors use their skills effectively to provide a suitable level of challenge to school leaders.

Estyn 2022



I like having chickens at school. When we are waiting for Breakfast Club, we can go and check on the chickens!

Bella (Y2)

4. Performance and Target Information

2022 Outcomes – Whole School

Year 11 Outcomes

Measures	2019 Whole School (88) (No.)	2022 Whole School (137) (No.)
Interim Capped 9	337.4	343.8
5A*-C Inclusive	33% (29)	46% (64)
5A*-G	98% (86)	88% (121)
A*-C English Lang/Lit	40% (35)	59% (81)
A*-C Maths/Numeracy	49% (43)	53% (72)
A*-C Science (x2)	27% (24)	51% (70)
A*-C Welsh	42% (37)	56% (77)
5A*-A	8% (7)	15% (21)

Teaching in the secondary phase has improved overall, and has had a positive impact on pupils' progress, behaviour and attitudes to learning

Estyn 2022

2022 Outcomes – Whole School

Year 11 Outcomes

Measures	2019 Whole School (88) (No.)	2022 Whole School (137) (No.)
Capped 9	337.4	343.8
APS Literacy	34.6	36.4
APS Numeracy	33.4	33.8
APS Best Science	27.3	34.8
APS Skills Challenge	36.9	38.1

Most pupils behave well in lessons, when moving around the school and during lunch and break times.

In lessons, they adopt positive attitudes to learning and engage well in their work. They are respectful to each other and to adults in the school.

Estyn 2022

After school revision sessions were put on to help Year 11 learners prepare for their GCSE Science exams. Learners that attended these sessions benefitted from tuition and past exam paper practice and they had a big impact on the results that these pupils achieved.

Head of Science Faculty

2022 Outcomes – **Mainstream** Only

Year 11 Outcomes

Measures	2019 Mainstream	2022 Mainstream
	(77) (No.)	(137) (No.)
Interim Capped 9	349.1	364.1
5A*-C Inclusive	38% (29)	52% (64)
5A*-G	100% (77)	97% (120)
A*-C English Lang/Lit	45% (35)	65% (80)
A*-C Maths/Numeracy	52% (40)	58% (72)
A*-C Science (x2)	31% (24)	56% (70)
A*-C Welsh	48% (37)	62% (77)
5A*-A	9% (7)	17% (21)

Most teachers establish and maintain a productive learning environment in their classes. They start their lessons purposefully, help pupils settle to their work swiftly and manage behaviour positively.

Estyn 2022

5. Financial details

	2021/2022 Fixed Budget	2021/2022 Year End Actual
	£	£
Employees	7,075,691	6,827,492
Other Employee Costs	107,374	464,768
Utilities	153,036	180,452
Capitation	317,835	262,564
Premises	322,809	339,792
Communications	19,495	17,531
Transport	6,000	10,761
Central Services	793,611	739,675
Total Expenditure	8,795,850	8,843,036
	2021/2022 Fixed Budget	2021/2022 Year End Actual
	£	£
Income	75,000	£510,143
Net Expenditure		
Expenditure-Income	8,720,850	£8,332,893

The school's use of significant grant funding, including the pupil development grant, is beginning to impact positively on pupils' outcomes and better engagement by pupils eligible for free school meals.

Estyn 2022



I like the mud kitchen because you can make pretend food. Paige

I like dressing up and playing music on the stage. Harrison

I like to measure the plants. Savannah

I love to paint flowers. Annilah

I like to build in the block area with my friends. Gracie

I love playing in the water with my friends. Finley



We have worked with our pupils, staff and the wider community to develop our new curriculum, TAlTH. This has been launched in our primary phase and pupils are responding really well to the exciting approach to learning.

Director of Learning

I like to build in
the block area
with my friends.

Gracie





Mae siarad Cymraeg
yn cŵl! Kian

5. Action taken by the Governing Body/School

- Action taken as a result of any resolutions passed at the last meeting. N/A
- Progress on school action plan (post inspection).

ESTYN RECOMMENDATION	VERY GOOD PROGRESS	STRONG PROGRESS	SATISFACTORY PROGRESS	LIMITED PROGRESS
R1. Improve standards, in particular outcomes at the end of key stage 4				
R2. Improve standards of behaviour in the secondary phase				
R3. Improve the quality of teaching				
R4. Improve planning for progression of skills, including the Welsh language and the breadth of the secondary phase curriculum				
R5. Improve the quality and impact of Leadership at all levels including self-evaluation and planning for improvement				
R6. Provide robust financial management to address the deficit budget				

Action taken to implement and review specific action taken to develop or strengthen links with the community (including links with the police)

- Every Primary campus has a group of Y5/6 learners working with Heddlu Bach and each campus has an identified member of staff responsible for co-ordinating the project alongside PCSO Kay Mosley.
- Each campus has a link with a local church. Local ministers deliver assemblies throughout the year e.g. Harvest, Easter.
- Each campus has a link with a local foodbank. Harvest donations are given to these food banks.
- The Eden Play Centre kindly provided awards for children working towards the 4CP in the new curriculum.
- Carl Betty delivered martial arts sessions for our primary learners as part of the WG pilot project to extend the school day.
- Y6 transition sports day held in July alongside local sports providers.
- Primary campuses established a link with Abertillery Brass Band and worked with UpBeat to rehearse a performance to commemorate Abertillery's Centenary (Y5/6 learners) – although due to Covid restrictions the school were unable to take part in the final performance.
- ALC learners created items for sale at Abertillery's Winterfest and Aberfest.

6. Organisation and Policies

➤ SEN (Special educational Needs)

ALCs Additional Needs Policy was presented and accepted by the Governing Body during the Spring Term. The policy reflects a whole school approach to ALN (Additional Learning Needs) and the implementation of the new bill including changes made during the ALNET (transformation from the old SEN system to the new ALN system). All stakeholders were consulted and participated in creating the policy. It has been shared with staff and is accessible to all on the school's website. The policy is successful in clearly outlining the schools vision for ALN. It also clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of all staff, in particular the increased responsibilities of class teachers when supporting children/young people with ALN.

Resources are allocated from the schools delegated budget received from the LA on a need led basis throughout mainstream 3-16, our CNRBs are funded directly by the local authority separately. Allocation is reviewed termly and staff, interventions and physical resources are shared effectively ensuring the best outcomes for learners. Partnership working is good with the LEA and cluster/specialist schools, this has been a strength during the implementation of the new ALN bill where support and guidance has been shared and offered.

➤ School Strategies

- Primary playgrounds have been 'zoned' during break and lunchtimes to provide a variety of structured activities for learners.
- Pupil Parliament and Class Ambassadors have consulted with all primary learners on sanctions and rewards. This feedback fed directly into the development of the new behaviour policy.
- All learners received regular assemblies with a focus on anti-bullying (e.g. during Anti-Bullying Week).
- All learners received assemblies with a focus on safeguarding.
- Roseheyworth Campus has fitted thumb-locks on all internal classroom doors to support the Secure and Shelter policy.
- Weekly assembly calendar includes carefully planned opportunities to celebrate inclusivity and diversity.

Brief overview of Lower School developments

- Forest Schools area developed at RR and being developed at TS/ SB.
- Cross-progression step AOLE groups established (teachers).
- Teachers trialling new approaches to planning in line with the new curriculum.
- Learners took part in the BG calendar of sporting events including cricket tournaments where our team reached the final.
- Each campus celebrated Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum jubilee through tea parties, learning activities and assemblies.
- Primary phase supported a range of charities e.g. Downs Syndrome Awareness, Children in Need.
- Parents were introduced to the new curriculum through in-person events.
- Parents were once-again invited to spectate sports days.
- Parents were invited into school to watch the Y6 leavers' assemblies.

Brief overview of Upper school developments

- Upper school Literacy, Languages and Communication and Science and Technology faculty are planning for early Curriculum for Wales trials.
- The Health and Well-being faculty is established and Well-being lessons have been incorporated into the curriculum to develop a holistic approach to the statements of what matters.
- Pupils participated in a range of sporting activities including netball all ages, boys football all ages, girls football all ages, rugby all ages, cross country,
- Pupils participated in career events at Coleg Gwent in line with learners' careers check interests and future career pathways
- Y7-11 participated in the Careers Discovery week, including virtual presentations and resources from a range of providers in line with each AoLE. In addition to this, Year 10 benefited from a face-to-face drop-down careers day where 5 employers delivered presentations and facilitated Q&A sessions.
- A local careers fair was planned in conjunction with Careers Wales where KS4 learners were able to engage with employers to understand what career opportunities there are in Abertillery and Blaenau Gwent.
- Learners raised money for a range of charities throughout the year voted in by each year group including Mind Cymru, AP Cymru, Wales Air Ambulance, Ty Hafan and Latch charity.

Teachers demonstrate a willingness to explore new ideas and this is contributing to the development of a learning culture in the school.

Estyn 2022



The launch of our CyberClub has been a great success. Our Thales CyberClub recruits on the secondary campus have engaged well and enjoyed visiting the Thales NDEC in Ebbw Vale, where they were able to drive the simulators and see a top-secret cyber development. The club has allowed learners to develop advanced cyber security skills and knowledge through a series of tasks. This included a pitch in the summer term from learners received prizes for their participation. The CyberClub recruits are looking forward to the activities organised for the term ahead, where Thales will be bringing in a server for learners to investigate.

Gary Nash - Principal IT technician and CyberClub lead

Personally, I really enjoy attending the Thales club, and I know the other members do top. The Thales room is really well equipped and a great environment to be in. The club enables us to learn lots but also have fun at the same time. It is also great to put on my CV and support me with my future career.

Blake Retallick - Year 10

The school focuses on providing suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, and this is having a positive impact on the standards of pupils' written work

Estyn 2022

Term dates

The school term dates are established in line with Welsh Government requirements and consultation with Councils and schools. For INSET days please refer to the school's webpage. Please see below the term dates for the academic year 2022/23:

Date	Start	Half Term Starts	Half Term Ends	Term Ends
Autumn	02/09/2022	31/10/2022	04/11/2022	23/12/2022
Spring	09/01/2023	20/02/2023	24/02/2023	31/03/2023
Summer	17/04/2023	29/05/2023	02/06/2023	21/07/2023

Pupils of all ages elect a representative for the school council. Class ambassadors provide valuable feedback on issues taken forward to the whole school council meetings. Their input has led to notable changes such as changing provision in the school canteen and the implementation of gender neutral changing rooms and improving transition arrangements for Year 6 pupils. This gives pupils a sense of ownership of important aspects of the life and work of the school.

Estyn 2022

8. Destination of School Leavers

- **46% of learners are enrolled on courses at Coleg Gwent**
- **22% of learners are enrolled on courses at Cross Keys College**
- **24 learners did not enrol in September at Coleg Gwent- BGLZ or Cross Keys Campus (some of which may be enrol elsewhere that is not recorded by Coleg Gwent)**
- **44 learners went on to complete A Levels**
- **13 learners went on to complete ILS skills**