

# The Potteries School

**ABERMULE NEWTOWN POWYS SY15 6JH**

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## • ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025 - 2026 •

**A detailed guide of school performance at the Potteries School for learners, care workers, parents, HM Inspectorate and Local Authorities.**

## **SCHOOL DETAILS**

**Name:** The Potteries School  
**Address:** Abermule  
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Powys  
SY15 6JH  
**Telephone:** (01686) 630176  
**Email:** potteries.school@greenfields.uk.com  
**Headteacher:** Andy Joynson (B.Sc. P.G.C.E.)  
**Registered Manager:** Lucy Scotford

## **PROPRIETOR DETAILS**

**Name:** Andrew Sutherland  
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82 Oxford Road  
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**Telephone:** (01707) 601800  
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## **REGIONAL EDUCATION LEAD**

**Name:** Rob Mcconomy  
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## **INSPECTION INFORMATION**

The Potteries School was registered with the Welsh Assembly Government as of 27<sup>th</sup> July 2013. The School provides an assessment centre for up to four male learners between the ages of 10 and 18. The school educates Looked After Children who may have an Education Health and Care Plan (England) or Individual Development Plan (Wales) with the predominant support being SEMH with Additional Learning Needs.

The School had its first core inspection from Estyn between Monday 13<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and the report findings were published on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Overall, the School was rated as good.

The School had its most recent core inspection from Estyn between Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and the report findings were published on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025. The School was not compliant with Part 1 – Quality of the education provided of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024.

The School had two monitoring and compliance visit (April and September) in 2025 and at the second of these, it was found to be compliant with the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2024. The narrative below explains the findings of the inspectorate.

*Since the core inspection in November 2024, leaders at The Potteries have taken significant steps to strengthen the curriculum across all areas. They have worked systematically to develop a coherent curriculum framework and to ensure that pupils receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced education.*

*The school's curriculum policy is now detailed and well structured. It sets out clearly the ethos and aims of the provision and maps out a curriculum that meets statutory requirements while being adaptable to the individual needs of pupils. The policy is supported by thorough schemes of work which provide coherent sequences of learning.*

*These schemes set out clear pathways in literacy, numeracy, science and other key subjects with appropriate opportunities for accreditation from entry level through to level 2 qualifications.*

*The detail and coherence of the revised schemes of work mean that learning activities are planned more effectively to meet the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with IDPs. The curriculum places strong emphasis on developing life and independence skills as well as preparing pupils for adulthood. For example, pupils work through individual learning passports that cover sport and recreation, food technology, independence skills and curriculum-based targets.. These activities help pupils prepare for adult life by giving them practical experiences that build confidence and readiness for their next steps.*

*Leaders have also embedded a range of valuable short courses, unit awards and digital literacy awards alongside practical accreditations such as food hygiene, independent living skills and workplace readiness. These provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to gain recognition for their achievements in both academic and vocational areas.*

*Working relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive. The headteacher knows their pupils' emotional and social needs well and this knowledge underpins lesson planning and delivery. As a result, pupils engage increasingly well in their lessons and make appropriate progress from their starting points. Timetables demonstrate a careful balance between academic learning, personal development and opportunities to rebuild pupils' confidence in education.*

*Assessment arrangements have been strengthened considerably. Leaders have implemented a structured framework that ensures pupils' work is assessed regularly and thoroughly. Teachers use assessment information to plan next steps and set meaningful short-term targets. Progress is tracked across all areas of learning and leaders can now demonstrate improvement over time. Although some of these processes are relatively new, they are already contributing to better sequencing of work and more purposeful planning.*

*The curriculum also provides pupils with suitable access to impartial careers guidance, initially through a digital platform. Careers schemes of work, individual learner pathways and purposeful work experience opportunities help pupils prepare for adult life. This aspect of the provision has become more consistent and is embedded appropriately within the wider curriculum.*

*The recent appointment of an additional teacher has increased the school's capacity to deliver a wider range of subjects and has enabled the headteacher to strengthen quality assurance processes. The wider organisation has also supported leaders to plan adaptations to the premises so they can better meet the educational needs of current and future cohorts.*

*Although the premises are currently suitable for the small number of pupils on roll, leaders also recognise that additional space will be required both to sustain and extend the curriculum as numbers increase towards the maximum permitted and to accommodate the additional member of teaching staff. A new modular building is planned, with construction expected to take only a short time once planning approval is granted.*

*Taken together, these actions mean that leaders have addressed the shortcomings identified at the core inspection. The curriculum is now underpinned by detailed and coherent schemes of work, assessment processes are robust and teaching is appropriately planned and delivered. As a result, there is no evidence that the school*

*does not school now meet the Independent School Standards with which it was previously non-compliant.*

## **Recommendations**

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

**R1** Establish effective procedures for quality assurance and improvement planning that focus clearly on pupil progress and the standards they achieve.

**R2** Establish ongoing and robust professional learning for staff to effectively deliver the curriculum and meet pupils' learning needs

**R3** Improve curriculum provision so that it covers all areas of le learning and enables pupils to study a range of courses at an appropriate level

## **ATTENDANCE**

The school year commenced on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 and was completed on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2026. In total, the school was open for 195 days in the last academic year. There were 5.5 INSET days during that period. The four-term year model adopted at the Potteries School ensures precision, concentrated five-week programmes of study; frequent half-term holidays serving to reinvigorate learning and a reduced four-week summer break to encourage engagement by reducing time away from school.

The Admissions Register for the academic year 2025 - 2026 shows that the Potteries School had **seven** enrolled learners, **three** of whom were enrolled from the previous academic year. As of Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025, the mean average length of enrolment is **30.0 weeks** and three of the seven learners are still enrolled as part of their 39-week placement. The cohorts across this time are composed of these groups:

- **Two** learners were placed under Section 20 (accommodated), **three** learners under Section 31 (full-care order) and **two** under Section 76 (interim care order).
- **Two** year 8 learners; **four** year 9 learners and **one** year 10 learner.
- The learners are all Children who are Looked After and live in residential care at the Potteries. The Local Authorities placing the learners at the school were:

Cardiff; Hereford; Lancashire; Lewisham; Newport; Somerset; Plymouth.

- **Two** learners have an Individual Development Plan (Wales); **four** learners have Education and Health Care Plans (England) and **one** learner has no formally identified additional learning need.
- In terms of experiencing and presenting Additional Learning Needs:  
**All** learners present with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.  
**All** experience some form of attachment difficulty either diagnosed or not.

## The Potteries School

Attendance data: Academic Year 2025 - 2026

Learner	Dates of admission and discharge	Present %	Authorised Absence %	Unauthorised Absence %
85	23/12/2024 - 24/09/2025	70.4%	17.4%	12.2%
86	13/02/2025 - 15/12/2025	83.9%	10.0%	6.1%
87	19/02/2025 - 09/01/2026	88.1%	6.1%	5.8%
88	10/12/2025 - 26/06/2026**	72.4%	25.5%	2.1%
89	16/12/2025 - 13/04/2026	72.2%	9.3%	18.5%
90	22/01/2026 - 26/06/2026**	62.7%	14.7%	22.6%
91	30/01/2026 - 26/06/2026**	80.1%	13.9%	6.0%
Average attendance		<b>70.4%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>
Difference from 2024 - 2025		<b>-9.5%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>

The data shows that there has been a significant decrease in overall average attendance (- 9.5%), a small increase in authorised absence (+3.8%) and a significant increase unauthorised absence (+5.7%). The current cohort of learners are experiencing significant levels of incompatibility on the living together front and this is impacting their ability to attendance and attain. Unlike previous years, there has been no offsetting factor where one learner's poor attendance has lopsidedly affected the average of the cohort. This means that attendance for all learners can be examined with precision; it presents a more accurate picture of the patterns of attendance and highlights learners who may need extra support with attendance and engagement in their next education provision.

The school continues to have a policy of no education expectations for learners on days where important meetings for them are scheduled. The anxiety evoked in most learners on days where CLA reviews, PEP meetings or SEN assessment indicates that their learning capacity on these occasions is severely affected. The ability to both focus and concentrate, regulate their behaviour and give the attention required to

such events negatively mediate their learning pattern and more often than not, unpicks the work they have achieved leading up to it.

## ATTAINMENT

### Learners and their path to progress

For the cohort of seven learners enrolled in 2025 – 2026:

- The learners average class points score (that reflects their lesson performance against the five learning expectations: *on time – respect – effort – work set – remain in class*) is **77.9%**
- National curriculum (or equivalent) levels were attained in core subjects during formative or summative assessment sessions for **nearly all learners**.
- All learners saw at least a **50.0%** reduction in their priority risk associated to their health and wellbeing.
- In terms of completing **Personal Education Plan** targets during placement, **70.0%** of learners achieved either partially or fully all the required targets.
- On average, learners achieved over **69.4%** of **Individual Learning Targets** based on bespoke, need-centred Quality of Life indicators (**-10.1% from previous year**).
- On average, each learner achieved **14** AQA Unit Awards in Sport and Recreation and Life and Independent Skills.

## OUTCOMES FROM THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025 - 2026

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES FOR 2025 - 2026				
INSPECTION AREA/TERMLY PROGRESS	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer
INSPECTION AREA 1: Standards	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
INSPECTION AREA 2: Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Green	Green	Green	Green
INSPECTION AREA 3: Teaching and learning experiences	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
INSPECTION AREA 4: Care, support and guidance	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
INSPECTION AREA 5: Leadership and management	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

## QUALITY FRAMEWORK

### KEY PROGRESSIONS

- **Stakeholder questionnaires**

There have been nine learners enrolled at the Potteries School in the academic years 2024 - 2026. Only seven of those are eligible for this report as the questionnaires have yet be completed for two current enrolled learners. The average length of care placement is 27.5 weeks of which the initial period of twenty-six weeks forms an assessment programme across care, education and therapy. The monitoring process for their learner includes interim and summative reports at weeks 8, 18 and 26. The details for the three different cohorts are outlined below:

1. A month prior to the placement coming to an end (either due to assessment cessation or 39-week moratorium) all learners are asked to complete a questionnaire either with their keyworker or during classroom time to offer feedback about their experience of the education programme and the support they have received whilst at the school.
2. Local authority social workers are requested to complete a similar set of feedback questions at the meeting to review the 26-week assessment report. Their input is also sought during transition for future school compatibility.
3. The curriculum at the school involves a substantial element of offsite activities. These include life and independent skills, educational visits and sport and recreation. The school is **very** dependent on external services and providers.

#### **Learners – what did we learn?**

The learner questionnaire is a valuable summative document that allows learners the opportunity to forward their opinions on how the education provision has worked for before they transition to a new placement.

Akin to last time, a very similar pattern of response from most learners was congruent across the same four areas:

- Most learners agreed or agreed strongly that they have been taught well;
- Most learners enjoyed the programme and thought it helped them learn;
- Most learners felt they were treated with respect and supported well;
- Most learners liked their time at the school.

- **Referrals:**

No complaints or safeguarding referrals have been made this academic year. There have been fifteen incidents during the school day over the past year. The whole school ethos around anti-bullying and high levels of supervision enable learners to participate in the school programme with safety.

## ASSESSMENT AND TRANSITION

All learners aim complete the initial twenty-six week integrated assessment programme. The assessment process contains evaluation of a number of different educational areas:

- **Reengagement:**

Examination of patterns of attendance across the curriculum and strategies that enable improvement and progress for learners with absence difficulties.

- **Core subject baseline levels:**

Establishing National Curriculum/GCSE levels in English, Maths, Science, I.C.T. and P.S.E. and profiles of attainment in Sport and Life & Independence Skills.

- **Behaviour profile:**

Using Motional to establish the priority behaviours that learners experience most difficulty with and then strategies to aid improvement.

- **Learning targets:**

Monitoring key criteria across the curriculum that learners may struggle with or need to focus on to progress.

- **Transition**

As an intake and assessment provision with a maximum placement of 39 weeks, the transition development for learners as well as within the classroom are an important guide as to how well we have supported our young people during their stay. Below are detailed the accommodation outcomes of learners for this academic year:

- **New Residential Care Placement:** 4 learners
- **Placement @ Potteries:** 3 learners

## TERM DATES 2025 - 2026

<b>THE POTTERIES SCHOOL</b>			
<b>ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2026 - 2027</b>			
<b>TERM</b>	<b>STARTING</b>	<b>ENDING</b>	<b>DAYS</b>
<b>TERM 1A</b>	<b>Tuesday 01 September 2026</b>	<b>Friday 02 October 2026</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TERM 1B</b>	<b>Monday 12 October 2026</b>	<b>Friday 13 November 2026</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TERM 2A</b>	<b>Monday 23 November 2026</b>	<b>Friday 18 December 2026</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TERM 2B</b>	<b>Monday 04 January 2027</b>	<b>Friday 05 February 2027</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TERM 3A</b>	<b>Monday 15 February 2027</b>	<b>Friday 19 March 2027</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TERM 3B</b>	<b>Monday 05 April 2027</b>	<b>Friday 07 May 2027</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TERM 4A</b>	<b>Monday 17 May 2027</b>	<b>Friday 18 June 2027</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TERM 4A</b>	<b>Monday 28 June 2027</b>	<b>Friday 30 July 2027</b>	<b>25</b>

## **STAFF SUMMARY**

### **Andy Joynson (Teacher) Start Date: 17/09/2012**

Andy spent the early part of his working life running a busy landscape design and construction business in London. He then trained apprentices at a local college in NVQ qualifications in horticulture, construction and surveying. He also tutored in Information and communication Technology in the early 1990's.

On moving to Wales in 1998, he completed his PGCE and has worked at three ESB Special Schools in the local area for the last dozen years. He has assisted in setting up two schools through to full (successful) ESTYN inspections; taught Mathematics, I.C.T. and Science through Keystages 2 – 4 and to GCSE level. He has experience in delivering vocational, Outdoor Ed. and A.S.D.A.N. programmes through to full accreditation. He is also a qualified Rugby Union coach.

Andy holds the following professional qualifications: Post Graduate Certificate of Education (1999); B.Sc (Econ: LSE) Politics and Sociology; TDLB Assessor Awards D32, D33 and D34 (upgraded to V1 2007); IRB Level 2 Coaching Rugby Union Award; WRU Level 1 Rugby Union Referee Award.

### **Nick Copestake (Teacher) Start Date: 18/09/2025**

Nick initially worked within research into solid state gas sensors, developing and applying these to volcanological applications along with some supervision of MSc students. Afterwards, he completed a PGCE with a primary education focus, which led to a teaching career in a selection of Primary schools mostly based within inner city Nottingham. Nick's teaching experiences were developed as he attained his SENCO qualification, taking on this responsibility alongside teaching and again when he took on management roles such as Deputy headteacher, Lead Teacher and Headteacher. He has had experience of many positive OFSTED inspections throughout this career. Nick left teaching to work with the Education Access team supporting families and learners, who were home educating.

Nick holds the following professional qualifications: Post Graduate Certificate in Special Educational Needs Coordination (2012), PGCE Primary education (1999), MSc Geochemistry (1993) and BSc Geology (1992).