

**A report on**  
**Penderyn Primary School**

**Pontprenllwyd  
Penderyn  
Aberdare  
RCT  
CF44 9JW**

**Date of inspection: June 2025**

**by**

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

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## About Penderyn Primary School

Name of provider	Penderyn Primary School
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Welsh-medium School Category 3
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	168
Pupils of statutory school age	120
Number in nursery classes	25
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year <i>average</i> ( <i>The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 22.9%</i> )	19.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) ( <i>The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 11.1%</i> )	*
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	9.2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2010
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/04/2018
Start date of inspection	02/06/2025

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:  
[mylocalschool.gov.wales](https://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term ‘additional learning needs’ is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school

## Summary

Ysgol Gymraeg Penderyn is a happy and welcoming community that places consistent emphasis on the well-being and development of pupils and staff. The inclusive and familial ethos ensures that pupils are happy and feel safe.

The headteacher has high expectations of himself, staff and pupils. He has established effective self-evaluation processes, which enable improvements in provision for pupils' wellbeing and learning. Governors play a beneficial and supportive role in the school and have a good understanding of the school's strengths areas for development.

Staff provide a stimulating curriculum that supports many pupils to make good progress in their skills over time. Teachers plan a range of rich experiences and interesting activities that engage and maintain pupils' interest successfully. At times, there is a tendency for a few staff to over-direct activities which limits pupils' ability to make more independent choices about their learning.

Most pupils speak Welsh enthusiastically across the school and strive regularly to communicate increasingly confidently in various contexts. They respond positively to staff's oral feedback and use it to improve their learning with confidence. However, teachers' comments do not always support pupils to improve their work successfully enough.

Staff promote positive behaviour amongst pupils successfully, which supports them to show respect and courtesy towards their peers, staff and visitors. The school makes effective use of the local community and outside areas to develop pupils' physical and creative skills purposefully. The headteacher and staff have a positive working relationship and effective communication arrangements with parents.

## **Recommendations**

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve

- R1. Ensure consistency in opportunities for pupils to make more independent choices about their learning
- R2. Ensure that teachers provide useful and consistent feedback that supports pupils to identify the next steps in their learning in order to improve their work

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

The school is a caring and familial community in which a purposeful strategic direction is provided by the headteacher. Through high expectations, the headteacher and staff realise the school's motto, 'Be everything you can be,' successfully, and foster values that motivate pupils to be confident learners within the school's inclusive community. A hard-working and dedicated team of teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively to ensure stimulating provision for pupils in a local and Welsh context.

Staff are appropriate language models for pupils. They encourage and support pupils to speak Welsh and make purposeful use of the language as an integral part of their learning and play. Most pupils speak Welsh enthusiastically across the school and strive regularly to communicate increasingly confidently in various contexts. As a result, by the top of the school, they are confident to communicate in both Welsh and English, and show pride in their bilingual skills.

Many of the younger pupils develop their reading skills effectively, with the older pupils reading a good range of texts confidently in both languages. Many pupils develop their writing skills successfully in an appropriate range of genres. Staff take advantage of local contacts to develop pupils' literacy skills skilfully, for example the older pupils applying their digital skills to create a presentation for the local residents to promote the use of the food bank.

Across the school, teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding in supporting pupils to make progress in their mathematics skills. They provide interesting activities that encourage pupils to immerse themselves and apply their skills in numeracy tasks successfully. In doing so, many pupils' numeracy skills develop effectively.

Most pupils' digital and physical skills develop skilfully as they move through the school. Staff use the school's forest area as a valuable learning resource where pupils develop their creative and problem-solving skills successfully, such as creating a waterproof shelter.

Staff support pupils to develop their spiritual and moral awareness effectively. Across the school, pupils understand the benefits of growing and caring for produce as an important aspect of living sustainably. In addition, staff support them to appreciate different beliefs and to show tolerance and fair consideration for other people's views.

In the best practice, teachers ensure a purposeful pace and ambitious activities in learning sessions. They ensure a consistent balance between staff-led activities and opportunities to engage and maintain pupils' interest and development as increasingly independent learners. However, these effective practices are not always consistent across the school. A

few staff tend to over-direct learning, at times, which limits pupils' ability to make more independent choices about their learning.

Staff provide a rich curriculum that supports many pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those affected by poverty, to make good progress in their skills over time. They include pupils' ideas purposefully in planning learning activities that engage their interest and give them opportunities to influence the content of their termly themes.

Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to influence the life and wider work of the school to develop their leadership skills, for example the older pupils raising money to develop the school's forest area. Overall, members of all pupil committees do not gain the views of their peers and collect ideas from them actively enough in order to adapt and improve the school's wider provision.

Pupils are proud of their school, happy to attend and feel safe there. They are respected and treated fairly by staff, and state that they are listened to when they have any concerns. The learning environment is stimulating and engaging and celebrates their learning successfully. As a result, most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning, enjoy their tasks and commit themselves enthusiastically to their learning.

Staff promote positive behaviour amongst pupils which, in turn, leads them to show respect and courtesy to their peers, staff and visitors. They support pupils' emotional, health and social needs effectively to engage positively with their learning experiences. Most pupils respond positively to staff's oral feedback and use it to improve their learning confidently. However, teachers' comments do not always identify the next step forward in supporting pupils to improve their learning in a beneficial and consistent way.

Staff provide effective support for pupils with ALN and cooperate purposefully with external agencies to support them further with their wellbeing and learning. Leaders provide individual development plans that identify pupils' learning needs clearly and this enables teachers to provide tailored support and activities to meet their needs. This means that almost all pupils who need support make sound progress against their personal targets.

Leaders build effective working relationships with parents and ensure that they have effective methods of communicating with them; for example, staff provide valuable information about pupils' learning experiences effectively. Governors are supportive of the school's work and know the school and the community well. By scrutinising pupils' work, conducting learning walks and asking the leaders purposeful questions, members of the body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Leaders ensure that the school has effective arrangements in place to review progress against the school's improvement priorities, identify areas of development, and identify the steps that need to be implemented to continue to improve further. For example, recently, they have identified the need to develop pupils' Welsh speaking skills. Through this, many pupils' oral and literacy skills develop effectively. They offer a successful range of beneficial professional learning opportunities for staff that have a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and learning skills.

### **Additional information**

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are not a cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for the management of the site are not a cause for concern.

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

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



## **Evidence base of the report**

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers questionnaires and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers, staff and the governing body/members of the management committee through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection.

## Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report refers to different quantities and proportions, e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website  
(<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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**This document has been translated by Trosol (Welsh to English).**