

A report on

Colcot Primary School

**Florence Avenue
Barry
CF62 9XH**

Date of inspection: October 2025

by

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

About Colcot Primary School

Name of provider	Colcot Primary School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	283
Pupils of statutory school age	226
Number in nursery classes	32
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 Primary is 22.9%)	40.1%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 11.1%)	15.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2010

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/03/2018
Start date of inspection	13/10/2025

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

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
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

Colcot Primary is a welcoming and inclusive school that promotes equity and inclusion effectively. The headteacher and staff work closely with external agencies to provide strong welfare and emotional support to pupils and their families. They provide a range of worthwhile opportunities for parents and carers to engage in school life, and this helps develop a strong sense of trust and belonging.

From their individual starting points, most pupils make good progress in their literacy and numeracy skills, including those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Many pupils make good progress in their oracy, reading and writing skills. They develop effective mathematical skills and demonstrate increasing confidence when solving number problems. Most pupils' Welsh language skills remain at a basic level.

Across the school, most teachers provide effective, targeted support for pupils with ALN. In the most effective examples, additional adults know their pupils well and offer valuable support that helps them manage their emotions and access the school curriculum successfully.

Leaders and staff provide a purposeful and engaging curriculum that reflects pupils' interests. Through an inquiry-based approach, pupils research topics and express their understanding creatively through presentations, drama and digital media. Many lessons support pupils' progress effectively. However, in a few examples, especially for younger pupils, activities do not build on prior learning, and adults supervise rather than actively extend and challenge pupils' thinking. During lessons, many older pupils respond positively to written and verbal feedback and use it to improve their work. However, the quality and use of feedback varies across the school

Leaders use a range of monitoring activities appropriately to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. They take suitable actions to support improvement. The governing body is supportive of the school and works closely with leaders to manage pupils' attendance. Governors recognise the financial challenges the school faces and are working with the headteacher and local authority to put in place more robust plans to address these.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Improve staff understanding of child development and pupil engagement to ensure that all adults provide purposeful learning that builds on pupils' skills progressively
- R2. Strengthen the quality and consistency of feedback to help pupils improve their work and achieve the next steps in their learning
- R3. Improve standards in Welsh
- R4. Improve the financial management of the school

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders at Colcot Primary promote a strong sense of inclusion and belonging. Staff place high value on building strong relationships with pupils and their families, and this helps staff to support pupils' emotional and well-being needs effectively. Through carefully thought-out interventions, teaching assistants provide targeted support for pupils to help them regulate their emotions so that they can access the school curriculum and learning.

Overtime, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress in their learning. They develop effective oracy skills by the time they leave school, increasing in confidence, extending their vocabulary and developing the ability to present to a range of different audiences. Many of the youngest pupils develop a love of books and reading. As they progress, they build on their understanding of letter sounds to read simple words and phrases. By Year 6, many pupils read more challenging and complex texts and apply their skills to support their research work. Many older pupils write confidently, improving their spelling and punctuation skills as they progress through the school. Teachers provide purposeful opportunities for older pupils to write at length and apply their writing skills successfully in other areas of the curriculum.

Most younger pupils have opportunities to engage with the Welsh language through songs and rhymes. A majority of older pupils develop an understanding of what it means to be Welsh and enjoy participating in themed events such as assemblies and music sessions. However, there is a lack of progression in pupils' ability to develop their Welsh language skills beyond a basic level and, as a result, the overall progress that pupils make is limited.

Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge in the teaching of mathematics and build on pupils' existing knowledge and skills effectively. Many teachers plan meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills systematically. This helps to ensure that most pupils develop as confident mathematicians. Many pupils enjoy challenges in Maths lessons and competently talk about and demonstrate their learning. Teachers provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to represent their understanding visually and in written form and this helps them to deepen their understanding of number and explore any errors or misconceptions.

Most pupils use their digital skills effectively and with increasing sophistication. Younger pupils use a range of programs and apps effectively to support the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Most older pupils apply their digital skills to communicate their learning creatively and demonstrate confidence when creating animations and videos.

Many younger pupils develop their physical skills and coordination well through regular outdoor learning experiences. Older pupils enjoy physical activity, but overall, they have limited opportunities to take part in outdoor learning or a broad range of sporting activities.

Leaders and staff work closely with the cluster of schools to design a purposeful and engaging curriculum that focuses on developing key ideas such as 'identity' and 'relationships'. Through an inquiry-based approach, teachers encourage pupils to explore, question and deepen their understanding across a range of areas of learning. This helps to ensure that many pupils, especially older pupils, develop their problem-solving, thinking and creative skills well.

The school's curriculum effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development, providing meaningful opportunities to explore a wide range of values and beliefs. This helps pupils deepen their understanding of the world around them and become empathetic, reflective and respectful learners. Teachers offer purposeful opportunities for pupils to make choices and take increasing responsibility for their learning, nurturing curiosity, enthusiasm and independence. Pupils engage thoughtfully in discussions about important themes such as gender equality, stereotypes and diversity, showing growing maturity and developing their critical thinking and communication skills.

Overall, teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding over time. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan learning that builds on pupils' prior knowledge and use questioning skilfully to provide challenge and support. However, planning for younger pupils is less effective. This is because activities do not always match the pupils' needs or provide sufficient opportunities to deepen learning through purposeful, play-based experiences. In these cases, the role of teaching assistants tends to be supervisory, and they are not always clear about how to support learning effectively. This means that pupils sometimes miss out on opportunities to deepen or extend their learning.

Leaders are developing suitable assessment procedures to strengthen standards in teaching and learning. Teachers increasingly provide opportunities for older pupils to reflect on their work and respond to feedback to make improvements. However, the consistency and quality of feedback remain at an early stage of development. The impact of feedback on pupils' progress varies, with a few teachers focusing more on praise and completion of tasks rather than on improving the quality of pupils' learning.

Leaders have established well-structured monitoring and review procedures and use a range of strategies to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. Overall, they recognise most areas for improvement and implement suitable plans to address them. However, their evaluations do not always focus well enough on pupils' progress,

and this limits leaders' ability to plan specific actions to raise standards in learning. In a few cases, leaders are overly task-focused and do not consistently consider how these activities will improve staff subject knowledge and raise standards in teaching and learning.

Spotlight: Partnership Working and Supporting the Needs of Families

Leaders know their pupils and families well and use this understanding to provide effective support. They promote strong family engagement through purposeful activities that help build positive and trusting working relationships. Senior leaders deliver beneficial workshops that focus on developing parents' and carers' literacy and numeracy skills. These help to build their confidence to support their child's learning at home. Leaders work particularly well with other professionals to provide bespoke support to parents of pupils with ALN, both during and beyond the school day. The school arranges skills-based training and work experience for parents and helps them to gain qualifications to increase their employment opportunities. The family engagement officer creates important links with organisations and businesses to access welfare and emotional support for families. Partnership working is a strength of the school.

Governors are supportive and engage well with the school through visits, learning walks and discussions with pupils. They appreciate the presentations they receive from staff, which provide useful information about the curriculum. However, the information they receive does not always ensure that they have a clear understanding of pupils' standards or their progress over time. Governors are aware of the school's financial challenges and meet regularly to discuss these. The headteacher and governors are working with the local authority to tackle the school's significant budget deficit, but the plans in place are not robust enough to deliver meaningful improvement. Governors liaise with the headteacher and family engagement office to track and monitor pupils' attendance and, although rates of attendance remain low, progress is being made, especially for those most vulnerable pupils.

Additional information

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

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

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking

Leaders and governors manage the use of the pupil development grant appropriately, but the school has a large overall budget deficit.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body 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 and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to 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 classes, including learning support groups 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 and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- 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 makes references 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 (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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

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Publication date: 15/12/2025