

A report on
Durand Primary School

**Alianore Road
Caldicot
Monmouthshire
NP26 5DF**

Date of inspection: October 2025

by

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

About Durand Primary School

Name of provider	Durand Primary School
Local authority	Monmouthshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	English- medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	229
Pupils of statutory school age	167
Number in nursery classes	34
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%)	16.9%
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%)	24.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2023

A report on Durand Primary School
October 2025

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/01/2018
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

Durand Primary is a welcoming and nurturing school where most pupils feel safe and supported. There are strong relationships between pupils, staff, parents, and the community, which helps create a positive atmosphere. There are beneficial arrangements to support pupils' well-being. Pupils have frequent opportunities to share their views and influence school life. Most pupils behave well and engage fully with school life and learning. Most pupils, including those with additional needs (ALN) or those who are affected by poverty, make good progress and develop effective literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh language communication skills over time.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers pupils meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Learning is based on questions that encourage pupils to explore and think deeply. Pupils learn about their local area, Wales, and the wider world, which helps them to develop a sense of belonging, understand diversity and develop respect for others.

The headteacher has a clear vision and high expectations for teaching and learning. Under her leadership, staff work together to improve teaching. Most teaching is effective. Teachers use assessment information well to plan lessons that challenge and support pupils. They provide regular and effective feedback that supports pupils to move forward in their learning. In classes for younger learners, adults tend to provide too much direction for pupils. This limits pupils' independence and opportunities for them to think creatively.

Leaders know the strengths and areas for development of the school well and prioritise the most appropriate areas for improvement, such as improving the quality of teaching and learning. Governors support and challenge the school effectively.

Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Improve opportunities for younger pupils to develop as independent and creative thinkers and learners

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Durand Primary School provides an inclusive and caring environment for pupils to learn and develop. Strong relationships between pupils, staff, parents and the community underpin the school's warm and positive ethos. The school places a high priority on ensuring the well-being of pupils and there are successful systems and approaches in place to ensure that pupils thrive. Pupils have a strong voice and there are frequent opportunities for them to positively influence the life of the school and their learning. Most pupils feel safe and secure in school, they behave well in all areas of school life and most engage purposefully in their lessons. Most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress from their individual starting points.

Spotlight 1: Effective leadership to improve teaching and learning

The headteacher sets high expectations and maintains a determined focus on improving teaching and learning. Leaders create the conditions for staff to work collaboratively to construct and agree expectations for practice. They have established a shared framework to guide progression in teaching approaches across the school and developed a shared language for teaching and learning. This work impacts positively on the progress that most pupils make.

In most classes, highly effective and consistent approaches to teaching and learning have a positive impact on pupils' engagement and progress. For instance, the effective use of 'pitstops' ensures immediate feedback for pupils. In addition, the way that teachers apply this approach supports the pace and focus of lessons whilst also providing pupils with valuable opportunities to discuss, review and reflect on their next steps in learning. Most teachers use ongoing assessment information very well to provide levels of challenge and support for pupils that meet their learning needs.

In most lessons, teachers provide interesting and meaningful opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. They use a progressive approach to develop collaborative skills, which means that older pupils are clear about the elements of successful group work and apply these well to support their learning. Most teachers use effective questioning, which develops pupils' independence and thinking skills very well. In the youngest classes, however, learning is often overly teacher-led, and this limits the opportunities that pupils have to think creatively and to become independent in their learning.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides pupils with authentic, meaningful and engaging learning experiences that develop their knowledge and skills well. In most instances, teaching promotes enquiry and exploration successfully, for

example through the use of questions. Lessons build towards responding to these questions, so that learning is purposeful and captures pupils' interests and imagination effectively.

There are rich opportunities for pupils to learn about their local area, Wales and the wider world, which foster a sense of identity and belonging and develop an understanding of diversity. Nearly all pupils are considerate, they show empathy, respect one another's differences and develop a strong understanding of equality. The school provides pupils with valuable opportunities to understand the skills required for range of different professions. The school's curriculum develops pupils' spiritual and moral understanding well.

Structured and progressive whole-school approaches to the teaching of oracy impact very well on the progress that pupils make over time. By the time they leave the school, most pupils conduct lively, yet respectful debates and discussions, where they make links between points raised, build on one another's responses skilfully and, when necessary, disagree politely. They use a wide range of sophisticated vocabulary to good effect. Teachers use a carefully structured approach to teaching reading, which ensures that by the time they leave school, most pupils read with enjoyment, understanding, fluency and expression. High quality feedback and a purposeful and progressive approach to the teaching of writing ensures that most pupils make at least good progress in writing. Teachers provide pupils with worthwhile opportunities to apply their writing skills across the wider curriculum.

Most teachers provide beneficial and meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills. Most pupils make good progress and apply their numeracy skills successfully in a range of purposeful contexts. Most pupils develop their digital skills well and have a good awareness of how to stay safe online. Most pupils develop effective Welsh language skills. Many pupils develop their physical skills and creative skills well.

The school's provision for supporting pupils with ALN is strong. Leaders and teachers work together successfully to ensure early identification of pupils' needs and to provide effective, tailored support. The school uses beneficial approaches, which result in bringing together the pupil, school, parents and external agencies to agree and review the pupil's needs for support and to plan the most appropriate actions. This approach impacts positively on pupils' learning and well-being and means that most pupils identified as having ALN make good progress towards their individual goals. Skilled teaching assistants support pupils' learning and well-being needs very well.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and identify and address areas that require improvement. They bring about improvement in key areas of the school's practice, such as in improving teaching and learning and developing the learning

environment. This has a positive impact on pupils' development, especially in improving their response to feedback and their overall progress in oracy and writing. Leaders manage the process of change at the school exceptionally well. They encourage staff to innovate, collaborate and share the impact of their effective practice with one another. All teachers have clearly defined leadership roles and responsibilities which focus sharply on improving teaching and learning. This results in a strong sense of teamwork and ownership of the strategic direction of teaching and learning.

Professional learning opportunities are well focused on improving teaching and learning and contribute very well to improvements in practice. The school shares its expertise successfully within the school. Governors know the school well through their involvement in a range of first- hand monitoring activities. They offer school leaders positive levels of challenge and undertake their responsibilities well. Leaders provide sensitive consideration of the workload and well-being of staff.

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 school's finances 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 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.

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

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales