

**A report on**

**Pen-Y-Bryn Primary School**

**Dunster Road  
Llanrumney  
CF3 5TP**

**Date of inspection: October 2025**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education**

**and Training in Wales**

## About Pen-Y-Bryn Primary School

Name of provider	Pen-Y-Bryn Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	246
Pupils of statutory school age	172
Number in nursery classes	45
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%)	43.0%
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%)	5.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	16.3%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	09/07/2018
Start date of inspection	20/10/2025

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](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

Pen-y-Bryn Primary School is a happy community where staff and pupils show mutual respect for one another. Most pupils behave very well, feel safe and know who to turn to for support.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is a visible presence around the school. He has focused successfully on improving parental involvement, and parents are confident to approach staff if they have any concerns, knowing that these will be dealt with.

During their time at the school, most pupils make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. The focus on improving younger pupils' oracy skills ensures that they make rapid progress early on and can begin to access other areas of learning successfully. Most pupils make good progress in learning Welsh, but older pupils lack the confidence to use Welsh more informally.

In many classes, where teaching is most effective, teachers provide pupils with the right level of challenge to take their learning forward. Many pupils are beginning to improve their work during lessons. This work is inconsistent across the school, and teachers' feedback is not always precise enough to identify what pupils need to do to improve their work. The school's curriculum is developing effectively to meet most pupils' needs.

Systems for supporting pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) are a strength. Most pupils with ALN make suitable or better progress from their starting points.

Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully and work closely with external partners to support families. Pupils' overall attendance has improved, but too many pupils still have high rates of absence.

The school's governors provide extremely effective support and have a thorough knowledge of the school's work. They provide robust challenge to school leaders, particularly regarding the progress that pupils make and the standards that they achieve.

## **Recommendations**

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

- R1. Reduce persistent absenteeism
- R2. Ensure that feedback to pupils is clear and precise and focuses on specific aspects of their work

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

Pen-y-Bryn Primary School is a happy community where staff and pupils show mutual respect for one another. Staff provide high levels of care, support and guidance, ensuring that most pupils feel safe and seek help when needed. The headteacher is a visible presence around the school and promotes a warm and inclusive ethos. This ensures that parents feel confident in approaching staff with any concerns, knowing they will be listened to and assisted.

The headteacher provides purposeful and effective leadership. He shares his clear vision with staff, pupils, parents and governors. Together with governors and the leadership team, he delivers strong strategic direction to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning. All leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the needs of their pupils and the school community and strive to meet those needs effectively.

Leaders build strong working relationships with parents, creating a better understanding of their children's learning and helping them to provide more effective support with aspects such as reading.

Staff foster positive working relationships across the school, and as a result, most pupils behave very well. In many classes, where teaching is most effective, teachers challenge pupils at an appropriate level and support them in making sensible decisions when selecting their own level of challenge. They skilfully use questioning techniques to develop pupils' thinking skills. Support staff play a key role in enabling pupils to make good progress from their individual starting points, often taking the initiative to advance pupils' learning. The school has been working on developing pupils' understanding of how to improve their work. Many pupils are beginning to correct and enhance their work during lessons. However, this practice is inconsistent across the school, and teachers' feedback is not always specific enough to bring about the desired improvements.

Over time, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress in developing their literacy skills. The structured approach to teaching literacy has a positive impact on pupils' progress. Most pupils make good progress in developing their oracy skills as they move through the school. Focused support for younger pupils helps them to make strong progress in improving their speech, often from low starting points. By Year 6, most pupils speak confidently in a range of situations, using extended sentences and a rich vocabulary.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their reading and writing skills. Younger pupils build rapidly on their understanding of phonics to read simple words and phrases. Most of the oldest pupils read more challenging and complex texts confidently and use

inference competently. Younger pupils develop their pre-writing skills through imaginative and engaging provision, while older pupils have plentiful opportunities to write independently and to apply their skills purposefully across the curriculum. By Year 6, most pupils write competently in a range of genres.

As they move through the school, most pupils demonstrate an increasing understanding of a range of Welsh language patterns. By Year 6, pupils are confident in speaking to each other using familiar language patterns, although they lack confidence to use Welsh outside of formal lessons.

During their time at school, most pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. From an early age, most develop a sound understanding of number concepts. As they move through the school, they build well on these firm foundations. By Year 6, most pupils apply their mathematical knowledge effectively to solve problems and present data meaningfully across various areas of the curriculum.

Teachers have carefully balanced the introduction of technology with the need to develop pupils' communication skills. Older pupils are enthusiastic and highly engaged in their digital work. They use their digital skills effectively and with increasing sophistication to enhance their work and create presentations as they progress through the school. Most pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.

Overall, the school's curriculum provides pupils with rich and meaningful learning experiences. Teachers encourage pupils to explore, question, and deepen their understanding across a range of subjects. Older pupils, in particular, relish opportunities to undertake independent research and present their knowledge in thoughtful and creative ways. Through well-planned opportunities, many younger pupils develop their physical skills and co-ordination successfully. The school's focus on physical activity ensures that most pupils make good progress in developing a wide range of physical skills.

There are suitable opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding, enabling them to become empathetic, respectful and inclusive learners. Over recent years, the school's population has changed, and teachers are beginning to take greater account of this when developing a bespoke curriculum for the school. This work in providing pupils with greater opportunities to share their experiences, cultures and beliefs is at an early stage of development. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles and to have a voice in the school.

Systems for supporting pupils with ALN are a strength. There is swift identification of pupils with ALN, and staff provide effective, tailored support to meet pupils' individual needs. There are effective and rigorous systems to track and monitor pupil progress. Most pupils with ALN make suitable or better progress from their starting points.

Provision for pupils with social and emotional difficulties is strong. Staff support pupils effectively to develop strategies to regulate and express their emotions and get ready for learning.

Leaders have robust systems for monitoring pupils' attendance and work closely with external partners to support families. Consequently, pupils' overall attendance has improved. However, the number of pupils who are persistently absent remains a concern and continues to be a priority for improvement.

A robust monitoring and evaluation cycle involving all staff ensures a good track record of securing improvement of pupil performance and standards of teaching. Monitoring is linked to the school's priorities and provides leaders, including governors, with an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development.

### **Spotlight 1 – Effective Governance**

The school's governors provide extremely effective support and have a thorough knowledge of the school's work in implementing its priorities. They provide robust challenge to school leaders, particularly regarding the progress that pupils make and the standards that they achieve. They conduct first-hand monitoring activities with pupils and seek their opinions. They feed this information into school improvement planning effectively.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's financial position and monitor spending effectively. They make considered decisions that benefit all pupils. The school uses its grant funding, including the pupil development grant, well to ensure targeted support for pupils with additional needs and equity for all.

The roles and responsibilities of leaders and staff are well defined and communicated clearly. The headteacher sets clear expectations for staff performance. He is aware of the need to build leadership capacity across the school and has begun to provide opportunities for staff members to take on additional responsibilities and to develop new skills.

### **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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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