

A report on
Glyn-Gaer CP School

**Oxford Street
Gelligaer
Hengoed
CF82 8FF**

Date of inspection: November 2025

by

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

About Glyn-Gaer CP School

Name of provider	Glyn-Gaer CP School
Local authority	Caerphilly County Borough 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	212
Pupils of statutory school age	164
Number in nursery classes	18
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 21.7%)	13.2%
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 9.2%)	7.3%
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	02/09/2024

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/06/2017
Start date of inspection	17/11/2025

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

The school's new leadership team has established a clear and ambitious vision for improvement. The headteacher works effectively with governors, staff and families to embed this vision and strengthen the school's strategic direction.

Pupils benefit from a caring and inclusive environment where staff place a high priority on well-being and personal development. Staff provide effective support that helps pupils feel confident, safe and ready to learn. This helps those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those affected by socio-economic disadvantage to make suitable progress in their learning.

From the early years onwards, there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' oracy skills, enabling them to become confident speakers and attentive listeners. Leaders place a purposeful focus on improving pupils' reading skills, which is helping them to read more fluently and with greater enjoyment. As pupils' reading improves, the quality of their writing has also strengthened.

Many pupils make secure progress in mathematics supported by well-chosen resources and appropriate teaching approaches. Pupils develop a broad range of digital skills and benefit from creative, physical and outdoor learning experiences that help to build their confidence and creativity.

Teaching across the school is generally effective. In many lessons, teachers provide a suitable pace, use resources well and intervene purposefully to support and extend pupils' learning. However, they do not always provide the clear modelling or skilful questioning needed to secure consistently strong progress for all pupils.

Leaders are committed to creating a purposeful, bespoke curriculum that enriches pupils' experiences and promotes important life skills across the school. Although this work is progressing, the curriculum does not yet ensure the clear progressive development of pupils' skills.

Nearly all pupils display positive attitudes to learning and work well with others. They contribute purposefully to school life through a range of leadership roles. Pupils benefit from meaningful opportunities to express their ideas and influence aspects of their school experience. Parents value the school's supportive ethos and the regular communication they receive.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Continue to develop a coherent whole-school curriculum that ensures clear progression and provides regular, meaningful opportunities for pupils to apply and deepen their literacy, numeracy and wider skills across all areas of learning
- R2 Improve the consistency of key teaching strategies across the school, particularly modelling, questioning and challenge, so that pupils develop greater independence and make more secure progress

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The school provides a nurturing and inclusive environment that prioritises pupils' well-being and positive engagement in learning. Leaders and staff know pupils well and respond swiftly to their needs, helping them to feel safe, valued and ready to learn.

The newly formed leadership team communicate a clear and ambitious vision that sets high expectations for pupils' progress, well-being and personal development. The headteacher works effectively with governors, staff and parents to embed this vision and reinforce the school's sense of purpose. She delegates roles and responsibilities clearly, enabling staff to lead key priorities with confidence. This helps to ensure that leaders and staff work collaboratively, drawing on a wide range of strategies to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Senior leaders use professional learning purposefully to strengthen the skills of staff at all levels. Staff increasingly contribute positively to improvement priorities and offer appropriate challenge within their areas of responsibility. Leaders and staff are beginning to analyse assessment information more rigorously and evaluate teaching more reflectively. This work is beginning to have a positive impact on classroom practice and outcomes for pupils.

Teaching across the school is generally effective. Many lessons move at an appropriate pace and include timely interventions that support pupils' learning well. In less effective lessons, pupils do not receive clear modelling or effective questioning to support their progress. Teachers also miss opportunities to clarify expectations, check understanding and provide enough challenge.

Across the school, most pupils make good progress from their starting points, including pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those at risk of underachievement. They engage well in lessons and develop positive attitudes to learning. Staff contribute to this through the development of strong, supportive relationships and purposeful routines that create a calm and respectful atmosphere.

Leaders and staff place a high priority on developing pupils' oracy. They use high-quality texts, and purposeful discussion to strengthen vocabulary and build pupils' confidence when speaking. This supports nearly all pupils to make sustained progress in their oracy skills. Staff successfully develop pupils' reading skills. In the younger classes, consistent phonics teaching, clear modelling and an enthusiasm for books supports early reading well. Older pupils apply a range of reading strategies confidently when engaging with a variety of texts.

Spotlight: Securing rapid improvement in pupils' reading

There has been a notable and rapid improvement in reading standards across the school. Leaders' sustained focus on developing a strong reading culture, supported by consistent well-structured teaching approaches, has significantly strengthened pupils' engagement with reading. This is reflected in the way pupils talk about books, choose to read independently and participate enthusiastically in reading activities. As a result, pupils demonstrate greater fluency, stronger comprehension and a markedly increased enjoyment of reading.

Many pupils write effectively for a range of purposes. In the younger classes purposeful hands-on activities support the development of early writing skills well. Older pupils write successfully for a variety of purposes and audiences. They use varied vocabulary effectively, develop sentence structures confidently and adapt tone appropriately. In the best examples, pupils respond thoughtfully to feedback and refine their written work with increasing independence.

Provision for developing pupils' mathematical skills is effective. Most pupils develop a secure understanding of key concepts and apply them appropriately in their work. Teachers use a suitable range of resources and real-life contexts to deepen understanding and build securely on pupils' prior learning. In many classes, pupils benefit from well-planned activities and support that help them consolidate their skills and make steady progress.

The school's work to promote the Welsh language and culture is effective. Most adults model Welsh consistently and provide regular opportunities for pupils to use the language in structured activities. Many pupils show growing confidence when speaking Welsh, and more able pupils read Welsh texts with good fluency and understanding. However, pupils do not yet use Welsh conversationally often enough, and opportunities to practise the language naturally with one another remain too limited.

The school develops pupils' creative and physical skills well. Younger pupils build secure movement, balance and coordination through well-designed early learning experiences, while older pupils refine control and expression through well-structured gymnastics sessions. Across the school, pupils make good progress in their creative skills. Younger pupils apply artistic techniques inspired by artists such as Picasso in their self-portraits and create imaginative dances that show a clear understanding of tempo and movement. Older pupils benefit from a purposeful range of musical experiences, learning instruments systematically and developing DJ skills that enable them to compose thoughtfully using digital tools.

Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils engage thoughtfully in discussions about ethical issues, human rights and diversity, demonstrating empathy and a secure understanding of the wider world. Increasingly, they contribute meaningfully to school life through a growing range of leadership roles.

The enquiry-led curriculum aims to provide authentic and purposeful learning experiences, and leaders are beginning to develop approaches that support this intention. While there are emerging strengths and valuable enrichment opportunities, these approaches are not yet cohesive across all areas of learning. This means that the curriculum does not yet provide the coherent structure needed to secure the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding over time. Opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills meaningfully across the curriculum remain too limited, preventing pupils from building skills systematically and making strong connections in their learning.

Leaders co-ordinate additional learning needs (ALN) provision effectively. Staff identify pupils' needs promptly and work well with families and external agencies to ensure that support is timely and well-matched to individuals. This ensures that pupils with ALN engage positively in learning, regulate their emotions effectively and develop increasing independence through well-planned interventions. Suitable assessment processes enable staff to track progress, carefully, adapt provision where needed and set clear, purposeful targets that reflect pupils' specific needs.

Governors play an active and well-informed role. They monitor key priorities effectively, provide appropriate challenge to leaders and understand their statutory responsibilities well, particularly in relation to safeguarding and promoting healthy eating.

Leaders manage finances prudently and deploy resources strategically. They use additional funding effectively to support pupils who may face barriers to learning, leading to improved outcomes, particularly in reading and well-being.

Parents have high confidence in the school and value its inclusive ethos, clear communication and personalised support. Leaders work well with families to reduce barriers to learning, particularly for pupils who may be at risk of under-achievement. These strong relationships have a positive impact on pupils' engagement, confidence and well-being. The school promotes good attendance effectively and leaders highlight its importance for pupils' learning and wellbeing. Although these approaches are starting to make a difference, levels of persistent absenteeism remain too high.

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.

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