

A report on
Tref-Y-Rhyg Primary School

**The Avenue
Tonyrefail
Porth
RCT
CF39 8PS**

Date of inspection: November 2025

by

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

About Tref-Y-Rhyg Primary School

Name of provider	Tref-Y-Rhyg Primary School
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	86
Pupils of statutory school age	65
Number in nursery classes	11
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%)	50.2%
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%)	18.5%
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	01/09/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	28/02/2017
Start date of inspection	10/11/2025

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

Tref-y Rhyg Primary School is a welcoming and friendly school where the headteacher is eager for all pupils to be the best they can be and to have high aspirations for their futures. Leaders forge close links with parents and members of the community, and this growing partnership means that parents feel comfortable asking for advice and help about their child's learning and well-being.

Staff build strong working relationships with pupils and provide effective support for anyone who has a worry or concern. Most pupils behave well and cooperate with other pupils. The recently introduced nurture provision and the work of staff is helping to create a calm atmosphere and provide a space where pupils who are struggling can manage their behaviour.

Many teachers offer valuable opportunities for pupils to develop effective literacy, numeracy, and digital skills and there is a focus on improving pupils' Welsh language skills. By the time they leave school, most pupils have made good progress in their learning. Staff support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) effectively, helping them to make sound progress towards their individual learning and well-being targets. In many instances, learning proceeds at a suitable pace and provides appropriate levels of challenge for pupils, but this is not consistent across the school.

Pupils' attendance is beginning to improve, but too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough and therefore do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders know the school well and generally identify areas for improvement accurately. However, when planning for improvement, there is a tendency to try to tackle too many aspects at once, and this slows progress. Overall, governors know the school well and work effectively with leaders to manage the school's finances. All staff take responsibility for providing effective support for learners who are affected by poverty.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Reduce persistent absenteeism
- R2. Streamline improvement planning processes to ensure a clear focus on the school's priorities
- R3. Ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate level of challenge, particularly younger pupils

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders at Tref-y-Rhyg Primary School know their pupils and their families well and provide a warm and caring environment where everyone is valued and encouraged to do their best. The headteacher provides thoughtful and inclusive leadership. She shares a clear vision for pupils to be safe, secure and ambitious.

Staff work diligently to build close links with parents and the local community. As a result, the partnership between school and home is strong, and parents appreciate the care and commitment shown by staff to ensure that their children are happy and settle quickly. Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with concerns about their child's well-being or for advice on supporting their learning.

Pupils show a clear sense of belonging and pride in their school. They value the close working relationships with staff and other pupils. Pupil voice groups enrich the school's work in the community, though pupils' roles in leading these groups are currently underdeveloped.

Staff collaborate to design and deliver an inclusive and authentic curriculum that provides pupils with a suitable breadth and depth of learning. Teachers foster pupils' understanding of the historical, cultural and linguistic heritage of their local area and Wales effectively through visits and visitors to the school, and participation in the local eisteddfod. Strong links with the community enrich the curriculum and raise pupils' aspirations by exposing them to new experiences. Teachers enable pupils to develop an understanding of the complex nature of societies through introducing them to past and present stories of their local area, Wales and the wider world.

Staff promote creative and artistic development well through a range of activities in art, music, dance, and drama, resulting in most pupils developing strong creative skills. The school is highly effective in delivering lessons across the curriculum and assemblies that nurture pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

Many teachers provide purposeful and progressive opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. In many instances, learning proceeds at a suitable pace and presents pupils, including those with additional learning needs, with appropriate levels of challenge and support. Consequently, many pupils throughout the school acquire the necessary skills to improve their work and make the expected progress. However, there are inconsistencies in pace and challenge, particularly for younger pupils. This results in a minority of pupils becoming disengaged during learning activities.

Overall, adults model speech well and place a high priority on developing pupils' oracy skills. Given their starting points, most pupils develop their listening and speaking skills

well. The school places a high priority on developing pupils' reading skills to ensure that they make good progress as they move through the school. By Year 6, most pupils read a range of genres with fluency and confidence. They develop their reading skills sufficiently to access all elements of the curriculum successfully. Most pupils make good progress in writing as they advance through the school. Most older pupils write purposefully across a range of factual and creative genres, using an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary and varied sentence structures.

The school has appropriate plans to promote pupils' Welsh language development. These are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' skills, but older pupils lack the confidence to use Welsh outside of formal lessons.

Pupils across the school benefit from a broad range of mathematical experiences. Many teachers plan interesting and purposeful activities that are matched well to pupils' stage of learning. This helps to ensure that most older pupils develop a secure understanding of mathematical concepts and apply their numeracy and problem-solving skills effectively across the curriculum. Most pupils throughout the school develop good digital skills and apply them successfully to support their learning and enhance their work across the curriculum.

Teachers make good use of more independent 'Tref' tasks to provide pupils with opportunities to influence how and what they learn. This supports most older pupils to work successfully with their peers and develop as effective learners who show resilience and perseverance when facing challenges.

In many classes, where teaching is most effective, teachers demonstrate high expectations of all pupils and use questioning and feedback skilfully to consolidate and extend learning. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Teachers and support staff understand their pupils' needs well and create comfortable and stimulating learning environments, such as the realistic home corner for younger pupils. Support staff assist pupils skilfully and often act on their own initiative to respond to pupils' immediate needs.

A majority of staff model Welsh effectively and provide useful opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh oracy skills. Most pupils use Welsh well in lessons, but they generally lack the confidence to use Welsh outside the classroom.

The supportive and friendly working relationships between staff and pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils feel confident that staff will listen to them and respond to any concerns. A culture of mutual respect fosters trust throughout the school. In general, staff have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, and most pupils' behaviour is good. Staff manage incidents of challenging behaviour well. They use effective strategies to support pupils who find regulating their behaviour challenging.

Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with ALN effectively, helping them to make good progress towards their individual learning and well-being targets. The recently introduced nurture provision enables all pupils to access learning in a calm environment.

Although overall attendance has improved recently, too many pupils are persistently absent and therefore do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders are developing suitable processes to evaluate the school's work and ensure that this feeds into improvement planning. However, there is a tendency to address too many aspects at one time, and this impedes overall progress. Leaders ensure that the school addresses national priorities appropriately, with all staff taking responsibility for providing effective support for learners who are affected by poverty. There are effective systems and processes to track pupils' progress.

The school's work with external partners is effective, particularly in supporting the governing body, which has sharpened the focus of committee meetings and ensured governors are well informed. Governors have a good understanding of the school's work. They provide effective challenge and valuable support and are beginning to gather first-hand evidence to hold the school to account.

School leaders and governors manage the school's finances effectively. They make carefully considered decisions that benefit all pupils. The school uses its grant funding, including the pupil development grant, well to reduce inequality and improve pupils' well-being.

Leaders actively support professional learning at all levels. They make appropriate arrangements for staff to work with others and to share their expertise to support the school's priorities.

Additional information

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

A site management concern was raised during the inspection, and the local authority has been notified

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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