

Report summary for parents and carers on Pontarddulais Primary School

**Date of inspection: November
2025**

Summary

Pontarddulais Primary School is a warm and inclusive community where pupils feel safe, respected and valued. Staff cultivate warm relationships that contribute strongly to the calm and purposeful feel of the school. Behaviour is a notable strength: almost all pupils conduct themselves sensibly, treat others kindly and show pride in belonging to their school.

The headteacher has set out a clear direction for strengthening leadership and raising standards. Middle leaders are beginning to influence the school's priorities for improvement positively. However, as the senior leadership team has only recently been reorganised, their impact on improving the quality of teaching is still developing.

In many lessons, teachers plan purposeful and engaging learning activities and use questioning well to encourage pupils to explain their thinking. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is too slow.

The curriculum is broad and engaging, and it reflects the school's values and local context well. Themes such as Windrush, belonging and Fairtrade help pupils think about fairness and the experiences of others. Most pupils, including those from low-income families, participate enthusiastically and make steady progress across the curriculum. Approaches to early reading are developing securely. Pupils write for different purposes, but they have too few opportunities to write imaginatively or refine their work.

Pupils use number confidently and apply their skills successfully when given the opportunity. Many learning areas support independence and curiosity, with the forest school area being a particular strength. A few areas of the school are less well maintained, and classes for the youngest pupils are not designed effectively enough to promote effective exploration and purposeful play.

The school nurtures pupils' well-being well, and provision for additional learning needs is carefully planned. As a result, most pupils receiving extra support make good progress. Attendance, however, remains a significant challenge. Too many pupils are persistently absent, including those with additional learning needs and those eligible for free school meals, and current strategies have not yet led to sustained improvement. Governors support the school well, although they do not gather enough first-hand evidence to fully understand pupils' progress.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Strengthen strategic leadership and governance so that all leaders understand their roles and contribute effectively to school improvement
- R2 Establish a clear, shared understanding of effective teaching and ensure that self-evaluation focuses closely on its quality and impact on pupils' progress
- R3 Improve attendance, particularly for pupils eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs
- R4 Improve the quality and consistency of feedback so that all pupils are suitably challenged and have regular opportunities to refine and extend their writing

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

Full Report

If you would like to read more about Estyn's evaluation of the school, please follow this link to the [full report](#)

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