

A report on

Pennard Primary School

**Pennard Road
Pennard
SA3 2AD**

Date of inspection: February 2026

by

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

About Pennard Primary School

Name of provider	Pennard Primary School
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	167
Pupils of statutory school age	119
Number in nursery classes	25
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%)	5.1%
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%)	6.7%
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	01/01/2016

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/05/2018
Start date of inspection	02/02/2026

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

Leaders at Pennard Primary School set high expectations. They have worked thoughtfully to shape an ambitious vision to nurture pupils' well-being and enthusiasm for learning. The school fosters respectful relationships ensuring all pupils feel safe, valued and supported. Leaders promote clear and consistent teaching approaches. Staff know their pupils well and build successfully on pupils' prior learning and skills. This supports pupils to make good progress as they move through the school.

The school has created an exciting, authentic and purposeful curriculum with pupil-led enquiry at its core. Teachers model language to support learning carefully and support pupils to talk about their progress purposefully. They use clear assessment approaches that ensure that pupils reflect on and improve their learning.

In most lessons, teachers provide suitable challenge and use questioning skilfully to extend pupils' thinking. Many pupils work independently and take increasing responsibility for their learning. Staff ensure that play-based learning for the youngest pupils helps them to be curious and develops their independence well. Opportunities to extend these approaches as pupils move on from the youngest classes is at an early stage.

Staff model communication skills effectively. This helps pupils to develop as confident speakers and listeners. Staff teach reading systematically and most pupils apply a range of strategies successfully when engaging with different texts. They provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing purposefully, and many pupils produce meaningful extended pieces, incorporating ambitious vocabulary appropriately. In mathematics, pupils develop secure number understanding and apply skills well in suitable problem-solving contexts. Pupils' digital competence develops well as they move through the school. Older pupils demonstrate increasing confidence in their use of digital tools and show a mature awareness of online safety and the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

There is a strong culture of ongoing reflection and review in nearly all aspects of school life. Leaders use self-evaluation well to identify priorities and drive improvement. They provide staff with valuable professional learning that supports the school's strategic direction. Governors are developing a more constructive approach to challenge leaders about the school's work.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Further develop opportunities to provide all younger pupils with access to a rich learning environment that promotes experiential learning.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

At Pennard Primary School, leaders have high expectations. They have worked closely with staff to develop an ambitious school vision that promotes pupils' well-being and love of learning effectively. Leaders place continuous reflection and review at the heart of their strategic approach. They support staff well to adapt their teaching approaches to meet pupils' needs. This helps teachers to build purposefully on pupils' knowledge and skills. As they move through the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals, make strong progress.

The school promotes positive and respectful relationships where pupils feel safe and valued. This supports pupils' well-being and strengthens their readiness to learn. Most pupils behave well and show resilience in their learning. They understand the school's expectations for behaviour and demonstrate positive attitudes towards their work. There are clear safeguarding procedures that are understood suitably by the whole school community.

Spotlight: An authentic curriculum that builds purposefully on pupils' skills and prior learning

Over time, leaders and staff have developed a bespoke curriculum with pupil enquiry at the heart. The curriculum provides engaging and stimulating learning experiences within authentic contexts that build progressively on pupils' skills and prior learning. Leaders maintain a clear focus on establishing consistent and effective approaches to teaching that align closely with the curriculum design. As a result, most pupils develop a shared and coherent understanding of their learning as they move through the school. They talk confidently about their work, reflect thoughtfully on their progress and understand their next steps clearly.

The school's curriculum, including the well-structured learning experiences provided through its 'Wellbeing Wednesday' arrangements, contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders and staff carefully plan activities that help pupils become confident individuals who understand the importance of healthy relationships and respect for diversity.

Teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' individual learning needs. They use this information well to develop purposeful learning experiences that build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. In many lessons, teachers provide pupils with activities that challenges them appropriately and helps them to learn. In these lessons, teachers' questioning helps pupils to deepen their thinking and reflect on their learning purposefully.

Teachers' thoughtful use of resources and well-designed activities enables many pupils to work independently and take responsibility for their learning. Staff working with the youngest pupils create worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their learning through play. They ensure that pupils have beneficial opportunities to explore and be curious in the outdoors. This develops pupils' physical and independent learning skills suitably. Leaders recognise that opportunities to build systematically on these early play experiences are at an early stage of development.

Teachers promote rich language interactions and activities across the school. Staff model language effectively and, as a result, most pupils develop confidence in their speaking and listening skills in both Welsh and English. Many pupils make good progress in their Welsh oracy skills and apply these confidently in meaningful contexts.

The school's structured approach to teaching reading ensures that, by the time they leave, most pupils use a range of reading strategies well to engage with a broad range of texts. Teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills effectively. Many of the youngest pupils write initial sounds and basic words accurately. As they move through the school, they produce extended writing across a range of text types using varied and increasingly ambitious vocabulary.

Teachers plan a broad range of relevant and engaging mathematical activities that meet the needs of pupils well. Many pupils develop a secure understanding of number and can apply their numeracy skills effectively in meaningful, problem-solving contexts.

Pupils' digital skills develop progressively across the school. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for younger pupils to begin building their digital competence, although a minority still require support to log on and access resources independently. As pupils move through the school, they benefit from more regular opportunities to apply and extend these skills. Many older pupils use digital tools confidently to enhance their learning in authentic contexts. They demonstrate a mature understanding of online safety and express thoughtful views on issues such as artificial intelligence.

Leaders use robust self-evaluation processes to drive improvement. Staff understand their role in supporting the school's priorities and benefit from a range of well-planned professional learning opportunities to strengthen their practice. Successful collaborative partnerships with other schools, support leadership development well.

Governors show commitment to supporting the school's strategic direction. They engage appropriately with leaders and, increasingly, provide constructive challenge to senior leaders.

Provision for pupils with ALN is strong. There are effective arrangements for identifying pupils with needs, and staff work with external partners well to secure appropriate support. Leaders and staff use the school's assessment and progression model well to monitor pupils' progress systematically. This enables them to identify individual needs promptly and adapt support appropriately. This includes providing access to 'Coeden Fach', the school's bespoke small-group intervention provision.

Many older pupils, including those with ALN, benefit from meaningful opportunities to undertake leadership roles within the school. Through these roles, they develop their leadership skills appropriately and make important contributions to improve aspects of school life.

The school engages effectively with parents and carers through frequent and meaningful communication. Open mornings, regular newsletters and opportunities to share pupils' learning, generally foster positive home-school partnerships. For example, through clear communication the school promotes positive attendance.

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/carer 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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