

Report summary for parents and carers on Pontygwaith Primary School

Date of inspection: 09/03/2026

Summary

At Pontygwaith Primary School, the headteacher provides strong, thoughtful leadership, supported effectively by staff and governors. Together, they share a clear vision that promotes a nurturing, inclusive and supportive school community, consistently communicated to staff, pupils and families. This means that the school has a calm and purposeful ethos where pupils feel safe, valued and confident. Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being, which is reflected in respectful relationships and robust safeguarding arrangements understood by all staff.

Leaders demonstrate a strong understanding of the local community and work proactively with parents, using timely communication, family learning events, and targeted support to enhance pupils' learning and well-being. Family engagement is a notable strength, with parents actively involved through initiatives such as the 'Celebration of Learning' events, which contribute notably to improved pupil participation and attendance.

Over time, many pupils, including those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), make suitable and at times good progress from where they start. Younger pupils develop language and communication skills well and talk confidently about their learning. Reading is a strength across the school, pupils progress well from using early phonics to become fluent expressive readers. Writing skills develop appropriately, although a minority of pupils struggle to sustain ideas and extend their writing. In Welsh, younger pupils develop listening and speaking skills well, but older pupils have too few opportunities to extend spoken Welsh which limits their confidence and progress.

In mathematics, most pupils develop calculation skills and an understanding of number, shape and measure well, though opportunities to apply these skills across the curriculum are less well developed. Pupils develop digital skills suitably and their physical skills successfully through outdoor learning, swimming and a wide variety of sports. Teaching is largely effective, due to supportive and creative learning environments and strong relationships. In the most effective lessons, teachers use questioning successfully and clear expectations promotes good collaboration, though at times feedback to pupils about how they can improve their work is inconsistent across the school.

The curriculum is broad, engaging, and effectively linked to local culture and Welsh history. Outdoor learning opportunities support pupils' practical skills and well-being successfully. Systems for identifying and supporting pupils with additional learning needs are highly effective, enabling most pupils to make good progress. Leaders and governors have sound self-evaluation and budgeting procedures, though monitoring is not always precise enough to identify specific areas of teaching that need to improve.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement planning to focus more sharply on the aspects of teaching that have the greatest impact on learning
- R2 Strengthen the level of challenge overall and ensure that feedback supports pupils to improve and refine their work
- R3 Improve pupils' writing skills

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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