

A report on

Bishop Childs C.I.W. Primary School

**Willowbrook Drive
St Mellons
CF3 0AY**

Date of inspection: May 2026

by

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

About Bishop Childs C.I.W. Primary School

Name of provider	Bishop Childs C.I.W. Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales
Number of pupils on roll	201
Pupils of statutory school age	174
Number in nursery classes	
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%)	16.4%
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%)	4.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	13.2%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2015

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	26/11/2018
Start date of inspection	18/05/2026

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

The school promotes a caring and inclusive ethos where pupils feel valued, supported and confident in their learning. Nearly all pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to school, behave respectfully and engage purposefully in lessons and wider school life. Strong working relationships between staff and pupils contribute to a calm environment where pupils feel safe, well supported and motivated to attend school regularly.

Staff work collaboratively to establish consistent approaches to teaching and learning, which help create clear expectations for pupils across the school. Many teachers use effective questioning and feedback strategies well to extend pupils' understanding and address misconceptions promptly.

Purposeful opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills across the curriculum help most pupils make good progress over time. Most pupils read, write and communicate confidently, while many apply Welsh appropriately in familiar situations. Pupils develop secure mathematical and digital skills through meaningful learning experiences. However, opportunities to apply numeracy skills independently and develop as creative, independent thinkers are underdeveloped.

Leaders and staff provide effective support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) through strong collaboration with families and external agencies. Targeted interventions and careful tracking of progress enable many pupils with ALN to make secure progress towards their individual targets.

Leaders have established effective systems for self-evaluation and professional learning. As a result, staff contribute purposefully to school improvement and increasingly take responsibility for leading aspects of the school's work. Leaders use assessment and monitoring information effectively to identify priorities and improve outcomes for pupils.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Provide further opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in authentic contexts across the curriculum
- R2 Develop pupils as independent creative thinkers

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Bishop Child's school is a welcoming and happy school where pupils feel safe, supported and valued. Leaders have established a strong culture of care and high aspirations that underpins all aspects of school life successfully. As a result, nearly all pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning, behave well and show respect and care for one another. They engage enthusiastically in learning, work collaboratively with their peers and discuss their work confidently with maturity and enthusiasm.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and there is a strong safeguarding culture across the school. The school has a robust system in place to monitor attendance, and this is scrutinised closely by leaders, resulting in most pupils attending regularly. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and are punctual. Working relationships between pupils and adults are respectful and strong. Nearly all pupils feel free from bullying and harassment and feel safe at school. They are confident that leaders and staff will look after them whenever they need their help. Through consistent promotion of the United Nations Rights of the Child (UNRC) nearly all pupils are aware of their rights and how they relate to daily life.

Teachers work collaboratively to develop a consistent set of teaching approaches known as 'The Bishop Child's Way'. This provides staff and pupils with a shared understanding of expectations for learning and behaviour. Teaching across the school is generally effective, with many teachers demonstrating high expectations, strong subject knowledge and purposeful questioning that deepens pupils' understanding. In the strongest practice, particularly in older classes, teachers act as skilled facilitators who intervene at the right time to challenge and extend learning. They use questioning, feedback and regular 'pit stops' effectively to check understanding and address misconceptions promptly. In the younger classes, caring relationships and positive language modelling help pupils become confident and enthusiastic learners. Staff provide effective support for pupils to develop their skills within small, focused groups well. However, they do not always provide purposeful play opportunities that build successfully on pupils' skills and understanding.

The school has developed a comprehensive approach to assessment. This enables teachers to monitor the progress pupils make with their literacy, mathematical and digital

skills in lessons and across the curriculum. This helps teachers to identify the next steps in pupils' learning and to provide appropriate support and challenge when needed,

The school has established a positive and improving reading culture. Most younger pupils develop secure phonic awareness and a growing confidence in early reading which supports their enjoyment and understanding of texts well. Guided reading groupings for older pupils are matched carefully to abilities, enabling staff to track progress and provide targeted support purposefully. Recent investment in diverse and inclusive texts, enrich pupils' engagement with literature effectively. As a result, most pupils across the school enjoy reading, discuss books enthusiastically and show strong awareness of favourite authors and series.

Most pupils develop strong oracy skills and communicate clearly and confidently across a wide range of contexts. They listen attentively to adults and peers, collaborate respectfully in discussions and paired activities, and respond thoughtfully to the views of others. Effective language modelling and purposeful conversations by staff support pupils to extend their vocabulary successfully, so that by the time they leave the school, most use ambitious and subject-specific language accurately and with increasing sophistication.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills and apply these effectively across the curriculum. By Year 6, many produce writing of a high standard, demonstrating a secure understanding of purpose, structure, spelling, and use genre-specific features successfully. Pupils generally present their work neatly, with well-controlled handwriting, and increasingly edit and improve their work independently.

Many pupils develop appropriate Welsh language skills and use simple Welsh confidently in familiar contexts, including greeting visitors politely and responding to basic questions. Focused teaching sessions support pupils to build confidence in relevant vocabulary and language patterns effectively.

Across the school, most pupils make secure progress in developing a broad range of mathematical skills through progressively planned and suitably challenging activities. The effective use of practical resources and reasoning opportunities strengthen pupils' understanding and application of number, measure, shape and data handling. However, opportunities to apply maths and numeracy skills consistently across the curriculum are underdeveloped.

The school plans effectively for the progressive development of pupils' digital skills. Nearly all pupils benefit from worthwhile opportunities to develop and apply these skills in authentic and meaningful contexts across the curriculum. As a result, nearly all pupils develop their digital skills appropriately and use them confidently to support their learning.

Teaching across the school is generally effective, with many teachers demonstrating high expectations, strong subject knowledge and purposeful questioning that deepens pupils' understanding. In the strongest practice, particularly in older classes, teachers act as skilled facilitators who intervene at the right time to challenge and extend learning. However, too often teachers do not always provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to direct their own learning and develop their independent thinking.

The schools' detailed curriculum purposefully embodies all areas of learning. It provides useful guidance for teachers which helps them to plan engaging learning experiences that support pupils to develop as capable and confident individuals. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' interests and suggestions to make adaptations that meet their needs. The school provides purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop a secure understanding of world faiths through collective worship, enrichment activities and visits to places of worship, such as mosques and gurdwaras.

Leaders and staff provide purposeful support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) through effective collaboration with families and external agencies. Trained support staff deliver targeted interventions that enable many pupils to make secure progress towards their individual targets. Robust procedures are in place to monitor the progress of pupils with individual development plans. Effective multi-agency collaboration, combined with strong partnerships with families, ensures pupils' individual needs are identified and addressed promptly.

Many pupils benefit from opportunities to develop their leadership and independence skills in authentic contexts. The school's Senedd and pupil leadership groups enable pupils to take on leadership roles and make meaningful contributions to school life and events.

Leaders have developed a successful model of distributed leadership that strengthens the leadership skills of staff across the school effectively. As a result, teachers take increasing ownership of their areas of responsibility and demonstrate a strong level of autonomy in leading school improvement initiatives. Leaders are reflective practitioners and provide staff with beneficial opportunities to engage in meaningful review and reflection activities. Consequently, staff evaluate the impact of their work purposefully and adapt their practice effectively to improve teaching and pupil outcomes.

Spotlight: Collaborative approach to school leadership

Governors and school leaders work collaboratively to establish a strong values-led vision that places the well-being of pupils and staff at the heart of the school's work. As a result of highly effective teamwork and open communication, staff and governors have a secure, evidence-based understanding of the school and the families it serves. They use this knowledge purposefully to inform both strategic and operational priorities. Consequently, leaders make informed decisions that support pupils' well-being and progress successfully, while fostering a strong sense of trust, belonging and shared commitment across the school community.

Effective self-evaluation provides leaders with a highly informed understanding of how different groups of pupils, including those with ALN, English as an additional language (EAL) and pupils adversely affected by poverty, make progress over time. This supports them to identify beneficial professional learning opportunities that align closely with whole-school priorities and support the professional learning needs of staff effectively.

The school's collaborative approach to professional learning enables staff to reflect purposefully on their own practice, identify strengths and areas for development, and share effective practice with colleagues. Teachers and support staff take an active role in leading and delivering in-house professional learning, which contributes positively to improving teaching and learning across the school.

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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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Publication date: 21/07/2026