

A report on

Henllys C.I.W. Primary School

**Ty Canol Way
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 6JA**

Date of inspection: June 2026

by

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

About Henllys C.I.W. Primary School

Name of provider	Henllys C.I.W. Primary School
Local authority	Torfaen County Borough 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	169
Pupils of statutory school age	153
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%)	6.5%
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%)	*
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4.6%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2019

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	14/02/2017
Start date of inspection	22/06/2026

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

Henllys C.I.W. Primary School provides a welcoming environment where pupils enjoy learning, behave exceptionally well and feel a strong sense of belonging. Leaders have established a positive culture based on high expectations and strong relationships. They work closely with parents and carers to support pupils' learning and well-being. This work has contributed to notable improvements in rates of attendance at the school. Most pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

The curriculum provides a rich range of learning experiences that reflect the local community and Welsh context well. Meaningful learning experiences help pupils develop valuable knowledge and skills that prepare them well for everyday life. These opportunities also enable pupils to explore their beliefs, values and responsibilities and develop respect for others and an appreciation of the wider world.

Teachers are developing appropriate approaches to increase challenge and encourage pupils to think independently. Currently, this is not consistent across the school. In a minority of lessons teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities that challenge pupils to think or work independently to solve problems

Most pupils develop strong literacy, numeracy and digital skills as they move through the school. They become confident readers and writers, apply their mathematical understanding successfully and use digital technology purposefully to support their learning. The school promotes the Welsh language effectively. Currently, older pupils have too few opportunities to converse in Welsh.

Teachers know their pupils well and use assessment information appropriately to build on prior learning and respond to individual needs. They adapt support suitably, including for pupils with additional learning needs, so that most make good progress.

Through high-quality professional learning and collaboration with the local cluster of schools, leaders have established a consistent approach that encourages pupils to reflect on and improve their learning. They evaluate the school's work carefully to identify priorities for improvement. Governors provide valuable support and appropriate challenge, helping leaders maintain a clear focus on improving outcomes for pupils.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to think independently and solve problems through appropriately challenging learning.
- R2 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Henllys C.I.W. Primary School is a thriving community where pupils enjoy learning and feel a strong sense of belonging. Throughout the school, pupils are courteous and behave exceptionally well. They show respect for their peers, adults and visitors, helping to create a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils benefit from a wide range of enriching opportunities that reflect their interests and experiences. This contributes to the high levels of engagement and enjoyment that are evident across the school.

Spotlight 1: Promoting attendance through a culture of belonging

Leaders have successfully placed attendance at the heart of the school's values and expectations. They work closely with staff, governors, pupils and families to build a culture where pupils feel valued, enjoy school and understand the importance of attending regularly. Through trusting relationships and a shared commitment to pupils' well-being, leaders improved attendance significantly and reduced persistent absence. These improved rates of attendance mean that more pupils benefit from the full range of experiences the school provides.

Leaders reflect frequently on the school's work and refine their vision to meet the evolving needs of pupils and their families. Leaders and staff establish highly productive and respectful relationships with parents, building worthwhile partnerships that support pupils' learning and well-being effectively. This helps them maintain a sharp focus on improving outcomes for pupils.

Robust self-evaluation arrangements help leaders identify strengths and priorities accurately. Staff contribute to evaluating the school's work and planning for

improvement. This supports the development of leadership across the school. Performance management arrangements align closely with school priorities. Leaders use these processes to embed Curriculum for Wales and additional learning needs reform, while continuing to strengthen pupils' Welsh language skills. Collectively, these approaches contribute to most pupils, including those with ALN and those eligible for free school meals, making strong progress in their learning and well-being.

The school provides a broad, balanced and purposeful curriculum that reflects the local community and Welsh context well. Staff plan engaging learning experiences through meaningful real-life contexts, supported by stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments. These experiences develop pupils' knowledge and skills successfully. They also provide valuable opportunities to develop practical life skills that prepare pupils well for everyday life. Through the curriculum, pupils explore their beliefs, values and responsibilities while considering important local and global issues. This encourages them to develop respect for others, appreciate diversity and become thoughtful individuals with a growing understanding of the world around them.

In many lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to stimulate discussion and extend pupils' thinking. They intervene appropriately to build on pupils' responses and encourage them to explain their ideas in greater detail. The school is developing a range of worthwhile strategies to promote challenge and independence. Where teachers use these approaches most skilfully, they provide sufficient challenge and enable pupils to take greater ownership of their work. Currently, this is not consistent across the school. In a minority of lessons teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities that challenge pupils to think or work independently to solve problems.

From the outset, teachers assess pupils' knowledge, skills and progress carefully. They use assessment information efficiently to adapt planning, build purposefully on pupils' prior learning and identify where additional support or challenge is required. This ensures that teachers respond promptly to pupils' individual needs through their teaching and targeted support.

Spotlight 2: Developing a shared approach to improving learning

Leaders and staff have established a beneficial approach that helps pupils reflect on and improve their learning. High-quality professional learning has been central to this work. Teachers collaborate closely with colleagues from across the local cluster of schools to share effective practice and strengthen assessment processes. This collaboration has influenced practice across the school, for instance by improving how teachers help pupils reflect on their work and respond to feedback.

Most pupils develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills well as they move through the school. Regular opportunities to strengthen these skills in a wide range of learning experiences help them build confidence and make meaningful links across their learning.

From an early age, most pupils establish secure speaking and early reading skills. They use their knowledge of letters and sounds confidently to read unfamiliar words and build firm foundations for reading. Over time, they become fluent, expressive readers who apply a range of strategies independently to deepen their understanding of increasingly challenging texts. These strong literacy skills provide a strong foundation for writing. Most pupils write competently for a wide range of purposes and audiences, applying their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills accurately. They present their work neatly and take pride in its quality. As they move through the school, many refine their work thoughtfully and use sophisticated vocabulary to improve their writing.

Most pupils build sound mathematical understanding through practical experiences from an early age. They build on these foundations successfully and become confident in applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Over time, they use a range of digital tools thoughtfully to organise, analyse and present information. Together, these skills help pupils recognise the practical value of mathematics and digital technologies in everyday life and the world of work.

The school promotes the Welsh language suitably. Staff model Welsh routinely throughout the day and this has a positive impact on the use of everyday Welsh across the school. Currently, older pupils do not have enough opportunities to converse in Welsh, which hinders their progress.

The school identifies pupils' additional learning needs effectively and provides support that is matched appropriately to their individual needs. Teachers work closely with support staff and external agencies to adapt provision as pupils' needs change. This coordinated approach helps pupils access learning successfully, and most make good progress towards their individual targets.

Pupils play an active part in school life through a range of pupil groups and by making choices about aspects of their learning. Their views are valued and listened to. Supportive transition arrangements, developed in close partnership with partner schools, help pupils settle quickly and equip them for the next stage of their education.

Leaders and governors use the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) strategically to promote equity and inclusion and reduce the impact of poverty on pupils' learning and well-being. Governors use their skills and expertise well to provide valuable support and appropriate challenge. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively and contribute positively to the school's strong safeguarding culture.

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.

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