

Birchgrove Primary School
Birchgrove Road
Birchgrove
CF14 1RR

09/07/2026

Dear leaders and staff

Interim visit: July 2026

A team of inspectors visited Birchgrove Primary School recently to consider progress in relation to two recommendations from the previous core inspection. The inspection team took the opportunity to observe teaching and learning, talk with pupils and staff, consider documentation and look at samples of pupils' work. Below is a summary of the findings from the visit.

Focus of visit

Improve the provision for outdoor learning

- Leaders and teachers have responded positively to relevant professional learning by taking a thoughtful and gradual approach to developing provision for outdoor learning.
- Staff have worked with parents to create an attractive and engaging outdoor area, which reception pupils use to develop their curiosity, and practise and consolidate their physical and creative skills alongside their early literacy and numeracy skills.
- Most of these pupils engage well in learning activities and experiences in the new environment. They are beginning to gain the confidence to try new things, think creatively, solve simple problems and talk about what they are learning.
- More broadly, many pupils benefit from using a range of outdoor environments in the local community, including a local park. This expands pupils' experiences in the outdoors and enhances the curriculum across the school.
- Overall, the school has made a positive start in addressing this recommendation. School leaders realise the need to build on this by extending opportunities for all pupils, including the development of additional outdoor learning areas to support more classes.

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Estyn welcomes correspondence in both English and Welsh. Correspondence received in either language will be given equal priority.

Develop pupils' independent learning skills

- Leaders have established a clear whole-school vision for developing pupils' independence, supported by focused professional learning and shared expectations. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to think critically, make decisions and take increasing responsibility for their own learning across the curriculum.
- Most teachers use beneficial strategies, including effective questioning, appropriate challenge and opportunities for reflection, to develop pupils' independence. Pupils are encouraged to persevere before seeking adult support. As they progress through the school, most pupils demonstrate increasing resilience, confidence and resourcefulness when tackling unfamiliar tasks.
- Across the school, classroom routines and learning environments promote independence through accessible resources appropriately. Older pupils make effective use of success criteria and opportunities for self- and peer-assessment to monitor their progress, identify next steps and improve the quality of their work.
- Leaders monitor the implementation of independent learning effectively through learning walks, looking at pupil's work and talking to pupils about their learning. They use this evidence well to refine practice and provide focused support where needed.
- Overall, pupils engage positively in their learning and demonstrate increasing levels of independence, collaboration and resilience as they move through the school. In particular, older pupils articulate their thinking confidently, sustain concentration for extended periods and apply previously learned knowledge and skills successfully.

The school's latest core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6812011>

Yours sincerely



Liz Miles

Assistant Director