

Report summary for parents and carers on Thornwell Primary School

Date of inspection: 22/06/2026

Summary

Thornwell Primary School is a happy, caring and inclusive school where pupils feel welcomed, valued and well supported. Strong relationships between staff and pupils create a positive ethos in which most pupils enjoy learning, behave well and develop high levels of well-being. Leaders have established a clear vision that places pupils, staff and the wider community at the heart of the school's work.

The curriculum is broad, engaging and enriched by an exceptional outdoor learning environment. The school farm, forest area and community gardens provide authentic opportunities for pupils to develop skills and deepen their understanding of sustainability.

Leadership and governance are effective. Robust self-evaluation and improvement processes have secured sustained progress over time. The school ensures that professional learning aligns appropriately to school improvement priorities. The school has strengthened provision in the younger classes, where pupils make strong progress in the development of their communication and oracy skills through purposeful play and exploration. Across the school, most pupils develop strong reading, writing and mathematical skills which they apply purposefully in the outdoor areas. Pupils make slower progress in the development of their Welsh oracy skills.

The school provides highly effective support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those facing barriers to learning, with innovative provision that promotes confidence, resilience and well-being.

In many lessons, teaching provides purposeful learning experiences that enable pupils to make good progress. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent across the school. In a few lessons, teachers do not adapt learning sufficiently to meet pupils' individual needs or break activities into manageable steps. In these lessons, pupils become disengaged and this reduces the progress they make.

The school uses a range of initiatives to promote and support regular school attendance. Despite this, attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals has declined in recent years and persistent absence, while improving, remains too high.

Recommendations and next steps

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

- R1 Reduce variability in teaching to ensure that all pupils are engaged in their learning and make good progress
 - R2 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills
 - R3 Improve attendance, particularly for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals
- 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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