

A report on
Glyncoed Primary School

**Badminton Grove
Ebbw Vale
Blaenau Gwent
NP23 5UL**

Date of inspection: February 2025

by

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

About Glyncoed Primary School

Name of provider	Glyncoed Primary School
Local authority	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	341
Pupils of statutory school age	248
Number in nursery classes	48
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 22.9%)	24.3%
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 11.1%)	4.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	03/04/2023

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	10/02/2025

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's support and provision for pupils' well-being is a strength. Staff have strong relationships with pupils and this commitment to their care and well-being helps pupils, including those from socio-economically disadvantaged contexts and those with additional learning needs (ALN), to make progress. The behaviour of pupils is good, and they have a positive attitude to school.

Most pupils make a strong improvements in speaking and listening from a young age. The school fosters a strong culture of reading, and, by Year 6, many pupils develop effective skills and are confident readers. Overall, most pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical and digital competency skills, but the provision to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped. The school's curriculum reflects the principles of Curriculum for Wales well and considers the history of the local area.

Teachers plan appropriate projects that encourage inquiry. As a result, nearly all pupils actively engage with their learning successfully. Classrooms are calm spaces that support pupils to develop their independence. This ensures that pupils across the school are engaged in their learning well. Most teachers use verbal feedback well to help pupils reflect on their work and as a result most make good progress in understanding what they need to do to improve.

Leaders work together with the governing body to share a clear vision for the school and develop an inclusive culture. They understand the needs of the community and ensure a strong focus on well-being that underpins the work of the school. Senior leaders have a good awareness of the progress made by different groups of learners, including those with ALN and those eligible for free school meals. This ensures that those vulnerable pupils make good progress from their starting points. Leaders regularly monitor pupils' outcomes, using direct observations and data analysis, to build a good understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. However, monitoring activities aimed at evaluating the impact of teaching on pupil progress are not as well developed.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Sharpen monitoring and evaluation to focus on learning and progress
- R2. Broaden and deepen learning experiences to ensure that pupils develop and apply their skills and knowledge in purposeful contexts across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Glyncoed Primary School is an inclusive school where staff and pupils feel safe and valued. The headteacher has high expectations of both staff and pupils and leads by example. Leaders invest time in their staff and support their well-being, resulting in a passionate team of professionals that provide a supportive learning environment. The highly effective care, support and well-being provided by the staff is central to the school's vision. This helps most pupils, including those affected by the impact of poverty and those with additional learning needs (ALN), to make good progress during their time at school. Standards of pupil behaviour are good, and nearly all pupils are welcoming and polite.

In the foundation learning classes, nearly all teachers ensure that younger pupils develop an interest in the world around them. Through carefully planned provision, most pupils investigate independently and develop a range of skills. With older pupils, teachers create effective learning experiences that incorporate pupils' ideas and interests well. They use an inquiry-based approach to develop pupils' curiosity and understanding of the world through exploring local, national and international events. This approach enables most older pupils to draw comparisons across different periods and societies, such as between the different size and costs of major buildings across the globe. The curriculum develops an appropriate understanding of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through a whole-school approach.

Many staff use questioning and feedback to support pupils' progress. Many younger pupils benefit from interactions with adults that moves their learning forward. Older pupils interact positively with teachers' questioning and, as a result, gain a deeper understanding of their work. Teachers organise classrooms well to enable pupils, including those with ALN, to access resources independently to support their learning. In most classes, teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in most aspects of their learning.

Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make good progress in developing their initial literacy and numeracy skills. Opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other areas of learning are at the early stages of development. Through effective modelling of language by adults, most pupils make very good progress in their speaking and listening skills, often from low starting points. Older pupils use technical language appropriately and experiment with new terminology when sharing their ideas. From a

young age most pupils make good progress with their reading skills and by the end of Year 6, most are fluent readers. Staff have a clear focus on maths that enables most pupils to master key concepts effectively. They develop their skills systematically throughout the school and, by Year 6, become competent in number work. Most pupils' digital competency is developing throughout the school. They use programmes to support their reading for example, accessing online platforms to research information and use applications to build computer generated designs. The school has a clear plan in place for the development of the Welsh language and staff model this well. Younger pupils use of Welsh in informal situations is developing well, however, this is less strong in older pupils.

The school provides effective support for pupils with ALN that ensures they make good progress from their individual starting points. Staff in the nurture team understand the varied and complex needs of the pupils they support. They skillfully implement effective strategies to enable pupils' social, emotional and learning development.

Spotlight 1: Providing opportunities for vulnerable learners to access all aspects of school life

Provision for supporting the young carers is a strength of the school. Pupils thrive in a positive atmosphere where their views and ideas are taken on and used to support them in their roles as carers. The strength of relationships between staff and these pupils enables them to attend school regularly and make progress in their learning.

School leaders ensure that processes for evaluating and monitoring pupils' progress are robust. They use a variety of evidence, including the monitoring of planning and pupils' work, to make accurate decisions about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school's work. They build leadership capacity by carrying out evaluation activities alongside other members of staff and together they correctly identify the need to improve the quality of teaching across the school. Where monitoring and evaluation is less well developed, there is insufficient focus on the impact of the school's work on the progress made by pupils.

Staff contribute effectively to the school improvement process through evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum areas for which they have responsibility. Through careful use of tracking information, senior leaders have a sound understanding of the progress made by different groups of learners, particularly those with ALN and those eligible for free school meals.

Leaders support staff in developing their teaching and leadership skills. They foster a culture of identifying and sharing effective practice that impacts positively on the quality of provision. Senior leaders collaborate well with partners and provide worthwhile opportunities for professional learning. For example, work with the local cluster of schools

has led to positive developments with planning and implementing of Curriculum for Wales. Governors know their school well and actively participate in its life. They engage in useful self-evaluation activities and work closely with senior leaders, monitoring progress against priorities such as attendance and safeguarding. They provide appropriate support and challenge for leaders.

The school encourages pupils to develop their leadership skills and take on responsibilities. Because of opportunities for engagement in decision-making, pupil leadership groups have a clear voice in shaping their school's development.

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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