

A report on
Oak Field Primary School

**Amroth Court
Caldy Close
Gibbonsdown
Barry
CF62 9DU**

Date of inspection: February 2025

by

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

About Oak Field Primary School

Name of provider	Oak Field Primary School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	173
Pupils of statutory school age	135
Number in nursery classes	21
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%)	65.9%
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%)	48.9%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4.4%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/09/2017

Start date of inspection	17/02/2025
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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

Oak Field Primary School is a welcoming, happy, and inclusive school that is truly at the heart of its community. The school has developed a caring and inclusive culture where pupils and families feel safe, happy, and valued. This environment supports nearly all pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and behaviour. Pupil well-being is a priority for the school. This means that nearly all pupils take a pride in their school and appreciate the warm environment into which they are welcomed.

Leaders and staff have worked successfully to develop a vision for the school that is relevant to the needs of the pupils and the local community. They work closely with a range of agencies to support families, and this has had a positive impact on attendance and parents' engagement with the school.

The curriculum is engaging and exciting with inquiry questions used successfully to enable pupils to lead their learning and develop their creative skills. Opportunities to work with local artists, overseas trips and regular visits to working farms provide authentic opportunities for pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities and leadership roles, but their role in the school's development and decision-making processes is at an early stage of development.

There is good provision for pupils to develop their English, mathematical and digital skills through the school and, as a result, most make at least expected progress. However, pupils' Welsh language skills are underdeveloped.

The school's self-evaluation processes successfully identify the most important areas for improvement. Leaders recognise, for example, the importance of extending opportunities for all pupils, and use additional grant funding creatively to support this. The governing body works successfully with the headteacher, staff, pupils and parents to support ongoing improvement. A commitment to professional learning for all staff successfully supports improvements in pupils' learning and well-being.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills
- R2. Provide a greater range of opportunities for pupils to influence the wider life of the school

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders, staff, and governors at Oak Field Primary School have created a nurturing, inclusive environment where pupils and families feel safe, happy, and welcomed. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's work. Staff know pupils and their families well and provide high levels of care and support. As a result, pupils develop confidence and are keen to learn within a positive environment where everyone is valued and appreciated.

Spotlight 1: Developing effective partnerships with parents to support pupils' learning and well-being

The school's working relationships and support for families are a strength. The school provides a welcoming community space for parents to attend meetings and workshops to help support their children's learning and well-being. Parents are encouraged to contribute to school life through the community café and Big Bocs Bwyd. This support for families, along with effective collaboration, has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, and the well-being and progress of most pupils.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and around school and show positive attitudes to learning. They engage enthusiastically with the wide range of experiences and opportunities provided by the school, including regular trips to local farms and with an international exchange programme. The Oak Field Deal supports pupils to show kindness, respect and positive attitudes towards others and encourages them to take responsibility for their learning and attendance.

The school has developed an engaging curriculum that provides authentic opportunities for pupils to develop a range of skills across all areas of learning. This inquiry-based approach enables pupils to make decisions about what and how they learn and to apply their skills in real-life contexts across the curriculum. For example, pupils calculate the cheapest ingredients to make a Christmas cake and write persuasive letters to the government in support of farmers following a visit to a working farm.

The school's curriculum develops pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding well, enabling them to become empathetic and considerate towards others, respecting differences and understanding equality. The school's focus on health and well-being also helps pupils to develop as confident individuals who have a greater awareness of the importance of healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe.

Spotlight 2: Developing a creative curriculum through a focus on the expressive arts and inquiry-based learning

Staff have combined creative and authentic approaches to learning through inquiry questions with opportunities for pupils to develop their expressive arts skills. For example, younger pupils work with local artists to explore themes of diversity and Cynefin. Older pupils develop their creativity, collaboration and critical thinking when exploring how they can use music, dance and the movements of shadows and silhouettes to tell a story without relying on written text.

In most lessons, teachers use questioning well to extend pupils' understanding and provide clear learning intentions and valuable verbal feedback. This helps most pupils to know what they do well and what they need to do to improve their work. Older pupils are beginning to improve and refine their writing purposefully.

Staff collaborate effectively to ensure that pupils develop and build on skills progressively across the school. For example, a well-structured and progressive approach to teaching reading ensures that by Year 6 most pupils use a range of effective reading strategies and develop a love of books and reading. Most pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills over time. Younger pupils enjoy talking about their play and retelling familiar tales in role play areas. Older pupils share their opinions, discuss ideas, and predict story lines in their language work related to Macbeth.

Most pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their writing skills appropriately. They write confidently for an increasing range of audiences and purposes and show a good understanding the features of different forms of writing.

Many pupils greet visitors and their friends in Welsh and follow simple commands. However, across the school there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh oracy skills well enough.

Teachers have a good understanding of the progress pupils make. Staff have developed a continuum of assessment that aligns with the school curriculum. It enables them to measure the progress of different groups of learners effectively and identify those pupils who may require additional support or challenge.

Leaders have addressed many national priorities successfully, including the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales and additional learning needs (ALN) reform, and this work has strengthened the school's overall provision. The school's comprehensive processes for monitoring and supporting attendance have led to noticeable improvements in pupils' attendance.

Well-trained staff deliver a range of appropriate programmes to support pupils' emotional and social well-being, as well as their literacy and numeracy skills. This ensures that most pupils, including those with ALN and those affected by poverty, make good progress during their time in school.

Older pupils, including those with ALN, take on leadership roles and contribute to decision-making in some areas of school life. Although pupil leadership groups meet and carry out some meaningful work such as promoting good digital health and safety, opportunities for them to make suggestions and influence the work of the school are limited.

A compassionate leadership team values all members of staff and supports them well. Professional development reviews and a culture of reflective practice successfully support improvements in teaching and the sharing of good practice. For example, staff delivering phonics sessions completed peer observations and shared good practice and resources with their colleagues.

Leaders use a range of monitoring and self-evaluation processes well to support improvements in provision. A recent focus on developing a consistent approach to teaching mathematics through professional learning for all staff supports most pupils to develop a secure understanding of number and use this knowledge to complete a range of mental and written calculations effectively. Most pupils apply their skills effectively in their work across the curriculum, for example when calculating the profit from ticket sales for a show or using their knowledge of area and perimeter to calculate the size of pen needed on a farm.

Effective collaboration with local schools has supported leadership capacity and provided valuable opportunities for staff to share good practice and further develop teaching, learning and curriculum design.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils regardless of their backgrounds, and focus on high quality teaching, carefully targeted support and a wide range of aspirational experiences to enable all pupils to make progress. The school's governors are highly supportive of the school. They provide effective challenge and successfully support the school's vision. They ensure that grants are used effectively to improve outcomes for pupils and, alongside staff, promote a strong culture of safeguarding.

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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