

A report on

Springwood Primary School

**Pennsylvania
Llanedeyrn
CF23 9LS**

Date of inspection: June 2025

by

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

About Springwood Primary School

Name of provider	Springwood Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	286
Pupils of statutory school age	228
Number in nursery classes	30
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%)	42.2%
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%)	20.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	22.4%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/06/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	05/03/2018
Start date of inspection	02/06/2025

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

Springwood is a school that serves a diverse community. Pupils from all backgrounds, including those from the special resource bases (SRBs), feel a strong sense of belonging. They are well supported by leaders and staff who prioritise pupils' well-being in particular.

Many pupils join the school with limited language and social skills, but most, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals, make good progress as they move through the school. Teachers place a clear emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and communication skills, which strengthens their writing and use of vocabulary effectively. Most pupils become confident writers and many enjoy reading, developing secure phonics, fluency, and comprehension.

Many pupils develop their numeracy skills well and they gain confidence in solving problems. The school's inquiry-based curriculum reflects pupils' cultures and promotes a sense of community. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to lead their own learning and develop independence.

Teaching is effective in many lessons. Where it is strongest, pupils are engaged, understand learning intentions, and benefit from good support from additional adults. In less effective lessons, pace and challenge are limited and this affects pupils' motivation and progress.

There are daily opportunities for pupils to use Welsh. Pupils engage positively with the language during designated Welsh lessons, though incidental use of the language remains limited. Generally, pupils develop a basic range of digital skills. However, overall, they do not develop these skills as well as they could, or use digital technology frequently enough to support their learning.

The school fosters empathy, and kindness. As a result, many pupils show positive attitudes to learning and engage well with the experiences provided, especially in younger classes. Staff and leaders develop strong relationships and inclusive practices. For example, all pupils and staff benefit from the purposeful integration of SRB pupils into mainstream activities.

Staff identify and supports pupils with ALN well. They work closely with partners, the community and families to support most pupils effectively. Leaders have established suitable systems for safeguarding pupils, monitoring rates of attendance, and to support aspects of professional learning for staff. However, leaders do not currently prioritise improving the quality of teaching well enough to ensure consistently good practice across the school.

Governors are reflective as a team, they support school improvement well, and help reduce the impact of disadvantage, supporting all pupils to access rich and meaningful learning experiences.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Ensure that leaders plan precisely and respond promptly to address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching
- R2. Increase opportunities for pupils to take ownership of their learning
- R3. Improve pupils' digital skills

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The school provides an inclusive learning environment for all members of its diverse community. Many pupils join the school with limited social and language skills. From these relatively low starting points, most pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school.

Teachers place a strong emphasis on the importance of the development of pupils' speaking and communication skills. This valuable work supports pupils to develop an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary as they move through the school. Most pupils use this vocabulary well in their development as effective writers. Many younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics effectively to write simple words and sentences, while most older pupils write well for a range of purposes. Many pupils enjoy reading and develop secure reading skills. They benefit from the structured teaching of phonics and skilfully delivered guided reading sessions which aid their fluency and comprehension.

Many pupils develop and apply their numeracy skills effectively. As they move through the school, they handle numerical problems with increasing confidence and accuracy.

Most teachers model the Welsh language appropriately. In Welsh lessons, pupils respond positively and make suitable progress. Currently, most pupils do not use their Welsh incidentally in the classroom or around the school.

A majority of pupils demonstrate suitable basic digital skills, such as retrieving and presenting information and understand the importance of online safety. However, pupils do not develop a broad enough range of digital skills or use digital technology well enough to support their day-to-day learning.

The school's inquiry-based curriculum meets the needs of most pupils appropriately, for example by promoting a sense of belonging through community events and drawing on pupils' diverse cultural experiences. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to take ownership of their learning. Generally teaching does not support them well enough to develop skills to ask relevant questions, research topics or to direct or evaluate their own learning.

Teaching in many lessons is effective and where it is at its strongest nearly all pupils understand the learning intentions well. Pupils are engaged purposefully by stimulating content. They receive beneficial support from adults. In a minority instances, where teaching is less effective, lessons lack pace, additional adults are not deployed sufficiently well to support learning, and the lessons do not hold pupils' interest levels effectively.

The school's inclusive ethos means that most pupils are happy, feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Staff utilise useful nurture areas and safe spaces purposefully to support pupils' well-being. Nearly all pupils treat each other with respect. As a result of the school's caring and nurturing ethos, relationships between staff and pupils are strong. This includes the SRBs where staff have created a learning environment to promote the development of purposeful relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, pupils in the SRB are sensitive, caring and kind to one another.

The school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness appropriately. Many pupils, including those with ALN, demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Pupil engagement is generally at its strongest in the younger age groups. Here, pupils are well motivated by stimulating learning experiences and the learning environments, both inside and outside the classroom.

The school has effective systems to identify and cater for the additional learning needs of pupils. Highly skilled staff provide a range of effective support and intervention strategies to support pupils with ALN. Partnership work with local schools and specialists enhance the school's provision for ALN successfully and ensures that this group of pupils make suitable progress.

Spotlight 1: Inclusive practice

Teachers identify purposeful opportunities for pupils who attend the SRB to join mainstream classes frequently, for example to participate in inquiry-based learning sessions, play times and lunchtimes. This inclusive practice is mutually beneficial for both SRB pupils and mainstream pupils alike. Both staff and pupils respect, value and appreciate the needs of others thoughtfully. The arrangement also supports the professional learning of staff usefully.

Pupils take on suitable responsibility through a variety of leadership roles. The school successfully identifies and draws upon the diversity, skills and expertise of its community, including the local university, families and governors. Leaders and staff use these skills effectively to help pupils understand the world of work, enhance learning and celebrate a variety of cultural events.

The school's systems to monitor and improve attendance are comprehensive. Staff work constructively with the local authority attendance officer to provide support to families. It uses its own family support systems effectively to increase pupil attendance, improve punctuality and build strong relationships.

Leaders have a strong focus on staff well-being and have developed a committed team of staff. They use approaches to professional learning purposefully to grow and develop the school's vision, to underpin priorities within the school improvement plan and to address individual pupil needs. Staff have opportunities to share and observe good practice within and beyond the school. Where this works well, internal staff expertise has impacted positively on raising staff confidence and skill levels of others. Opportunities to share the effective practice from the SRBs within the school are less well developed.

Leaders have developed appropriate self-evaluation systems and know the school well. They focus appropriately on national priorities. For example, they have ensured that the school complies effectively with changes to provision for pupils with ALN. Where leaders have placed a rigorous focus on improving aspects of the school's work, for example in improving the quality of pupils' writing, this has resulted in good outcomes. However, leaders do not always prioritise a few important aspects of teaching quickly enough, or plan precisely enough to directly improve practice.

Spotlight 2: Effective governance

Governors have well defined roles and support school leaders effectively to set the school's strategic direction and form good links with the school community. They are proactive in evaluating their own effectiveness as a group. They identify and address key areas to make them a more effective team in supporting the school in their role as critical friends. Governors draw on their skills and experience purposefully, for example to support leaders to allocate funding to reduce the impact of poverty and disadvantage on pupils' learning and progress. They support pupils to access to a range of worthwhile learning experiences.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern

The school's arrangements for site management give cause for concern and have been brought to the attention of the local authority

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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