

A report on

Waunfawr Primary School

**Waunfawr Road
Crosskeys
NP11 7PG**

Date of inspection: May 2025

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Waunfawr Primary School

Name of provider	Waunfawr Primary School
Local authority	Caerphilly 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	176
Pupils of statutory school age	144
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%)	19.7%
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%)	11.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	03/09/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/03/2017
Start date of inspection	13/05/2025

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

Leaders, governors, staff, and parents at Waunfawr Primary School work collaboratively to foster a strong sense of belonging. Pupils take pride in their school and feel happy, safe, and supported. The headteacher sets high expectations and leads with clarity and purpose, ensuring a consistent focus on pupil well-being and achievement. Governors play an integral role in the school, providing highly effective support and challenge to the headteacher and staff. Leaders and staff prioritise strong relationships with parents and carers. They communicate openly and involve families regularly in a wide range of school events and activities.

Staff promote pupils values such as respect and kindness effectively through regular assemblies and active involvement in charity events. They provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to contribute to school life, particularly through a wide range of pupil voice groups. As a result, nearly all pupils behave well and develop into confident, responsible individuals who make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

Staff place a strong and consistent emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Most pupils listen attentively, respect the views of others, and contribute thoughtfully to discussions across the curriculum. Provision to develop pupils reading and writing skills supports most pupils to make good progress. Pupils have regular, worthwhile opportunities to use these skills in their work across the curriculum. Welsh language development is a notable strength. Many pupils confidently use spoken Welsh in everyday contexts. Teachers plan and deliver mathematics lessons well. They use a wide range of strategies that help pupils to understand key concepts and apply their skills confidently. This effective provision enables many pupils to make good progress in mathematics and numeracy.

Overall, the school offers a broad and stimulating curriculum that promotes high aspirations and supports pupils to engage meaningfully in their learning. Teachers design purposeful and well-structured learning experiences that successfully develop pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to choose what they learn or make choices of how they complete their work.

Support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a notable strength. Staff identify needs early, monitor progress closely, and provide tailored support, helping most ALN pupils to make strong progress against their targets.

Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1. Improve opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning, make choices about their work and develop as effective independent learners

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

The headteacher provides highly effective and strategic leadership, fostering a strong culture of collaboration and high expectations. She works effectively with governors, staff, and parents to promote a shared, inclusive vision that places pupils' well-being and progress at the centre of the school's work. She delegates roles and responsibilities clearly, enabling staff to lead key areas of the curriculum with confidence. Staff in leadership roles provide effective professional learning for colleagues that aligns closely with individual and whole-school priorities. Nearly all staff apply this training successfully, leading to notable improvements in teaching and learning.

Leaders and staff use a broad range of strategies to identify strengths and priorities for development. Governors play an integral role, offering both challenge and support that strengthens school leadership and drives improvement.

Spotlight 1 – Leaders and governors working effectively to drive school improvement

School leaders and governors work in strong partnership to drive continuous improvement at Waunfawr Primary School. Leaders provide governors with accurate information about the school's work. Governors use this information well. They undertake their roles as critical friends effectively, providing appropriate support and robust challenge. Regular communication and mutual trust enable productive dialogue on key issues such as pupil progress, curriculum design, and well-being. Many governors participate in joint monitoring activities, which gives governors a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This informed insight supports timely, evidence-based decision-making and strengthens accountability. Together, leaders and governors promote a culture of high expectations, reflective practice, and innovation that secures sustained progress and improves outcomes for all pupils.

Nearly all teachers create calm, well-organised classrooms that support purposeful learning. They plan engaging and meaningful activities that develop pupils' skills effectively, using a wide range of successful teaching approaches. Most teachers make strong cross-curricular links and adapt tasks well to meet the diverse needs of their pupils. They use questioning skilfully to check understanding, extend thinking, and improve learning outcomes. However, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to influence their learning, including making decisions about what they learn and how they approach tasks.

Positive relationships between staff and pupils form a key strength of the school. All staff promote mutual respect and set high expectations, which contribute to a calm, supportive learning environment. As a result, most pupils are motivated, behave well, and show resilience and courtesy in lessons and around the school.

Pupils' speaking and listening skills are strong across all age groups. Nearly all teachers plan regular, purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. Most younger pupils speak clearly and listen attentively to stories, instructions, and one another. Older pupils extend their oracy skills effectively through structured debates, group discussions, and targeted vocabulary work.

Nearly all teachers in the younger classes provide a wide range of purposeful, hands-on activities that support pupils' fine and gross motor skills effectively. This helps most younger pupils to make good progress in developing early writing skills. As pupils move through the school, teachers build on these skills well. They provide structured opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for a range of purposes. Most older pupils write at length with confidence, organise their ideas clearly and, in the best instances, use increasingly sophisticated vocabulary to improve their work.

Staff successfully develop pupils reading skills. Most younger pupils develop phonic knowledge well and decode texts effectively. Most older pupils use a range of reading skills, such as skimming and scanning, well. They apply these strategies confidently when engaging with a wide range of texts.

The development of Welsh language skills is a notable strength. Nearly all teachers model Welsh consistently and create regular opportunities for pupils to use the language in both formal and informal contexts. Many pupils respond positively and show growing confidence in using spoken Welsh. They ask and answer questions with increasing accuracy, and take part in simple conversations with peers, staff, and visitors.

Provision for mathematics and numeracy is strong. Nearly all teachers plan lessons and tasks that build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge. They share a clear understanding of progression and use a range of concrete resources and real-life contexts to deepen pupils' understanding. Nearly all pupils engage well in their learning and make good progress in developing their mathematical skills.

The school provides purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills across all areas of learning. Most pupils use a range of digital tools confidently to present information, research topics, and enhance their learning experiences. They demonstrate a secure understanding of how to stay safe when using digital devices online.

The school provides an engaging curriculum that reflects pupils' interests and the local context well. Teachers plan authentic learning experiences that motivate pupils and support them to apply their skills purposefully in meaningful situations. The curriculum promotes high aspirations and enables most pupils to make good progress across a broad range of learning areas. However, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity and to deepen their understanding of cultural awareness and diversity.

The school promotes healthy lifestyles effectively. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of making healthy choices and participate in a wide range of physical activities. Staff plan regularly for pupils to develop their physical skills through engaging and meaningful experiences.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a notable strength of the school. Leaders identify pupils' needs at an early stage and monitor their progress closely. Teachers and support staff tailor provision effectively to meet individual needs, using a wide range of appropriate strategies. Skilled staff provide high-quality support that promotes pupils' confidence, independence, and well-being. As a result, most pupils with ALN make strong progress towards their targets and participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Staff support pupils' personal development well through a broad range of carefully planned experiences that promote their social, moral, and spiritual understanding. Pupils reflect meaningfully on values such as kindness, fairness, and respect. Many pupils take part in charity events, community projects, and pupil voice activities. These opportunities help them to develop as active, responsible citizens who contribute positively to their school and wider community.

The school's commitment to its community is a significant strength. Parents benefit from a wide range of activities that help them support their children's learning. These strong partnerships contribute to improved outcomes for pupils and enhance the school's position as a valued and active part of its local community.

Spotlight 2 – Community

The school plays a central role in the community and builds strong, trusting partnerships with families. Leaders and staff promote open communication and provide regular opportunities for parents to engage in their children's learning through workshops, shared events, and ongoing support. This inclusive and caring approach helps families feel valued and leads to improved pupil attendance and greater parental involvement. Staff foster meaningful links with local businesses, rugby clubs, and cultural organisations, which enrich pupils' learning experiences. These partnerships enable pupils to develop valuable skills, engage with local issues, and take pride in their community. The school contributes effectively to reducing disadvantage by providing targeted support and promoting equity for all pupils.

Safeguarding arrangements are secure and give no cause for concern. Leaders ensure that staff and governors receive regular, up-to-date training and understand their responsibilities well.

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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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