

**A report on**

**Greenhill Primary School**

**Penywrlod  
Gelligaer  
Hengoed  
CF82 8EU**

**Date of inspection: June 2025**

**by**

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

## About Greenhill Primary School

Name of provider	Greenhill Primary School
Local authority	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	None
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	165
Pupils of statutory school age	129
Number in nursery classes	16
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%)	49.3%
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%)	18.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2014
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	12/02/2018

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Start date of inspection	30/06/2025
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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](https://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

Greenhill Primary School provides pupils with a safe and secure environment. Pupils have high levels of support for their well-being within this inclusive and caring school. Staff develop positive working relationships with pupils which impacts positively on pupils' well-being, including those in the Specialist Learning Resource Bases (SNRB). Pupils know that adults in the school care for them and that they can turn to them when they face challenges or have difficulties.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and there are valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills, and understanding in a range of learning experiences. Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), those taught in the SNRB classes and those from low-income families, make good progress over time.

The youngest pupils make strong progress in developing their vocabulary and are confident when speaking to others about their learning. Teachers model language well and give good opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy skills through stimulating experiences. Nearly all older pupils demonstrate positive listening behaviours. They listen attentively to adults and peers, follow instructions, and respond appropriately to questions and feedback.

Most classrooms are productive, active learning environments. This ensures that most pupils focus well during lessons and many develop positive attitudes to learning. Most staff engage pupils well in learning experiences and support them to focus on their work successfully. Teachers ensure that most learning is purposeful and that, it enables pupils to use existing or newly learnt skills appropriately. However, they do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Leaders use a range of suitable self-evaluation processes to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have improved certain aspects of the school's provision successfully for example, the development of the Welsh language. However, these evaluations do not always identify inconsistencies in teaching and learning.

Staff work effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families to improve attendance. However, levels of attendance remain too low and persistent absenteeism is too high.

## **Recommendations**

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

- R1. Strengthen school self-evaluation and improvement processes to identify and address shortcomings in teaching
- R2. Continue to improve attendance

## **What happens next**

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

## Main evaluation

The headteacher, in partnership with the governing body and staff, works conscientiously to provide a nurturing and inclusive school community, where all are welcome. There is a strong team ethos among staff, which helps to support positive relationships with pupils and parents.

The school's support for most pupils' emotional needs is particularly effective in ensuring that they understand how to self-regulate and engage effectively with their learning. Staff work constructively with families and external partners, to help pupils who need ongoing support.

Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), those taught in the Special Needs Resource Bases (SNRB) and those from low-income families, make good progress over time. By the time they leave the school, most pupils' speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy skills develop well. Most pupils engage well with their learning and develop as effective learners.

As they move through the school, most pupils improve their English writing skills well, from experimental mark making and writing simple words and sentences to more complex texts that engage the reader well. They apply their writing skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum. For example, when writing instructions on how to train a dragon or explaining the dangers of coal mining.

Across the school, pupils' speaking skills are strong. They express themselves clearly from an early age and talk enthusiastically about their work. For example, pupils in Reception use a wide range of vocabulary when talking about mini-beasts and the life cycle of a butterfly. Most of the oldest pupils speak articulately and confidently for a wide range of purposes. They moderate their tone, expression and language depending on the audience. Many pupils listen well, pay close attention to each other's point of view, and make effective contributions to conversations. Nearly all older pupils demonstrate positive listening behaviours. They listen attentively to adults and peers, follow instructions, and respond appropriately to questions and feedback.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, and in most areas it is planned effectively to support pupils' progression. Pupils also benefit from visits and visitors that help broaden their understanding of the wider world. Teachers plan systematically to develop pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. They use assessment effectively to plan lessons that help most pupils develop a range of skills and make progress in their learning. Many staff use questioning well to develop the pupils understanding effectively. They use verbal feedback well to enable most pupils to complete tasks set successfully and move their

learning forward. Where teaching is most effective, staff have a detailed understanding of pupils' abilities and interests and use this knowledge well to plan learning. However, expectations of pupils are not always clear and the level of challenge does not always meet the needs of all pupils, leading to variable levels of engagement and low-level dysregulation in a few pupils.

Staff make the learning environment stimulating and engaging. Class displays celebrate pupils' work and offer valuable and relevant support for pupils in their learning. Effective use of the high-quality outdoor environment enables pupils to take part in worthwhile learning experiences. They respond positively to these practical and collaborative activities.

Leaders provide suitable professional learning opportunities for staff and promote a cooperative approach to all they do within the school and with other schools in the local cluster and beyond. This has contributed to improving aspects of the curriculum.

Leaders, through their professional development review systems, have defined clear roles and responsibilities for all staff. They have aligned these staff expertise and ensure that all staff have appropriate targets for improvement. Distributed leadership is developing well, and this has had a positive impact on building leadership capacity across the school and has created a more supportive and engaging learning environment.

Leaders ensure that improvement areas focus appropriately on national and local priorities and use a range of suitable self-evaluation processes to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. They have improved certain aspects of the school's provision successfully, for example the development of Welsh language provision. The school's focus is successful in encouraging pupils to speak Welsh and has had a positive impact on the pupils' love of the language. However, there is a lack of rigour in aspects of self-evaluation work, which means that leaders have not identified or addressed a few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.

Leaders have appropriate procedures to identify and support pupils with ALN. Teaching assistants provide a range of beneficial interventions that develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well and support their well-being successfully.

Leaders know the needs of pupils and the community well. They build strong relationships with families and provide support in a welcoming, inclusive environment. There are valuable family engagement opportunities that help parents to support pupils' skills and well-being. These include workshops for parents and pupils, that focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility through a variety of pupil voice groups. However, opportunities for pupils to take on meaningful responsibilities are at an early stage of development.

The school recognises the need to improve pupils' attendance and uses a range of strategies well. However, although improving this year, attendance remains notably below the national average and persistent absenteeism also remains high.

School governors are committed and knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the school's priorities. They are developing their role of critical friend well and provide strong support for leaders and staff. They fulfil their curriculum link roles diligently, for instance when evaluating the development of pupils' Welsh oracy skills.

Governors engage in the first-hand gathering of evidence. Pupils and staff make regular presentations at full governing body meetings which ensure governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and this helps them to challenge leaders appropriately.

### **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](http://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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