

A report on

Rhydypenau Primary School

**Fidlas Avenue
Llanishen
CF14 0NX**

Date of inspection: June 2025

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Rhydypenau Primary School

Name of provider	Rhydypenau Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	500
Pupils of statutory school age	361
Number in nursery classes	78
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%)	2.2%
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%)	2.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	1.4%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	5.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	12/03/2018
Start date of inspection	23/06/2025

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

Leaders at Rhydypenau Primary School set high expectations and create a highly inclusive, and caring learning environment. As a result, pupils feel a strong sense of belonging and pride in their school, and staff share a clear vision for preparing pupils for lifelong learning. Governors play an active and supportive role, providing appropriate challenge and maintaining a secure oversight of school finances. Leaders, governors and staff establish and maintain a secure culture of safeguarding.

The school has a successful track record of improving pupils' well-being and learning outcomes. Nearly all pupils develop into ambitious and aspirational learners. Staff monitor progress carefully and adapt provision to reduce barriers and support equitable experiences for pupils experiencing poverty. The school's arrangements to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) are a notable strength, ensuring that these pupils make effective progress. Relationships with external partners enhance support for pupils' specific individual needs.

The school's curriculum is broad, rich and engaging. Teachers plan experiences that support nearly all pupils to make effective progress across areas of learning. Pupils develop a strong understanding of values, identity and social justice through learning that includes religion, values and ethics (RVE), and work on human rights and diversity. The school's work to promote anti-racism and Welsh culture contributes well to pupils' respect for others and their sense of belonging. However, plans to develop pupils' Welsh language skills are at an early stage and pupils make limited progress in this area.

Most teaching is effective, with high expectations, clear explanations and helpful feedback. In the most successful lessons, pupils reflect, question and build on their learning. Where teaching is overly adult-led, pupils' independence and creativity are restricted. Most pupils make exceptional progress in literacy and mathematics, and many develop suitable digital and expressive arts skills. Pupils become conscientious digital citizens with a clear awareness of online safety.

Recommendations

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

- R1. Address the variability in teaching to ensure that all pupils develop as curious, creative, independent learners
- R2. Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Leaders at Rhydypenau Primary School set high expectations for staff and pupils and maintain an inclusive, warm and welcoming culture. Pupils are proud to be part of the school community and have a secure sense of belonging. Staff feel valued and supported and share a clear vision for preparing pupils for lifelong learning. The school has established strong partnerships with parents. Most parents feel well-informed about their child's well-being and progress.

Governors play an active part in school life. Through regular participation in monitoring activities, they provide effective support and challenge to leaders. The governing body has good oversight of the school's finances and, together with leaders, manages the budget well.

The school has a strong track record of improvement. A relentless focus on improving pupils' well-being and learning outcomes ensures that nearly all pupils develop as ambitious and aspirational citizens. Staff monitor pupils' progress effectively and adapt support and challenge to aid pupils' progress and to reduce any barriers to learning. Leaders use grants thoughtfully to ensure equitable experiences and worthwhile intervention for pupils from low-income households.

Leaders provide a range of worthwhile professional learning opportunities that enable most staff to develop the knowledge and skills they need to carry out their roles effectively. Staff work closely with local schools to strengthen provision, for example to develop a curriculum that supports pupils' transition to the next phase of their education successfully. However, the school's plans to develop pupils' Welsh language skills are at a very early stage of development and pupils make limited progress in speaking Welsh.

The school's provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a strength. The robust approach to identifying pupils' individual needs, and the impact of any additional support provided ensures that pupils with ALN make effective progress towards their learning and well-being goals. The school's relationships with external partners are highly effective in meeting pupils' social and emotional needs.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding are robust and give no cause for concern. Leaders promote the importance of daily attendance and staff respond promptly to pupil absence. Their actions result in high levels of attendance and reduced levels of persistent absence. Leaders and staff establish strong and respectful relationships with pupils and promote positive behaviour consistently well. The school ensures that there are worthwhile opportunities for pupils in leadership roles to make improvements to the

school's provision. Pupils in these groups were integral to the school's review of its anti-bullying policy.

The school has developed a rich and engaging curriculum. Teachers often plan thoughtful learning experiences that combine opportunities to develop apply their skills, further their knowledge and understanding and support pupils to make effective progress in many areas of learning and experience (AoLEs). In a few lessons, pupils demonstrate their increasing grasp of skills such as planning and organising, critical thinking and personal effectiveness.

Teachers plan purposefully to support pupils' awareness and appreciation of the unique cultural heritage of Wales. Pupils investigate the city they live in, learning about the changing landscape, communities and the people who have shaped them. Through a range of worthwhile learning experiences pupils develop respect for global cultures and diversity. The school's work to promote an anti-racist curriculum has helped to instil respect and contributes to pupils' sense of belonging.

The school's focus on religion, values and ethics (RVE) enables pupils to explore belief and identity. From a young age pupils develop their understanding of right and wrong and the impact of their actions on others. Pupils across the school have frequent opportunities to develop their expressive arts skills through art, music and drama. They build progressively on these skills, for example to apply techniques and ideas gathered from experimenting with the style of known artists in their own work.

Spotlight: Integrating cross-cutting themes into areas of learning and experience (AoLEs)

Across the school, pupils develop a secure knowledge of human rights. They link these to their learning and develop values such as empathy and fairness when exploring issues that affect people locally and globally. Often, their artwork helps them develop an understanding of the influence of art on social justice. The oldest pupils, for example, explore the links between art, human rights and advocacy when responding to the work of Banksy and begin to reflect on art as a vehicle for activism in the political landscape of Wales.

Most teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations for all pupils' learning. They often ask questions that consolidate and extend pupils' understanding. In many lessons, staff provide clear instructions and useful feedback to move learning on. Where teaching is most effective, staff provide authentic learning that often links to pupils' own experiences.

The youngest pupils are highly creative during play-based learning. They enjoy the many opportunities to take on characters in role-play situations and transfer their knowledge

and experience to their imaginative play. They thrive in a well-resourced, enticing learning environment that enables them to follow their interests. Many of the oldest pupils demonstrate their creativity and critical thinking in their work across the curriculum. They offer their thoughts, ask questions and listen to others' views to help them further develop their understanding of concepts. In these lessons, pupils have time to reflect on, contribute to and deepen their learning. However, where teaching approaches overly directed by adults, pupils' opportunities to develop as curious, creative, independent learners are limited and, on occasion, this hampers the progress they make in learning.

Most pupils develop highly effective literacy skills. By the time they leave the school they are confident speakers able to adapt their talk to a variety of formal and informal situations. From an early enjoyment of sharing books, pupils develop extensive, advanced reading skills. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the texts they read and apply their skills purposefully in learning. Most pupils make exceptional progress in developing their writing skills. They write for a range of purposes with the audience in mind and have a secure understanding of how to entertain, inform and invoke emotional reactions.

As pupils move through the school, they make excellent progress in developing their mathematical knowledge. They have a secure understanding of concepts and transfer their skills competently to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils generally make suitable progress in developing digital skills and often use these purposefully to enhance their learning, for example when using artificial intelligence to create images that illustrate their creative writing.

Spotlight 2: Becoming a conscientious digital citizen

The school develops pupils as insightful digital users. Pupils develop a sophisticated understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe online. They refine their online research and think critically about how reliable the sources are, share the possible implications of long-term screen use and learn how to manage online relationships and behaviour safely.

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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