

**A report on**  
**Cwmffrwdoer Primary School**

**Waunddu  
Pontnewynydd  
Pontypool  
Torfaen  
NP4 6QZ**

**Date of inspection: October 2025**

**by**

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

## About Cwmffrwdroer Primary School

Name of provider	Cwmffrwdroer Primary School
Local authority	Torfaen 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	220
Pupils of statutory school age	169
Number in nursery classes	20
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%)	24.6%
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%)	11.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2012

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	05/06/2018
Start date of inspection	06/10/2025

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](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

Cwmffrwdroer Primary School is a vibrant and friendly school. Staff, pupils and their families feel valued and respected within the school's strong community ethos. Across the school pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least good progress.

The school's curriculum offers pupils a wealth of rich and engaging opportunities, including beneficial STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) projects. Staff provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to be creative and encourage pupils to appreciate the natural world in the school's extensive outdoor environment.

Leaders place a strong focus on the well-being of pupils. They provide a range of responsive nurture support which helps pupils to develop confidence and ensures they are settled and ready to learn. The school has robust systems to identify pupils with ALN and works well with other agencies and parents to ensure they receive any specialist provision they require.

Teachers and support assistants use a range of approaches which spark pupils' interest and make learning enjoyable. They use questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding and deepen their thinking. In the youngest classes, there are ample opportunities to learn through play and exploration. However, at times learning for pupils lower down the school is overly structured or not pitched at an appropriate level. This means that learning experiences do not always meet the developmental needs of these pupils effectively.

Leaders ensure that the school's values are reflected in all aspects of provision. They display a strong commitment to equality and diversity based on shared values such as fairness and respect. Work to increase pupils' understanding of diversity, including the creation of an anti-racist environment is an established and natural part of the school's provision.

## Recommendations

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

- R1. Refine the school's approach to foundation learning to ensure that it meets younger pupils' developmental needs consistently

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

Cwmffrwdor Primary School is a vibrant and friendly school. Caring relationships between staff and pupils support pupils' strong sense of belonging and community. Through innovative and reflective leadership, the headteacher has established a highly inclusive climate where staff, pupils and their families feel valued and respected. She has worked with leaders and staff to develop a clear vision focused on nurturing the whole child, encouraging them to be the best they can be. This positive ethos ensures that most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and those with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least good progress. Across the school pupils' behaviour is exceptional.

The school places a strong focus on the well-being of pupils. Leaders provide a range of responsive nurture support for pupils across the school. This includes a nurture breakfast club that provides a welcoming 'check in' at the beginning of the day. This provision helps pupils to develop confidence and ensures they are settled and ready to learn. The school has robust systems to identify pupils with ALN and works well with other agencies to ensure that they receive any specialist provision they require. Senior leaders work in close partnership with parents. They provide helpful coffee mornings that ensure parents have regular opportunities to access advice and support.

### Spotlight: Developing an anti-racist approach

Leaders work with determination to ensure that the school's values are reflected in all aspects of its provision. They display a strong commitment to equality and diversity, and this has driven significant improvements in this aspect of the school's work. Professional learning for staff has involved discussing complex and challenging issues. Staff report that this has had a beneficial impact and deepened their understanding of how to be more inclusive within their practice. Work to increase pupils' understanding of diversity, including the creation of an anti-racist environment is an established and natural part of the curriculum. The use of stories, poetry writing and drama to open discussions about a range of issues is particularly effective. Pupils deepen their understanding and empathy as they consider a range of issues such as the experience of the Windrush generation, and moral dilemmas linked to racial bullying.

Consistent approaches to teaching ensure that most pupils develop their literacy skills successfully as they progress through the school. From a relatively low starting point in Nursery, most pupils develop strong listening and speaking skills during their time in the school. Staff share stories, songs and rhymes which encourages the youngest pupils' interest in books and reading. Daily opportunities for older pupils to read and discuss books with adults, help them to read increasingly complex texts. They practise skills, such

as scanning and summarising effectively. Teachers provide pupils with a wealth of writing experiences. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils express themselves competently and use their writing skills creatively across the curriculum. Many produce extended pieces of a high standard.

The school promotes Welsh language through engaging sessions, games and songs. This has a positive impact, and pupils are motivated to learn new words, phrases and sentence patterns which they use effectively with one another and adults. Most pupils develop a beneficial range of digital skills and use digital devices and applications to support and present their work across areas of learning.

Pupils develop their understanding of mathematical concepts well as they move through the school. Teachers provide engaging, authentic contexts for pupils to enhance their numeracy skills, including ample opportunities for reasoning and problem solving. Younger pupils use mathematical language confidently as they make sensible predictions about which pumpkin is the heaviest and collaborate to sort them by weight.

Teachers share clear learning intentions and link lessons to previous learning effectively. They use a range of approaches which spark pupils' interest and make learning meaningful. Teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding and deepen their thinking. Learning support assistants reinforce learning successfully and make a strong contribution to pupils' progress. Teachers use ongoing assessment strategies to evaluate progress and inform future learning. This is strengthened through termly pupil reviews where teachers support pupils to reflect on their progress and challenge themselves further.

In the youngest classes, there are ample opportunities to learn through play and exploration. However, at times learning for pupils lower down the school is overly structured or not pitched at an appropriate level. This means that activities and experiences do not always meet the developmental needs of these pupils well enough.

The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes are robust. Leaders have high expectations and apply these consistently across the school's work. This has resulted in the school establishing high quality provision in many areas. A particularly strong example is the school's curriculum.

### **Spotlight: Establishing a vibrant and holistic curriculum**

The school's curriculum offers pupils a wealth of rich, exciting and creative opportunities that bring areas of learning together seamlessly and have a considerable impact on the growth of pupils' wider skills. Interesting science investigations and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) projects enable pupils to extend and consolidate skills from across the curriculum effectively. The thoughtful use of external specialists and members of the community, enhance the curriculum considerably. For instance, older pupils learn about quilting from a member of the community before designing a tessellating tile pattern to decorate the school's bat house. Opportunities such as this, make learning purposeful and engage pupils very well.

The school provides meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity and creative thinking, particularly through art, drama and responding to music and literature. Provision to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective. Teachers encourage pupils to appreciate the natural world in the school's extensive outdoor environment and learn about the joy of producing their own food in the school's garden.

Senior leaders provide a comprehensive offer for professional learning that involves staff in reflecting on and improving their skills and knowledge through a range of beneficial individual and collaborative activities. This includes carrying out focused professional enquiries into areas of personal interest, or aspects of practice they identify for improvement, linked to the school's priorities.

Governors are highly committed to the school and have a strong understanding of their role. A comprehensive induction programme for new governors helps to ensure that they understand what is expected of them and sets high expectations for their future work.

### **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.

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