

A report on

Westwood Community Primary School

**Tabernacle Street
Buckley
Flintshire
CH7 2JT**

Date of inspection: February 2026

by

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

About Westwood Community Primary School

Name of provider	Westwood Community Primary School
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	198
Pupils of statutory school age	155
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 21.7%)	43%
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 9.2%)	16%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	7.1%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2022

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Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	23/02/2026

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

School leaders create a highly inclusive community in which most pupils and families feel valued and supported. They provide clear strategic direction, grounded in a secure understanding of the needs of pupils and the wider community. Across the school, staff respond sensitively to individual needs. Together, these strengths ensure that nearly all pupils develop as confident contributors to school life.

Many pupils enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typically expected for their age. During their time in school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), those eligible for free school meals and those who speak English as an additional language, make at least appropriate progress from their starting points.

Leaders prioritise well-being and pupils' readiness to learn effectively. A sustained focus on language, literacy and communication supports this priority. Staff model spoken language well and promote a strong reading culture. This fosters positive attitudes towards reading and supports most pupils to become competent readers. However, provision does not consistently develop pupils' more advanced reading skills. Pupils write regularly for a suitable range of purposes, and many make good progress in building writing stamina and understanding different forms. However, standards in spelling, punctuation and grammar remain too variable. Provision to develop pupils' numeracy and digital skills is effective and pupils make appropriate progress in learning to speak Welsh.

In many instances, teaching is appropriate. It is strongest where staff build on prior learning, set clear expectations and use questioning effectively. In a few cases, teachers' expectations lack clarity and the level of challenge does not match pupils' needs closely enough. When this occurs, pupils lose engagement and progress slows.

The school's family and community engagement strategy is a notable strength. Frequent opportunities for parents to work alongside their children strengthen relationships and support learning at home and school.

Leaders implement effective evaluation and improvement processes regularly involves meaningful contributions from pupils. This ensures that they have a powerful influence over matters that affect them.

Leaders work diligently to improve attendance and reduce fixed-term exclusions. However, rates of persistent absenteeism and fixed-term exclusions remain too high, particularly for pupils who are eligible for free school meals.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Continue to improve attendance and reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions, especially for pupils eligible for free school meals.
- R2 Ensure that teachers set clear expectations for learning in lessons and over time and that they match the level of challenge precisely to pupils' needs.
- R3 Further improve pupils' reading and writing skills.

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

School leaders are highly successful in creating an inclusive community where most pupils and families feel valued and supported. They provide clear strategic direction, based on a secure understanding of the needs of pupils and the wider community. This supports nearly all pupils to develop as confident contributors to school life.

A notable strength at the school's is the strategic approach to parental and community engagement.

Spotlight: Strategic Parental Engagement

There are a well-planned range of experiences that build parents' confidence and capacity to support learning. Initiatives such as 'Talk with Me' projects, specialist learning cafés and health-focused sessions engage parents directly in learning alongside their children. This work strengthens the partnership between home and school and contributes positively to the development of pupils' skills.

Many pupils join nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typically expected for their age. During their time in school, most pupils make at least appropriate progress from their individual starting points. This includes pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), those eligible for free school meals and those who speak English as an additional language.

School leaders prioritise pupils' well-being and their readiness to access learning. A sustained focus on language, literacy and communication supports this priority effectively.

Across the school, most staff model spoken English effectively and support pupils to speak confidently about their learning and experiences. The school promotes a strong reading culture, which fosters positive attitudes from an early age. Most pupils enjoy books and stories and make good progress in developing their reading skills. Regular engagement with the local library and the use of literature to enrich topic work, strengthens this provision and complements a structured approach to teaching phonics. As pupils move through the school, they build appropriately on their early reading skills and read with suitable fluency and understanding. However, teachers do not plan precisely enough for the progressive development of advanced reading skills. They also miss opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding through targeted questioning and discussion.

Pupils write regularly for a suitable range of purposes. From an early age, they develop gross and fine motor skills and experiment confidently with mark making. By Year 6, many make appropriate progress and understand the features of different forms of writing. A few more able pupils produce work of a good standard, for instance when they write at length

to create stories. However, the quality of presentation, spelling and punctuation are too variable. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations for these aspects of writing or provide sufficient support to bring about improvements.

Teachers plan systematically for the development of pupils' numeracy skills. Most younger pupils develop a secure understanding of number and use this to order, compare and calculate accurately. Most older pupils apply their understanding of place value confidently, using familiar strategies effectively to complete calculations. Teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge purposefully across other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching ensures that most pupils use digital tools for a variety of purposes to enhance their learning successfully. They use a good range of skills progressively and apply these in suitable contexts.

There are valuable opportunities for pupils to celebrate Welsh culture and heritage. Pupils study the work of Welsh artists, and the Cwriw Cymraeg leads regular assemblies that promote the Welsh language positively. Provision for younger pupils supports most to develop their Welsh speaking skills effectively through regular use in learning and play. As pupils move through the school, they build on these skills appropriately. Planned 'International Days' broaden pupils' understanding of other cultures and celebrate diversity within the school community. Teaching supports pupils to develop their creativity in a range of contexts. These include forest school sessions and whole class violin lessons.

Teachers and teaching assistants provide strong ALN support that helps most of this group of learners to make good progress from their starting points. Staff identify needs early and tailor provision effectively, often drawing on draw support from external agencies where appropriate. They review provision regularly to evaluate its impact. The school adopts an effective whole-school approach to supporting pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. Across the school, staff form strong, professional relationships with pupils and respond sensitively to pupils' individual needs. They work alongside pupils to encourage perseverance.

Teachers use engaging themes to provide a broad range of learning experiences that sustain most pupils' interest. In the best examples, they consider pupils' interests carefully and create relevant contexts that motivate purposeful learning. Where teaching is strongest, staff plan activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge and challenge them to extend their learning. They adapt resources and the learning environment skilfully to promote confidence and engagement and use questioning to assess progress and provide feedback that supports pupils to deepen their understanding.

In classes for younger pupils, teachers use small-group and practical activities effectively, both indoors and outdoors, to develop pupils' social, communication and numeracy skills. Opportunities for role play and model making foster imagination, cooperation and problem-solving successfully.

In a few instances, where teaching is less effective, expectations for and learning are not always clear. Tasks do not always focus sharply enough on the specific knowledge and skills pupils need to learn or challenge them at the right level. These factors limit the pace of pupils' progress in lessons and over time. Occasionally, pupils are over reliant on adult support.

Evaluation and improvement processes are effective. School leaders have a generally accurate view of the difference that the school's provision makes to pupils' progress and well-being. They identify priorities for improvements well and implement plans to address these successfully.

Spotlight: Pupil Leadership

Pupils are at the heart of the school's evaluation and improvement work. Through their proactive and autonomous pupil voice groups they contribute purposefully to evaluations of the school's current provision and identify opportunities for improvement that lead to meaningful change. This influential work contributes greatly to pupils' pride in their school and their sense of agency over issues that affect them.

Leaders use professional learning effectively to support improvement and strengthen staff skills, for example through the Welsh language sabbatical scheme and training in trauma-informed practice. However, their overall use of professional learning to improve consistency in the effectiveness of teaching pedagogy is at an earlier stage of development.

Governors demonstrate a clear understanding of strategic priorities. They use information and focused visits thoughtfully to evaluate the impact of improvement actions. This enables them to identify strengths and provide constructive challenge.

Leaders manage resources effectively and monitor finances carefully. They evaluate the impact of expenditure, including the pupil development grant, to ensure it benefits pupils' well-being and progress. Leaders allocate roles thoughtfully and align resources with priorities, for example by creating a family engagement officer post to strengthen community links and improve attendance.

School leaders work diligently to improve rates of attendance and to reduce the number of fixed term exclusions. This work is beginning to secure improvement. Currently rates of

absence, persistent absence and fixed term exclusions remain high, especially for pupils eligible for free school meals.

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/carer 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.

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