

A report on
Ton Pentre Junior School

**Bailey Street
Ton Pentre
Pentre
RCT
CF41 7EL**

Date of inspection: May 2026

by

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

About Ton Pentre Junior School

Name of provider	Ton Pentre Junior School
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf 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	164
Pupils of statutory school age	164
Number in nursery classes	0
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%)	14.9%
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%)	4.13%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.6%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No

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Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	07/01/2019
Start date of inspection	05/05/2026

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

Ton Pentre Junior School provides a caring and inclusive environment where pupils feel safe, valued and well supported. Strong leadership establishes a clear vision for improvement and promotes high expectations, which are shared by all staff. As a result, positive relationships and a nurturing ethos support nearly all pupils to engage well in their learning and have positive attitudes to school.

Many pupils make good progress in their learning, including pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). They develop their literacy skills effectively, communicate clearly, read with increasing fluency and make good progress in developing their writing skills. Many pupils have a secure knowledge of number and explain their reasoning effectively when solving mathematical problems. Most pupils develop their Welsh oracy skills well and use familiar phrases confidently, with older pupils extending their responses accurately.

The school is developing its curriculum to provide pupils with a range of learning experiences and opportunities that successfully develop pupils' expressive arts and physical development. Pupils participate enthusiastically in performances and sporting activities, which support their confidence, well-being and sense of identity.

Teachers provide clear guidance during lessons that helps pupils complete tasks successfully. They provide prompt support and further direction that enables pupils to make progress, although this often leads to over-scaffolded learning. Pupils have limited opportunities to develop as creative and independent learners who make choices and take responsibility for their learning. Teachers are beginning to consider opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning but the feedback they provide does not consistently help pupils understand how to improve their work

Leaders use effective self-evaluation processes to identify priorities and drive improvement. They have successfully created a strong team ethos, where both staff and pupils value learning. Leaders support staff professional learning extremely well and provide valuable opportunities for staff at all levels to develop their skills and qualifications. This approach successfully builds leadership capacity across the school and strengthens the quality of teaching and learning.

Leaders work closely with families to strengthen relationships. They provide beneficial workshops that help families support pupils' learning at home and signpost parents to useful external support services. This strong partnership working supports pupils' well-being, engagement and attendance. Governors understand their roles and provide

appropriate support and challenge, contributing positively to the school's ongoing development.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Improve feedback to ensure that pupils understand their next steps in learning and improve their work.
- R2 Develop pupils as independent and creative learners

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Ton Pentre Junior School is a caring and inclusive community where pupils feel safe, valued and well supported. The headteacher provides inspiring and purposeful leadership. They lead a strong and cohesive team of staff, with high expectations and a shared commitment to supporting pupils to be successful. Positive relationships between staff and pupils underpin the school's nurturing ethos, and this helps nearly all pupils to engage well with their learning. Staff know pupils well and respond thoughtfully to their emotional and well-being needs. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons and around the school.

Leaders identify pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who require extra support effectively. They work closely with staff and other professionals to plan targeted interventions that meet pupils' individual needs. Teachers use this information carefully and adapt learning to help pupils with ALN apply and transfer their skills in lessons. Regular monitoring and review of pupils' progress enables staff to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. This ensures that most pupils with ALN build confidence and make good progress towards their individual targets.

Many pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. They demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts, recall number facts and use appropriate vocabulary to explain their thinking. They apply these

skills confidently to solve problems, explain their reasoning clearly and enjoy the challenge of working with number.

Many pupils communicate confidently and become increasingly fluent readers. They make good progress in developing their writing skills and apply these skills meaningfully in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils take pride in their work and take care with their presentation.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their Welsh oracy skills over time. They use familiar Welsh phrases confidently to greet staff and visitors and respond to simple questions, with many older pupils extending their answers with increasing confidence and accurate pronunciation. Pupils take an active role in promoting Welsh by leading assemblies and participating in events across the year, including preparation for local eisteddfodau. This strengthens their confidence and promotes positive attitudes towards the Welsh language.

The school provides effective opportunities for pupils to develop the expressive arts. These experiences are enriched through strong links with the local community. Pupils take part in performances that celebrate Welsh culture and traditions and have meaningful opportunities to apply a range of communication and collaboration skills when planning and promoting these events. These experiences build confidence and develop pupils' performance and expressive skills. They enhance engagement with families and the wider community. Pupils benefit from a wide range of physical activities, including competitive sports, adventurous activities, and team games, which support their physical development effectively.

Pupil leadership groups take an active role in leading whole-school initiatives, assemblies and fundraising events. They work with staff to explore important themes, including identity and belonging, which support pupils' social, cultural and moral development. This work helps promote pupils' empathy, kindness and respect towards one another.

Teachers plan learning experiences that link appropriately to topics and offer structured support to pupils, so they understand what they need to do during lessons. They use clear explanations to support learning and develop questioning to check pupils' understanding. In a majority of lessons, teachers provide step by step instructions that enable pupils to complete tasks successfully, but this limits pupils' ability to make decisions, take responsibility for their learning and develop their resilience. They do not develop well enough as independent and creative learners.

Teachers are developing assessment approaches appropriately to inform planning for learning and build on pupils' next steps. They provide regular feedback that identifies what pupils have achieved in their learning and create opportunities for pupils to reflect

on their work. Although pupils often reflect on their enjoyment of activities, teachers do not ensure that feedback enables pupils to understand how to improve their own learning.

Leaders have developed a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. They use a wide range of first-hand evidence, including pupils' work and listening to learners, to accurately identify areas for improvement. Self-evaluation processes are effective and bring about changes that impact positively on pupils' outcomes.

Spotlight 1: A strong culture of professional learning and leadership development

Professional learning aligns closely with the school's priorities and contributes well to improving teaching and learning. Leaders create a positive culture in which staff reflect on their practice honestly, collaborate purposefully and develop their skills with confidence. A broad range of valuable professional learning opportunities strengthens leadership capacity at all levels, supports succession planning effectively and increases staff confidence in delivering targeted provision. The school's positive #TeamTon ethos permeates its work and reflects a strong shared commitment to lifelong learning for staff and pupils alike.

Spotlight 2: Partnership working with families

Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting families and building effective partnerships. Staff tailor support that meets individual pupils' needs well. Leaders work proactively with families to reduce barriers to communication and engagement. They provide support beyond the school day, which ensures continuity of care where needed. Useful workshops help families to support their child's learning at home and close working with external agencies secures effective emotional and financial support for families. Families value the school's approachable and caring ethos, and this contributes to improved attendance, stronger engagement and positive outcomes for pupils.

Leaders support pupils' smooth transition into the school. They create valuable opportunities for younger pupils to buddy with older pupils and this helps build confidence and a sense of belonging. Transition to secondary school is also well planned and supports pupils effectively, helping to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

Governors at the school understand their roles and responsibilities and work closely with leaders to monitor pupils' attendance and manage the school's finances effectively. They value opportunities to hear directly from pupils, particularly through presentations from pupil leadership groups about whole-school activities and projects. Governors meet

regularly with leaders and staff to gain a clear understanding of the school's work and curriculum and use this information to provide appropriate support and challenge.

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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