



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Durand Primary School  
Alianore Road  
Caldicot  
Monmouthshire  
NP26 5DF**

**Date of inspection: January 2018**

**by**

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

## About Durand Primary School

Durand Primary School is in the town of Caldicot in Monmouthshire. There are 245 pupils on roll between the ages of three and eleven, including 37 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis.

Approximately 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average (19%). Nearly all pupils are of white British ethnicity and come from homes where English is the main language. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school identifies that 14% of pupils have additional learning needs. This is below the national average (21%). A very few pupils have statements of special educational needs.

The last inspection of the school was in February 2011. The headteacher took up her post in 2007.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

The school provides good support for pupils' wellbeing, especially for those who need additional help with their social, emotional, and learning needs. Many pupils start school with skills above those expected for their age. Most develop into confident and articulate speakers and fluent readers. However, given their starting points, a minority do not achieve high enough standards during their time at the school. The quality of teaching varies too much across the school. Teachers choose topics that engage pupils well, but they do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to work independently in the foundation phase or to apply their number, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum in key stage 2. Leaders deploy support staff effectively to make the most of their particular talents. The school provides many positive opportunities for pupils' physical and creative development. Leaders have improved aspects of the school's work recently, including the way that staff track pupils' progress. However, important areas, including attendance, have not improved enough over time. The school is well resourced and has extensive outdoor spaces that pupils use well. Governors support the school well.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that leaders evaluate all aspects of the school's work thoroughly, identify areas for improvement accurately and challenge underperformance robustly
- R2 Address the health and safety issues identified during the inspection
- R3 Raise the standards of more able pupils
- R4 Improve attendance
- R5 Ensure that teaching meets the needs of all learners and the requirements of the foundation phase
- R6 Increase opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy, writing and ICT skills across the curriculum

## **What happens next**

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

## Main findings

### **Standards: Adequate and needs improvement**

Many pupils begin school with skills and understanding above the level expected for their age. As they move through the school, most pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points. However, a minority of pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. These include both less able and more able pupils who do not fulfil their potential. Most pupils with additional learning needs make effective progress.

Across the school, pupils' speaking skills are strong. Pupils in the foundation phase speak confidently, for example when explaining how they sort musical instruments according to their weight. In key stage 2, many pupils have a well-developed vocabulary. They use this effectively, for example when choosing slogans to persuade people to visit historic sites, such as Petra and the Great Wall of China. Many pupils listen carefully to adults and to each other. However, a minority of pupils do not listen well enough, for example to the views of other pupils in class discussions.

Most pupils throughout the school develop effective reading skills. In the reception class, many pupils know the sounds that letters make and are beginning to use these successfully to help them to read simple words. In Year 2, pupils read texts aloud well and show a good understanding of what they are reading. In key stage 2, most pupils are fluent readers. Many use their reading skills purposefully to help them to research information. For example, pupils in Year 3 use non-fiction books to find out how the digestive system works and pupils in Year 5 use internet search engines to research the life of Desmond Tutu.

Younger pupils in the foundation phase use their phonic knowledge well to write simple words and short phrases. Many pupils in reception and Year 1 form letter shapes accurately and by Year 2 many have developed a joined handwriting style. Pupils in Year 2 write stories using appropriate narrative language. They extend their sentences using basic connecting words and use capital letters and full stops accurately. In key stage 2, many pupils write appropriately in a suitable range of styles. For example, pupils in Year 6 write discussion texts about whether children should communicate using e-mail and explanations of how animals adapt to their environment. However, across the key stage, too many pupils do not write to the same standard in their topic work as they do in their English lessons.

In the foundation phase, most pupils understand and use simple Welsh words and phrases appropriately. For example, pupils in the nursery class answer the register and sing Welsh songs and rhymes. By Year 2, a minority of more able pupils can read and write simple Welsh texts. However, throughout key stage 2, many pupils' Welsh skills are weak. They do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of familiar language patterns. As a result, very few pupils use Welsh confidently when speaking.

Most pupils in the foundation phase develop good number skills. They learn to add and subtract numbers, measure length and tell the time. They use these skills well

across the curriculum, for example to measure how long pirate ships float when made from different materials. They record these findings accurately in bar graphs. Pupils' numeracy and mathematical reasoning skills develop well in their mathematics lessons as they move through key stage 2. For example, pupils in Year 6 use a range of strategies to multiply and divide numbers. They use these skills effectively in their shape and space work, for example using multiplication to calculate the area of parallelograms. Year 5 pupils show resilience in problem-solving activities, for example when investigating patterns in triangular numbers. In these classes, pupils are beginning to use their number skills in their science and topic work. However, across key stage 2, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills often enough in their work across the curriculum.

Pupils have suitable ICT skills. In the foundation phase, many pupils use tablet computers, for example to practise letter formation and reading skills. Pupils in key stage 2 make good use of Hwb to send e-mails and store their work. They use their ICT skills well to communicate information, for example producing presentations about the seven wonders of the world. They import images and use functions such as sound buttons effectively to link music extracts to add interest and enhance their presentations. Older pupils are beginning to use techniques such as joint editing to improve their work. However, pupils' use of a wider range of ICT skills, for example data handling and modelling, is underdeveloped.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Adequate and needs improvement**

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure in school. Most pupils know where to turn if they have any concerns and many speak maturely about how the school supports their emotional and social needs. Many pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay safe online. They use the phrase 'think then click' to remind themselves to take care when using the internet. They know that they should not open emails from someone that they do not know and that the use of passwords can help to keep information safe. Many pupils behave well in class and during break times and lunchtimes. However, a few pupils are not always respectful of other pupils and adults.

Most pupils speak confidently about their work and have positive attitudes to learning. Many work well as a whole class, individually and in small groups. For example, Year 6 pupils negotiate effectively to produce a joint presentation, taking good account of the views of others. Many pupils focus well on their tasks and activities, for example pupils in Year 5 persevere with an investigation on triangular numbers. However, a minority of pupils do not concentrate well enough. Where this happens, they do not make the progress of which they are capable. In a few instances, the poor behaviour of a few pupils distracts other pupils from learning effectively.

Most pupils have an appropriate understanding of healthy eating and understand the positive impact that exercise has on their wellbeing. For example, they participate in regular physical activities, such as walking or running a mile each day, and know that fruit and vegetables are healthy eating options. However, too many pupils eat unhealthy snacks as part of their packed lunch each day.

Older pupils have an appropriate awareness of children's rights and develop class charters to reflect these. Many pupils in Year 6 show empathy in discussions about issues that affect children in other countries, for example school-age children working in factories to produce clothes.

Pupils contribute appropriately to the work of the school through involvement in pupil groups, such as the school council and digital leaders. Members of the school council chose equipment for the school playground and this has increased opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activities at break times. Digital leaders share their expertise with younger pupils, for example by helping them to use new computer applications.

Pupils' attendance rates are weak over time when compared with those of similar schools. They have placed the school in either the bottom 25% or the lower 50% for the past three years. Most pupils arrive at school on time.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement**

Teachers plan learning experiences that motivate and engage nearly all pupils well. For example, in the foundation phase, pupils enjoy learning about pirates as part of their topic work and pupils in key stage 2 show an interest in the wider world through their work on natural disasters. Many teachers question pupils effectively in order to challenge and extend their thinking. For example, in Year 6 skilful questioning helps pupils to consider carefully the language that they use to write persuasively. A few teachers build well on pupils' previous learning, for example by helping them to recall information about seed dispersal when learning about eco-systems in the school's forest area. Most teachers provide good feedback to pupils to help them to understand what they do well. In key stage 2, pupils respond appropriately to this feedback, for example by answering questions posed by the teacher. However, in the foundation phase, many pupils do not understand how to use the written feedback in their books to improve their learning.

The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in school visits that enhance the curriculum well, including a residential trip for pupils in Year 6. Staff make good use of the extensive school grounds to support pupils' learning. For example, a teaching assistant, trained to deliver forest school activities, works with pupils throughout the school to develop their interest in the world around them.

Overall, the quality of teaching is adequate and needs improvement. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to share clear explanations and learning objectives with pupils. In phonics teaching and guided reading sessions, teachers adapt work well to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities. However, this is not consistent across all areas of learning. In too many classes, pupils of all abilities complete the same tasks and activities. This results in a lack of challenge for more able pupils and insufficient support for lower ability pupils who struggle to complete work successfully. As a result, over time and within individual teaching sessions, these pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Nearly all teaching assistants work effectively with groups and individual pupils on a wide range of intervention programmes. These programmes have a positive impact on the progress that pupils make.

Provision for pupils across the foundation phase is inconsistent. Not all practitioners have a strong enough understanding of the principles of the foundation phase to plan and deliver worthwhile opportunities that help pupils to learn independently. Many pupils spend too much time working together as a whole class or taking part in adult-directed activities and have too few opportunities to learn through active play or to direct their own learning.

Teachers have adapted published schemes of work to ensure that curriculum plans include suitable opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. In the best instances, a few teachers plan well for pupils to use their numeracy skills in real-life contexts. However, overall, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they learn in mathematics lessons in their science and topic work. Teachers provide too many worksheets for pupils to complete and this limits pupils' abilities to structure their own responses or to write at length.

The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills, for example by providing a weekly talk topic to promote discussion. Teachers share the topic with parents through the school's website and this provides good opportunities for parents to hold worthwhile conversations with their children that extend and develop their vocabulary effectively.

### **Care, support and guidance: Adequate and needs improvement**

School leaders identify pupils that need additional support well and the school's provision for supporting pupils' social and emotional needs is strong. For example, well-planned sessions for individual pupils and small groups help pupils to develop strategies to manage their emotions effectively and to raise their self-esteem. The school has a good range of support and intervention strategies to address pupils' learning needs. These include literacy and numeracy programmes that help pupils to improve their basic skills, for example in spelling and reading. All pupils with additional learning needs have appropriate individual plans that outline the areas in which they need support. Teachers review pupils' progress against these plans regularly and share this information openly with parents.

Staff provide a good range of information to parents to help them support their children's learning. For example, parents receive booklets that help them to support their children's literacy skills, including guidance on how to support children at different stages of their literacy development. The school has recently started a programme of parental engagement workshops for parents. These workshops help parents to understand better how pupils acquire skills, for example in phonics.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments. All pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 learn to play the violin and, as a result, many pupils retain an interest in music as they move through key stage 2.

The school has appropriate systems in place to monitor and track pupils' progress as they move through the school. Leaders and teachers have recently started to use this information to identify groups of learners who are not achieving as well as they could, for example more able pupils. However, the use of these tracking systems by all teachers to inform their classroom teaching is at an early stage of development.



The school holds daily acts of collective worship that support most pupils' spiritual and moral understanding well. However, a few pupils do not attend these sessions as they take part in intervention programmes or meet as pupil leadership groups during whole-school assembly time.

Teachers and leaders provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. All pupils have the opportunity to improve their physical fitness by walking or running a mile each day. The school has recently introduced a system for older pupils to reward pupils who make healthy food choices at lunchtime. However, this has not reduced the number of pupils who bring chocolate, crisps or cakes to school as part of their lunch each day. The school makes good use of support from the school nurse and the police liaison officer, for example to deliver first-aid training to pupils.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in school. For example, by belonging to one of the pupil leadership groups, such as the eco-committee, or by acting as junior road safety officers. However, opportunities for pupils to influence what and how they learn are limited.

Inspectors shared issues relating to the safeguarding and health and safety of pupils with school leaders during the inspection, for example a lack of clarity about safeguarding procedures.

The school has recently introduced a range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance. For example, a weekly reward system for the class with the best attendance and certificates for individual pupils who attend school regularly. However, these strategies are at an early stage of development and have not yet had a positive impact on improving pupils' attendance levels.

### **Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement**

The headteacher places pupils' wellbeing at the centre of the school's work. Staff and governors share this vision and they succeed in creating an inclusive community for pupils. The senior leadership team has made effective arrangements to ensure that the school runs efficiently during the headteacher's part-time secondment to the local authority. The secondment has provided the deputy headteacher and senior teacher with a valuable opportunity to contribute suitably to school improvement. For example, they have introduced a new pupil tracking system and improved opportunities for parents to learn how to support their children's learning.

Regular meetings, where staff share ideas in curriculum teams, help to establish a strong team ethos. For example, the mathematics and numeracy team discuss how best to teach written methods of calculation to ensure that pupils build on their number skills as they move through the school. However, meetings do not always generate clear action points and leaders do not always make their expectations of staff clear enough. This makes it difficult for leaders to monitor whether agreed actions have been achieved successfully and limits their ability to address the undue variation in the quality of teaching across the school.

Leaders have taken good account of the views of the school's challenge adviser to put in place a realistic timetable of self-evaluation activity. This includes analysing

performance information, observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' books and seeking the views of pupils and parents. However, not enough staff contribute purposefully to this process. Leaders do not always consider well enough a wide enough range of evidence when drawing conclusions about the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the school does not always identify well enough the areas of provision and learning which require most improvement. The school's development plan contains a manageable number of priorities and relevant actions, linked to suitable resources. However, it is not always clear how leaders will monitor the impact of actions and judge their success.

The school has appropriate staffing and expertise to meet pupils' needs. Leaders deploy support staff effectively to make the most of their particular talents, for example in providing emotional and social skills support to pupils, leading forest schools activities and teaching gymnastics. The school is well resourced and has extensive outdoor spaces. Staff use these well to promote pupils' physical wellbeing and their understanding of the natural world.

Performance management processes are appropriate and link closely to priorities identified in the school's annual plan. Staff have purposeful opportunities to review their practice and discuss their professional learning needs in supportive staff development interviews with leaders. However, leaders do not always address issues of underperformance robustly enough.

The headteacher ensures that all staff receive relevant and beneficial professional learning opportunities. She builds collaborative and supportive professional relationships with other schools and is proactive in seeking grant funding to support well-planned joint initiatives, such as the parental engagement literacy project. These provide staff with purposeful opportunities to work with staff in other schools and to share effective practice.

Leaders and governors manage the budget efficiently. They use the pupil development grant appropriately to support vulnerable pupils. However, they do not evaluate the impact of the grant on improving the outcomes of eligible pupils well enough.

Governors are supportive of the school. The chair of governors attends school leadership meetings regularly to develop his understanding of school improvement. However, governors' involvement in setting the strategic direction for the school and their contribution to the school's self-evaluation processes are limited. As a result, they do not challenge leaders well enough to improve aspects of the school's work, for example pupils' attendance.

## 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))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

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