



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

**A report on**

**Penybont Primary School  
Minerva Street  
Bridgend  
CF31 1TD**

**Date of inspection: May 2019**

**by**

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

## About Penybont Primary School

Pen-Y-Bont Primary School is in Bridgend local authority. There are 372 pupils on roll aged from three to eleven. The school has 12 classes including a nursery class with 40 full-time and 12 part-time pupils.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is approximately 26%. This is above the average for Wales of 18%. The school has identified 17% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is below the national average of 21%. Approximately 17% of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and come from homes where English is the main language. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The headteacher took up his post in September 2009. The school's last inspection was in February 2012

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

Throughout Pen-Y-Bont Primary School, there is a thoughtful, caring and supportive ethos, in which all pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they are articulate, courteous, and welcoming to visitors. The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team and ensure that the school provides very helpful, individual support for pupils and their families.

Nearly all pupils make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. Most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, they are eager to learn and enjoy their lessons. Staff work well together to create a calm environment where pupils are respectful to adults and each other. Teachers provide a good range of learning experiences that engage pupils well. A particular strength of the school is the work to enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills.

The headteacher, along with senior leaders, provides effective, purposeful leadership. Collectively they have a clear vision for school improvement and they share this successfully with all members of staff. Together, they set high expectations and establish effective strategic plans that focus on meeting the needs of all pupils.

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

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve pupils' Welsh language skills

R2 Enable pupils to contribute effectively to decision-making

R3 Create more opportunities for pupils to be involved in how and what they learn

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

A majority of pupils enter school with communication skills that are below the level expected for their age. As they move through the school, nearly all pupils make good progress and achieve at or above the expected level by the time they leave. Pupils with additional learning needs and those learning English as an additional language generally make good and at times very good progress from their starting points.

Across the school, most pupils' speaking and listening skills are very strong. In the foundation phase, most pupils discuss their work imaginatively using a wide range of vocabulary, such as, backpack, torch and map, when discussing what to take to the land of Oz. Across key stage 2, most pupils appreciate the importance of listening to the ideas of others as well as expressing their own opinions. They use a more extensive vocabulary in their group discussions, such as decay, crumble and pollution, when debating the effects of plastic pollution in the sea.

Most pupils show enjoyment in reading and are keen to read to adults. In the foundation phase, older pupils use their reading skills effectively to read sentences, for example, to decide whether they have the qualities to make a good friend or not. At the end of key stage 2, many pupils have strong reading skills. They show a love for reading and discuss the books they read enthusiastically. Most read confidently and with expression and show a very good understanding of the purpose of different books such as a thesaurus. Most use information retrieval skills well when working across the curriculum.

Most pupils across the foundation phase develop their writing skills well. Many write confidently for a range of purposes, in indoor and outdoor activities. Pupils in Year 2 write stories and accounts effectively, for example when retelling a well-known fairy tale in their own words. They use their imagination creatively, for instance to write questions to ask Dorothy and the Tinman as part of their topic the Wizard of Oz. As they move through key stage 2, many pupils organise and develop their ideas clearly in an appropriate variety of styles. They have a sound understanding of punctuation and use exciting, adventurous vocabulary in their writing. For example, Year 3 pupils use words such as infinite, exuberant and peaceful when describing scenes from virtual reality headsets. By Year 6, nearly all pupils use their writing skills successfully, for example when writing a letter home as a soldier during the Great War and poems from the trenches. Most pupils across the school demonstrate good handwriting and presentation skills consistently across the school.

Nearly all pupils develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding systematically as they move through the school. For example, younger pupils in the foundation phase create simple lines of symmetry by painting butterflies and learn vocabulary associated with capacity in the water area.

In Year 2, pupils that are more able solve problems relating to time intervals and read negative numbers in the context of temperature well. By the time pupils reach Year 6, most have well developed mathematical skills. For example, they calculate monetary profit and loss successfully when selling Christmas decorations in their

pop-up shop in the town centre. However, throughout the school, pupils do not apply their good mathematical skills regularly enough or to the same standards across all areas of the curriculum.

Many pupils have a positive attitude to learning Welsh and use the language with growing confidence in a suitable range of contexts. In the foundation phase, standards of Welsh are sound. Most pupils understand, use and respond to simple words and phrases. For example, younger pupils take part enthusiastically in simple conversations to share personal information when saying their names and how they are feel. In key stage 2, younger pupils read simple texts accurately and answer basic questions about the text with good understanding. However, older pupils do not extend their Welsh skills well enough by building on previous learning. Overall, throughout key stage 2, pupils do not use their Welsh speaking skills often enough outside of structured Welsh lessons.

Most pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are very strong across the school. In the foundation phase, younger pupils use word-processing and simple paint programmes to create pictures and to add text, changing the colours and font size with growing independence. Many older foundation phase pupils give clear instructions to a programme to make an object move and follow a route. By the end of key stage 2, pupils use ICT in useful ways across the curriculum to support their learning, for example when creating scientific line graphs, historical databases and spreadsheets to extract purposeful information.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Standards of behaviour of nearly all pupils are exemplary in class and around the school. Pupils are friendly and speak confidently and respectfully to adults and to each other. They display supportive, tolerant and caring attitudes relating very well to each other while respecting and valuing the cultural diversity within the school.

Most pupils are enthusiastic learners and are ready to learn at the start of lessons. Most engage well in lessons and have a positive attitude to learning. They demonstrate interest in their work and are eager to learn new things. Most cope confidently with new tasks and apply previously learned skills well. They maintain concentration for appropriate lengths of time. They work well in pairs and small groups, and in whole class settings. Many show perseverance and resilience and develop a very positive approach to tackling challenging work. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked enthusiastically and displayed determination as they attempt to make strong ropes out of plastic bags. Most pupils listen carefully to the views of others and wait patiently for their turn. This contributes successfully to the school's calm and tolerant ethos and has a very positive impact on pupils' wellbeing and standards.

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and taking regular exercise. For example, pupils benefit from the strong focus on healthy lunch boxes and snacks. There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer for pupils to attend, such as netball, rugby, football and yoga and the take up for these activities is notable. Nearly all pupils feel safe and valued in school and know where to turn if they feel worried or upset. The school's digital leaders remind pupils about the rules of the internet and, as a result, most have a

sound awareness of the importance of staying safe online. Most pupils have a good understanding of the problems that substance misuse, tobacco, alcohol and anti-social behaviour can cause.

Pupils who are members of specific committees contribute appropriately to school life. For example, they ensure that the school is environmentally friendly. A good example of this is the production of Christmas cards created from school-recycled paper. However, pupils' contribution to decision-making is generally underdeveloped.

Most pupils respond well to the school's focus on improving attendance and they understand the importance of attending school regularly. Most are punctual at the start of the school day.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

In nearly all classes, staff build supportive working relationships with pupils and create a productive learning atmosphere. They place a high priority on promoting pupils' wellbeing. This encourages respect, courtesy and trust and, consequently, nearly all pupils behave well and are eager to learn. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. They intervene at appropriate times to provide support, particularly to the less able. The nurturing ethos enables nearly all pupils to make good and at times very good progress. In a few instances, teachers over-direct pupils and this limits the development of their independent learning skills.

Nearly all teachers ensure that their lessons move pupils' learning forward at an appropriate pace. Most teachers share learning objectives clearly with pupils and provide them with valuable oral and written feedback. Teachers remind pupils of the purpose of the lesson effectively and use mini plenaries well to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve their objectives. They explain work effectively and question pupils skilfully to assess their understanding and to encourage them to think further. For example, in Year 4, the teacher used virtual reality headsets to aid the recall of previous learning about life under the sea.

Teachers provide a wide and well-balanced variety of learning experiences based around a series of themes, such as 'Our Wonderful World' and the 'Blue Planet'. Pupils are beginning to develop their learning through involvement in 'thematic weeks' throughout the year. However, opportunities for pupils to influence their learning consistently across the curriculum are limited. Teachers plan activities that are practical and multisensory in nature and build suitably upon pupils' own first-hand experiences and interests. For example, reception pupils explore a popular story by following a sensory trail to describe a character's emotions.

The school implements the foundation phase suitably and staff provide an appropriate range of teacher-led and child-led activities, which develop pupils' skills well. They make effective use of the indoor and outdoor environments when planning and delivering activities. Overall, the school is at an early stage in taking account of the new curriculum for Wales in designing its own curriculum.

The school enriches the curriculum effectively through a wide range of educational visits. These broaden all pupils' knowledge of the local community and wider world.

For example, pupils in the foundation phase visit local shops and a country park, and pupils in key stage 2 meet visitors from different countries. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities for all ages, both after school and during lunchtime, is a notable feature of the school. These include art, coding and sign language.

The school provides valuable contexts for pupils to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, generally, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum. The school is developing its provision to meet the requirements of the digital competency framework very well. As a result, pupils apply their ICT skills successfully in many learning areas. Teachers plan exciting activities, such as programming drones to follow a flight path and land in a particular space.

Provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills across the school is appropriate. Regular Welsh language lessons are beginning to link successfully to pupils' life and experiences. For example, pupils write about themselves, their families and characters from stories. The recently established 'Criw Cymraeg' is beginning to have a positive impact across the school in encouraging the use of the language with pupils and staff. The school uses a wide range of displays and notices to promote a Welsh ethos around the school. For example, pupils study Welsh stories such as, Cantre'r Gwaelod and Welsh artists inspire them to produce stimulating landscape paintings, which they proudly display. Overall, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture of Wales.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Pen-y-Bont is a happy, caring and inclusive school where all pupils feel valued and safe. All members of staff know the pupils very well and ensure their wellbeing successfully. Staff are highly successful in promoting pupils understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect for others.

The school promotes pupils' social development effectively through regularly engaging with visitors to learn about the world of work. For example, the fire service, the army and the police. Staff encourage pupils to use their imagination and to engage with the creative arts through well planned drama lessons as well as in end of year performances and concerts. School excursions to the Royal Mint, St Fagan's and Cardiff Castle further enhance the pupils' learning experiences.

The school promotes positive attitudes to healthy living and eating effectively and, as a result, pupils understand the importance of making healthy choices. For example, staff support pupils to run a fruit tuck shop at breaktime. Staff organise a good range of curricular and extracurricular activities that successfully promote pupils' understanding of the importance of keeping fit.

Leaders provide a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to participate as member of groups such as the school council, eco council and Criw Cymraeg. These groups contribute appropriately to school life with activities such as fundraising for charities, monitoring energy consumption and recycling waste. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school's decision making.



The school promotes equality, diversity and racial tolerance well. As a result, all pupils feel valued within the caring ethos of the school. The school fosters pupils' spiritual and moral development well, for example through regular acts of collective worship reinforcing the monthly value.

The school has an efficient and effective system to monitor and track pupil progress. All teachers collect information about pupils' strengths and areas for development carefully. They make good use of this information to provide effective support for specific groups of pupils, including those with additional learning needs. Purposeful individual learning plans support pupils' development well. As a result, identified pupils make good and often very good progress from their individual starting points.

The school communicates with parents' effectively thorough digital messaging, newsletters and social media. Staff organise beneficial workshops to help parents to support their child's learning, for example, sessions to promote good reading habits and information about how the school teaches literacy and numeracy. Parents feel strongly that the school is very approachable and that they can share any concerns with the headteacher and staff.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher communicates a clear vision for the school, based on ensuring the wellbeing of all pupils and on securing improved outcomes. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. Together, they set high expectations and establish effective strategic plans that focus on meeting the needs of all pupils. Leaders share responsibilities effectively among the staff who they organise into four teams. The teams meet regularly to focus on teaching and learning, sharing good practice and monitoring progress towards development plan targets. As a result, all teachers have a clear understanding of their role in driving forward strategic priorities for improvement. All members of staff have up to date relevant job descriptions and lines of accountability are clear.

Members of the governing body are highly supportive of the school and know its community well. They meet regularly and fulfil their statutory obligations efficiently. Governors receive detailed information from the headteacher about pupil progress and they have a sound understanding of how well the school is performing. The governors' role in contributing to self-evaluation processes is beginning to impact on school improvement planning. For example, they have recently taken part in looking at pupils books and talking to groups of pupils about their work. Overall, the governors' role in determining the school's strategic direction and holding leaders to account for school performance is at an early stage of development.

Leaders take good account of national priorities, including developing pupils' ICT skills and improving outcomes for vulnerable pupils. Adapting the school's planning and provision to address the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales is at a very early stage of development. Leaders plan suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. However, developing pupils' Welsh language skills is a continued area for development. Leaders and managers improve weak aspects of provision effectively. As a result, the quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school.

Self-evaluation processes are efficient and thorough. They include analysis of performance data, session observations, book scrutiny and listening to learners. As a result, leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The self-evaluation processes inform school improvement plans successfully. The plans have a clear focus on improving pupil outcomes, with suitably challenging targets. Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of actions to secure improvement robustly and the school has a good track record of maintaining high standards of pupil achievement.

Performance management systems are efficient and effective. Staff objectives link directly to priorities in the school improvement plan and to their professional learning needs. Leaders arrange suitable training opportunities to develop staff expertise and knowledge. These have a positive effect on the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils. For example, training to implement a consistent approach to support pupils' emotional needs has led to high levels of wellbeing and exemplary behaviour across the school. Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is organised efficiently. It enables staff to work together to ensure continuity and progression in planning and to share good practice. As a result, the quality of provision is good and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.

Good use is made of all available resources. The buildings and surrounding grounds are utilised effectively to enrich pupils' learning experiences. There are sufficient, suitably qualified teaching staff to deliver the curriculum. They are supported by a dedicated team of support officers. Leaders foster effective teamwork and this strength contributes well to the caring family ethos evident in the school.

There are effective arrangements to manage financial resources. A strong feature is the regular evaluation of the impact of spending plans on pupil outcomes to ensure value for money. The pupil development plan grant is used successfully to improve standards of literacy and numeracy, and to provide support for the emotional wellbeing of vulnerable pupils. High quality interventions ensure that nearly all identified pupils make good and often very good progress from their individual starting points.

## 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)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)

© Crown Copyright 2019: This report may be re used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 16/07/2019