



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

**A report on**

**Pendoylan C.I.W. Primary School**

**Pendoylan  
Nr. Cowbridge  
CF71 7UJ**

**Date of inspection: October 2022**

**by**

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

## About Pendoylan C.I.W. Primary School

Name of provider	Pendoylan C.I.W. Primary School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Pendoylan is a Church in Wales Primary school
Number of pupils on roll	224
Pupils of statutory school age	173
Number in nursery classes	25
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 21.3%)	1.2%
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 22.2%)	7.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	02/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/04/2014
Start date of inspection	17/10/2022

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.

## Overview

Pupils at Pendoylan Church in Wales Primary School relish attending school. They are eager to talk to adults and speak articulately and with great pride about their school. Most pupils demonstrate high levels of perseverance and positive attitudes to learning, they feel safe and well cared for, and they trust that staff will always support them through difficult moments. Over their time in school, pupils, including those who are vulnerable and those with additional learning needs, make good and often very good progress in most areas of learning from where they started. Pupils have many opportunities to influence and improve their school and are thrilled to work alongside school leaders to bring about change.

Pupils' well-being and emotional development are at the heart of the school and staff work tirelessly to ensure that the school is a reflective and inclusive environment. This inclusivity is shown by the encouraging relationships between staff and pupils. All staff think carefully about how pupils learn best and employ a range of methods to involve them successfully in their learning. They show an eagerness to develop their professional skills and knowledge together and within a variety of partnerships well. This enables them to fine-tune provision to best meet individual pupils' needs. The care, support and guidance provided across the school community are significant and support the school's vision, to 'Inspire, Reflect and Transform'.

The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership. Governors support the school well and along with dedicated staff place the well-being of all pupils and improving learning at the centre of school life. Partnerships with parents and all outside agencies are effective. Leaders and staff are well on their way to implementing a curriculum that is authentic and reflects the needs of the community. The school is good at identifying areas of its work that are successful and those aspects that need to be improved. For instance, the school's work to develop pupils' numeracy skills has been highly effective and led to improvements in its provision and the progress that pupils make. Moving forward, leaders and staff now recognise that creating more opportunities for older pupils to experience outdoor learning along with refining their approaches to providing feedback to pupils will improve pupil progress further.

## **Recommendations**

R1 Refine and improve the quality of feedback to pupils so that they can understand what they need to do to improve their learning

R2 Plan more opportunities for older pupils to benefit from outdoor learning

## **What happens next**

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to developing and designing a curriculum for Wales, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Over their time in school, nearly all pupils flourish and make good progress from their individual starting points. This includes pupils who are vulnerable and those with additional learning needs. In addition, pupils' progress in developing and applying their literacy, numeracy and digital skills in new situations is a notable feature across the school.

During their early years, most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and talk purposefully during activities and play sessions. They are confident and keen to talk to adults about what they are learning. As they progress, younger pupils listen with increasing interest and talk eagerly about their work, for example when describing how they are making 'autumn perfumes' using herbs and flowers. As they get older, most pupils become increasingly articulate. In Year 4 for instance, pupils speak knowledgeably and precisely when designing a Roman villa. Older pupils listen and express themselves confidently as they volunteer opinions, giving sound reasons for their answers. For example, when creating public information warnings of the impending Blitz as part of their topic on World War 2.

Most pupils make very good progress in developing their Welsh language skills and become confident Welsh readers and speakers in a wide range of circumstances. Nearly all younger pupils count correctly in Welsh up to twenty and know their colours when describing an autumn scene. As they progress through school, older pupils become more proficient and respond to more complex situations in Welsh such as when answering questions about themselves or describing characteristics of famous people. As part of their transition activities older pupils create videos with detailed dialogues where they play the characters in a Welsh soap opera.

Most pupils' reading skills progress well. Younger readers develop an understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds and how sounds combine to form words. They begin to read with increasing fluency and understanding. They demonstrate a love and enjoyment of stories, poems and traditional tales. As pupils move through the school, they build on this progress and develop a good range of approaches to become confident readers. For example, they use contextual clues to work out the meaning of challenging words. Nearly all older pupils confidently talk about what they have read and express an opinion about their favourite authors and stories. They talk caringly about their class novel, recounting stories of evacuees and empathise with the characters well.

Nearly all pupils' writing skills develop well. They understand from an early age that they can communicate through mark-making, this motivates them to express themselves, write freely and retell traditional tales. As pupils get older, they develop a clear understanding of a wide range of different genres of writing and apply this well in their own work, such as when creating a leaflet about how to look after your pet. Many write an increasing range of sentences and develop their ideas effectively, using good vocabulary and punctuation. Most older pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds accurately in spelling quite complex words, for example using 'luxurious' and 'sumptuous' when describing a palace. They share their ideas

confidently and thoughtfully when writing harvest prayers, and when writing empathic descriptions about the consequences of war.

Most pupils develop their mathematical and numeracy skills well across the school. The youngest pupils begin to grasp a sense of number quickly, counting conkers, sticks and leaves. They copy a range of patterns, match shapes, recognise and match colours and spot the odd one out. As they get older, pupils count well and develop a good understanding of number bonds to 20 and a few pupils use them to subtract successfully. By the time most pupils reach Year 2 they are developing a sound awareness of multiplication tables and use these facts to help solve problems when working out number problems to reveal a combination code to escape from the museum. Most older pupils transfer their maths skills appropriately in a variety of contexts, they record data and produce a variety of graphs to represent their findings. The oldest pupils work out challenging percentage problems confidently, for example calculating which bank offers the best rate of interest and return when investing £2,000 over two years.

Across the school, most pupils develop a wide range of digital skills to support their learning and to help them communicate digitally purposefully. Younger pupils learn how they can use digital programs to control a floor robot to avoid obstacles and use a variety of software confidently to support their learning such as in spelling and number work. Most older pupils display high levels of digital competence. For example, they write algorithms to control a robot and modify the programme by adding peripheral devices such as light sensors.

Most pupils develop high levels of independence as they move through school. From a young age, most engage with tasks independently to complete challenges that have been set. Most pupils express themselves well creatively. Nursery pupils create models of hedgehogs using natural materials. Older pupils confidently use a variety of materials and resources to create illustrations and models, as well as enthusiastically participating in school performances and seasonal celebrations.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils demonstrate resilience and positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their school, each other and their work. They value the interesting learning experiences they receive and make the most of lessons and the many clubs, leadership groups and additional activities that they attend. A notable feature of the school is the very good levels of attendance from all pupils. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, attendance levels have risen well and are now climbing to pre-pandemic levels.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate high levels of well-being across the school, they show respect for each other, their school and their community. They understand that they are well cared for and show a considerate attitude towards others. They are confident that staff will listen to their concerns and deal with any problems that may arise. They show great eagerness when talking about the extensive range of well-being opportunities available, such as the emotional literacy support or small group sessions to learn about positive relationships. Overall pupils feel safe and secure within the school's positive and thoughtful learning environment.

Most pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. For example, they know the importance of protecting their passwords and personal information. Digital leaders lead assemblies on aspects of e-safety and actively participate in internet safety days, producing posters encouraging safe use of the internet. Nearly all pupils are becoming healthy, confident individuals and can confidently explain how to make healthy choices relating to diet, physical activity and in their emotional well-being. For example, school lunch options are healthy and fruit and vegetables are always available on the menu. In addition, water fountains are located around the school and pupils are regularly encouraged to stay hydrated. Nearly all pupils like being active and participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities in addition to their regular physical education sessions, such as in 'Sports Xtra club' and in a dancing club for younger pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary across the school. Nearly all pupils demonstrate high levels of respect for each other and adults. Older pupils take an active role to promote a positive code around the school as yard and reading buddies. Most pupils confidently describe their understanding of the purposes of rules, rewards and consequences in school. Many older pupils speak knowledgeably about how laws are formed and how these apply to them, as well as the wider community. Most pupils develop well as ethically, informed citizens, especially through their work around local and world current affairs, such as recent conflicts or health issues. Regular visits from the local police liaison officer support the school's work well and pupils value the opportunities to discuss topics such as anti-bullying, anti-social behaviour and racism.

Pupil voice is a strong feature and all pupils have many opportunities to influence the work of the school. All pupils have suitable opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a considerable range of roles and pupil voice committees. These groups include the School Council, Criw Cymraeg and the Community Ambassadors. While undertaking these roles, many pupils present themselves confidently and can explain where their work has made a difference to school life. For example, Criw Cymraeg members meet weekly and choose the Welsh word or sentence of the week, give out certificates for Welsh achievement in assemblies and work with purpose to promote the Welsh language around school.

In lessons, nearly all pupils are attentive and eager to participate and sustain concentration on tasks and activities. Most develop their independent learning skills well, making the most of their learning time. They describe lessons as 'fun and fascinating'. They respond willingly to well-crafted questions from teachers and listen to each other's answers respectfully. Nearly all pupils apply themselves purposefully when working collaboratively. Levels of pupils' engagement in learning are high across the school. They are industrious and demonstrate extremely positive attitudes towards their work. Overall, pupils are ambitious, confident and willing to explore new themes and share their ideas for what and how they would like to learn.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

Senior leaders and staff have collaborated successfully with local schools and the whole school community to design a bespoke curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced and builds systematically and logically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills. This allows for secure

progression as pupils move through the school and provides pupils with a suitable breadth and depth of learning experiences to engage and motivate them to learn.

All staff effectively plan and develop the curriculum to fully reflect being part of Wales. This includes designing learning activities that reflect the cultural, linguistic and diverse nature of Wales and the wider world. Examples include visits to local places of interest such as St Fagan's and Caerleon, learning Spanish and celebrating its racial mix through events such as Eid, Diwali and the Chinese New Year. All teachers take full account of pupils' individual learning needs, and have high expectations of themselves and of the pupils. They plan the curriculum to support pupils to make progress through the delivery of high-quality lessons. The curriculum is inclusive and promotes equality for all. Younger pupils enjoy well-crafted learning opportunities outdoors that support their all-round development, consolidation and understanding of specific skills, for example when creating potions from natural materials found on an autumn walk or examining a crime scene and looking for clues. However, opportunities for older pupils to make full use of the outdoor learning areas to expand their learning are less well developed.

The school curriculum effectively enables pupils to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in communication, numeracy and digital competency to support their work and enable pupils to progress. Most pupils use and apply their skills at a good and at times, outstanding level across the curriculum. For example, older pupils research information about how to build robots and using their mathematical, creative and digital skills, and build, programme and operate their designs. Enterprise days enable all pupils throughout the school to further apply their skills in creating products such as decorated glass jars, plant pots, mermaid purses and bee wands. Pupils decided that money raised from the sale of their products should support the purchase of additional playground equipment.

The school has high aspirations for the development of pupils' Welsh language communication skills. From a very early stage in the school, pupils have opportunities to learn and use Welsh through daily routines. Older pupils develop good and often better, Welsh language communication skills in both formal teaching activities and informal situations and use these skills with confidence and enjoyment.

All staff effectively support the development of pupils' social and emotional skills well as a result of focused, whole staff training in restorative approaches, autism awareness and in supporting well-being. The school successfully provides pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make healthy lifestyle choices. All staff collaborate effectively with the community to support pupils learning and their knowledge of the world of work. For example, they utilise the diverse skills of parents such as dentists, doctors and nurses to support their lessons and ensure that pupils are well informed.

All teachers use assessment to inform them of pupils' next steps for learning and collaborate successfully to plan exciting experiences for pupils each week.

The use of 'hooks' to entice pupils into their learning is highly successful. Tasks are purposeful and build on prior learning systematically. Relationships between pupils and adults are extremely positive and contribute to high levels of pupil engagement across the school. All staff know their craft well and effective questioning develops



pupils' vocabulary, deepens their learning and supports discussion. In the best practice, teachers set clear learning goals and often co-construct success criteria with pupils. This gives them a greater understanding of what is expected of them and how to recognise achievement. Overall, lessons move at a brisk pace and the use of verbal feedback supports pupil progress well. However, the impact of teachers' written feedback is variable.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school supports pupils' emotional and social needs well. Staff create an exceptionally warm and caring learning environment where pupils feel valued and safe. The school has increased its provision to support pupils' mental health and well-being. For example, since the recent pandemic it has increased the number of staff trained to support pupils' well-being and routinely provides pupils with opportunities to talk to staff when they feel the need. The very calm atmosphere throughout the school reflects the success of this provision.

The school manages familiar routines well and these support pupils successfully. For instance, all pupils receive a heartfelt welcome at the start of the school day and this helps pupils to settle and be ready to learn. At the end of the day all staff ensure that any issues arising during the day are dealt with before pupils go home. Each pupil has a detailed profile that informs staff of their interests, how they like to be supported and to learn. Highly skilled teaching assistants work effectively across the school to provide good quality support for pupils in need, for instance through emotional well-being sessions and literacy and numeracy intervention programmes. A notable strength of the school is how all staff use the effective training received in autism awareness. All staff use a range of effective strategies to support these pupils and this has had an extremely positive impact on their progress. In addition, most pupils have developed a greater understanding of autism by undertaking the school's 'Autism Superhero pledge'.

The school is wholly inclusive and provision for pupils with additional learning needs is highly effective. The school's systems and processes to track and monitor their progress is detailed and rigorous. The school involves pupils, parents and outside agencies effectively to plan pupils' next steps in learning. Leaders and staff attend regular pupil progress meetings, which focus on pupils' individual plans and the outcomes from useful assessments. These meetings identify what is working well and what additional support could work better to meet individual needs. As a result of this good practice, most pupils make good, and at times very good, progress from where they start.

The school provides valuable opportunities to support pupils to take responsibility and contribute to the life and work of the school. Members of the pupil voice groups collaborate successfully on several projects such as when making a case for challenging the road speed outside the school, speaking to all pupils about current affairs in assemblies and creating a reflection area in the main reception. The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to perform in celebrations including the annual Eisteddfod, the Harvest Service and when singing a medley of 'James Bond' movie themes enthusiastically as part of the successful school choir.

Staff promote Welsh culture and Welsh heritage effectively across the school through regular events such as in the annual Eisteddfod, Owain Glyndwr Day and studying topics where pupils celebrate the history and traditions of Wales. As a result, pupils take pride in their heritage, traditions and their Welshness. Topics throughout the school support pupils to develop an understanding of their identity, the world of work and how they relate to the local community and the wider world. For example, a visit to Porthcawl to study the work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) led to pupils asking to learn more about other emergency services. A visit to Caerleon sparked pupils' enthusiasm to study how the Romans impacted on life in Wales. Trips to Cardiff Castle and the National Museum alongside improving their knowledge of other countries such as the language and culture of Spain, support pupils' natural curiosity well.

The school provides regular opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully, through school values and regular collective worship. The school recognises the wide range of cultures and faiths represented across their community. In daily acts of collective worship staff provide pupils with the opportunity to reflect on the key message and how it may apply to their faith. The strong relationship with the local church ensures that acts of collective worship provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect on important issues and key values.

The school treats pupil voice and pupil leadership groups with great respect and gives them a directive to lead change. There are many opportunities for pupils to become active, informed citizens and influence decisions that bring about improvement to school life, for example by improving the amount resources available at break times and supporting healthier meals and lunchboxes. Most pupils have access to a good range of extra-curricular activities that they request. This includes dance, drama, choir and sports clubs. These clubs enhance pupils' well-being and enable them to broaden their horizons and develop new interests.

Staff monitor pupils' attendance effectively. Systems to support and challenge low attendance are rigorous and over time have resulted in improved levels of attendance. The school promotes a culture of safety, empathy, care and support. There is an established system to report safeguarding concerns regarding pupils and the school makes timely referrals to outside agencies when appropriate.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership and sets an extremely positive ethos in all aspects of the school's work. She has established a strong team ethic across the school through maintaining high levels of collaboration and trust.

All leaders and staff have a thorough understanding of the needs of the pupils and local community and work passionately and with commitment to meet these needs. As a result, the school is a stimulating and vibrant learning community. At its core is a thoughtful and inclusive culture that ensures that all pupils feel a secure sense of belonging and develop the confidence and skills to engage positively with all learning experiences. Overall, leaders place a strong emphasis on establishing and upholding a strong safeguarding culture across the school.

Leaders along with the whole school community have established and communicated a clear vision. They place a clear emphasis on improving pupils' well-being and the quality of teaching. They have high expectations of themselves and their staff. Overall, leaders are very good role models, are aspirational for pupils' futures and pursue opportunities to influence pupils' lives positively, for example to make the Curriculum for Wales a reality for all pupils through their passion, their wider research and innovation.

The leadership structure and distribution of roles and responsibilities are effective and support the school's determination to improve. The culture of professional learning is modelled well by leaders and the headteacher encourages all staff to undertake research-based learning that directly links to the needs of the pupils. They are given valuable opportunities to disseminate their knowledge with each other. This has a positive impact on the provision and standards across the school. For example, the highly effective, whole school approach to well-being has enabled all staff to develop a greater understanding of relationships, which has impacted positively on pupil behaviour and in unlocking each child's potential. Leaders create opportunities for teachers to grow into leadership roles and for support staff to progress their careers. As a result, the school is developing positively as a learning organisation.

Within this learning community there is a shared strategic direction and responsibility for delivering against national and school priorities amongst all staff. Effective teamwork moves these priorities into action successfully. For example, leaders and staff work collaboratively with other local schools and collectively are well on their way to implementing a bespoke curriculum. Nearly all pupils have developed effective digital skills and teachers have rapidly developed their approach to using these as a teaching tool. In addition, developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and Welsh language skills remains a high priority.

Leaders use a wide range of evidence to evaluate the progress of school initiatives, the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Information is used effectively to construct the school development plan. There is a transparent, effective monitoring cycle of activities mapped across the academic year. Activities are robust and inform leaders of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. For example, after observing lessons and looking at pupils' work, leaders identified the need to improve pupils' application of numeracy skills across the curriculum.

The school's work in partnership with parents, support agencies and other schools is highly successful. Parents trust that the school is doing the right thing for pupils and always acting in their best interests. The very active parent council supports the school in decision-making well and has a positive impact in encouraging parents into school. Leaders actively encourage collaboration, such as staff working with professionals beyond the school, for example. They work purposefully with other schools to improve aspects of pedagogy such as in expressive arts and when working with Swansea University to introduce algebra with older pupils. The school works closely with Trinity St David's and supports the nurture of student teachers effectively. Specialist agencies such as Autism Awareness, education psychologists and pupil welfare officers attend the school regularly to provide direct support and advice that impacts positively on outcomes for pupils.

Members of the governing body are highly supportive of their school. They discharge their duties well over a range of committees and bring expertise to their roles. The headteacher keeps them fully informed of progress against school priorities. They have a good understanding of pupil progress and the school's priorities. Governors hold the school to account and fulfil its duty as challenging friends. The governing body ensures that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

School leaders and governors manage finances well, and make prudent decisions that benefit all pupils. For example, governors, in conjunction with the headteacher, run a highly successful afternoon childcare provision. Revenue from this supports staffing and the development of the outdoor learning area. The school uses its grant funding effectively to ensure targeted support for vulnerable pupils and to provide them with experiences that they might not otherwise have. Additional funds support provision for a range of additional approaches including beneficial pastoral care to support pupils' emotional well-being.

## 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

## 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.

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:

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