



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

**A report on**

**Llwynypia Primary School**

**School Terrace  
Llwynypia  
Tonypandy  
RCT  
CF40 2HL**

**Date of inspection: January 2024**

**by**

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

## About Llwynypia Primary School

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| Name of provider   | Llwynypia Primary School                 |
| Local authority  | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council |
| Language of the provider   | English                                  |
| Type of school   | Primary                                  |
| Religious character  | none                                     |
| Number of pupils on roll   | 218                                      |
| Pupils of statutory school age   | 169                                      |
| Number in nursery classes  | 36                                       |
| 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 23.7%) | 35.2%                                    |
| 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 13.2%)               | 2%                                       |
| Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home   | 0.0%                                     |
| Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language  | 0%                                       |
| Date of headteacher appointment  | 01/01/2023                               |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)  | 01/07/2016                               |
| Start date of inspection   | 22/01/2024                               |

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

Llwynypia Primary School is a happy, inclusive school that places a high priority on the well-being of its pupils. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know who to go to if they are worried. Many pupils show good levels of interest in their lessons and enjoy the opportunities they have to improve their school as part of a range of pupil voice groups. There is a strong emphasis on community, and families greatly appreciate the role the school plays in their lives. There is a high level of care and respect amongst pupils, staff and governors, and this has a very positive influence on pupils' attitudes and behaviours.

Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals, make good progress in their literacy and numeracy skills, and the school's provision for developing these core skills is a strength. Teachers provide a range of learning experiences that engage pupils' interest and make good use of the local community. Staff deliver suitable lessons that build progressively on what pupils know. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and digital skills across all areas of the curriculum are underdeveloped. As a result, many older pupils lack confidence in the application of their skills in real-life situations.

Staff have strong relationships with pupils. They use positive encouragement, and they praise pupils for their achievements. In a few cases, staff provide worthwhile feedback to pupils. However, overall, the feedback to pupils does not support them to identify their next steps and improve their independent learning skills well enough.

Leaders provide appropriate strategic direction for the school's work and are beginning to address national priorities such as curriculum reform suitably. Leaders provide opportunities for staff to collaborate well together to contribute to improvement work, and they undertake suitable monitoring activities. However, school improvement planning lacks precision. Leaders generally try to address too many priorities at the same time and do not always provide clarity for staff about what they expect to see in their improvement actions. Governors play a very supportive role in the development of the school and help to ensure that it meets the many needs of its community well.

Despite the staff's efforts to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly, the rates of attendance remain too low.

## Recommendations

- R1 Provide opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and digital skills systematically across the curriculum
- R2 Develop the curriculum to provide purposeful and authentic learning experiences that allow pupils to develop their independence and confidence, particularly in Years 3-6

- R3 Ensure that feedback provides pupils with a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve
- R4 Continue to improve pupils' attendance

## What happens next

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

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Most pupils start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. Generally they make good progress in developing their personal, social, literacy and numeracy skills during their time at school, including pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those eligible for free school meals.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their oracy and communication skills. For example, younger pupils speak confidently to friends and listen well to instructions from adults. By Year 6 a majority of pupils speak clearly and with understanding about their learning. They provide good examples to reinforce their points, for example when discussing the main character from their class novel 'The Last Bear'.

Most pupils across the school develop their reading skills effectively and show an enthusiasm for books and stories. Most younger pupils acquire an understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds well. By Year 2, they read simple texts accurately and with expression, taking good account of punctuation such as question marks and commas. Older pupils build on this progress well and develop a range of strategies to become fluent independent readers. They speak with enthusiasm about selecting books they enjoy from the school library. By the end of their time in school most pupils have good comprehension skills.

From a young age, many pupils show enthusiasm for developing their writing skills. They develop their confidence in writing key words and apply their knowledge of letter sounds to write unfamiliar words successfully, for example when writing recipes to make gingerbread men. By Year 2 many pupils begin to write more extensively and develop a good understanding of punctuation. When provided with the opportunity, older pupils continue to make suitable progress as writers. For example, pupils write engaging letters to persuade the local council to promote the idea of more recycling bins. A few strengthen their points particularly well using phrases such as 'for instance' and 'without a doubt'. However, particularly in the classes for the older pupils, opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across the curriculum are too infrequent.

Most pupils across the school make good progress in developing their mathematics skills. Many younger pupils develop a good understanding of the number system and recall number bonds to ten accurately. A few use this knowledge well to create larger bonds to one hundred. Many older pupils apply these skills when solving problems, for example to work out the differences in their heart rates before and after exercise. However, due to lack of opportunities, pupils do not apply these skills frequently enough across the curriculum.

Many pupils make steady progress in learning Welsh. By Year 2, they use sentence patterns and suitable vocabulary to share basic information about themselves. They respond appropriately to basic questions and instructions. Many older pupils participate appropriately in short conversations they have prepared about themselves. However, they do not use Welsh frequently enough to make the progress they could.

Many pupils develop basic digital skills during their time in school. A majority use devices independently to support their learning. Older pupils have developed appropriate skills such as logging on to platforms and using programmes, for example to create a biography, and design Welsh-themed digital artwork.

Most pupils' physical skills develop well. For example, nursery pupils thread cotton reels onto shoelaces when making a bracelet or necklace and show good concentration and perseverance. Older pupils develop a range of physical skills successfully, for example by taking part in activities such as multi-skills sessions and swimming lessons.

Most pupils make appropriate progress with developing their creative skills. Younger pupils enjoy creating artwork linked to their topic, for example making gingerbread men out of dough, whilst older pupils create Welsh themed artwork to celebrate 'Diwrnod Shwmae'.

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

Nearly all pupils feel safe and happy in school and develop positive relationships with staff and each other. These relationships ensure that pupils feel cared for and listened to. This supportive ethos leads to a calm but purposeful atmosphere throughout the school.

Nearly all pupils behave well and have a good understanding of the school's charter for behaviour. They show kindness and respect to each other and are welcoming to visitors. They are polite and courteous and move calmly and safely around the buildings. Most pupils play co-operatively with each other on the playground.

Most pupils settle to their work purposefully and work with concentration. Many pupils show good engagement in their tasks and work well with others. They take their turn to speak, and listen politely, showing good consideration of the views of others. Most pupils in the younger classes speak confidently about what they are doing and are keen to engage with adults, for example when retelling how the boy had been lost in the snow in their class picture book. Many pupils respond to verbal feedback and make some basic improvements. However, pupils do not develop the skills they need to lead their own learning.

Many pupils, including those with ALN, participate in a wide range of active pupil voice groups that influence the life and work of the school positively. These include the 'Power Rangers' eco group who monitor electricity usage and encourage others to recycle a range of materials from home. The school council has worked to improve playtimes. They have introduced a buddy bench, which they are very proud of, to ensure that pupils feel included and have friends to play with. Many pupils are aware of their rights as children and understand the need to help others and look after the environment, for example by collecting or contributing food for the local foodbank.

Many pupils have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. For example, they participate in the 'Daily Mile' and promote healthy snacks at playtimes. Many pupils talk enthusiastically about rewards for walking or cycling to school.

Many pupils understand the importance of good school attendance. They have a good awareness of the attendance rates of different classes and enjoy celebrating when they meet targets. However, rates of attendance continue to remain too low.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The school is developing its interpretation of Curriculum for Wales appropriately overall. Staff use a broad range of topics to provide engaging contexts for learning that pupils enjoy. They take account of pupils' ideas and suggestions when planning learning experiences, for example during their topic Around the World in 80 Days, pupils decided they would like to visit the local travel agents to learn about different destinations.

Teachers plan well to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They have developed programmes of lessons that build systematically on what they know and ensure that they acquire a broad range of basic skills. Younger pupils have worthwhile opportunities to use these skills, for example when making missing person posters for the police and promoting holidays in the travel agents role play. They are provided with opportunities to make choices about how they develop their skills, for example nursery pupils choose jewellery making or collage to allow them to develop creatively. However, older pupils do not benefit from the same breadth of experiences. They do not currently have enough opportunities to develop their skills in purposeful and authentic contexts. Adults tend to provide too much structure and direction to pupils' learning. This means that pupils do not apply their skills to help them to develop as independent and confident learners.

The school promotes the Welsh culture and heritage effectively. For example, staff provide pupils with opportunities to learn about and discuss the Tonyandy Riots. They make good use of the school's own history, for example by providing opportunity to experience and explore the underground shelters. In particular, it uses the local area for the benefit of its pupils well. Staff plan valuable opportunities for pupils to engage with the local community, for example, pupils visit the lake to litter pick, and work with the mayor to make improvements to the community such as setting up recycling bins. The school makes good links with local companies to enhance the pupils' experiences, such as performances from the Bow Tie Theatre.

The school provides opportunities for a wider range of visitors to enhance the pupils' learning experiences and engage pupils in developing their knowledge and

understanding of the world around them. For example, a member of the Formula One in Schools team supports older pupils to design and create their own model car.

A few teachers provide useful verbal feedback to pupils. Where this is effective, teachers engage in dialogue to support pupils to think about their learning. Most teachers provide written feedback to pupils, although this tends to be focused on correcting errors such as spelling mistakes, and opportunities to engage older pupils in dialogue about what they need to improve are missed.

Teachers provide parents and carers with helpful information about their child's progress in written reports and verbally in regular formal and informal discussions.

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

The school is a very caring, nurturing community, where staff, pupils and families know each other well and nearly all show a high level of respect for each other. Staff place a high priority on pupils' well-being. This is a strength of the school.

Staff support pupils' and families' social and emotional needs very well, for example through their emotional literacy programme. They meet the wide range of needs of pupils well and respond sensitively and effectively any issues. This supportive ethos encourages pupils to develop a positive attitude to their learning.

The school actively promotes a culture of valuing learning and runs well-attended sessions that support families to take ownership of improving their own skills, such as in developing their reading skills as part of the Rhonda Readers programme. The ALN co-ordinator holds drop-in sessions to support families to help and support them meet the needs of their children.

The school's provision for pupils with ALN is a strength. Staff identify pupils' individual needs very well at an early stage. This means that the school intervenes quickly and appropriately to support all pupils with additional needs to make good progress in their basic skills. For example, staff implement an effective programme to develop pupils' speech and language skills. The school monitors their progress effectively and ensures pupils are making steady progress from their starting points. However, in lessons, staff do not always provide the constructive feedback needed to move pupils' learning forwards, particularly in the older classes.

The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about different beliefs and religions, such as visiting the local church, and holding assemblies that allow pupils to reflect and understand other faiths, such as Buddhism. The school plans opportunities to develop understanding of equal rights and diversity, providing pupils with the opportunity to participate in a range of learning experiences including Black History Month, Anti-bullying Week and Show Racism the Red Card. This promotes a tolerant and inclusive ethos in the school.

There are beneficial arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Staff encourage pupils to drink water and eat fruit at breaktimes. Provision to promote physical health and fitness is strong and has a direct impact on pupils' well-being. The school provides opportunities that encourage pupils to take part in a range of sport and physical activities. For example, the youngest pupils benefit from

purposeful opportunities to use the outdoor area to develop their physical skills when experimenting with balance bikes. There are beneficial opportunities for the oldest pupils to take part in various sporting clubs and competitions. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to monitor and reward active travel to school.

Staff support pupils to develop a good understanding of their rights as children and of their roles as responsible citizens within their community. Many pupils enjoy taking an active part in events such as litter picks in the local park, to develop their understanding of sustainability. The school makes good provision to help pupils stay safe online, for example through the school curriculum and workshops with the police liaison officer.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding are robust and give no cause for concern. The school monitors rates of pupils' attendance suitably and works proactively to encourage regular attendance, for example by providing a bespoke nurture breakfast club. Despite these efforts, rates of attendance remain too low overall.

## **Leadership and management**

Leaders provide suitable strategic direction for the school's work. They work successfully with the school community to establish a supportive culture where pupils feel safe, happy and cared for. Leaders ensure that provision to develop pupils' basic skills is effective, so that nearly all pupils make strong progress in their literacy and numeracy. Leaders have developed a strong team ethos that all staff contribute to enthusiastically. Staff have regular opportunities to collaborate and evaluate their work.

Leaders ensure that staff understand and carry out their roles effectively. This includes opportunities for staff to develop leadership skills and worthwhile opportunities to observe good practice within the school. The school is beginning to develop links with the local cluster of schools to share good practice in teaching, and to develop a shared approach to aspects of the Curriculum for Wales, although this work is in its early stages.

Leaders undertake a range of monitoring activities. In a few instances, they use this information appropriately to identify opportunities for improvement, for example when developing pupils' grammar and punctuation. However, in general, leaders do not focus sharply enough on evaluating the difference that teaching and the learning experiences provided make to pupils' progress. In addition, leaders tend to have too many improvement priorities at the same time, and this limits their capacity to focus their efforts precisely enough to bring about the changes they need to make.

Leaders address national priorities suitably. For example, they are beginning to develop their curriculum to ensure that it aligns with the ethos of Curriculum for Wales. Leaders are beginning to focus professional learning opportunities and performance management processes to support school improvement, but these are at an early stage of development and over time they have not used these processes with sufficient focus.



Pupils contribute appropriately to whole school leadership, for example by developing a relationships policy with the headteacher. This helps pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens within the school community.

Partnership work with parents is very beneficial. Parents value and appreciate the opportunities provided to them to learn about the school's work, for example attending workshops to increase their understanding of the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Parents support fundraising events to enhance pupils' experiences, such as attending the Welsh National Opera at the Wales Millennium Centre.

Governors contribute well to the school's work. They are regular visitors to the school where they play a very supportive role. They support leaders to monitor and use financial resources, including grant funding, such as the pupil development grant effectively for the benefit of pupils, for example by funding intervention programmes to improve pupils' reading skills. Their role in evaluating the school's progress in relation to its improvement priorities and in challenging school leaders is at an early stage of development. Governors ensure that there are appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking and contribute well to the school's robust safeguarding culture.

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

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Publication date: 25/03/2024