



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

**A report on**

**Barry Island Primary  
Clive Road  
Barry Island  
Barry  
Vale of Glamorgan  
CF62 5UZ**

**Date of inspection: November 2019**

**by**

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

## About Barry Island Primary

Barry Island Primary School is in the town of Barry in the Vale of Glamorgan. Currently, there are 243 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11. This includes 35 part-time nursery pupils. The school has nine classes.

The average percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is around 14%, which is below the national average of 18%. The school identifies around 16% of pupils as having special educational needs, this is below the national average of 21%. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and no pupils speak Welsh at home. A few pupils have English as an additional language.

The school's last inspection was in July 2014. The headteacher took up his post in 2015.

The school is currently working with the Welsh Government and other schools to take forward developments relating to education reform in Wales.

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

During their time at Barry Island Primary School, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points. The school has a very strong kind and caring ethos, which permeates all aspects of school life. Most pupils have a good variety of opportunities to be involved in leadership roles within their school.

The school forges extensive partnerships to enhance opportunities for pupils, these include becoming active members of their community when developing an understanding of global issues. Pupils have a strong understanding of the history and culture of Wales and know what it means to be Welsh. Parents have many useful opportunities to work in partnership with the school to support their children's learning.

The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership. As a result, leaders work together highly effectively to bring about changes and have a strong record of making and sustaining improvements. Among the staff, there is a strong culture of teamwork, particularly in supporting the wellbeing of pupils.

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

## **Recommendations**

R1 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy, reading and writing skills

R2 Develop pupils' independent learning skills in the indoor and outdoor environments

## **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 working with experts to develop staff knowledge and the curriculum in a historical context.

## Main findings

### **Standards: Good**

During their time at the school, most pupils make at least good progress in developing their skills from their starting points.

In the lower foundation phase, many pupils have well developed speaking and listening skills. For example, they listen attentively and respond to questions about stories. By the time pupils reach Year 2, most pupils speak confidently, for example when acting out their interpretation of the Great Fire of London. In key stage 2, most younger pupils are confident when talking in formal and informal situations and in discussions with adults and their peers. By Year 6, many pupils debate topical subjects articulately, such as climate change.

Most pupils in the reception class participate enthusiastically when learning initial letter sounds. By Year 2, most pupils apply their phonological skills confidently. Most read unfamiliar words in texts and self-correct appropriately. For example, they use their knowledge of the traditional tale of the Gingerbread Man to read the story with increasing accuracy. Many pupils provide considered opinions about what they are reading, as well as providing plausible predictions on what may come next. By the end of key stage 2, pupils read accurately and use higher order reading skills well when looking for information.

Most pupils in the nursery class enjoy mark making and understand their marks have meaning. By Year 2, most pupils have developed a joined and legible script for handwriting. This enables them to start writing for longer periods, for example when writing a set of instructions about making bread. In lower key stage 2, most pupils focus systematically on improving their spelling and punctuation skills. Many develop their creative skills well, for example when writing about the battles of the Welsh Dragon. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils write accurately in a wide-range of genres. They create imaginative story plans and use these effectively to develop pieces of writing that capture the interest of the reader. In upper key stage 2, pupils who are more able write an effective balanced argument as to whether it would be acceptable to steal food if you were starving.

In the reception class, nearly all pupils count and write numbers up to 10. They name the properties of 2D shapes when creating a picture of a rocket. Most pupils in Year 2 use non-standard measures, for example to find out the length of ladders while exploring their topic of the Great Fire of London. Pupils who are more able use standard measurements accurately. Many pupils in Year 2 have a growing understanding of larger numbers and use pairs of socks in order to count in twos. Pupils who are more able build on this to double two-digit numbers. In key stage 2, most pupils continue to develop their mathematical skills well. They apply their mathematical knowledge successfully to new situations. For example, Year 6 pupils work within a set budget to calculate the cost of a holiday package. Most pupils have a good understanding of mathematical language and use this well when solving problems. For example, pupils in Year 3 use the term array when exploring patterns in the school environment.

Pupils develop very strong information and communication technology (ICT) skills and this is a strength of the school. From an early age, most pupils in the foundation phase develop good ICT skills which they use confidently. For example, in reception, most pupils can use a programmable toy to follow a route around a tricky shape. Older foundation phase pupils use applications usefully to practise their spelling and number skills. Most pupils in key stage 2 use ICT successfully and naturally to support their learning. They present information in a variety of interesting ways and use a range of resources naturally, for instance, when using drones to find out about coastal management. Older Year 6 pupils have highly effective ICT skills. They use a spreadsheet confidently to create a database on the diameter of different planets and research sensibly the best holiday packages, ensuring they remain within a certain set budget.

Many pupils in the nursery and reception classes respond to simple commands in Welsh. Most pupils in Year 1 develop their skills well and ask simple questions for example about colours and how their friends are feeling today. Most pupils in Year 2 hold a very brief conversation when describing their clothes. Many pupils are beginning to read simple vocabulary, such as the names of shapes, and can label a diagram of the parts of a body in Welsh. In lower key stage 2, pupils can hold basic conversations in Welsh. They tell the listener their name and where they live, however, the sentence patterns they use are not always often accurate. By Year 6, a few pupils have a suitable understanding of more complex instructions. However, too often, older pupils do not extend their sentence appropriately. A few pupils read very simple texts and write using appropriate sentence patterns independently.

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

Nearly all pupils feel safe and happy at school and believe that staff will listen to their concerns. They behave very well in classrooms and at playtimes. The working relationships between staff and pupils are an outstanding feature of the school and this is evident in the polite, respectful and courteous manner in which pupils interact with each other, staff members and visitors to the school.

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school. They have positive attitudes to their work and become resilient and creative individuals. For example, when challenged with constructing a buggy of multiple parts with electrical components to ride over a moonscape they have created, most pupils stay on task and work well together to solve multiple problems. Pupils show empathy for others and many co-operate well to accomplish a shared goal. For example, following a bereavement at the school, pupils collaborated to raise funds for family members. In class, nearly all pupils are engaged in their learning and enjoy the learning experiences, such as when they use inference and deduction to investigate a crime scene. They make useful contributions to how and what they learn by sharing what they already know about a topic and what they would like to find out.

Pupil voice is a strength of the school. There are a wide-range of democratically elected, pupil leadership groups, which include the e-cadets and digital leaders. These groups have a positive impact on pupils' e-safety awareness. For example, they have set up a series of QR codes to encourage all pupils to read information carefully. The new Criw Cymraeg has developed a more structured approach to developing pupils' Welsh language skills and their understanding of what it means to

be Welsh. They take their roles seriously when challenged with the task of improving the Welsh language across the school. They have successfully increased all pupils understanding of the history and culture of Wales, for example by creating and presenting an assembly on the Aberfan Disaster. They support the teaching of Welsh by creating a box of resources for teachers to use. Year 6 pupils are proud and confident when given the opportunity to share their opinions of being a pupil of Barry Island Primary School. They do this as part of the school's annual stakeholder self-evaluation processes.

Most pupils are becoming ethically informed citizens through their work in the community, for instance when working to support local beach cleans. Most are aware of the impact of single-use plastic on their coastal environment and promote a reduction in the use of these items at their school.

Nearly all pupils understand the need to keep healthy by making healthy choices. They participate in an enjoyable and energetic 'five a day' exercise activity. This prepares them well for the day and ensures they are ready to learn. Nearly all pupils are aware of the healthy food choices they should make. Pupils in Year 2 have a very good understanding of how to look after their new 'big teeth'. All pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 are aware of the need to stay safe online. They know what to do to keep safe and are confident to speak to an adult if they have any concerns.

Pupils frequently resolve conflicts on their own. Older pupils help their peers effectively at playtimes through their roles as peer mediators. Younger pupils know they can turn to these pupils to get support when they need it.

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

In nearly all classes there are strong working relationships between pupils and adults based on mutual respect. In most classes, teachers plan a range of worthwhile learning activities that engage most pupils in learning successfully and challenge pupils of all abilities suitably. They ensure that lessons move at a brisk pace and use questioning effectively to nudge pupils learning forward. Teachers explain and model work effectively. They have good subject knowledge and use resources thoughtfully. The caring working relationships between adults and pupils helps pupils to feel comfortable making mistakes and to persevere to overcome them. Most teachers use an appropriate balance of techniques, including practical activities, paired and group work, to maintain pupils' interest. For example, pupils in Year 6 work well collaboratively, to find the best deal when planning a holiday for the headteacher within a set budget. As a result, most pupils behave very well, work enthusiastically and engage fully in the tasks that their teachers provide for them. However, there are not always sufficient opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning skills inside and outside the classroom.

Teachers provide pupils with effective feedback about their work that helps most pupils to improve. In many lessons, teachers provide extra challenges for pupils to extend their learning, for example, by correcting spelling mistakes and punctuation and by posing questions thought provoking questions to move their learning forward. Staff encourage pupils to assess their own work and the work of their peers regularly. This helps pupils to be aware of how well they have done and how to move their learning forward. Most teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to set their own targets for improvement.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs and interests of all pupils and meets statutory requirements. Teachers use collaborative and flexible approaches to plan a curriculum that builds progressively on pupils' prior knowledge as they move from one class to the next.

The school takes appropriate account of the principles of the foundation phase. Most teachers plan interesting topic work and opportunities for pupils to use their skills creatively. For example, they use the outdoor areas regularly to motivate pupils to learn through practical experiences. They create attractive areas for pupils to take part in role-play. For example, pupils in Year 1, enjoy playing in the Pudding Lane Bakery, when learning about the Great Fire of London.

At the start of each topic, pupils across the school have the opportunity to share their existing knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers have recently introduced pupil voice boards to develop opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas linked to areas of learning. In key stage 2, they provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to reflect on the four purposes of the forthcoming curriculum for Wales. As a result, most teachers plan to provide authentic learning experiences for pupils to apply their skills within real-life situations. For example, when learning about climate change, older key stage 2 pupils construct graphs to show the relationship between levels of carbon dioxide and the average global temperatures. Most teachers plan well for the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through a range of purposeful cross-curricular themes and topics. A notable and outstanding feature of curriculum development is the whole school Welsh heritage project linked to St Fagans National History Museum. Pupils in each class worked alongside experts to develop a series of lessons and resources to share with other schools, based on a selection of the historical buildings.

Teachers enrich the curriculum effectively through a wide range of educational visits and by inviting visitors to the school to speak to pupils. For example, pupils in the foundation phase have been to the local supermarket, the beach and to the theatre to enjoy the pantomime. Older Year 6 pupils visit a nearby engineering firm as part of their science and technology work linked to programming robots. There is appropriate provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills across the school, and teachers promote the culture of Wales well. Regular Welsh language lessons link suitably to pupils' life and experiences. For example, pupils write about themselves, their families and the Rugby World Cup. The school uses a wide range of purposeful displays and notices to promote a Welsh ethos and the 'Cryw Cymraeg' lead Welsh assemblies successfully.

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

The school is a kind and caring community that supports all pupils through its positive and nurturing environment. It has highly effective systems to assess and track the progress of pupils. Staff use an extensive range of assessment data skilfully to identify pupils who would benefit from additional focused intervention. For example, they use a numeracy intervention that identifies specific areas for development in basic number skills. As a result, nearly all pupils make at least expected progress and around half make very good progress.



Pupils with additional learning needs have high quality individual development plans with suitably challenging targets. All members of staff have a detailed knowledge and awareness of the support that individual pupils require. This enables the school to monitor and support pupils with additional needs highly effectively. Teachers, together with parents, regularly review pupils' progress against these targets and pupils' involvement in this process is developing well. As a result, most pupils with a support plan achieve their targets. Where pupils do not meet their targets, staff take prompt action and put intervention that is more suitable in place. Pupils with social and emotional needs have very effective support through a whole school wellbeing programme led by highly skilled practitioners. Intervention programmes have a beneficial impact on the personal development of many pupils. In particular, the thoughtful provision has had a very positive impact on the needs of more vulnerable learners.

Staff work effectively to develop very positive relationships with parents. They provide many useful opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning. The school has developed a community library and runs highly effective parent workshops, such as, enabling parents to view teachers' use of effective questioning when listening to children read. Parents value the effective communication and support the school provides.

Teachers provide an innovative annual immersion week that gives pupils opportunities to experience a variety of activities linked to the history and culture of Wales. As a result, most pupils have a strong sense of awareness of what makes them proud to be Welsh. Older and past pupils have opportunities to attend school self-evaluation events and provide their views to help with school improvement.

The school has very good arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. This has a very positive impact on pupils' wellbeing. Many pupils participate in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities to enhance their creativity and physical development, such as photography and hockey. The school provides pupils with a wide-range of opportunities to develop their social skills, morals and values.

Partnership working is an outstanding feature of the school that benefits its pupils greatly. Links with a local engineering firm enable pupils to extend their understanding of science and technology and its use in the work place. Working closely with the St Fagans National Museum of Wales has increased pupils' historical knowledge while enabling them to create high-quality teaching and learning resources that will benefit other schools. The school has well-established and effective transition arrangements to support pupils moving from class to class and when transferring to secondary school. These include well-planned visits and experiences that provide effective opportunities for both staff and pupils to develop positive relationships.

The school effectively monitors the attendance and punctuality of pupils and has comprehensive procedures to improve attendance. It has worked closely with parents to foster positive attitudes towards regular attendance. This has resulted in improvements. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

## **Leadership and management: Excellent**

The headteacher leads the school successfully. He promotes positive professional values and behaviours and this helps to create a purposeful, forward thinking learning environment. In collaboration with the highly effective senior leadership team, he focuses directly on refining provision to improve pupils' standards and wellbeing. This leads to a safe and inclusive ethos across the school, that ensures nearly all pupils achieve well. As a result, the school provides a very good start for pupils, which allows them to learn productively and to adopt enthusiastic attitudes to learning.

The distribution of leadership across the school is thoughtful and the grouping of all staff in teams leads to a positive culture of effective teamwork. Many staff take a lead role in addressing school priorities, for example, a teaching assistant leads the school's work to support aspects of pupils' wellbeing. The school has enough staff to meet the needs of all pupils and the headteacher deploys staff effectively. For example, the insightful use of staff specialisms to develop curricular areas, such as science and technology, has a strong impact on school improvement. All members of staff share positive, professional working relationships that support the school's caring ethos successfully. They have a secure knowledge of their roles and responsibilities and carry them out with passion and enthusiasm.

The school is developing staff professionally and establishing extended leadership opportunities that strengthen the school's leadership capacity. All staff are reflective practitioners and constantly strive to bring about improvements to the school's work in important areas. Leaders promote a professional learning culture by encouraging teachers to engage in action research into aspects of their current practice. For example, they have reviewed and revised strategies to develop pupils' higher order reading skills and introduced a new approach to mathematics. These initiatives have had a positive impact on pupils' standards. The school's collaborative work with other schools is highly effective and as a result, all members of staff contribute effectively to developing the school as a learning organisation.

Development planning includes a comprehensive range of priorities that reflect the current needs of the school effectively. This successfully identifies milestones for review, and specific costing and monitoring responsibilities. Leaders have a clear plan for introducing the new curriculum for Wales, including the digital competence framework. Teachers have started to plan learning experiences for pupils that take account of the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales and they provide pupils with opportunities to use a wide range of ICT skills as an integral part of their learning. The school has effective procedures for the performance management of teaching and support staff. These procedures link directly to school priorities and successfully address the personal development needs of the staff.

There are purposefully planned, effective processes to evaluate the effectiveness of improvement planning. These are based on a range of first-hand evidence, such as listening to learners, learning walks and an analysis of a range of school data. The annual self-evaluation day with staff, governors, parents and past and present pupils, is an outstanding feature of the school's work in this area. During the day, all evaluate the school's effectiveness in a variety of chosen areas and make suggestions about how to improve. This ensures that the school's priorities are

relevant, and that all stakeholders have ownership of them. Where leaders use this information most successfully, they identify suitable priorities and put in place procedures to bring about sustained improvement. For example, the work undertaken to improve pupils' ICT skills has resulted in this area becoming a strength of the school.

Governors understand their roles and responsibilities well. They conduct effective termly and sub-committee meetings. They link, according to their strengths, to specific curriculum areas. For example, governors responsible for literacy or wellbeing foster useful links with the relevant school staff to monitor the development of their areas of responsibility. As a result most governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very supportive of the school and contribute successfully to the self-evaluation process through looking at pupils' work, taking part in learning walks and through interviews with curriculum leaders.

Leaders and governors monitor the budget effectively and ensure that the school secures value for money. They make prudent decisions to ensure that financial planning conforms to regulations and meets the needs of the school. Leaders allocate resources effectively to support current school priorities and ideas from the pupils. For example, pupils designed improvements to their accommodation by producing plans for the renovation of the key stage 2 toilets and cloakroom.

The school has a detailed spending plan for the pupil development grant that effectively outlines areas where the grant is used, for example to provide purposeful interventions for specific groups of pupils with lower basic skills. Leaders track pupils' progress effectively and, as a result, most pupils eligible for free school meals make good progress.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent 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 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' wellbeing, 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))

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:

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