

A report on

Nottage Primary School

**Porthcawl
Bridgend
CF363ED**

Date of inspection: January 2025

by

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

About Nottage Primary School

Name of provider	Nottage Primary School
Local authority	Bridgend County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	347
Pupils of statutory school age	278
Number in nursery classes	32
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 22.9%)	16.5%
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 11.1%)	2.9%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2016

A report on Nottage Primary School
January 2025

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	06/02/2017
Start date of inspection	27/01/2025

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

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

Nottage Primary School is a happy, safe and caring school where most pupils make solid progress in the development of their learning and well-being. The school benefits from strong leadership and a dedicated team of staff who work together successfully to support the needs of pupils and their families. Throughout the school, relationships are purposeful and considerate. Staff are strong role models for good behaviour and language, and they treat all pupils with kindness, fairness and respect. This helps pupils to develop as polite, friendly and conscientious learners who behave well and engage positively with school life.

Leaders provide staff from all roles with a good range of opportunities to develop their practice. This helps staff to refine their individual skills and supports whole-school improvement priorities purposefully. Professional learning for staff to help develop pupils' reading and independence has been particularly beneficial. Across the school, pupils speak well and read capably. They develop valuable physical and creative skills and enjoy using the wide range of well-planned learning spaces the school provides. However, pupils' writing and Welsh language skills are underdeveloped overall.

Leaders know the school and its pupils well. Both staff and governors carry out a good range of activities that provide them with accurate first-hand evidence of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This helps them to put in place useful measures leading to the development of strong practice in areas such as the provision for pupils with additional learning needs and promoting good attendance.

The school's curriculum is developing well and provides pupils with meaningful opportunities to influence their learning. Purposeful use of the local area helps pupils to understand the impact of local and global events on themselves and their community.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Provide more frequent opportunities for pupils to develop and apply a full range of writing skills
- R2 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Nottage Primary School's vision of providing a safe, caring and happy environment that values its pupils, staff and families and helps them to thrive, is evident throughout the school. Leaders have high expectations of themselves and staff, and model strong professional values and conduct consistently well. Working relationships between staff and pupils are strong, as are peer to peer relationships. This contributes successfully to a calm and purposeful working environment where pupils are friendly, polite and behave extremely well. During their time in school, most pupils, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantage, make solid progress from their starting points.

There is a purposeful culture of leadership development that is impacting positively on staff and pupils across the school. Leaders manage the performance of staff well. They make well-considered strategic links between whole-school improvement, individual development needs and professional learning. This benefits all staff in improving their skills, knowledge and practice, leading to improvements in pupils' progress, and particularly their independence.

Spotlight: Developing strong, shared and impactful leadership

Strong and successful distributed leadership is an impressive facet of the school's work. Leaders strive productively to ensure the continuous development of the skills and knowledge of both pupils and staff, to support them all to reach their potential. Leaders at all levels have a thorough and accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use this effectively to drive and sustain improvements in teaching and learning, such as recent successful work to improve reading.

The school places a strong and consistent focus on the development of pupils' oracy and reading skills. Most pupils quickly develop a valuable range of vocabulary and an early enjoyment of reading, through purposeful and engaging learning opportunities. As they get older, most pupils develop as confident speakers who read well. They use these skills capably to support and enhance their learning across the curriculum. However, as they move through the school, opportunities for pupils to develop their writing are inconsistent. Consequently, by the time they leave the school too many pupils' writing skills are underdeveloped.

Many pupils develop their mathematical skills well. Throughout the school, staff use a good range of strategies to develop pupils' mathematics knowledge and interest. The use of concrete apparatus to support learning is effective and, as they get older, pupils make wise choices about what to use and when. Across the school, pupils begin to apply their mathematical skills in real-life contexts, although this is not consistent in all classes.

Throughout the school, adults are good language role models. They support pupils to develop their ideas through skilful questioning and provide beneficial encouragement and positive reinforcement where needed. Most adults use questioning effectively to swiftly assess pupils' understanding and to move learning on efficiently. In the main, learning is appropriately challenging, and teachers use swift verbal feedback well to support pupils' next steps. In general, pupils respond positively to the feedback they receive and use it ably to refine their work.

Staff make comprehensive use of the school's sizeable indoor and outdoor learning environments. They provide beneficial practical learning opportunities that enable most pupils to develop valuable creative and physical skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to explore and develop strong levels of independence. Pupils of all ages use information and guidance on 'learning wall' displays effectively to support their understanding of mathematics and literacy.

Spotlight: Developing pupils as thoughtful and independent learners who can solve problems

A notable feature of the school's practice is the highly successful provision for pupils to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills in meaningful ways. Pupils of all ages skilfully tackle stimulating activities that promote creative thinking, independently or in collaboration with their friends. Nearly all pupils rise to these challenges well. They demonstrate perseverance to complete their tasks and show resilience when trying different approaches.

The school's curriculum is developing well. There is a suitable focus on the interests and needs of the children of Nottage and staff use the local area successfully to enrich the learning. Pupils benefit from a useful range of opportunities to explore the history and culture of Wales. Younger pupils learn about castles whilst older pupils make good use of the local beach and examine the impact of the Second World War on their community. Strong middle leadership and teamwork across the school ensures that curriculum planning is robust, progressive and purposeful. Pupils have regular opportunities to contribute to how and what they learn, as well as to review their progress. Similarly, the school's many pupil groups are active and enthusiastic. They are proud of the purposeful role they play in influencing school life and feel that staff value and act upon their ideas.

Pupils have sound opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They learn about a variety of world religions and develop a worthwhile understanding of the importance of values in supporting harmony. Pupils of all ages understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, including when online.

The school takes good account of most national priorities. Attendance is strong, the curriculum is authentic, broad and balanced and there is an effective culture of well-being. However, the school's overall provision for pupils' Welsh language skills is underdeveloped. As such, pupils use limited Welsh by the time they leave the school.

Good attendance has a high profile in the school. Most pupils attend school daily and do so with glee. The school monitors attendance diligently and staff challenge and support the attendance rates of identified families well. There is a strong culture of safeguarding, which ensures that pupils are safe and happy during their time in school. Staff are well trained and have a good understanding of the role they play in keeping pupils safe. Across the school, staff model positive behaviour well and successfully develop strong relationships with pupils based on mutual respect and fairness. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour, bullying and discrimination are extremely rare.

The school's support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is strong and well-led. Leaders and staff have a good understanding of ALN reform and extensive and valuable training has taken place. Leaders work closely with cluster colleagues and external agencies to support all pupils and their families, especially those with ALN. Leaders deliver beneficial and relevant professional learning to staff and monitor the progress of pupils effectively. Learning support officers provide effective assistance to pupils with ALN through intervention programmes and class-based support, enabling most to make solid progress towards their individual targets.

Governors are passionate about the school and fulfil their role with determination and care. They provide the school with good support and in recent times have become more confident in their ability to hold the school's leaders to account. Their knowledge of the schools' work, strengths and areas for improvement is developing well through joining leaders to gather first-hand evidence. They use their skills and experience well to support important decision-making and strategic planning.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. ‘*most pupils...*’ or ‘*very few pupils...*’. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales