



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

**A report on**

**Evenlode C.P. School**

**Evenlode Avenue  
Penarth  
CF64 3PD**

**Date of inspection: April 2024**

**by**

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

## About Evenlode C.P. School

Name of provider	Evenlode C.P. School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	496
Pupils of statutory school age	358
Number in nursery classes	79
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%)	3.1%
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%)	3.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	1.4%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.6%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/03/2015
Start date of inspection	29/04/2024

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

Evenlode Primary School is a caring and inclusive environment with positive relationships between pupils and staff. This creates a friendly and supportive atmosphere where pupils feel valued. The school offers strong support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), including effective provision for emotional and social well-being. All staff have clear expectations for pupils, and this ensures that they behave well and engage purposefully in lessons. As a result, most pupils make strong progress during their time at school.

Leaders and governors are effective, demonstrating a clear vision and a strong commitment to improving standards. The school reflects continuously on its work and ensures that robust processes are in place to monitor pupil progress. Teachers work well together to create an engaging and balanced curriculum that encourages pupils' curiosity.

Pupils are confident speakers and attentive listeners. From a young age, they eagerly share their ideas and express themselves clearly. As they progress, they collaborate effectively and articulate their thoughts and ideas with growing sophistication. Across the school, many pupils read a variety of texts well, with increasing fluency and confidence. Their writing skills are well developed, with older pupils using language thoughtfully and creatively. The school is working hard to improve its provision for teaching Welsh, but overall, pupils' language skills do not progress quickly enough. Pupils are developing as confident mathematicians and are beginning to apply their skills effectively. However, opportunities to deepen and extend these skills independently across the curriculum are underdeveloped.

The school uses its resources effectively. Classrooms are well equipped and the outdoor learning areas are stimulating and engaging. Staff know their pupils well and use a range of strategies to engage them in their learning. A particular strength is the nursery, and early foundation learning, where staff engage the youngest pupils in thoughtful, guided activities that promote independence and curiosity.

The school develops strong partnerships with parents, actively involving them in school activities and decision-making processes. This collaboration ensures that parents are well informed and contribute to a supportive community that improves the educational experiences for all pupils.

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve opportunities for pupils to apply their maths and numeracy skills independently
- R2 Improve pupils' skills in speaking Welsh

## 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 its approach in developing a reflective culture across the school community, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

In general, many pupils enter the school with literacy, numeracy, and social skills that meet or exceed the expectations for their age. Overall, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make strong progress as they move through the school.

Most pupils develop their communication skills quickly. Nursery children confidently discuss the materials needed to make a dam, and in reception, they collaborate and share ideas when making cakes out of play dough. Older pupils articulate their thoughts and opinions effectively and often incorporate ambitious vocabulary in their responses. For instance, Year 6 pupils discuss black history using terms like 'apartheid' and 'segregation'.

Most pupils develop strong reading skills. Children in the nursery class enjoy listening and joining in with class stories, and often choose to immerse themselves in books quietly in the reading area. Many younger pupils develop a secure understanding of letter sounds and use this to read a range of simple words accurately. Older pupils use a good range of skills to infer ideas from pieces of text and identify fact and opinion. Across the school, most pupils read suitably challenging texts with growing fluency and expression and respond well to class novels linked to curriculum topics. The school's 'Hook and Book' focus fosters a growing culture of enthusiasm for reading across classes.

Overall, most pupils' writing skills develop well. Younger pupils learn early mark-making skills quickly and begin to write their names independently. As they progress, most pupils write effectively in a range of genres. For example, Year 3 pupils write comprehensive instructions to make African masks. Older pupils write purposefully across the curriculum, for instance, Year 5 pupils produce high-quality fact sheets about the human circulatory system. Many older pupils express their ideas imaginatively. They use a wide vocabulary, present their work well, and spell with increasing accuracy. However, a few pupils do not take enough care with their work, leading to frequent and recurring spelling errors.

Younger pupils develop their early understanding of number well. They use their skills purposefully, for example when matching numbers and objects in their play. In Year 2, most pupils understand volume well and use this knowledge to measure simple

capacities accurately. Many older pupils develop strong number skills. For instance, Year 6 pupils confidently multiply fractions and understand place value to millions. Across the school, when given the opportunity, pupils apply their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. For example, Year 4 pupils produce bar graphs to show how much water different types of soil absorb. In a few instances, pupils explain their reasoning to solve simple problems skilfully. However, an overuse of worksheets restricts opportunities for pupils to set out their own calculations and present their work independently. In addition, while most pupils develop their number skills well, they do not always develop and use their wider maths skills well enough.

Pupils develop strong digital skills. Younger pupils experiment confidently with programmable toys to follow a simple route and older pupils develop more advanced coding skills. For example, Year 5 pupils programme digital devices to monitor climate conditions in their mini greenhouses. Most pupils create, edit and improve their digital content through combining images, altering text, font size, colour and transitions. They save and retrieve their files from a range of devices and older pupils use spreadsheets confidently to present data and use formulae to make simple calculations.

Younger pupils develop their understanding and use of the Welsh language well. They respond quickly to instructions from staff and are beginning to use it naturally in their everyday activities. However, as pupils move through the school, their progress in using the Welsh language slows. Older pupils lack confidence when asking and responding to suitable questions and very little Welsh is spoken by pupils as part of their daily routines.

Most pupils develop their thinking and problem-solving skills successfully. In younger classes pupils experiment with materials to make junk models and work well together to solve problems. As they progress through the school, pupils build upon these skills effectively. For example, in Year 3 pupils solve challenging problems linked to their learning about capacity. Older pupils apply their thinking skills successfully, for example when explaining the difference between fact and opinions.

Across the school, pupils' physical skills develop well. In younger classes, nearly all pupils are confident at using balance bikes in the outdoor area. In older classes, pupils enjoy taking part in PE lessons, and further develop their skills in a range of sporting clubs after school.

Most pupils develop their creative skills well. Younger pupils use a range of materials independently to make rafts and investigate how well they float on water. Year 1 pupils develop their curiosity of the outdoors by carrying out a mini beast hunt to find worms and explore the life cycle of sunflowers. Older pupils contribute to designing and making a group mural using a variety of media such as paint, felt pens and markers. A particular strength is the high-quality art worked produced by pupils from Year 3 to Year 6.

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

Pupils enjoy school and speak positively about their strong relationships with staff. Nearly all pupils are courteous and polite to adults and each other. They greet visitors in a friendly manner and clearly articulate their views and experiences of

school life. Nearly all pupils feel safe, know who they can turn to for help or support, and have confidence that adults listen to their views and act appropriately. Nearly all pupils behave well in class, showing care and respect for each other. They understand what is expected of them and behave well at breaktimes and around the school.

From a very early age, most pupils are ready and eager to learn. The youngest pupils demonstrate confidence and curiosity when engaged in their learning activities and most pupils across the school find their lessons interesting and respond well to challenge. They enjoy sharing their ideas for lessons and topics, taking pride in these being displayed on class planning boards. For instance, when engaging with the school's 'Break the Curriculum' day, they suggest ideas for examining how peoples' civil rights have changed over time. However, in a few lessons where teachers over-direct the learning, pupils lose concentration and occasionally struggle to remain focused.

Most pupils show perseverance when completing tasks, enjoy working independently with others and often work with purpose and determination. They collaborate well in groups, and many make positive contributions to discussions, showing respect for the views of others. For example, when working as a group, older pupils organise themselves independently into specific roles such as facilitator, timekeeper, and reporter.

Pupils develop a sound awareness of ethical issues, for example through their work on anti-racism and by studying the lives of inspirational black women such as Katherine Johnston. Older pupils show empathy for the challenges these influential people have experienced and articulate their thoughts and feelings maturely when discussing or writing about historical racism and sexism.

All pupils benefit from the using the extensive outdoor area as part of their lessons. They enjoy taking part in forest school sessions and engage well with the natural environment to support their learning.

Most pupils are aware of the need to make healthy choices whilst eating and drinking, for example they all have access to water and drink this regularly throughout the day. Older pupils are developing a strong awareness of the impact of screen time on their well-being and talk about the need to limit this where necessary.

Overall, most pupils attend school regularly and understand the importance of good attendance on their progress and well-being.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

Evenlode Primary School provides a caring and nurturing environment that successfully supports pupils' learning. Staff know their pupils well and establish positive working relationships with them. They work well with a skilful team of learning support assistants to further develop pupils' skills and support their well-being. For example, support staff in the nursery guide children's learning thoughtfully and encourage their thinking and independence effectively.

The staff create an engaging and balanced curriculum. They collaborate across year groups to select topics that engage and spark curiosity in their pupils. They ensure that learning environments are attractive and stimulating, and plan purposefully to develop pupils' skills, knowledge, and understanding systematically across the curriculum. Pupils have valuable opportunities to contribute ideas and opinions about topics that interest them.

Teaching is generally strong across the school and teachers display a good knowledge of the topics that they are covering. They employ a range of purposeful strategies to engage learners, and often ask relevant questions to extend pupils' thinking. They listen carefully to pupils' responses and give good verbal feedback to help support their learning. However, in a few lessons, teachers' introductions to lessons over-direct learners and this impacts on pupil engagement and the level of challenge.

Teachers are beginning to provide useful strategies for pupils to reflect on their work and understand what they have done well. However, opportunities for pupils to understand their next steps and make more sophisticated improvements, for example in their extended writing, are not consistent enough across the school.

Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. They plan carefully for pupils to develop their reading skills through a structured approach to phonics as well as ensuring that classrooms are literacy rich environments. They provide interesting contexts for pupils to develop and apply their writing skills. For example, older pupils write informative reports that reflect current events, such as the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

There is strong provision for developing pupils' number skills. In a few cases, staff plan useful opportunities for pupils to apply these skills across the curriculum, for example, applying their data handling skills to research and analyse information regarding climate change. However, overall, opportunities for pupils to use a wider range of skills and apply them in more engaging contexts are underdeveloped.

Most staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills during Welsh lessons. Overall, staff encourage positive attitudes to learning Welsh and pupils are keen to become more proficient speakers. Staff support the younger pupils well to use the language as part of their daily activities such as counting or identifying animals as part of their play. However, this provision is at an early stage of development and is not yet impacting well enough on the progress of pupils' skills as they move through the school.

Staff provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their sense of Cynefin. They celebrate the rich and diverse history and geography of their local area, Wales, and the world. For example, the youngest pupils walk to the beach and visit Penarth lifeboat station as part of their class topics. Older pupils study inspirational local people, such as Billy Boston and Shirley Bassey and have opportunities to research the Penarth census and what life was like in Cardiff during the second world war.

The school offers its pupils a range of educational experiences, including visits in the local area and residential trips. Pupils' physical and creative skills are further

developed through an extensive menu of extra-curricular activities that cater for a variety of interests and skills, such as yoga, chess and gardening.

End of year reports to parents are informative. They highlight what the pupils do well and include what they need to do to improve their work in literacy and numeracy.

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

Staff work with dedication to ensure that the school is a happy, caring and safe place to be, where the well-being of all is a high priority. This leads to a calm and inclusive environment where pupils feel welcome and staff well-being is high. Staff have positive working relationships with pupils, clear expectations and, as a result, throughout the school most pupils behave well in lessons.

The school provides high quality support for pupils with ALN. The ALN co-ordinator and staff have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils and work well together to provide diverse and inclusive learning environments. Where pupils require further support, staff create bespoke provision to help them make progress. For example, skilled support staff work with pupils who require help with their emotional and social wellbeing needs in the school 'Den'. Leaders monitor the impact of these interventions carefully, by tracking pupils' progress and adjusting provision as necessary. Staff work closely with a range of external agencies who offer specialist support to pupils with ALN and their families, for example a local charity work with the school to deliver parenting sessions to families.

Throughout the school, staff provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the importance of healthy eating and leading a healthy lifestyle. For example, pupils learn how eating too much sugar can affect the human body and find out about the positive effects of a healthy diet. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to attend after school clubs, such as archery and lacrosse and all pupils are encouraged to participate.

Pupils have suitable opportunities to be young leaders through a number of pupil voice groups, including the Sport Leaders and Criw Cymraeg. Most pupils are elected to these roles by their peers and meet throughout the year. These groups are beginning to have an impact on school life. For example, the sports leaders encourage the younger pupils to participate in games at breaktimes and the Criw Cymraeg lead assemblies.

The school provides strong opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity. For example, as part of the school Eisteddfod staff create engaging contexts for pupils to produce high quality art and poetry. Staff combine opportunities for fostering pupils' creativity alongside raising awareness of significant issues. For example, pupils participate in an anti-racism project that culminates in a whole-school dance event, promoting a sense of belonging and inclusion within the community. Staff provide suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths from around the world and improve their understanding of the diverse nature of society. For example, pupils find out about inspirational role models such as Betty Campbell.

The school has robust procedures for safeguarding pupils. All staff and governors understand and promote the school's safeguarding policies and processes



effectively. They monitor and address ongoing concerns promptly, for example by informing parents about potential concerns around the use of social media or the influence of online videos on appropriate behaviours. School Leaders monitor attendance robustly and work closely with families to improve pupils' attendance. They formulate plans with parents and pupils whose attendance falls below an acceptable level and as a result, overall, most pupils attend school regularly.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is developing a strong leadership culture across the school and providing clear strategic direction alongside a dedicated and supportive senior leadership team. Together, they promote a clear, inclusive ethos for the school focused on improving the quality of teaching and improving links with the school community.

Leaders support pupils and families well, fostering beneficial professional relationships with parents and carers. They seek and listen to feedback from families and, where appropriate, make important changes to benefit the needs of pupils. For example, the school's parent forum successfully links senior leaders, parents, and governors together, providing important opportunities to share information and learn from each other. Parents are firm advocates of the school and appreciate the work staff have carried out to improve communication and the provision for pupils with ALN.

Whilst the school is located on two sites, leaders have worked thoughtfully to minimise any disruption or barriers to learning and to support pupils as they move between classes. Teachers know their pupils well. The strong practice in nursery is built upon successfully in the reception class. As a result, pupils continue to thrive in the early years as they move across school sites.

Leaders ensure that there is a comprehensive, well-organised programme of self-evaluation activity that involves staff, governors and pupils. Leaders and staff reflect on this information together successfully and, as a result, improvement priorities are suitable, and build well on self-evaluation findings. In most cases, they evaluate the impact of improvements carefully on pupils' outcomes and use these to set next steps, for example to strengthen the provision for reading.

Working with class teachers, leaders track pupils' progress carefully and use the information suitably, for instance to inform pupil progress meetings. This supports leaders and staff to further evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and adjust the school's strategic priorities. The role of middle leaders is developing well across the school, and while at an early stage, staff are beginning to have a stronger influence on improving the provision for learning across the school. However, in a few instances, self-evaluation does not identify sharply enough aspects of teaching that require improvement, such as the impact of feedback on pupils' understanding of their next steps.

The governing body undertake their roles and responsibilities and fulfil their statutory duties well. Governors work closely with leaders and staff to understand the progress the school is making. They meet regularly with leaders and pupils and, as a result, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

They act purposefully as a critical friend to the school, identifying, monitoring, and challenging improvements in important areas. For example, they promote healthy eating and drinking, evaluate the impact of school meals on pupils' health and well-being, and share approaches to healthy living with parents.

Governors works suitably with the school's leadership to monitor spending robustly. They ensure that grant spending is used appropriately. For example, they use the pupil development grant to provide additional nurture support for pupils who may require it. Alongside leaders, they ensure that the school is very well resourced and staffed.

Leaders ensure that professional learning links to national priorities and the school's improvement priorities. These opportunities balance in-school professional development and the thoughtful use of outside providers. Leaders are reflective and ensure that any new initiatives are carefully adapted prior to implementation. They have recently introduced a coaching model, which is beginning to strengthen opportunities for staff to reflect on the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Staff are encouraged to innovate and seek out opportunities to improve their practice. For example, teachers work together to improve strategies for pupils to develop their independence and the ALNCo uses research from the Education Endowment Foundation well to support ALN reform.

Staff have good opportunities to collaborate with other schools. For instance, they work with colleagues in local schools to strengthen their understanding of progression across the curriculum. Leaders and staff have also engaged with schools across Europe to develop and share good practice in the provision for pupils' 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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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