



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

**A report on**

**Maendy Primary School  
Wayfield Crescent  
Cwmbran  
Torfaen  
NP44 1NH**

**Date of inspection: November 2017**

**by**

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

## About Maendy Primary School

Maendy Primary School is in the Northville area of Cwmbran.

There are 239 pupils on roll, including 27 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are taught in eight classes, one of which is mixed age. The school also hosts a special needs resource base, funded by the local authority.

Around 32% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is well above the Wales average of 19%. The school states that about 20% of pupils are on the additional learning needs register, which is similar to the Wales average of 21%. No pupil has a statement of special education needs. Most pupils are of white British origin. No pupils speak Welsh at home or speak English as an additional language.

The headteacher took up her post in September 2008. The school's last inspection was in February 2010.

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

Most pupils at Maendy Primary School make strong progress from their starting points as they move through the school. They develop effective literacy and numeracy skills that they apply well in subjects across the curriculum. They behave well and show high levels of tolerance and consideration for other pupils and adults. Staff know their pupils well. Teachers deliver lessons and plan learning experiences that engage and motivate pupils successfully. The school's systems for tracking and monitoring pupil progress are very effective in ensuring that pupils make excellent progress over time. The school's special needs resource base assesses accurately the needs of its pupils, which helps to ensure suitable future placements. Leadership at the school is strong. Senior leaders have a clear vision for school improvement based on high expectations and they challenge underperformance robustly.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</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>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

R1 Increase opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills outside of dedicated Welsh lessons

R2 Provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to what and how they learn

## **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 procedures for monitoring the progress of individual pupils.

## Main findings

### Standards: Excellent

The majority of pupils enter the school with language, numeracy and social skills that are well below those expected for pupils of their age. However, most pupils, including those that attend the special needs resource base, make good and often very good progress in the development of these skills by the end of Year 6. The school has sustained this high level of performance over time. This is an outstanding feature.

Most pupils in the foundation phase listen attentively, talk confidently about their work and use a good range of vocabulary. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils develop effective oracy skills, which they use in a range of situations confidently. Pupils' speaking skills in Welsh are developing well in the foundation phase. They listen and respond to instructions, use simple greetings and enjoy singing Welsh songs. In key stage 2, most pupils have positive attitudes to learning Welsh but many are reluctant to use their effective oral skills outside the classroom.

Across the school, most pupils demonstrate very strong literacy skills, particularly when writing across the curriculum. Most pupils in the foundation phase make swift progress from early mark-making and emergent writing to writing in full sentences. By the end of the phase, most pupils use basic punctuation accurately. Many pupils demonstrate imaginative ideas that engage the reader. For example, when writing in response to a story read by the teacher, pupils use phrases such as, 'The striking red and white lighthouse is as tall as a giant'. Most pupils' writing skills develop well during key stage 2. In Year 4, many pupils develop a clear handwriting style and present their work neatly. They adapt their style of writing to different genres well, such as when drafting and redrafting a report on the life cycle of the brown trout. By Year 6, many pupils write at length in a variety of styles that are suited closely to their purpose and intended audience. As they progress through the school, most pupils apply their knowledge of the Welsh language well to write in a variety of genres.

Most pupils in the foundation phase make rapid early progress in learning to read. They develop an understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds quickly and apply these skills effectively to read unfamiliar words. Most read with enthusiasm showing good expression and intonation. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils are confident readers who become absorbed for longer periods, especially the more able. As they move through the school, pupils' reading and writing skills in Welsh develop appropriately.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their mathematical development. They handle money confidently when buying or selling goods in the class shop. By the end of key stage 2, the standard of most pupils' mathematics skills is strong and they transfer these skills effectively to other subjects. For example, in Year 3, pupils use their knowledge of number and measure to calculate the amount of steel piping needed to replace the worn railing around the ground at Cwmbran rugby club. Older pupils plan bunkers for Second World War tanks on a specific piece of land as part of their topic work. Extension activities linked to this activity stretch the more able successfully.

Most pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are good across the school. In the foundation phase, most pupils program a wheeled robot confidently, progressing to programming moving animals on screen using basic pictorial commands. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils program the computer to undertake more complex actions, such as when producing a 'Space Invaders' game.

Most pupils in the special needs resources base make good progress in the development of their literacy, numeracy, Welsh and ICT skills during their time at the school. They achieve good standards relative to their individual targets.

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

Nearly all pupils feel safe and valued. They demonstrate care and tolerance for each other and treat peers and adults with respect and maturity. For example, 'playtime pals' show high levels of consideration consistently as they help and support younger pupils. Nearly all pupils respond positively to school rules and understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour. Nearly all pupils in the special needs resource base behave well, relate well to others and are keen to participate in activities with other pupils.

Most pupils are aware of the need to eat healthily and to exercise. The activities that they engage in across the curriculum raise their awareness of healthy lifestyles effectively. For example, many pupils and staff enjoy taking part in the 'daily mile'. Most pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, such as when using the internet or crossing the road.

Nearly all pupils work productively, in groups and as individuals. Most pupils are interested in their work and talk about their achievements and discoveries enthusiastically, such as when discussing the methods they use to solve a problem. They demonstrate resilience and use a range of strategies to help them to persevere. For instance, when facing difficulties with a task, pupils use the 'learning pit' display as a focus to think about how they can overcome this and continue to make progress.

Pupils take pride in their school roles. For example, members of the school council represent their peers maturely and use their voice effectively to inform school improvements when suggesting ways to make mathematics lessons more enjoyable. Pupils contribute well to the caring ethos in the school. For instance, in their role as 'rights ambassadors', pupils encourage and promote tolerance amongst their peers based on the United Nations Charter for Children's Rights.

Pupils' rates of attendance are consistently strong and compare favourably to those in similar schools for the last four years.

The positive working relationship between pupils and staff mean that pupils know what to do if they become worried or anxious. A few pupils with specific emotional needs respond well to a wide range of support structures that give them the time and space to assess their emotions and promote effective coping strategies.

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In nearly all cases, teachers deliver lessons that engage and motivate pupils successfully. For example, pupils in the nursery class enjoy developing their oracy and counting skills when taking part in a teddy

bears' picnic. In Year 6, pupils practise and improve their ICT skills effectively when simultaneously collaborating on a shared document using two separate computers. However, overall, teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop their skills as independent learners.

Teachers and support staff maintain positive working relationships with pupils and have consistently high expectations of pupil standards and behaviour. Staff address any instances of poor behaviour gently, but firmly. In nearly all instances, this is effective in bringing pupils back on task.

Teachers use their ongoing assessments of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well to design activities that challenge pupils to achieve at a level that is appropriate to their ability. For example, as part of a science activity in Year 3, pupils investigate the properties of magnets through tasks that are suited well to their ability level. As a result, most pupils make good progress in the development of their skills during lessons.

Staff provide useful feedback to pupils that indicates clearly what they have done successfully and what they need to improve. In many cases, teachers provide pupils with a specific time each week to respond to their marking and make improvements using their 'purple polishing pen'. This is effective in enhancing pupils' skills development and correcting mistakes.

Teachers ensure that developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is central in their planning. Throughout the school, teachers plan a stimulating and diverse range of learning experiences. There are many interesting and relevant opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their skills in topics work. For example, Year 6 pupils respond enthusiastically when using a wide range of digital technology to create, present and record their own news reports as part of their topic on the Second World War. However, opportunities for pupils to contribute to what and how they learn are underdeveloped.

Teachers plan effectively for the progressive development of pupils' skills. When pupils make less than expected progress, teachers ensure that well-planned and effective support addresses this. Teachers' planning in the special needs resource base addresses pupils learning targets effectively.

The planning for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills throughout the school is good. However, opportunities for them to extend their Welsh speaking skills outside dedicated Welsh lessons are underdeveloped.

Teachers plan suitable visits, which link well to their topics. For example, Year 2 visit the Roman fort of Caerleon and Year 4 visit the Tudor mansion at Llanciach Fawr. These opportunities enhance pupils' understanding of their topics and the history and culture of Wales successfully.

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

The school has highly effective procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. The school's 'RAG' group monitors the progress of every pupil on a regular basis and suggests actions for the improvement of pupils' skills, such as the introduction of additional intervention groups or changes in classroom practice. Senior leaders ensure that 'RAG' meetings maintain a clear and rigorous focus on pupil outcomes. This process is key to the very good progress most pupils make during their time at the school.

Support staff work skilfully to deliver a wide range of highly effective intervention programmes. All pupils with additional learning needs have an individual education plan that includes challenging, yet realistic and measurable targets. The additional needs co-ordinator and key staff monitor these plans carefully with pupils and parents. Targeted pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities.

Pupils attending the special resource base play a full and active part in the life of the school. Through an accurate assessment of their pupils needs, resource base staff ensure the suitability of future placements for pupils in their care. As a whole, the school works well with a number of outside agencies, such as other specialist resource units, a local special school and health professionals, to provide good quality support and guidance for staff and pupils. Support for pupils with additional learning needs is a very strong feature of the school.

The school provides a wide range of strategies to develop pupils' personal and social skills to a very high standard. These programmes reflect the school's aim to promote equality, tolerance and good behaviour. For instance, the school has worked tirelessly to develop pupils' ability to self-regulate their behaviour and make positive choices that avoid conflict. The school works well to promote the values of tolerance and respect amongst pupils. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 explore the impact of homophobic bullying sensitively. Pupils are encouraged to eat and drink healthily and to participate in a wide range of physical activities.

There are beneficial links with parents. For example, the school uses a wide range of methods, including digital technology, to maintain good communication with parents. Most parents feel well informed about the progress their child is making and consider that when they have concerns, the school addresses these well.

A very large number of pupils attend a comprehensive range of lunchtime and after school activities that support the development of an extensive range of skills. These clubs include mindfulness, art, ICT and a range of sporting activities.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural values. Staff encourage pupils to engage meaningfully in reflection time as part of collective worship. The school makes good use of visits by leaders from local churches to develop pupils' spiritual and moral awareness.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for school improvement based on high expectations of staff and pupils. Senior leaders are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes and wellbeing for pupils. They prioritise areas for school improvement successfully and address any areas of underperformance robustly. All members of staff have a good understanding of their specific roles and carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Senior leaders establish useful systems to maintain and improve standards. For example, the well-established, half-termly, 'RAG' meetings are highly effective in monitoring the standards being achieved by pupils and ensuring that classroom provision targets the needs of individuals well. Senior leaders ensure that membership of this group is reviewed regularly so that many members of staff have

the opportunity to participate in its work and can view the benefits on outcomes for pupils. As a result, most staff feel involved well in this monitoring process.

The school benefits from many worthwhile partnerships with other providers. For example, the school is part of a triad of high performing schools and shares good practice in developing pupils' skills in extended writing. Similarly, teachers from Maendy have visited these schools, for example to view effective practice in providing challenging mathematics activities to pupils. This has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and improved outcomes for pupils, particularly the more able. The school benefits from the role of the headteacher as a partner challenge adviser for the local educational consortium. This allows her to access high quality professional development and to view good practice in other schools that impacts positively on the quality of provision in her own school.

Senior leaders undertake a good range of monitoring activities that provide them with an accurate picture of the strengths of the school and its areas for improvement. These include formal observations of teachers and teaching assistants, scrutiny of pupils' work and an annual survey of parents' and pupils' opinions on the work of the school. For example, regular lesson observations help senior leaders to ensure that the quality of teaching across the school is consistently good. Senior leaders use monitoring information well to form the contents of the school's self-evaluation report. Most areas that the school identifies for improvement feature as actions in the school's development plan. However, in a very few instances, the report does not outline how specific shortcomings will be addressed.

Senior leaders arrange good professional learning opportunities for staff that link well with the school's areas for improvement. For instance, teachers worked collaboratively as part of a professional learning community to identify and implement ways to improve the resilience of pupils. This resulted in improvements to the quality of marking that encourage effectively pupil perseverance.

Through regular reports from senior leaders and the first hand gathering of evidence, the governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and its areas for improvement. For instance, by looking at samples of pupils' work, governors comment knowledgeably on the improvement in the quality of extended writing over time. Governors support the work of senior leaders well and challenge them when appropriate, for example when discussing the school's policy to improve attendance or the most effective use of resources when purchasing new ICT equipment.

School resources are plentiful. They meet the needs of pupils and support the effective delivery of the curriculum well. Classes are large enough to accommodate pupils and there is a good range of smaller rooms that staff use well to deliver intervention programmes and support vulnerable pupils. The school building is ageing, but senior leaders make the best possible use of it. There are ample outdoor spaces to support pupils' learning. However, teachers do not always make best use of this resource. The school uses grant funding well to ensure that pupils at risk of under achieving as the result of deprivation make as good progress as their peers.

## 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.

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