



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

A report on

**Cwmrhydyceirw Primary School
Maes y Gwernen Road
Morrison
SA6 6LL**

Date of inspection: January 2018

by

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

About Cwmrhydyceirw Primary School

Cwmrhydyceirw Primary School is in Morriston in the Swansea local authority. Currently, there are 524 pupils on roll, aged from three to eleven, including 85 nursery pupils who attend part-time. The number of pupils at the school has increased by about a fifth since the last inspection. There are 17 single age classes at the school.

About 18% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is around the national average. The school identifies around 21% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is in line with the national average. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

Most pupils are from a white British background. No pupils speak Welsh at home and a very few speak English as an additional language. The local authority looks after a very few pupils.

The headteacher took up his post in January 2012. The school's previous inspection was in October 2012.

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

Pupils at Cwmrhydyceirw Primary School are happy and make very strong progress in developing a wide range of skills that they use confidently across the curriculum. By the time they leave the school, the standard of pupils' oracy and numeracy skills is particularly high. There is a warm atmosphere in the school and a culture of showing respect for each other. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and, from a young age, they show high levels of independence and excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils have a strong voice in the school, both in designing the curriculum and making changes to everyday aspects.

The curriculum is innovative and teachers deliver it through challenging and exciting learning experiences. There is strong leadership throughout the school. The headteacher has high expectations of all staff and pupils and leads by example. He supports all staff to lead important aspects of the school's development. The school reviews its performance very effectively. It is outward looking and, in addition to sharing its excellent practice with other schools, it is keen to learn from others and is always looking for ways to improve.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Excellent
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Excellent
Teaching and learning experiences	Excellent
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Leadership and management	Excellent

Recommendations

R1 Further enrich learning experiences and the outdoor environment for younger pupils

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 case studies on its work in relation to pupil voice and how leadership is distributed across the school for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Excellent

Most pupils start school with skills and knowledge at the expected level for their age. During their time at the school, they make extremely strong progress, particularly in the development of their oral and numeracy skills. Pupils with additional learning needs and those eligible for free school meals make excellent progress.

Most pupils in the foundation phase listen very well to adults and others and take turns to speak demonstrating a high level of respect for their classmates. Pupils in nursery and reception follow instructions showing understanding and are eager to explain their work in detail to visitors. For example, pupils in reception talk about what they are doing to make patients better in the role-play hospital. By the end of the foundation phase, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills to a very high standard and communicate with each other respectfully using a rich and extended vocabulary. For example, they retell a story where they create new characters using vivid descriptions. Most pupils use a range of strategies they have learnt purposefully to interpret the meaning of text. They make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to work out new and unfamiliar words and talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and stories. Most pupils develop extremely effective writing skills and by the end of the foundation phase they produce writing at length that engages the interest of the reader. Younger pupils are eager to experiment with writing during independent activities. For example, they complete a medical report on a patient.

Throughout key stage 2, most pupils speak eloquently and with confidence. They use a varied and adventurous vocabulary and adapt their speech well to match the task and their audience. As they move through the key stage, pupils become increasingly precise in their use of language. For example, Year 5 pupils use specific technical language when voicing over a film they have made to show how blood moves through the heart. Nearly all Year 6 pupils express themselves with clarity and make thoughtful and careful language choices to convey key messages with accuracy. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils read well. They discuss a wide range of genres and authors confidently and provide well-considered opinions about characters that they like and dislike. They use higher order reading skills, such as skimming and scanning well when searching for information about topics. Most pupils write accurately and at length across a wide range of genres. They vary their form of writing according to their audience. Their writing engages the reader and they use a sophisticated vocabulary well. Nearly all pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. By Year 6, their writing in a joined, fluent style is consistently neat. Most pupils punctuate their work correctly and make generally accurate attempts at spelling new words. Their writing across the curriculum is of the same high standard as their work in English lessons.

Across the school, pupils develop strong Welsh language skills and communicate in Welsh with enthusiasm. In nursery, they sing a wide range of songs and rhymes and begin to count in Welsh. Most pupils in key stage 2 are eager to talk to adults in Welsh and can sustain a conversation using familiar language patterns. There is clear progression across the school as they build on the number and complexity of

the language patterns they use. By Year 6, many pupils extend their sentences, explaining their feelings and preferences. During guided reading sessions, pupils read simple Welsh texts linked to their topic with understanding. For example, in Year 5, they read a book of facts about the hearts of different animals linked to their current topic.

In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils make very good progress in developing their numeracy skills across the areas of learning. Most pupils apply the mathematics they have learnt in lessons to solve problems with confidence. For example, in Year 1 they consider how many of the 35 spiders a witch has left after she has used seven of them for her spell and other similar problems to find the keys to release the castle. Most pupils in key stage 2 have exceptionally well-developed numeracy skills. They apply these confidently when solving problems in mathematics lessons and in subjects across the curriculum. Many pupils explain their mathematical thinking accurately when performing calculations. For example, they explain how they calculated the selling price and percentage profit they hoped to achieve if they sold all the items they made for the 'Dragons Den' enterprise project.

Across the school, most pupils develop excellent skills in ICT and use them effectively to support their learning in other subjects. Foundation phase pupils know how to log on to Wales' bilingual virtual learning environment, access a range of programs and save and retrieve their work quickly. Older foundation phase pupils make good use of quick response codes to find relevant information in lessons. They record and upload independently aspects of their work that they are particularly proud of and want to share with the class teacher so that they can make a comment. For example, one pupil took pictures of a dragon she had made from construction materials, as she knew that other pupils would need to use this equipment later. In key stage 2, pupils use a wide range of programs and applications to enhance their work. They make sensible choices about when they need to use ICT. Older pupils produce creative multimedia presentations to present their work. They are proficient at searching for information, and create and interrogate databases to handle information, such as when pupils in Year 5 record the populations of endangered species across different African countries. They create spreadsheets to help them make a range of calculations quickly. The school's 'digital whizkids' play an effective leading role in supporting other pupils and raising awareness of the importance of internet safety.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Across the school, nearly all pupils have exceptionally high standards of wellbeing. An outstanding feature is pupils' attitudes to learning and the way they develop independent learning skills. In all classes, pupils suggest activities called 'missions' that they select from during 'mission and bubble time'. This is where some groups work with the teacher in a 'bubble' and others carry out independent 'missions'. This provides pupils with autonomy in their learning and they have become increasingly adept at suggesting and planning meaningful learning activities that link to the requirements of the national curriculum. Pupils persevere with tasks independently, without immediate adult intervention. They understand the need to produce work of high quality at all times.

Most pupils are confident and articulate speakers who listen to each other respectfully and politely and take turns in conversations. Where they have minor disagreements, they resolve these quickly and amicably so that they do not interfere with their learning. They reflect on their own learning with maturity and honesty and are keen to improve their work with 'purple polishing pens'.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of regular exercise and the need to eat and drink healthily. Pupils appreciate and use the fruit tuck shop run by older pupils. All pupils benefit from timetabled structured games, such as basketball, and using the 'trim trail' at playtimes, where they co-operate exceptionally well. After school, many pupils take part in the good range of extra-curricular activities, including rugby, dance and netball, which promote exercise and fitness.

All pupils understand the need to stay safe, including online, and are aware of the need to keep their passwords private to protect themselves. Pupils learn about their digital footprint and understand that they should behave responsibly while online.

Pupils embrace the many and varied opportunities to undertake leadership roles, such as through the eco committee and as a house captain. The school council is a strong body; it has met with the parents' group to discuss ways in which pupils can benefit from funds raised. It focuses effectively on improving teaching and learning. For example, members put forward the idea of enrichment afternoons and take a lead role in planning how to deliver and improve these further. The 'digital whizkids' plan lessons that help other pupils to develop high quality ICT skills effectively.

The school has a high profile in its community and pupils have many opportunities to play an active role, for example by singing at a local hospital and care home. Pupils support a range of charities, such as collecting toys and gifts for those who are less fortunate. All pupils have a strong understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. For example, they explain to visitors in detail their right to have an education and to see a doctor when they are ill. They understand that not all children are as fortunate as they are and that this is a cause for concern.

Pupil voice is extensive across the school both in how and what pupils learn and in how the school operates. It is evident in mind maps of planning displayed on classroom walls and this encourages pupils to take ownership of their learning. Pupils genuinely feel that their voice is heard and their opinions valued by staff.

Nearly all pupils like coming to school. There are strong working relationships between pupils and staff, based on mutual respect. Pupils look after one another and seldom feel the need to use the playground friendship stop as they feel that no one is 'left out' and there are always friends to play with. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and while moving about the school is exemplary.

Attendance has improved steadily over the last few years and compares well with that in other similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent

The school provides an outstanding range of innovative, exciting, hands on learning experiences that match the needs of nearly all learners exceptionally well.

Interesting themes engage pupils and develop their skills and curiosity towards learning. This helps pupils, including those with additional needs, to achieve highly and make rapid progress in their learning. Teachers take good account of the philosophy of the foundation phase when planning and delivering activities. This fosters pupils' levels of independence from an early age very successfully. They generally make good use of the outdoor environment to develop pupils' skills but have not yet developed new areas as well as established ones.

Curriculum planning is thorough and builds systematically on pupils' previous knowledge. Progression and continuity in planning for and the teaching of skills are strength of the school. There are many imaginative, high quality opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills effectively across the curriculum through motivating challenges. For example, in Year 5, a letter concerning an alleged recent theft requires pupils to use a wide range of numeracy skills successfully to find the culprit. This has a very positive effect on pupils' progress and achievement, for example in developing their oracy and ICT skills.

Teachers reflect on the quality of the curriculum regularly and take good account of developments towards the new curriculum for Wales when designing the school's own curriculum. Pupils in each class suggest ideas for 'missions' that teachers integrate effectively into the weekly planning. These have a strong impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning, capture their interest and develop pupils' independent skills to a high level. Teachers plan relevant visits to enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' knowledge of the locality. For example, pupils make a visit to Mumbles during the topic on pirates, and to the Gwili railway as evacuees.

The quality of teaching across the school is generally excellent. Teachers make exceptional use of a variety of teaching methods and interesting learning experiences to engage nearly all pupils very successfully. Presentations are lively and encourage all pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. Adults question pupils skilfully to extend their understanding and knowledge effectively. Nearly all teachers and support staff are good language role models and take advantage of valuable opportunities to improve pupils' oral skills. Most teachers use an extensive range of imaginative and innovative resources to provide learning experiences that stimulate pupils of all abilities to develop skills. For example, in Year 1, staff develop reading skills in an activity about Winnie the Witch that requires pupils to read and solve clues to find a dragon. In all classes, an ethos of positivity, mutual respect and teamwork helps to create a purposeful and focused working environment. As a result, nearly all pupils work enthusiastically and make very strong progress.

Teachers provide pupils with extremely useful verbal feedback during lessons. Feedback focuses well on how pupils can improve their work and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to respond.

Provision for developing the Welsh language is very successful. Classrooms promote the language effectively with clear and colourful displays that stimulate pupils to develop vocabulary and sentence patterns very successfully. Welsh resources are of a high standard, and include a wide number of attractive reading books. There are extensive opportunities for pupils to visit attractions and important sites linked to the culture and history of Wales. For example, when studying Henry VII, pupils visited Tenby and The Museum of Welsh Life at St Fagans, to see

examples of a Welsh Tudor House. The school celebrates the culture of Wales by arranging an annual eisteddfod and a 'Shw Mae Day'. Teachers engage pupils' interest in traditional legends and folklore, for example with the stories of Cantre'r Gwaelod and Santes Dwynwen.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school is a very happy and caring community that nurtures pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural skills very well. Staff know pupils extremely well and provide a nurturing environment that builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem. There is a clear emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of their human rights and this has a positive influence on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which are exemplary.

Pupil voice is highly developed throughout the school. There are many opportunities for pupils to play an active part in decision-making and leadership. For example, there is a very active school council, eco council, Criw Cymraeg and digital whizkid group. The school council put forward the idea of enrichment afternoons that nearly all pupils speak about very positively as helping them to develop a different range of skills.

The extensive range of curriculum and extra-curricular activities that promote cultural activities for all ages is a notable feature of the school. These include the choir, orchestra, ukulele group and film club. Collective worship promotes pupils' spiritual reflection effectively.

Provision for pupils who need additional support is very strong and the school uses a wide range of programmes that meet their needs effectively. Leaders and teachers analyse data and use assessment information well to plan effective support in classes and through withdrawal groups. The additional needs co-ordinator supports the teachers and support staff effectively in tailoring high quality provision. Well-trained staff deliver a range of intervention programmes to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, such as a reading catch-up programmes and speech and language activities for younger pupils. There are beneficial programmes to support vulnerable pupils, including those with emotional needs. For example, emotional literacy groups have a positive impact on raising pupils' self-esteem and, as a result, they demonstrate improved levels of confidence and engagement in school life. All pupils with additional learning needs have an individual education plan that includes measurable, challenging and achievable targets. As a result of this high quality provision, nearly all targeted pupils make good progress in line with their abilities and needs.

The school offers a beneficial range of opportunities for parents to engage with the school and to learn how to support their child's learning. It holds regular consultation evenings and offers workshops and programmes. These develop parents' skills to support their children's emotional wellbeing and learning at home. For example, the school facilitates parent workshops that focus on playing and cooking together as a family unit. This has led to a few parents undertaking an accredited programme based on developing their understanding of childhood emotional and behavioural issues.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. A range of extra-curricular clubs, such as football, cricket, rugby, summer fitness and athletics, promotes pupils' fitness well. Regular visits from the community police reinforce the school's strong message about how to stay safe online.

Developing pupils' artistic, creative and sporting abilities is a strength of the school. Leaders and teachers offer good opportunities for pupils to engage in trips and visits. For example, older pupils have opportunities to take part in a broad range of residential trips involving outward bound and cultural activities. The school takes part in the Urdd eisteddfod and provides many opportunities for pupils to participate in musical concerts and sporting competitions. For example, the school's orchestra takes part in annual residential visits, to plan and practise a concert that it subsequently performs in school and to the patients and staff of the local hospital. Such activities develop pupils' performing, artistic and sporting abilities effectively.

The school's family liaison officer works in partnership with the education welfare officer very successfully to improve pupils' attendance. There has also been an effective focus on improving punctuality. A system of pupil check-ins allows staff to monitor wellbeing and address any concerns immediately. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Excellent

The experienced headteacher provides exceptional and highly effective leadership. He has a clear vision for the school's development and sets high professional standards for staff. These derive from clear educational values and ambitious objectives for all pupils. Senior leaders have a good balance of knowledge and skills, which complement those of the headteacher well. The senior leadership team work very effectively to implement the priorities set out in the school development plan and to ensure continuous improvements. During recent years, senior leaders have worked very successfully with staff to improve many aspects of the life and work of the school, particularly in relation to pupils' attendance and wellbeing. There is strong engagement with families and there have been notable successes in narrowing the gap between the performance of various groups, for example pupils eligible for free school meals and other pupils.

All members of staff take responsibility for aspects of the school's work, and they contribute effectively towards maintaining high standards of teaching and pupils' achievement. The headteacher distributes leadership well and the grouping of staff in learning expertise teams means that there is consistency of good practice across the school. All staff take a lead role in working towards priorities in the school improvement plan. Particular successes are the work to improve the quality of feedback to pupils and to reduce excessive workload.

Members of the governing body are enthusiastic and highly supportive of the work of the school. They have a sound knowledge of the strength of the school. The headteacher and senior leaders keep them well informed about developments and pupils' progress. They meet regularly and are involved actively in strategic decision-making, offering suitable challenge to leaders, for example regarding staffing and finance. Their role in self-evaluation is less well developed.

The school has a clear timetable for monitoring its activities and uses a suitable range of evidence to evaluate its work, such as lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' books. Staff make very extensive use of this information to identify a comprehensive list of improvement priorities. The school's improvement plan sets out relevant and measurable actions clearly. A very valuable extra component of the school's self-evaluation arrangements is linking with leaders from other schools during specific self-evaluation days held at the school. This has provided a valuable addition to the school's existing self-evaluation procedures and has added to the objectiveness of the process. It has been extremely helpful in moderating and confirming the school's own judgements on the standards that pupils achieve.

One highly effective feature of the school's leadership is the wealth of opportunities for staff to develop professionally. Performance management procedures are robust and leaders address any training needs identified promptly. Staff have embraced school-to-school working and work effectively with a range of schools to improve and share their own effective practice. A notable example is the work on a pilot project with a local university and another primary and secondary school to improve the quality and effectiveness of feedback to pupils. This project emphasises the value of verbal feedback to pupils and has had a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Leaders use resources efficiently to enrich the curriculum and raise pupils' standards in all areas. For example, they use the pupil development grant for a wide range of activities that benefit targeted pupils, including financial support for music tuition, employment of teaching assistants to support specific initiatives, and intervention groups. Expenditure links appropriately with priorities in the improvement plan. The governing body monitors expenditure carefully to ensure that the school provides high quality teaching and learning.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	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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