



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

A report on

**Meadowlane Primary School
Heol Maes Eirwg
St Mellons
CF3 0JZ**

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by

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

About Meadowlane Primary School

Meadowlane Primary School is in the St Mellons area of Cardiff. The school has 337 pupils aged between 3 and 11, including 46 who attend the nursery class on a part-time basis. There are 12 classes, most of which include pupils from two year groups.

The school's three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 50%. This is well above the average for Wales, which is 19%. The school identifies that around 28% of its pupils have additional learning needs, which is higher than the Welsh average of around 21%.

The majority of pupils are of white British ethnicity. Around 16% come from ethnic minority backgrounds and about 15% are learning English as an additional language. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. A few pupils are in the care of the local authority. The headteacher was appointed in September 2014. The school's last inspection was in 2011.

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 make good progress in their learning and achieve well by the end of key stage 2. Most pupils show positive attitudes during lessons and behave very well around the school.

Teachers have strong working relationships with pupils and support their wellbeing effectively. Many plan learning experiences that stimulate the interest of most pupils well. They use questioning to develop pupils' thinking and assess their progress effectively. However, the quality of teaching and feedback varies between lessons.

The school is a welcoming community with a strong caring ethos. Good relationships with parents and other partners contribute purposefully to the support pupils receive. As a result, most vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs make good progress from their starting points.

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She receives valuable support from senior leaders and the school's governing body. Leaders have a good track record of improvement and share a clear vision for the school's strategic development.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that teaching provides a good level of challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able
- R2 Raise standards of pupils' writing, particularly in key stage 2
- R3 Improve the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

The majority of pupils enter school with skills that are considerably below the level expected for their age. Most make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Pupils with additional needs make good progress from their starting points. However, more able pupils do not always achieve well enough.

Most pupils in the foundation phase listen attentively, talk confidently about their work and use vocabulary that is appropriate to their age and ability. By Year 2, many discuss their ideas clearly and enthusiastically. In key stage 2, most pupils discuss their work thoughtfully and use subject vocabulary appropriately.

Nearly all pupils develop well as readers. They show enjoyment and pride, for example when reading their written work aloud. In the foundation phase, many pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds well to read simple texts and to decode unfamiliar words. Most pupils make good progress in reading throughout key stage 2. They skim read to gather information skilfully, for example when researching facts about waterfalls. They discuss appropriate texts by their favourite authors and predict what might happen next confidently.

Most pupils develop effective writing skills. By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils produce extended writing using a range of genres successfully. They write lively accounts of familiar stories and use basic punctuation well, for instance when retelling a story about a young boy's adventure in a magical country. In key stage 2, the majority of pupils write in a wide range of forms competently. Many use suitable vocabulary and stylistic features to convey information and ideas effectively. They use personification sensitively, for example to describe how 'the rain kissed my cheek as it fell'. However, in key stage 2 particularly, many pupils' extended writing is not always lively or detailed enough to engage the reader fully. The quality of pupils' spelling and handwriting varies too much across the school.

Most pupils make appropriate progress in developing their mathematics skills. In the foundation phase, many pupils use numbers to a hundred confidently to carry out calculations. They use block graphs and pictograms to represent data accurately in a variety of different contexts.

In key stage 2, most pupils build systematically on the skills learnt in foundation phase. More able pupils in Year 4 construct accurate Venn diagrams to sort different shapes. By the end of Year 6, most pupils use their problem solving skills to good effect. They respond confidently to mathematical challenges and apply their numeracy skills to other areas of the curriculum effectively. For example, in a recent activity to design 'my dream house' most pupils calculate the area of rooms correctly, work out the cost of decorating and furnishing their home and then sell the property for a realistic price, ensuring a healthy profit.

Most pupils make good progress in developing and using their communication skills in Welsh as they move through the school. In the foundation phase, most pupils use

a good range of familiar patterns and phrases accurately, for instance to describe the weather or to name body parts correctly. By the start of Year 2, most pupils sing a range of songs and rhymes enthusiastically and are confident in using their spoken Welsh independently throughout the day. Many write simple dialogues about a visit to the doctor. They use suitable vocabulary and spell common words accurately.

Most pupils extend their knowledge and build on their Welsh language skills further in key stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 enjoy asking and responding to an increasingly sophisticated range of questions when playing games to develop their speaking skills. They read simple texts correctly, using vocabulary rehearsed in lessons to support their understanding effectively. By Year 6, many pupils express opinions clearly, often extending their speaking to give reasons for their views. They write in well-organised paragraphs, presenting personal information using the past tense correctly.

Most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately across the curriculum. Many pupils use online learning platforms effectively to carry out research for their topic work and to improve their reading and numeracy skills. In key stage 2, pupils use tablet computers to create and edit short movies to retell a familiar story successfully.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils have good attitudes towards learning. They feel safe in school and speak positively about their strong relationships with teachers and support staff. Most pupils listen attentively to adults and follow instructions readily. Many pupils show very good levels of self-control for their age. They settle to tasks quickly and manage distractions well.

Many pupils respond enthusiastically to challenges and are keen to participate actively in learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 enjoy leading the class in singing Welsh songs and performing role-play when acting as Helpwr Heddiw. Their enjoyment in these sessions enlivens the learning and is motivating for others who engage keenly and make good progress as a result.

Nearly all pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and show respect for others, for instance by sharing resources thoughtfully. Most pupils appreciate the efforts of others and show generous support for their achievements. For example, pupils in Reception join together to praise others for working hard to meet their learning objective. Nearly all pupils are keen to achieve rewards for their good behaviour and are motivated to follow agreed rules consistently.

Many older pupils reflect purposefully on their learning. They take responsibility for monitoring their work against specific targets and see value in the progress they make over time. For example, Year 6 pupils explain how improving the accuracy of their reading benefits their ability to research information independently.

Many pupils take on additional roles in various pupil groups. They are confident that others value their views and know that their work leads to tangible improvements. For example, school council members directly influenced the redesign of the school's

library area. Many pupils are developing as informed citizens through the school's involvement in an international project to improve aspirations and opportunities for young people in European countries. A few pupils recently visited Romania to give presentations to a large audience and to learn about the experience of pupils in Romanian schools. They shared this learning through assemblies and show pride in their role as ambassadors for the school.

Most pupils understand the importance of keeping themselves fit and eating healthily. Many enjoy participating in the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school, such as football and netball. Nearly all pupils are confident in approaching adults to share any concerns they have. They show a mature attitude so that problems are resolved quickly and effectively.

Most pupils recognise the need for good attendance and value the importance the school places on encouraging and supporting them to attend well. Overall rates of attendance are improving and now compare more favourably with those of similar schools. A few pupils do not arrive in school on time.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Teachers have good, positive working relationships with pupils. They use behaviour management strategies skilfully to ensure that pupils settle quickly in class. In many lessons, they share learning objectives and success criteria with pupils and provide clear instructions that support pupils to engage with their learning appropriately. Teaching assistants use their knowledge of individual pupils' needs to support progress and engagement successfully.

Many teachers plan learning activities that engage pupils well. For example, as part of a recent space topic, pupils were enthusiastic to carry out research tasks before writing to the astronaut Tim Peake in order to learn more about his experience. This activity captured the imagination of pupils' strongly and inspired them to pursue their interest further. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers' expectations are not always ambitious enough and contexts for learning provide too little opportunity for pupils to apply their skills purposefully. As a result, pupils do not always extend their thinking fully.

Many teachers show good subject knowledge and use a variety of questioning techniques to enhance pupils' understanding effectively. They give helpful verbal feedback to pupils during lessons. Most teachers set individual literacy and numeracy targets for pupils and nearly all pupils understand what their targets are. However, teachers do not consistently show pupils what they need to do to improve their work or set sufficiently demanding goals for improvement. This leads to pupils, including the most able, repeating mistakes in their work.

Teachers' plans provide a clear focus for developing pupils' communication, numeracy and ICT skills. They ensure that the requirements of the literacy and numeracy framework are integrated fully into themes for learning. This has a positive impact on the standards they achieve across the curriculum. As a result, most pupils build progressively on their skills as they move through the school. However, teachers' use of writing frames in key stage 2 limits pupils' opportunities to experiment and improve their ideas.

Many teachers make effective use of the learning environment. In the foundation phase, teachers use outdoor and role-play areas, such as the pirate corner, to enrich pupils' learning well. They provide a good variety of activities for pupils to explore individually and in small groups to develop their creative and social skills. The school provides wider experiences for pupils to enhance their learning effectively. For example, key stage 2 pupils visit Cardiff Castle as part of their project on the Second World War and participate in residential visits to outdoor activity centres. Extra-curricular clubs, such as dancing, reading and coding, have a positive impact on pupils' personal and social development.

The school's provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills is good. Many teachers and teaching assistants use the Welsh language confidently and are enthusiastic role models. Most provide frequent opportunities to develop pupils' spoken use of Welsh, often in lively and interactive sessions, which stimulate pupils' engagement successfully. As a result, many pupils use spoken Welsh naturally outside of Welsh lessons. Teachers give good prominence to the culture and heritage of Wales through visits to important sites and project themes. These provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about famous historical figures and to study the work of Welsh artists and writers.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school's caring and inclusive ethos supports pupils in developing their social and moral understanding well. The high level of care and respect between staff and pupils contributes strongly to pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning. The school provides valuable programmes to support vulnerable pupils, including those with social, emotional and medical needs. This raises the self-esteem and confidence of identified pupils significantly and helps them to engage in all aspects of school life successfully.

The school provides many valuable opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning, for example through regular 'Wow' weeks and the popular 'Mum's Club'. Worthwhile adult learning classes enable parents to develop confidence in supporting their child and improve their own individual skills, for example through learning Welsh. The family engagement officer provides very useful support, for instance to improve punctuality and attendance.

Provision for developing pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is successful. The school's annual health and wellbeing week and its long-established healthy tuck shop contribute effectively to pupils' strong awareness of how to eat and drink healthily. The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop their fitness through regular physical activities. A good range of equipment in the playgrounds, such as climbing frames and a large multi-use games area, further encourages pupils to enjoy active play. A variety of extra-curricular clubs enhance pupils' wellbeing beneficially. Regular, well-planned assemblies develop pupils' spiritual understanding appropriately.

Leaders track and monitor pupils' progress very effectively. They maintain a clear overview of the performance of groups and individuals over time. Leaders analyse information on pupils' performance carefully to identify pupils who are not on target to achieve and need additional support. The school's skilful use of regular pupil progress meetings is highly effective in guiding this process. However, strategies to challenge more able pupils are relatively under-developed.

All pupils with additional learning needs have an education plan that includes clear and measurable targets. Teachers review these targets with pupils and parents each term. The school works successfully in partnership with a range of specialist services, such as the behaviour referral team and the educational psychology service, to secure additional, beneficial resources to support pupils with a range of needs. These arrangements ensure that targeted pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides strong, and purposeful leadership. She has high expectations and a clear vision for improving the wellbeing and attainment of pupils. She communicates her ambition energetically with all staff and governors.

Senior leaders support the headteacher well. They work effectively as a team to share leadership roles and responsibilities. This ensures that they have a good knowledge of the professional practice of all staff and the learning experiences that pupils engage in.

The school has robust financial arrangements and expenditure links suitably with the school's priorities. The headteacher and governing body monitor the budget carefully. The recent investment in ICT resources is beginning to impact positively on pupils' use of their ICT skills across the curriculum. Leaders make good use of the pupil development grant to improve the basic literacy and numeracy skills of pupils eligible for free school meals. As a result, most vulnerable pupils make good progress from their low starting points.

The school is an effective learning community. Leaders provide good opportunities for staff to share good practice and to evaluate each other's effectiveness within a trusting, supportive environment. For example, teachers collaborate effectively in research teams to learn from each other and improve their practice. Performance management procedures are robust. Targets link well to staff's individual professional development needs and to the school's strategic plans for improvement.

Leaders implement worthwhile self-evaluation activities that identify strengths and most areas for improvement successfully. There is a clear link between the outcomes of self-evaluation activity and identified areas for improvement that focus firmly on raising standards. Leaders monitor progress purposefully and review the impact of changes appropriately. They have recently introduced a more structured approach to monitor the quality of teaching. However, these changes have not yet ensured an appropriate level of challenge for pupils in all lessons.

The school has shown a strong commitment to implementing local and national priorities, for example the digital competence and the literacy and numeracy frameworks.

Governors are highly supportive of the school's work and are involved well in its daily life. They receive detailed information from senior staff and from the learning teams

and pupils. The inclusion of governors in the regular programme of learning walks and meetings with co-ordinators means that they have a clear understanding of the day-to-day work of the school and a first-hand insight into the progress of specific priorities. As a result, they are well informed and able to challenge the school effectively.

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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