



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

Report following monitoring

Level of follow-up: Special measures

**Goetre Primary School
Rowan Way
Gurnos Estate
CF47 9PB**

Date of visit: March 2024

by

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

Outcome of visit

Goetre Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

As a result, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Address the safeguarding and health and safety shortcomings identified during the inspection

The school has strengthened its culture of safeguarding significantly since the core inspection. All staff and many governors have received appropriate safeguarding training. The school's four designated safeguarding persons have completed a higher level of safeguarding training. They provide effective leadership across the school.

All members of staff are aware of the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a pupil or if a pupil makes a disclosure to them. This includes if there is an allegation or concern about the headteacher. The school provides all temporary members of staff and visitors with information on the school's policy upon arrival. The family liaison officer monitors how well staff follow the school's procedures by asking them regularly what they would do if faced with a safeguarding concern. The numerous safeguarding posters displayed around the school also help to reinforce important messages. Local authority Early Help Hub officers are now based in the school each week. They provide an important point of contact for staff to discuss concerns and to receive advice.

The school has strengthened its procedures for dealing with unexplained absences. They have employed two additional members of staff to support the family liaison officer with this work each morning. If a pupil does not arrive in school and no reason has been given, a member of staff contacts the parents immediately. For vulnerable pupils, staff also contact appropriate services working with the child.

The school has installed fencing to prevent pupils from accessing the school's car park during the school day. They have also fitted new CCTV cameras, which provide comprehensive coverage of the school grounds. This helps leaders monitor site security and traffic movement effectively.

R2. Improve the quality of teaching and feedback so that pupils develop as independent learners and have the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability

Across the school, the quality of teaching shows notable improvement. Teachers plan and deliver engaging learning experiences for all pupils that support them to make better progress. Senior leaders have worked well to create a culture across the school that places improving teaching and learning as everyone's responsibility. Alongside staff they have created a shared digital resource 'The Goetre Way' that provides valuable guidance about leaders' expectations of all teachers. The guidance sets clear expectations for all staff and as a result, has improved the consistency of teaching across the school. Teachers, through 'Quad Observations', use the guidance effectively to reflect on and evaluate their own and each other's practice and to identify areas in which they can improve.

Teachers and support staff have received well-considered professional learning and support to help improve the quality of their practice. They use a variety of well-practised approaches to ensure that all lessons are carefully structured and focused and have suitable challenge for all pupils. This has helped to eliminate any instances of unsatisfactory teaching and learning and promote professional relationships that generate trust and confidence between leaders and teachers.

All staff have very good working relationships with pupils, know them well and ensure that learning activities match their needs. Since the last visit, teachers have focused more on developing pupils' independent learning skills and, overall, this has had a positive impact, for instance on the quality of pupils' extended writing and digital skills. Generally, learning proceeds at a good pace, and most teachers use questioning effectively and provide suitably challenging tasks for all pupils. As a result, most pupils are keen to learn, are engaged and sustain interest in their work.

Senior leaders ensure that there is a clear focus on the progress of all pupils. They have established a robust tracking process, which is well understood by all teachers. Regular pupil progress meetings enable leaders and teachers to identify pupils who are on track to meet challenging targets. These meetings also enable staff to act promptly to provide interventions such as to support pupils' well-being or their skills in literacy and numeracy. Most teachers provide regular feedback to their pupils and use an agreed written coding system that pupils understand well. Overall, feedback to pupils continues to improve and is more consistently applied across the school. In most cases, pupils respond appropriately to teachers' comments and enjoy improving their work.

R3. Improve standards of pupils' literacy and ICT

Carefully considered professional learning and the effective use of resources have led to the improvement of pupils' literacy and digital skills. School leaders ensure that well-planned and purposeful monitoring activities focus precisely on pupil outcomes. Leaders and staff have worked collaboratively with the school's regional improvement services to provide pupils with opportunities to develop their literacy and digital skills progressively across the school. As a result, pupils' digital, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills develop well.

Many pupils engage well in speaking and listening activities. They benefit from a range of opportunities that allow them to express themselves and discuss ideas and feelings. A structured and focused approach to developing oracy has impacted positively on pupils' confidence and ability to embed and apply their literacy skills in all areas of learning.

Pupils' reading skills continue to develop well. Younger pupils enjoy looking at books, they quickly understand that print has meaning and develop a good understanding of letter sounds. By Year 6, many pupils develop into confident readers using a range of reading skills, such as skimming and scanning texts. They extract information and develop their reading skills well across the curriculum. Many state their love of reading, express their reading preferences with enthusiasm and appreciate opportunities to support younger pupils to read. There are effective tracking systems to monitor the progress pupils make across the school and good use is made of this information to ensure that pupils receive the appropriate challenge or support when necessary.

Many pupils are making good progress in their writing. The youngest pupils develop their early pre-writing skills effectively and have appropriate opportunities to mark-make using a variety of resources. As they mature, pupils write more frequently and with increasing independence using the correct tripod grip. By the time they reach Year 6 many pupils use the features associated with different genres of writing well, for example when writing explanation and persuasive texts. They write with an increasing understanding of purpose and audience. The recent introduction of a handwriting scheme is beginning to impact on the quality of pupils' presentation.

Many pupils' digital skills are developing well. Leaders and staff have benefited from the expertise of IT support to successfully embed the development of these skills as an integral part of pupils' learning. Digital resources are appropriately distributed across the school. Pupils use IT consistently in classes across the school for research, presentation, and to share and access work. Overall, many pupils are beginning to build on, and develop, their digital skills over time in a variety of contexts. However, pupils' understanding of data bases and spreadsheets is less well developed.

R4. Further strengthen monitoring and evaluation to enable leaders to accurately identify and address important shortcomings in the school’s work and to judge the impact of teaching and provision on improving pupils’ outcomes

Since the last visit, the headteacher has provided all leaders with valuable professional learning that enables them to carry out their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities effectively. As a result, the leadership team can speak competently about school improvement and are more confident to undertake beneficial self-evaluation activities across the school. In addition, school governors have received worthwhile support to gain a clearer understanding of the importance of regular and evaluative monitoring of provision and how this can improve pupil outcomes.

Linked to upskilling leaders and governors, the headteacher has refined the annual cycle of monitoring and evaluation activities and developed a more robust system that includes all stakeholders. This systematic, whole-school approach helps leaders, staff and governors evaluate the school’s work and identify current strengths and areas for improvement. For example, the recent, innovative, three-day monitoring review of pupils’ literacy, numeracy and digital skills across the school was comprehensive and successful. Leaders, including the governors, worked closely together to identify school strengths and areas for development. These were clearly recorded and summarised by the headteacher for feedback to all staff. A notable feature was the inclusion of numeracy leaders from local schools to assess standards and provision in this area across the school. Their positive comments improved staff confidence as well as providing useful suggestions for further improvement.

All teachers continue to be involved in observing each other’s practice through beneficial ‘Quad’ observations. These sessions are highly valued by staff and are generally effective. Sessions enable teachers to analyse the work of others, highlight strengths and suggest areas for improvement. In addition, these sessions support teachers to engage in useful professional dialogue about teaching and pupils’ progress. Recent observations evaluated how well teachers exhibited the ‘Goetre Way’ during their lessons. As a result of these activities, most teachers understand better, that they are accountable for the progress of pupils in their care and have a growing understanding of their strengths and what they need to improve.

R5. Further develop approaches to curriculum planning so staff have a shared understanding of progression, and all teachers consult with pupils to plan authentic learning experiences

Since the core inspection, leaders have focused on developing staff’s understanding of progression as pupils move through the school. Whilst staff develop their understanding of pupil progression and of curriculum design, they have adopted a published curriculum scheme to support all teachers with their planning. This scheme

ensures that as the staff develop their understanding, there is sufficient coverage across all the elements of the Curriculum for Wales. Teachers use the scheme as a starting point and then develop authentic opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences. This supports pupils to develop a knowledge of their local area and the community in which they live.

Teachers focus on the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, and digital competency skills as the central spine to learning and leaders are beginning to outline these skills across the year groups successfully. For example, literacy leads have focused on gaining an understanding of the progression of pupils' skills through the use of different writing genres and have shared this with staff. As a result, teachers use this information well to plan lessons and activities to ensure that pupils make appropriate progress in their writing skills across the school. Leaders plan to use the success of this process to further develop staff's understanding of how to improve other elements of pupils' literacy skills, such as their oracy skills. Leaders have a clear plan of how pupils' digital skills are to be developed and how the progression of these skills are planned and delivered in lessons. However, the planning for pupils' application of numeracy skills across the curriculum is less well developed.

Leaders and staff have conducted a range of worthwhile activities to gain an understanding of what their school community, local employers and attractions in the local area have to offer to support them in enriching their curriculum. This has resulted in beneficial opportunities for older pupils to participate in visits to local employers to gain an understanding of the world of work. Alongside this, leaders have developed a pledge to pupils of 100 activities that they feel are important for them to experience during their childhood. All pupils are encouraged to participate in these activities with their families and to complete the list by the end of their time at the school.

The newly appointed governors provide leaders with beneficial professional knowledge and support. In addition, the chair of governors' extensive knowledge of the local community has resulted in leaders accessing a range of beneficial enriching experiences for pupils as part of their thematic work. Governors meet regularly with staff to gain an understanding of their curriculum design process and how these changes are impacting on pupils at the school.

R6. Improve the quality of resources to support pupils' learning both indoors and outdoors

Following the core inspection, leaders alongside staff, assessed the school's resources for indoor and outdoor learning and identified areas for improvement. Over time, they have effectively ensured that any new resources align fully with the school's curriculum and the desired learning outcomes for pupils. Leaders, including the governing body, have used the school's budget and other sources of funding

prudently to improve the learning and well-being resources across the school. For example, pupils in the youngest classes have benefited from updated, purposeful learning environments, which result in highly effective foundation learning provision. Across the school staff use space efficiently and have created purposeful areas, through which they provide effective intervention and support for those pupils who need it. These, along with new and appropriate resources, have had a positive impact on pupils' well-being, progress and motivation to learn.

In the outdoors, all pupils enjoy a wider range of new play equipment to support their physical development, and this has led to improved behaviour during unstructured times, particularly for older pupils. As a result, the school is calmer and pupils' behaviour and well-being across the school has improved significantly. In addition, the development of a new forest area, designed by the pupils, enables younger pupils to enjoy learning through nature for extended periods of time.

The school has made significant progress in investing in and developing all staff through careful and targeted professional learning. Leaders have empowered staff to take ownership of specific areas of learning across the school, such as in the effective development of pupils' digital, writing and independent skills. Leaders have used both physical and human resources to improve the quality of provision for pupils in all areas. Of note is the creation of a new nurture class to support the needs of a few of the youngest pupils who are adapting to life in school. This has ensured that the provision and progress in learning and well-being of the youngest pupils in mainstream classes is highly successful.