



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

A report on

**Lansdowne Primary School
Norfolk Street
Canton
CF5 1JY**

Date of inspection: October 2017

by

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

About Lansdowne Primary School

Lansdowne Primary School is in Canton, an inner-city area of Cardiff.

There are 454 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11, including 37 nursery children who attend for a morning or afternoon session. There are 17 single-year classes, including the nursery. The number on roll has increased significantly since the school's previous inspection in February 2011.

The rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 26%. This is above the national average (19%). Around half the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the same proportion have English as an additional language. A handful of pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school identifies that around 25% of pupils have additional learning needs. This is just above the national average (21%). The majority of these pupils have general learning difficulties. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The school's substantive headteacher took up her post full-time in November 2013. Currently, she is the headteacher for the first half of each week and the deputy headteacher acts as headteacher for the second half. This arrangement is due to end in September 2018 when the headteacher will once again undertake her duties full-time.

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

The school benefits from very effective leadership and a strong professional culture at all levels. There is a positive record of change management over the last three years that has led to significant improvements in the school. The senior leadership is well placed to improve the school further. The quality of provision and teaching in the foundation phase is consistently high and there are many strong features towards the end of key stage 2. Most pupils make good progress as they move through the school, particularly those who have English as an additional language. The school is highly effective in developing pupils' wellbeing. It engages exceedingly well with parents to build their capacity to support their child's learning and to develop their own skills very well. The consistent, well-planned focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is effective, particularly in English and mathematics lessons. Pupils make a good start in developing their Welsh skills in the foundation phase and they build well on these early skills in designated Welsh lessons in key stage 2.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' ability to read Welsh and to use the language beyond designated Welsh lessons, particularly in key stage 2
- R2 Increase the opportunities for pupils to undertake extended writing
- R3 Improve opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum

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 leadership and the management of change and in relation to its work engaging with local families for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils make good progress as they move through the school and achieve at or above the level expected by the end of key stage 2. This is a notable achievement given that about 40% of pupils start school with skills that are below those expected for their age and around half have English as an additional language.

Across the school, most pupils express their ideas clearly and respond well to questions and instructions from staff. Nearly all pupils listen well to staff and to each other. A few pupils across the school have very well developed oral skills and they speak confidently and persuasively about their experiences and their opinions.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in reading. Many pupils develop a good grasp of initial sounds and use their phonic knowledge well to attempt to read unfamiliar words. They are reasonably competent readers at this point in the school year and a few have well-developed reading skills. In key stage 2, most pupils have effective comprehension skills. They identify specific information in texts and understand the difference between facts and opinions. They have a growing awareness of different authors and genres and respond well to opportunities to read for enjoyment, for example through the effective link with the local library in Canton.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop sound writing skills. By the end of the phase, many use capital letters and full stops appropriately. They write effectively for a range of different purposes, for example when composing a letter from Goldilocks to the three bears or setting out the lifecycle of a sunflower. A few older pupils in the foundation phase write extended sentences and express their personal opinions and values very well. In key stage 2, many pupils write confidently for a range of purposes. Pupils develop a good knowledge of aspects of grammar to help them to write more effectively. For example, Year 6 pupils understand how to add a non-finite clause to a main clause for effect ('Bellowing fiercely, the dragon leapt to its feet.') The writing of more able pupils is often well structured and accurate. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and this limits their ability to establish higher-order skills and to develop a more personal style. They use their literacy skills well across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop good mathematical knowledge and skills as they move through the school. At this stage in the school year, younger pupils in the foundation phase have a good awareness of numbers up to 20 and they count forwards confidently. Pupils in Year 1 are confident with numbers up to 100 and can match two and three-digit numbers correctly. They think through simple word problems well. By Year 2, their understanding of basic place value is sound and they use partitioning strategies appropriately to halve two-digit numbers. They use bar graphs well to record and interpret information about the colours of leaves. They sort objects well using Venn and Carroll diagrams. In key stage 2, most pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge move forward successfully. Older pupils tackle more complex tasks effectively, for example when calculating the circumference of a circle by using pi. They understand fractions and percentages and the relationship between them. For

example, they use a suitable range of strategies to work out the cost of sale items with various percentage reductions. However, they tend not to use their numeracy skills very often across the curriculum.

As pupils move through the school, most develop appropriate skills in using word-processing or presentation software to draft their written work. Many use tablet computers effectively to research information and to support their learning. Pupils import graphics and use basic animation software appropriately. They understand e-safety well; for example, they know what makes a strong password. However, pupils' use of database and spreadsheets is more limited.

Many pupils make strong progress in developing their Welsh skills in the foundation phase. By Year 2, many use familiar phrases confidently and respond well to instructions from teachers and staff. They enjoy developing a growing competence in using the language in a variety of situations in class. Many pupils in key stage 2 develop a sound knowledge of set phrases and responses in designated Welsh lessons, but do not use Welsh enough outside of these lessons. Their reading skills in Welsh are weak overall.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They show strong levels of enthusiasm and perseverance within lessons, particularly in the foundation phase and in Year 6. Most concentrate well and tackle new work confidently. Most are considerate when listening to the views of others and share readily their own thoughts and ideas. Most settle into their work purposefully and show resilience when faced with problems and challenges. Pupils with English as an additional language undertake tasks effectively, often due to good support from teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, including online. In the foundation phase, pupils develop their independent learning skills well, but they make fewer choices about what and how they learn in key stage 2.

Nearly all pupils understand the school's values of achievement, honesty, kindness and respect. They show care and consideration for each other and they respect the many different cultures within the school. Nearly all pupils' behaviour is good in classes and around the school. They are courteous and welcoming to adults and visitors. However, a very few pupils display challenging behaviour that detracts from their own learning and the learning of others.

Pupils have a strong, influential voice within the school through a wide range of committees, designated responsibilities and clubs, for example through the reading ambassador programme, the 'Caring Crew' and the 'Digon' group that focuses on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. They take their responsibilities very seriously and relish the opportunity to care for younger pupils and to assist them with their learning. The school council and young researcher group are purposeful committees and both make excellent contributions towards school improvement. For example, they feed back messages to school leaders on the quality of teachers' written feedback and how to improve pupil behaviour.

Most pupils have a good understanding of how to live a healthy life. Many take advantage of the extra-curricular sporting clubs the school offers. For example, the 'Family Fitness Club' helps pupils and parents to work out together, raising their awareness of healthy lifestyles and the benefits of exercise. Pupils enjoy using the variety of games equipment available during playtimes. Many purchase fruit for break time at the school's 'Snacko' shop, run by Year 6 pupils. Many discuss the importance of diet and exercise in a mature and well-informed way.

Overall attendance rates have stayed broadly the same for the past three years and have remained in the lower 50% when compared with those of similar schools. The majority of pupils arrive in school on time.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is consistently strong in the foundation phase and it is highly effective in a few classes in the latter part of key stage 2. In these very effective classes, teachers are skilful in the way they design activities, ask pupils questions and explain concepts. They often deliver lessons in energetic ways that excite pupils and help them to learn effectively. These approaches work well even when the lesson focuses on topics that could otherwise be unexciting, such as developing pupils' handwriting skills or their use of non-finite clauses.

Most teachers plan lessons well in year group teams. They take good account of the wide range of pupils' needs and abilities in their classes. They receive good support from teaching assistants and staff with expertise in teaching English as an additional language. The support helps to ensure that nearly all pupils undertake relevant learning tasks suited to their needs in each class.

The practice in the foundation phase provides a good balance between activities led by staff and those initiated by pupils. Teachers develop pupils' independent learning skills well in the foundation phase, where they give pupils plenty of opportunities to choose what and how they learn. However, the development of pupils' independent learning skills is less well developed in key stage 2.

Teachers in the latter part of key stage 2 manage a small degree of challenging pupil behaviour well. In the few classes with less effective teaching, the learning moves forward too slowly, the teacher tries to cover too much at once or low-level disruption by a very few pupils detracts from the learning of the rest of the class.

Teachers plan the curriculum carefully around a whole-school, thematic approach that ensures coverage of all learning areas and subjects. Nearly all plan lessons and activities effectively to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. Teachers take good account of the literacy and numeracy framework. Their planning for the development of pupils' literacy skills is strong. Strategies to improve the planning for numeracy across the curriculum are at an earlier stage of development. The school has considered the digital competency framework carefully and identified gaps in its current provision, which it is beginning to address.

Teachers link the topics that pupils study skilfully with the local culture and heritage of Wales, for example through visits to Victoria Park, Cardiff Bay and residential opportunities at the Urdd Centre. Opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh

language skills in lessons are appropriate, but the school does not ensure that pupils develop their Welsh skills enough outside of the classroom. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities, such as the coding club and book club offered at lunchtimes and after school, is a strength of the school.

Teachers provide effective oral feedback to pupils during lessons to encourage them to learn and to reflect further on their first responses. They identify strengths and areas for improvement in pupils' written work appropriately. Teachers use written feedback approaches consistently across the school and pupils understand their meaning well. They inform pupils about how to take their work to the next level effectively and they record the development of their literacy and numeracy skills appropriately in pupils' workbooks and through the progress tracking system. They assess pupils' work accurately and they make good use of day-to-day assessments to set targets for pupils to improve. Overall, the amount of self or peer assessment is relatively small.

During the 'Open Your Eyes Week', all pupils take part in worthwhile activities to develop their thinking and understanding about sustainable development and global citizenship. An annual trip to Paris for key stage 2 pupils offers them the opportunity to experience directly the life and culture of another country. Pupils in key stage 2 extend their knowledge and understanding of enterprise skills well through workshops with local business leaders.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school is an extremely caring community that celebrates the diversity of its pupils and their families very well. Respect for different cultures and beliefs and the development of fairness and equal opportunities are the foundation of the school's culture. There is a clear emphasis on promoting the agreed values in all classes.

The school listens very well to the views of its pupils. There are many opportunities for them to take an active part in decision-making and leadership roles, for example through the school council, the pupil leadership team, digital leaders, the eco council, the Digon group and the Caring Crew. The school council focuses very effectively on influencing teaching and learning. For example, they have focused recently on improving teacher and peer feedback and are now seeking ways to improve their own learning in classes.

The school offers an extremely wide range of opportunities for parents to engage with the school and to develop their skills to support their children's learning effectively at home. These opportunities build parent-to-parent relationships well, develop the language skills of parents new to English effectively and assist with the social cohesion of the school and its local community. A few parents have also gained recognised vocational qualifications and others have become valued voluntary members of the school and the wider community, as a result of the family engagement initiatives. These engagement groups have improved parent participation in school life effectively and supported the improving trend in pupil outcomes across the school. Leaders continue to seek further initiatives to engage parents in new and relevant ways, for example there is a new technology-based film-making project and a group helping to develop parents' skills with information technology.

There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to be healthy within the curriculum. A range of after-school sports clubs promotes pupils' fitness well, such as zumba, football, dance, family fitness and nutrition. The school provides worthwhile cultural opportunities for pupils, including tuition for musical instruments, engagement with visiting performance groups and an effective link with Canton library.

The school has highly effective systems to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. Teachers use this information well to set challenging targets for all pupils to achieve. The simple, but highly effective system has a direct impact on teachers' planning and the learning that takes place in classes. The regular meetings between teachers and senior managers on tracking pupils' progress have a clear focus and are purposeful. They have a very positive impact on the way teachers plan and adapt future work in lessons to help individual pupils to improve in specific aspects of their work. The system and its effective implementation by staff support pupils' strong progress across the school.

Arrangements for identifying and responding to the needs of specific pupils are rigorous. The additional learning needs co-ordinator supports teachers and support staff well in tailoring provision to meet the needs of all pupils, including through a wide range of intervention programmes. Teachers use a suitable range of standardised assessments to gauge pupils' progress and to pick up any problems at an early stage. Staff support pupils confidently in withdrawal groups to develop their English acquisition, social and emotional skills, number concepts and handwriting. This has enabled these pupils to make better than expected progress. All pupils with additional learning needs have an education plan that includes measurable and challenging targets. Staff review these regularly with pupils and their parents. Progress tracking meetings identify individual pupils who require accelerated support to address a specific learning need in the short term. These support sessions are effective in helping pupils to catch up and to meet their progress targets.

Leaders have recently improved strategies for promoting attendance. These include weekly class competitions, awards for full attendance and careful tracking of persistent absence. The school has used a range of robust strategies to follow up concerns with pupils' absence. Overall, raising attendance remains a priority area for development within the school's improvement planning.

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

Leadership and management: Excellent

The headteacher provides inspirational and highly effective leadership. She has a clear vision for the school's development and sets high professional standards for staff. These derive from clear educational values and ambitious aspirations for all pupils. Senior leaders have a good balance of knowledge and skills, which complement those of the headteacher well. The senior leadership and wider management team work very effectively together to implement the priorities set out in the school improvement plan and to ensure effective management of change. During the last four 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' wellbeing, engagement with families and the standards and quality of provision in the foundation phase.

Middle leaders undertake their distributed responsibilities well and contribute effectively to the work of the senior leadership team. All leaders take a full part in the rigorous monitoring of learning and teaching and the insightful analysis of performance information. This is making a significant contribution to narrowing the gap between the performance of various groups, for example between boys and girls and between pupils eligible for free school meals and other pupils.

Working closely with staff, the senior leadership team has implemented many significant and well-focused improvements to the way staff work together. For example, senior leaders have introduced the opportunity for staff to work in groups of three to observe each other teach and to share feedback informally with each other. Teachers share their knowledge, expertise and skills well through regular staff meetings and workshops. The school addresses local and national priorities effectively, for example in tackling social disadvantage through well-targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy, pupil wellbeing and engagement with families.

The school's governors are highly supportive. Between them, they have a wide set of skills and experience with which to support and challenge the school. They receive detailed information from senior staff about the school's strengths and areas for development and they have become more proactive recently in providing appropriate scrutiny and challenge to the leadership team.

There is an established and rigorous self-evaluation process. It takes very good account of information on pupils' progress and uses evidence from a wide range of sources, including book scrutiny, pupil surveys and focus groups. The school improvement plan has clear priorities and supports appropriate incremental change well. It identifies targets with associated costs and has a clear focus on improving teaching to raise pupils' standards of achievement.

The school's self-evaluation report provides an open and honest evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Improvement priorities link closely to the outcomes of self-evaluation. Staff at all levels contribute effectively to the self-evaluation and school improvement processes.

Senior leaders have established a highly effective culture of self-improvement within the school. Robust performance management helps senior leaders to identify whole-school professional development needs well. Individual staff identify their strengths and professional development needs in line with the priorities in the school improvement plan. A useful programme of workshops and peer observation groups allow staff to share their expertise effectively across the school. The shared post of headteacher across the week works very well due to the common values and priorities of the two post-holders. The opportunities provided to the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher by this arrangement has given them excellent on-the-job training and developed their capacity as future leaders very well.

There are regular opportunities for staff to meet and to work on a regular basis with other staff in cluster schools, for example to moderate pupils' work and to reflect on current practice across the cluster, including within the local secondary schools. These links have had a direct impact on developing teachers' practice within the school, for example in the teaching of reading towards the end of key stage 2

The school has an appropriate level of staffing. Senior leaders monitor the budget carefully and match spending closely to priorities in the school improvement plan. Senior leaders and governors have reduced costs efficiently through increased outsourcing, for example in relation to contracts for ICT support and estate functions.

The school allocates the large pupil development grant to a wide range of activities that benefit the targeted pupils, including financial support for music tuition, employment of teaching assistants for accelerated learning support and other intervention groups.

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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