



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

A report on

**Maes Y Morfa Community Primary School
Olive Street
Morfa
Llanelli
SA15 2AP**

Date of inspection: March 2018

by

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

About Maes Y Morfa Community Primary School

Maes y Morfa Community Primary School is situated on the western edge of the town of Llanelli in Carmarthenshire. There are 239 pupils on roll, aged from three to eleven, including 33 nursery pupils. There are eight single-age classes.

English is the predominant language for nearly all pupils. A very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and learn English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh at home. Around 33% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is much higher than the Wales average of 19%. A very few pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The school identifies around 44% of pupils are on the additional needs register, which is much higher than the Wales average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special education needs.

The headteacher, took up her post in September 2017. The school was last inspected in March 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

The school is a happy, nurturing community where the high level of care and co-operation between staff and pupils contributes well to pupils' wellbeing. Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and benefit from positive working relationships with staff. They are confident in the school environment and are proud of their school and their work. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.

Pupil tracking is effective and identifies the progress of specific groups and individuals. Over time, many pupils make sound progress and, by Year 6, achieve at least expected standards from their starting points. Pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are often strong, but they do not use their writing, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) and Welsh language skills well enough across the curriculum.

Teachers provide interesting learning experiences that engage and motivate many pupils to succeed. However, although a minority of teaching in the school is strong, the quality of teaching varies too much from class to class.

The headteacher's strong and purposeful leadership sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school. She has quickly established a clear vision for the school based on a commitment to achieving high standards of wellbeing and improving pupil outcomes. She receives purposeful support from all staff, who work well together as a cohesive and effective team.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' extended writing
- R2 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills
- R3 Improve the quality of teaching by sharing best practice more effectively
- R4 Provide regular and purposeful opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum
- R5 Increase attendance

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

The majority of pupils enter the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those expected of pupils of a similar age. Over time, many pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make sound progress and, by Year 6, achieve at least expected standards from their starting points. However, the school's track record in improving pupil outcomes is inconsistent over time.

Although a majority of pupils do not communicate well when they start school, their ability to listen, understand and speak improves quickly. By Year 2, most listen well and many communicate with their peers and adults confidently, for example when talking about a recent visit to the lifeboat station. Most key stage 2 pupils are attentive and listen carefully to their teachers and to one another, for example when discussing the advantages of healthy eating following a visit to a local supermarket. By Year 6, many pupils are articulate and speak confidently with adults, for example when discussing average wages and how to manage a bank balance.

Pupils make steady progress in developing their reading skills. By Year 2, most identify letters and sounds confidently and use appropriate strategies to read unfamiliar words. They recall the main events in texts and discuss their favourite characters well. By Year 6, most pupils read with expression and fluency and take good notice of punctuation. They gather information successfully from a range of sources, for example when learning about the Mayan civilisation in Mexico.

Many pupils approach early writing activities well in the nursery and reception class. By Year 2, most write an increasing range of sentences effectively, for example when recounting how to make cakes and jelly. They plan and write short, imaginative stories, using suitable sentence structures, but generally pupils do not write independently enough at length. By Year 6, many pupils write for a suitable range of purposes. They express their feelings and opinions sensitively, for example when writing about the sinking of the Titanic, and use redrafting and editing techniques to improve their work, for example by adding detail about who was to blame for the disaster. However, pupils do not always transfer their writing skills well enough in other areas of learning, or make sufficient progress in developing their extended writing skills across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop their numeracy skills effectively as they move through the school. By Year 2, most have a sound knowledge of basic number facts and use these well to tackle simple problems successfully. In key stage 2, most pupils understand an appropriate range of mathematical concepts and, by Year 6, many confidently use a wide range of methods to calculate in their heads and on paper when solving problems. They handle and analyse data competently, for instance to draw accurate line graphs comparing the loss of water from a cactus and a leafy plant. However, most pupils apply only a limited range of numeracy skills appropriately in other areas of the curriculum.

Many pupils develop appropriate skills in ICT. By Year 2, many use a suitable range of applications on tablet computers to support their learning, for example when writing a recipe for George's Marvellous Medicine. In key stage 2, most pupils communicate and share information with one another effectively. For example, they use word processing and desktop publishing programs to create a presentation to explain to others how animals keep warm in cold countries. However, pupils' ability to use databases and spreadsheets independently to collect, store and manipulate data is limited.

Most pupils have a positive attitude to learning Welsh and, by Year 2, many recall basic vocabulary, for example in relation to their topic on food. Most pupils in key stage 2 respond appropriately to simple questions and more able pupils are beginning to form their own questions to ask others. By Year 6, many read simple texts well and use a suitable range of vocabulary and sentence patterns, for example when writing about themselves. However, too few pupils have enough knowledge of Welsh language patterns or a wide enough vocabulary to enable them to communicate confidently in different situations.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and are confident in the school environment. The warmth and strength of the working relationships between pupils and staff mean that pupils feel safe in school and know what to do if they are worried or anxious. Pupils feel valued and this encourages them to take part in all school activities. Vulnerable pupils and those in need of additional support benefit greatly from the school's nurture provision. This provision helps them to manage their feelings and behaviour and raises their levels of confidence and self-esteem significantly.

Nearly all pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and well mannered, always greeting people and holding doors open for others. They show respect for adults and for one another, listening carefully to what their friends and teachers say and responding to their ideas considerately. They show respect, care and concern for each other at lunchtime.

Nearly all pupils are proud of their school and their work. Most have positive attitudes to learning. They settle in lessons quickly and move between tasks sensibly and efficiently. Many concentrate well in class and persevere when they find work hard. Pupils enjoy the topics they study and they work successfully in groups and pairs. Older pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own learning. This helps them to understand what they need to do to improve their work. They are beginning to be involved in making decisions about their own learning but, generally, pupils' independent learning skills are limited. A majority tend to rely too much on adults to direct them in their learning.

Most pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are very glad of the opportunities that they receive to shape the school's work. Members of the school council are proud of their involvement in deciding on the school's values and the positive impact that these have had on pupil behaviour. The eco-council takes an active part in school life and raises pupils' awareness of looking after their environment by organising recycling and energy saving activities. Members are proud of their work in designing the eco garden.

Nearly all pupils know how to keep healthy and safe. Most have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. Older pupils speak confidently about the need to protect their identity on line and the dangers of contacting people on line. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of eating and drinking healthily and keeping fit. For example, Year 5 pupils' visit to the school kitchen helps them to learn about the importance of healthy meals and food hygiene. Members of the school council promote good attitudes towards eating and drinking healthily, for example by running the 'Caban Snac' at break time to encourage pupils to eat fruit regularly. Most pupils know about the importance of exercising regularly to live healthily.

Many pupils and parents have responded positively to the school's focus on improving attendance, and pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. Despite these efforts, attendance has not improved enough in comparison to that of similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Teachers provide a wide range of valuable learning experiences that engage and motivate many pupils to succeed. Recent improvements in planning are helping to ensure that the curriculum builds systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the school. Increasingly, teachers are planning collaboratively and curriculum mapping is improving. For instance, staff in the foundation phase provide a suitable balance of focused and continuous activities that include purposeful opportunities for pupils to investigate, role-play and practise their physical skills. In many cases they provide pupils with opportunities to make their own choices and to contribute to their own learning.

The school has incorporated the literacy and numeracy framework suitably in its plans and has begun to consider the digital competency framework appropriately. As a result, planned provision for the development of pupils' oracy, reading and writing skills is beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to write in a broad range of genres. However, generally, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in a broad enough range of tasks across the curriculum.

A minority of teaching in the school is strong. These teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and engage all pupils effectively in improving their learning. This is reflected in the standards that pupils achieve in these classes. However, the quality of teaching varies too much from class to class. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is adequate and needs improvement.

Teachers have effective working relationships with pupils and use positive behaviour management strategies that help them to settle quickly to their tasks. This supports pupils' learning effectively. Most teachers encourage pupils to recall previous knowledge, and prepare interesting activities that build well on pupils' prior learning. Many teachers engage pupils' interest well. They match tasks appropriately to pupils' abilities and ensure that most pupils are motivated and challenged. They share clear learning objectives appropriately and most pupils understand what they need to do to succeed. In these classes, introductions are brisk and purposeful and teachers using a range of strategies well. They provide worthwhile opportunities for

pupils to collaborate on tasks. However, in a few classes, where teaching is less effective, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' achievement. They do not adapt the work to meet pupils' needs well enough and this means that learning activities do not always provide enough challenge for pupils, especially those who are more able. As a result, these pupils do not develop their independent learning skills and achieve well enough.

The school arranges stimulating opportunities for pupils to visit local places of interest. For instance, a visit to the Llanelli Wetland Centre promotes pupils' scientific skills well, for example their ability to identify the characteristics of freshwater creatures following a pond dipping activity. The school is successful in nurturing and developing the creativity of learners. For example, older pupils have worked successfully with staff from a local art college to produce good quality drawings and three-dimensional models.

The school provides a beneficial range of activities that promote Welsh history, culture and the local environment well, for example through the study of the area's coal mining heritage. Opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in lessons are appropriate. However, the school does not ensure that pupils practise the Welsh they learn often enough in informal situations around the school and this limits the progress that pupils make.

All teachers give pupils helpful written and oral feedback about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, they do not always follow this up to ensure improvements in pupils' work. As a result, pupils' ability to move their own learning forward is limited. Teachers, particularly in upper key stage 2, provide pupils with increasing opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of their peers.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Whole school pupil tracking is effective and systems identify clearly the progress of specific groups and individuals. School leaders and teachers use the information from the tracking system well to target support appropriately for identified pupils, particularly those with additional learning needs. Teaching assistants work conscientiously in classrooms to support pupils' learning. They are effective in implementing a wide range of appropriate intervention programmes that enable pupils to make sound and consistent progress.

All pupils with additional learning needs have an education plan that includes clear and measurable targets. Staff review these plans regularly with parents and their children. The school works well with a range of specialist services, such as the team around the family, the behavioural referral team and the educational psychology service, to secure additional, timely 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 provides beneficial programmes to support vulnerable pupils, including those with social and emotional needs. The school runs an effective nurture provision for identified pupils, which includes an innovative art therapy initiative. This provision raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence significantly and helps the targeted pupils to engage effectively in school life.

There are positive relationships with most parents, and the school provides them with appropriate information about their children's progress. Recently improved communication strategies, such as the use of social media, help parents to understand and support the work that their children are doing.

The school is a happy and nurturing community where the high level of care and co-operation between staff and pupils contributes well to pupils' wellbeing. The school's ethos supports pupils effectively in developing their social and moral understanding. Staff know the pupils well and respond positively to their social and emotional needs. The school promotes the importance of good behaviour, courtesy, respect, and commitment very successfully. The introduction of the seven core values contributes successfully to the school's vision of 'believe, achieve, and succeed'. As a result, pupils behave consistently well, treat each other with courtesy and respect, and apply themselves conscientiously to their activities. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe at school and take pride in their community and the various opportunities they are given.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Morning assemblies and visits from a local pastor promote pupils' understanding of issues relating to fairness and tolerance well. Frequent opportunities for pupils to visit the local community and local churches, for example to look at different sources of light, enrich this further. The school organises a range of worthwhile events to support charities, including supporting the local food bank. This promotes pupils' understanding of the needs of others well.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. This helps pupils to make sensible lifestyle choices so that they are aware, for example, of the need to provide healthy snacks in the school.

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

The headteacher's strong and purposeful leadership sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school. In the relatively short time since her appointment, she has established a clear vision for the school, based on a commitment to achieve high standards of wellbeing and improve pupil outcomes. The acting deputy head carries out his responsibilities conscientiously and supports the headteacher effectively. Together, they have introduced the school's new behaviour policy successfully and this has had a positive impact on improving pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

The headteacher has high expectations of herself and of others. She shares her vision effectively with staff, pupils, parents and governors. She receives purposeful support from the senior leadership team and all staff, who work well together as a cohesive and effective team. They share a common commitment to put the school's mission statement into practice, to raise standards and to provide stimulating experiences for all pupils. All teachers have clear and well-understood roles and responsibilities. This is beginning to support the development of shared leadership among staff and help staff to understand more clearly their role in supporting school improvement. However, these new arrangements are at an early stage of development and have yet to impact fully on teaching and learning.

Performance management procedures support professional development of teachers and support staff suitably. This ensures valuable opportunities for staff to improve their skills and to share good practice with other schools. The school has recently established links with a similar school in a neighbouring county to work collaboratively on raising literacy standards and with other local schools on developing teacher feedback. This renewed focus on professional learning is beginning to improve the quality of teaching in many classes, although it has not yet improved the quality of teaching in all classes, where pupils' progress is limited.

School leaders have established comprehensive systems to evaluate the school's performance. Self-evaluation processes take account of a wide range of first hand evidence to provide an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Classroom observations, book scrutiny activities and learning walks contribute well to this process. The school considers the views of pupils appropriately, for example to monitor the effect of the values initiative on behaviour and attitudes. The school's development plan is an effective document. It sets clear targets for improvement, outlines useful action plans and shares responsibilities equitably across the leadership team and other staff members. Focused staff meetings provide leaders and staff with appropriate opportunities to evaluate the school's progress towards achieving its improvement priorities. Although suitable self-evaluation and improvement planning processes are in place, they have yet to result in significant improvements in pupil outcomes.

The school's governing body is increasingly effective in supporting the school's vision and holding the school to account. Senior leaders keep governors well informed with useful, detailed reports. These include progress on activities and the use the school makes of outcomes of teacher assessments and national tests. As a result, governors know the school well and have a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. They use information effectively to challenge the school on its performance, for example on the impact of the art therapy initiatives made to improve standards of wellbeing. Their role in self-evaluation processes is developing appropriately.

The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, manages the school budget effectively. Leaders target finances well to meet pupils' needs and to support priorities in the school's development plan. The school makes effective use of the pupil development grant to provide a worthwhile range of intervention groups, in order to ensure that pupils who are eligible achieve at an appropriate level.

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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