



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

**A report on**

**Springwood Primary School  
Pennsylvania  
Llanedeyrn  
CF23 9LS**

**Date of inspection: March 2018**

**by**

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

## About Springwood Primary School

Springwood Primary School is in the Llanedynrn area of Cardiff.

There are 250 pupils on roll, including 36 part-time nursery pupils. The school also hosts a local authority learning resource class for 23 pupils with specific learning needs. These pupils are included in the total number of pupils on roll.

The three-year rolling average of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is 43%. This is well above the Wales average of 19%. The school states that around 30% of pupils are on the additional learning needs register, which is above the Wales average of 21%. There are a few pupils with statement of special educational needs. Nearly all of these are in the learning resource class. Most pupils are white British. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home. About 13% of pupils have English as an additional language.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2013. Estyn last inspected the school in September 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

Most pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well as they move through the school. Most pupils who attend the learning resource class make good progress over time. Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show great pride in their school and their work, but attendance rates are not as high as they could be. There is effective planning to develop pupils' skills as they progress through the school. Teachers have high expectations and provide interesting learning activities. They receive able support from well-trained and effective classroom assistants. The way in which the school supports pupils' wellbeing is outstanding. It creates a nurturing and tolerant climate that supports pupils' personal development extremely well. The headteacher leads the school well and receives strong support from an effective senior leadership team and a knowledgeable governing body.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve punctuality at the start of the school day
- R2 Improve pupils' ability to write at length
- R3 Ensure a consistent approach towards teachers' written feedback on pupils' work
- R4 Improve pupils' 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 for dissemination on Estyn's website on the school's work with the local authority learning resource class resource base and its impact on the provision for additional learning needs in the school as a whole.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

Most pupils enter the school with skills that are below those expected for their age. Over time, many make suitable progress and achieve at least expected standards from their low starting points by Year 6.

Most pupils who attend the learning resource class make good progress over time in line with their needs and abilities. They make sound progress in terms of achieving their own targets for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

Across the school, nearly all pupils develop strong oracy skills that support them well in all areas of learning. They speak with particular confidence about their progress and how they can overcome any difficulties that arise. They listen carefully to each other and staff. For example, in the foundation phase, pupils suggest rules for good speaking and listening, such as not talking over one another and taking turns. Many older pupils express their opinions thoughtfully, for example when empathising with the plight of the homeless on the streets of Cardiff. Year 6 pupils describe a character's feelings maturely and justify their thinking with pertinent reasons. Pupils display a positive attitude towards speaking Welsh throughout the school. By Year 6, many pupils speak enthusiastically about common themes, such as the weather and where they live. More able pupils are confident to extend the sentences to offer reasonable suggestions as to why they like or dislike a specific television programme on a Saturday evening.

In the foundation phase, many pupils develop suitable phonic reading strategies and use them confidently when reading unfamiliar words. In the nursery class, pupils are able to recount pictorial story maps on well-known reading books such as 'Shark in the Park'. By the end of the phase, most pupils read with strong understanding and with appropriate expression. Their reading skills develop well in key stage 2. By the end of the stage, many pupils have comprehensive reading skills and discuss the books they read enthusiastically. Many skim and scan texts to find information efficiently in order to, as one pupil put it, 'to get beyond the boring bit at the beginning of a book where the author introduces the characters and plot line'. Pupils' Welsh reading skills in both the foundation phase and key stage 2 develop well.

Most pupils in the reception class quickly learn to write letters accurately and use letter sounds to spell words appropriately. By Year 2, most pupils write independently at increasing length, using a lively style to capture the reader's interest, for example when they describe an imaginary character called a 'Giraffacorn'.

Throughout key stage 2, most pupils write successfully for a broad range of purposes. By the end of the stage, most pupils use a well-developed and interesting vocabulary to enliven their writing, for example when a pupil writes 'reluctantly, the small brown bear cub placed his paw gingerly into the icy blue water'. Most pupils use appropriate grammar and punctuation correctly and spell accurately. They present their work neatly and use a developing handwriting style. However, in both foundation phase and key stage 2, pupils' ability to write at length is underdeveloped. Pupils' writing skills in Welsh throughout the school are developing.

Most pupils' numeracy skills in mathematics lessons are developing effectively across the school. In the foundation phase, most handle money correctly and recognise the properties of 2D and 3D shapes confidently. They develop a good understanding of co-ordinates in activities such as locating the castles of Wales. In key stage 2, most pupils' understanding of the basics of mathematics is good. They demonstrate a sound understanding of multiplication and place value and use these skills in problem-solving activities successfully. This is a strength of the numeracy curriculum.

Pupils transfer their literacy skills to other areas of the curriculum successfully. However, pupils across the school do not apply their numeracy skills regularly enough in other areas of the curriculum.

Nearly all pupils make strong progress in developing their ICT skills. In the foundation phase, most pupils handle ICT equipment effectively. For example, they program simple robots to travel on a track and take photographs using digital cameras. By the end of the phase, most pupils are confident to download shapes and import these into their work. As one pupil explained, 'If I choose a park, I would choose a butterfly to fly in it which I would then enhance and edit over time'. In key stage 2, pupils progress to using internet for research. For example, they produce and interrogate spreadsheets based on the weather conditions in different European countries. More able pupils use spreadsheets to produce a profit and loss account for an imaginary football club, 'Springwood United'. The same group of pupils successfully produced a short horror trailer as part of their topic work. They filmed, directed and edited the film footage, enhancing the images with graphics, which added to the horror theme.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

All pupils have a very good working relationship with staff within an ethos of respect and inclusion. Pupils are confident that staff will value their opinions and act upon their ideas. Most pupils know where to turn if they are worried or upset. They show respect to adults and other pupils. For example, they understand the need to allow others time to express their views and they are conscious of the need to include pupils with additional learning needs.

Standards of behaviour are good across the school. Nearly all pupils are confident and resilient learners who readily engage in their learning activities throughout the day. They are confident meeting new visitors and keen to share their learning and achievements. Many pupils take up the opportunity of residential trips organised by the school, which help them to develop a wide range of life skills.

Nearly all pupils understand how to make healthy food choices when eating and drinking. They make many healthy choices about what they eat at lunchtime. They have a keen interest in taking part in a wide range of physical activities throughout the day and also in after-school clubs, such as gymnastics, netball, football and fitness sessions.

Many pupils engage willingly in opportunities to develop their leadership skills and responsibilities further through their involvement in various pupil groups. For example, the Eco committee co-operates effectively with staff and other pupils to

organise important changes to the life and work of the school, for example reducing the school's use of energy and increasing water efficiency by fostering greater understanding of green issues among pupils and staff.

The pupil-led 'A Team' promotes attendance effectively and imaginatively throughout the school, but it is at an early stage of development. Pupils' voices are evident in the way they engage in a range of opportunities, such as their active involvement in interviews for practitioners in the Creative Schools Programme and the selection of various members of the senior leadership team and the school's estates manager.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate a good understanding of right and wrong and issues relating to tolerance and equality through informative assemblies and by engaging with visitors from the local community. A particular strength of the school is the way in which all pupils show a high level of kindness and consideration for each other, for example through the support they give to other pupils with additional learning needs.

Attendance and punctuality has fluctuated too much over the last four years when compared the average for similar schools throughout Wales. The proportion of persistent absence has declined over recent years and is now at a low level. A few pupils continually arrive late for school.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

The quality of teaching across the school is good. In every classroom, there are effective working relationships between staff and pupils. Staff use effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour, and this enables pupils to settle to their tasks quickly. This improves most pupils' sense of wellbeing and enthusiasm for learning.

Nearly all teachers have high expectations for pupils and plan interesting lessons that challenge pupils to achieve well. At the start of lessons, teachers communicate lesson objectives and success criteria clearly to all pupils. In nearly all classes, teachers revisit learning objectives purposefully throughout the lesson and in plenary sessions. Nearly all teachers make suitable reference to pupils' previous learning and they ensure that lessons proceed at a suitable pace. The support that teaching assistants provide for pupils in classrooms and withdrawal groups is particularly effective in helping them to make good progress in improving their basic skills.

Across the school, the quality of teachers' questioning and verbal feedback to pupils as they carry out tasks in formal and informal situations is good. However, the quality of teachers' written comments and pupils' responses to them varies too much from class to class. In the best examples, there are purposeful teacher comments, which highlight the way forward and lead to improved pupil outcomes. However, too often, the feedback comments do not show pupils how to improve their writing skills and are limited to identifying basic punctuation and spelling errors.

The school has a wide range of relevant assessment procedures that provide an accurate and inclusive profile of all pupils' abilities. Teachers make good use of this information to inform the next steps in pupils' learning and to identify those who need additional support.

Across the school, all teachers plan systematically to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills, both within subject lessons and across the curriculum. As a result, pupils have interesting opportunities to apply these skills in their topic lessons. For example, the recent topic on Second World War in key stage 2 has enhanced pupils' understanding of the difficulties experienced by their older relations in feeding and clothing families on coupons. However, the plans do not ensure fully that pupils use their numeracy skills enough across the curriculum.

Carefully planned literacy and numeracy interventions provide highly effective additional support for specific groups of pupils. Staff record their progress and they use this information effectively to plan further support as needed. As a result, most targeted pupils make good progress in improving their basic skills. Teachers devise learning activities for individual pupils in the school's resource class particularly well.

Teachers reflect the principles of the foundation phase well in their teaching and in the way they organise pupils' learning experiences in their classes. Their planning ensures a suitable balance between independent pupil activities and adult-led activities. However, regular use of the outdoors for continuous learning activities is underdeveloped. The planning of activities in key stage 2 builds on the skills learnt in the foundation phase well and this enhances the development of pupils' independent learning skills. For example, the teaching approaches enable pupils to decide for themselves the areas of learning they wish to pursue as part of their topic work.

Provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is appropriate. Most teachers and teaching assistants are suitable language role models. They incorporate everyday Welsh in classrooms and around the school successfully. There are sound opportunities for pupils to speak Welsh, for example in specific lessons and in 'Helpwr Heddiw' sessions. Visits from Welsh artists and authors together with planned residential visits to Storey Arms and educational visits to Cardiff and Caerphilly castles enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the history and culture of Wales.

### **Care, support and guidance: Excellent**

The caring and nurturing ethos throughout the school is exceptionally strong and supports pupils' development extremely well. Nearly all pupils, many of whom have specific learning needs, make very good progress in relation to their individual, educational and behaviour plans. A particular strong feature of the school's work is its successful commitment to ensuring that pupils make enough progress so that they do not need to continue to receive interventions for extended periods of time. The extensive use of many outside agencies successfully enhances pupils' experiences and supports effective teaching and learning well.

The school has robust systems for assessing pupils' abilities, analysing information on their performance and identifying pupils who require support or further challenge. The school uses the analysis of assessment and tracking effectively to consider the progress of all pupils and responds appropriately by targeting purposeful support and challenge to pupils who need it. This process is very successful in securing improvements in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers also identify pupils' emotional and social needs at an early stage and provide them with effective intervention programmes. These interventions develop pupils' wellbeing, behaviour and social skills very effectively.

All staff in the local authority resource classes provide excellent opportunities for their pupils to develop as learners and young people. The team of staff in the resource bases works very successfully under highly effective leadership. The excellent working relationships between the resource class and the main school have benefited all staff and pupils alike. Much of this derives from the excellent partnership between the leader of the resource base classes and the school's co-ordinator for additional learning needs. There are highly fluid arrangements between the resource base and mainstream classes. Nearly all pupils in mainstream classes support pupils from the resource class very well and are sensitive to their needs. For example, when older pupils from the resource base play football during play times, mainstream pupils slow play to encourage them to score and celebrate with them when they do. Pupils from the resource class profit from the wide range of opportunities to access mainstream classes and clubs. As a result of the very good integration of the majority of pupils and the high quality of provision within the resource class itself, these pupils make excellent progress towards their individual targets.

The additional learning needs co-ordinator is highly effective in ensuring that pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders collaborate effectively to provide specific, targeted plans and interventions. As a result, the school's extensive provision of intervention programmes is very successful in meeting pupils' emotional, health and social needs.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, social and cultural issues. The school promotes respect and tolerance well and celebrates diversity very successfully through topics that reflect the varied cultures and traditions within the school's local community.

The school promotes the importance of healthy eating and drinking well. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping themselves safe and the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The school provides a variety of valuable learning experiences to help pupils engage with the creative arts and cultural activities, for example through participating in the school drumming sessions.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, which focuses successfully on meeting the needs of all pupils. She has communicated this very effectively to all members of the school community. The acting deputy headteacher, alongside the other members of the senior leadership team, provides strong support, and they work together well. They set high expectations for themselves, for staff and for pupils. The recent addition of the learning resource class leader has enhanced the leadership team's understanding of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

Senior leaders create detailed action plans and analyse these carefully to measure the impact of the curriculum on pupils' progress. Leaders act quickly to address any shortcomings and celebrate positive features of provision with staff. As a result, senior leaders have sustained strong quality provision over time and this has supported the achievement of good standards and wellbeing among pupils.

Staff at all levels carry out their responsibilities diligently and work well together to drive forward strategic school improvement priorities. For example, a recent whole-school focus on improving the teaching of reading has greatly improved pupils' motivation to read. Senior leaders collaborate very well with other schools and organisations to achieve improvements. A recent example of effective joint working is the valuable shared project on collaborative learning that has involved many staff. This has improved their ability to help pupils to solve problems and to become more independent learners.

Members of the governing body have a comprehensive understanding of their roles and responsibilities and carry out their statutory duties effectively. They make a valuable contribution to the strategic direction of the school. Through regular meetings with staff and pupils, and visits to school to understand the standards achieved at first hand, the governing body has an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result, it provides valuable support and a strong challenge as a critical friend to the leadership of the school.

Senior leaders have a thorough knowledge of how well the school is performing and what needs to improve. They gather and analyse evidence to inform these judgements rigorously through systematic and regular evaluation of the quality of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' books and listening to the views of pupils, staff and parents. Leaders' robust evaluation of the school's action plans is a particular strength.

All teachers use evaluation information effectively to plan for improvement. For example, the good use of group technology for shared reflection among staff on the teaching of mathematics has led to an increase in pupils' use of extended mathematics vocabulary. Leaders allocate resources well to ensure that they achieve identified priorities. All action plans are detailed and clear and they include a robust level of accountability. As a result, the school has a good track record in making improvements. For example, the plans to improve teaching have led to more challenging learning experiences for nearly all pupils. Improving attendance to a consistently high level has been more of a challenging target to achieve, but the school is using many positive strategies to address this.

Leaders have created a strong and vibrant learning community where all staff receive appropriate support to develop their professional skills and to share their expertise with others, both within school and further afield. All staff engage enthusiastically with these learning opportunities and use the knowledge gained to improve pupils' learning experiences. Senior leaders create effective performance management opportunities so that teaching staff receive appropriate challenge and support to improve their practice. The outcomes of well-planned professional learning experiences have a significant positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, the recent training activities to improve teaching in mathematics have resulted in an increased number of younger pupils achieving the expected outcomes.

The school uses its resources efficiently to ensure that spending decisions link well to improvement planning. For example, it has increased and updated information technology resources as a result of careful financial management. This has enhanced pupils' opportunities to develop their digital skills. Good staffing levels and an engaging indoor and outdoor learning environment ensure that teachers deliver

the curriculum effectively. The school uses available grants well, such as the pupil development grant, to support vulnerable pupils. For example, a number of innovative and carefully tracked interventions have enabled nearly all eligible pupils to make good progress in literacy and numeracy.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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

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