



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

A report on

**Treowen C.P. School
Newtown
Powys
SY16 1NJ**

Date of inspection: May 2018

by

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

About Treowen C.P. School

Treowen Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Newtown, in Powys local authority.

There are 140 pupils between four and eleven years old on roll. Over a period of three years, slightly over 21% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average of 19%. The school has identified 24% of its pupils as having additional learning needs. This is higher than the national average of 21% for primary schools in Wales. There are no pupils from homes where Welsh is the first language. Very few pupils are from a minority ethnic background.

The acting headteacher was appointed in January 2018. The school was last inspected in November, 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

The school places the development of pupils' wellbeing at the heart of its work. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most have positive attitudes towards learning. Many make suitable progress from their starting points. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good.

There are effective working relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers and support staff support pupils' learning appropriately. However, teaching is not always challenging enough and teachers tend to overdirect pupils' learning. Teachers plan engaging experiences for pupils, but do not always ensure that pupils develop their skills well enough across the curriculum.

There has been considerable instability in staffing and leadership over the last year. This means that the school has not addressed the priorities in the school development plan or the recommendations from the previous inspection. The acting headteacher has developed a clear vision for the school and has introduced strategies to improve these shortcomings. However, it is too early to see improvements in pupils' standards and the quality of provision. Governors are supportive, but they do not provide enough challenge or play a strategic role in school improvement.

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 Strengthen the strategic role of senior leaders and governors
- R2 Improve pupils' reading, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- R3 Ensure that teaching consistently challenges all pupils, especially the more able
- R4 Ensure that teachers' planning enables pupils to develop their skills progressively across the curriculum
- R5 Improve 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

Many pupils enter the school with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. During their time at the school, many make suitable progress from their starting points. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards meeting their targets. However, more able pupils do not always achieve well enough.

In the foundation phase, many pupils develop effective communication skills. Many listen carefully to adults, talk about their likes and dislikes and contribute appropriately to class discussions. Many develop a good understanding of the link between letters and sounds. They have an appropriate understanding of other strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Older pupils read steadily, but often hesitantly. By the end of the phase, many pupils develop their ideas suitably within a limited range of genres. They write short phrases and sentences appropriately, for example when they produce a short story. However, a minority of pupils do not spell well enough.

In key stage 2, many pupils develop effective listening and speaking skills. They talk to their peers and to adults confidently and discuss their ideas sensibly. Older pupils discuss their super heroes and justify their thoughts well. Many pupils' reading skills develop steadily as they move through the key stage. However, most lack fluency and show little enthusiasm when reading. They rarely express an opinion on the story in their books. The more able do not infer and deduce information effectively enough from a text. Many pupils' writing skills in key stage 2 are developing appropriately. They write for different purposes and show a sound understanding of different forms of writing, such as stories and book reviews. However, an over-reliance on worksheets often hinders pupils' ability to write independently and at length. A minority of older pupils do not always use capital letters and full stops effectively. Standards of spelling vary too much across the key stage. Standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work are developing suitably. Across the school, pupils do not always apply their literacy skills well enough to support their work in subjects across the curriculum.

In the foundation phase, many pupils make good progress in their mathematical development. They build effectively on previous learning and they interpret information from lists, tables and diagrams reliably. Many measure in standard units and they understand negative numbers in temperatures. They handle money well and prepare graphs carefully in order to present information. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils develop a secure understanding of number. In Year 6, most calculate competently using a range of different strategies to solve various problems. Pupils use their numeracy skills well to support their learning in a range of subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils solve time problems as they train soldiers for a 12-hour clock routine and successfully calculate marching speeds.

Many pupils make good progress in developing their skills in Welsh. In the foundation phase they respond well to a range of instructions and ask appropriate questions. In key stage 2, most pupils grow in competence and use the language

well in a variety of situations. Overall, by the end of key stage 2, pupils use familiar Welsh vocabulary well in a basic range of sentence patterns that they practise regularly.

As pupils move through the school, they gain suitable skills in ICT. In the foundation phase, they use an appropriate range of applications. For example, they develop their data-handling skills appropriately in graph work, when making a block graph to show data they collect from a traffic survey. In key stage 2, pupils use ICT competently to present their work, using simple graphs and pictures. Older pupils create a line graph to show rainfall patterns in Lima. However, throughout the school, pupils do not use their ICT skills often enough to support their learning effectively in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' awareness of e-safety is a strength of the school.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Throughout the school, most pupils know the importance of making healthy choices when eating and drinking. Pupils of different ages talk knowledgeably about sensible food choices from the school kitchen and know what makes up a healthy lunch box. Many participate in a wide range of physical exercise throughout the day and in extra-curricular sports clubs, such as circuit training and cricket. Most pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online, and they know where to go if they have any concerns. They respond well to adult guidance and support.

Pupils have an important voice within the school and undertake a wide range of responsibilities. Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs, respond well to the opportunities they receive to develop leadership skills. For example, older pupils are enthusiastic playground helpers, while others contribute successfully to various groups, such as the combined healthy and eco committee, helpwr heddiw and as members of the Criw Cymraeg. Pupils demonstrate a great interest in their roles and the Criw Cymraeg representatives regularly lead whole-school assemblies.

Most pupils behave responsibly in lessons and around the school. They listen carefully to what their friends and teachers say and respond to their ideas considerately. As a result of warm, caring and respectful working relationships between pupils and staff, pupils feel valued as individuals and they enjoy coming to school. Across the school, most pupils sustain concentration for extended periods and co-operate successfully with their peers. Many display appropriate resilience when faced with difficult tasks and use a wide range of strategies when they find their work challenging. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 quickly refer to their class display, 'What to do if I'm stuck.'

Most pupils respond well to the school's strong emphasis on encouraging fairness, equality and tolerance. As a result, most pupils demonstrate respect for adults and for one another.

Pupils' attendance rates over time have fluctuated when compared with those of similar schools. They have placed the school in either the bottom 25% or the lower 50% for the past three years. Most pupils arrive at school on time.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Overall, the quality of teaching is adequate and requires improvement. All teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and plan engaging learning experiences for pupils. Teachers and support staff manage pupils' behaviour well. The working relationship between pupils and adults at the school ensures a friendly and caring ethos. Teachers remind pupils of their previous learning appropriately and introduce learning clearly. Many teachers ask a wide range of questions that help to extend pupils' learning successfully. However, teachers do not always challenge pupils well enough, especially the more able, and they tend to over-direct their learning. As a result, many pupils rely too heavily on adult support and make limited progress. Teachers deploy teaching assistants successfully to support pupils who have additional learning difficulties.

Most teachers provide effective oral and written feedback to pupils about the quality of their work and how to improve it. Pupils often have good opportunities to assess their own work and that of other pupils. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to respond to their comments.

The school has very recently reviewed its schemes of work to ensure that curriculum plans include suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their skills across the curriculum. However, it is too early yet to measure the impact of these on standards. At present, the inappropriate use of worksheets in pupils' books often limits their ability to write at length. Although teachers are beginning to develop pupils' digital competence, they do not yet plan well enough to ensure that pupils develop the full range of ICT skills. The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in school visits that support their learning well. For example, visits to London and Llangrannog help to promote pupils' self-esteem and wellbeing. Visitors to the school include artists, veterinary surgeons, story tellers and local Rotary Club members.

The school promotes the principles of the foundation phase appropriately. Teachers and teaching assistants provide stimulating teacher-led and pupil-led activities. These activities include beneficial opportunities for pupils to practise their creative and physical skills. This helps pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and promotes their self-esteem and confidence.

The school promotes pupils' use of the Welsh language successfully. A good example of this is the regular opportunities for pupils to sing Welsh songs in whole-school and class assemblies. The school gives a prominent place to the study of local and national culture and pupils regularly compete in the school's annual eisteddfod and in local eisteddfodau. Staff ensure valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about Welsh history and culture. For example, they prepare interesting projects on the impact of the two World Wars on the local area. Pupils have regular opportunities to participate in traditional Welsh folk dancing and they are extremely proud of the three school houses to which they belong, Yr Wyddfa, Cadair Idris and Plynlimon.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The acting headteacher places a strong emphasis on improving pupils' wellbeing and implements a range of effective strategies to support this. Teachers and support

staff know their pupils well and respond sensitively to their needs and interests. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and, as a result, most pupils behave well in class and around the school. All staff make purposeful use of a programme to reward pupils who show positive attitudes to learning.

The school has a constructive and beneficial relationship with parents and gives them valuable support. For example, staff help parents to understand the school's approach to assessing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers set targets for pupils in English and mathematics, which they share with parents to help them to know the next steps in their children's learning.

Senior leaders and teachers monitor the progress of groups of learners carefully and use the school's tracking system effectively to set aspirational targets for all pupils. Staff review these targets regularly and, where progress is below that expected, teachers identify pupils who might need further support. For example, the school plans and delivers worthwhile support for those pupils who need additional help through catch-up programmes. As a result, most pupils who receive additional support make good progress.

The school provides pupils with many purposeful opportunities to participate in leadership roles that have a positive impact on their wellbeing and on school life. Members of the eco committee play an active part in making sure that the school recycles its waste appropriately. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to their own learning, for example through setting their own targets for improvement and helping to plan class topics. 'Wonder Walls' in classes display pupils' contributions to the topics they study. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning.

The school gives pupils worthwhile opportunities to develop healthy lifestyles through regular physical activities, after-school sports clubs and regular sports days. Pupils organise a successful healthy tuck shop and the bronze sports ambassadors promote various forms of physical activity at playtimes. There are effective opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills. For example, they perform in concerts and the school Eisteddfod and they benefit from the opportunities to play various musical instruments.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well in whole-school and class assemblies and through a successful programme of personal and social education. Valuable links with local places of worship provide purposeful opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual awareness. For example, foundation phase pupils visit a local church and learn about Christian celebrations and ceremonies.

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

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

The school has experienced considerable instability in leadership, especially at senior levels, and in staffing over the last year. Since her appointment in January 2018, the acting headteacher has quickly established a clear vision for the school and developed effective communication with staff and parents. As a result, members of 'Team Treowen' are well informed and supported and parents are confident that the school is now beginning to improve its provision and standards.

The acting headteacher is successfully managing issues that were not fully addressed during the period of leadership instability. For example, she has taken effective action to secure better pupil behaviour through staff training, and strengthened the support for pupils with additional needs. As a result, pupils' behaviour has improved and the school is a calm learning environment. However, many of the other improvements are too recent to see a sustained, positive impact.

The acting headteacher ensures that all members of staff have teaching duties and responsibilities that are appropriate to their qualifications and expertise. Staff at all levels make appropriate use of training courses to improve their skills, but leaders have rightly identified the sharing of good practice and teacher-to-teacher support as an important area for development. The school has formed a useful partnership with another local school to improve marking and feedback to pupils and this is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Provision for the performance management of staff is improving and the process is now undertaken purposefully by the acting headteacher.

The school's self-evaluation process identifies suitable strengths and most key areas for improvement. However, until very recently the school's monitoring arrangements were not systematic enough. An improved monitoring programme is in place and is beginning to have a positive impact. Leaders now gather a suitable range of first-hand evidence about the school through observing lessons, looking at pupils' work, analysing pupils' progress and talking to pupils about their work. The acting headteacher shares this information through staff and governor meetings. Senior staff work together soundly to use this evidence to evaluate accurately the school's progress to date. However, not enough staff contribute purposefully to the process and strategic school improvement planning does not yet involve other stakeholders, including the governing body.

Governors are supportive of school leaders and play an increasingly active role in the day-to-day life of the school. They are well informed and understand the performance and progress of pupils. However, they do not yet play a full role in holding the school to account and they do not monitor closely the use of grants. Their strategic role is limited.

The acting headteacher, with the support of the governing body, manages the school budget appropriately. Resources are generally suitable and the attractive indoor and outdoor environment promotes learning and good behaviour successfully. The school makes satisfactory use of the pupil development grant to meet the basic skills and wellbeing of the majority of vulnerable pupils.

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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