



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

**A report on**

**Wat's Dyke C.P. School  
Garden Village  
Wrexham  
LL11 2TE**

**Date of inspection: May 2018**

**by**

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

## About Wat's Dyke C.P. School

Wat's Dyke Primary School is in the Garden Village area of Wrexham. There are 334 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11, including 44 part-time nursery pupils. There are 12 classes, five of which are mixed age.

English is the predominant language for nearly all pupils. A very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and learn English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh at home. The three-year average of pupils eligible for free school meals is around 6%, which is much lower than the Wales average of 19%.

The school identifies that around 11% of pupils have additional learning needs, which is much lower 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 2011. The school was last inspected in November 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

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and demonstrate very strong attitudes to learning. Nearly all pupils show a high level of curiosity, insight and imagination in their work. Nearly all make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' ability to improve their own learning is a very strong aspect of work in all classes. Standards of behaviour and self-discipline of almost all pupils in lessons and around the school are high. Teachers foster a positive climate for learning and provide pupils with interesting activities that engage them well and enable them to make purposeful choices about how and what they learn. School leaders provide extremely effective leadership and a clear strategic direction for the school's work. A culture of improvement permeates the school and has led to the establishment of a strong teaching community where staff learn from each other very effectively.

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

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve pupils' ability to apply their numeracy skills effectively in work across the curriculum in key stage 2
- R2 Provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to communicate frequently in spoken Welsh throughout the day

## **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 developing pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning, and in particular their independent learning skills, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

Most pupils start school with skills at or above the level expected for their age. Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make good progress and achieve well. Most are independent and resilient learners, who tackle new concepts and experiences confidently. They make particularly strong progress in developing their communication skills.

Nearly all pupils are confident and articulate speakers. They listen attentively to other pupils and adults and speak confidently in a range of contexts. From an early age, pupils in the foundation phase converse very well with other pupils while working in groups studying minibeads. Most pupils in key stage 2 use partner talk very effectively to participate in lively dialogue about their work. By Year 6, most express their opinions thoughtfully, for example when discussing the concept of wants and needs in the context of protecting the planet.

Most pupils in the foundation phase enjoy reading and develop their reading skills well. They use their phonic knowledge to tackle difficult or unfamiliar words successfully. By Year 2, many read confidently and fluently and show a good understanding of the content and context of a range of different books. Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 show a very positive attitude to reading and enjoy sharing and talking about books and authors they like. By Year 6, most skim and scan texts effectively and retrieve specific information accurately, for example when carrying out research into the function of various organs of the body.

Most pupils across the school produce writing of a high standard. Most pupils in the foundation phase write engaging pieces with effective use of adjectives, adverbs and similes. The high standard of many pupils' creative writing is a notable strength. By Year 2, many produce highly imaginative extended pieces, for example when writing a story about The Day the Dragon Came. In key stage 2, most pupils use a range of genres very confidently. They plan, draft and improve their work thoroughly to produce extended pieces of high quality. Most pupils use appropriate grammar and punctuation correctly and spell accurately. Pupils use their writing skills to good effect in other subject areas, for example when writing about the experiences of children who were evacuated to the area during the Second World War.

In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils make strong progress with their mathematical development. They have very well-developed number skills, and show a sound grasp of shape, capacity and data, for example when preparing a pictogram and block graph about Easter eggs. Most have a very good understanding of time and money and apply their skills confidently, for example when timing how long it would take the gingerbread man to cross the river. In key stage 2, most pupils build well on their previous learning and, by Year 6, they have a sound understanding of number strategies. They are confident when using a wide range of mental calculation methods. They use and interpret data in a variety of contexts, for example when measuring the impact of physical exercise on their heart rate. However, pupils in key stage 2 do not always use their mathematical skills at a similar level in other areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils demonstrate good skills in information and communication technology (ICT). In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils use a wide range of software applications to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. They record their learning on a tablet computer successfully to share their work with a range of audiences. In key stage 2, nearly all pupils use their skills purposefully to support their work across the curriculum. For example, they make effective use of the internet to carry out research independently about space exploration. A noteworthy feature is the very effective use they make of an ICT application to continue their learning at home. By Year 6, many use databases appropriately to collect, store and manipulate data.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in their spoken Welsh and use Welsh confidently as part of class routines. They ask and respond to simple questions independently following basic patterns, for example to talk about themselves, describe the weather and discuss topic work. In key stage 2, many pupils respond appropriately to familiar questions, read short texts accurately and write well using familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns. However, pupils in key stage 2 do not use their oral Welsh language skills enough in other areas of the curriculum and around the school. This limits the progress they make.

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

Nearly all pupils' standards of wellbeing and attitudes towards learning are excellent. Pupils' confidence and resilience in tackling challenges contribute extremely effectively towards ensuring that pupils show high levels of motivation, interest and pride in their work. As a result, most are ambitious, capable, confident and independent learners who work together well and stay on task diligently for extended periods.

Most pupils throughout the school make worthwhile contributions to help shape the content of their topics. The innovative approach to pupil-led learning is developing high levels of pupil motivation. Nearly all pupils collaborate very effectively from a young age when working with partners or in small groups, for example during 'over to you sessions'. They make choices about what they want to investigate and are highly motivated about their discoveries. For example, Year 2 pupils have learned a wide variety of fascinating facts during their project on minibeasts by following their own interests enthusiastically.

Nearly all pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school. They demonstrate high standards of behaviour and self-discipline in lessons and around school. They feel safe and are proud to be part of a caring, ambitious learning community. Nearly all pupils are considerate and relate well to each other and adults. They treat adults with respect and are at ease in their company. They know where to turn if they need support and are confident that staff will listen and deal appropriately with any concerns.

Pupil voice groups are well established and exert a very positive impact on school life. In response to comments from the school council, the school has adapted the arrangements for written feedback to pupils. Teachers now place greater emphasis on self and paired peer marking against clear criteria. Consequently, pupils have a strong understanding of their personal learning targets and what they need to do in order to improve their work. Most pupils talk confidently about their next steps in learning.

The school council was instrumental in introducing the healthy snack initiative. Members carried out surveys, presented information to governors and communicated with parents to ensure the policy was effectively implemented and understood. Digital leaders have benefited from innovative opportunities to develop their skills, which they then share extensively across the school. A very good example of the impact of their work has been their involvement in providing film-making and film-editing training for pupils and members of staff using various ICT applications. A particular strength of the school is the recognition that, at times, all pupils and staff are learners and, at other times, all can be teachers regardless of age or status.

Nearly all pupils have a mature understanding of the importance of keeping healthy by eating and drinking sensibly and participating in physical exercise. They understand the importance of making sensible choices about lifestyle. Nearly all have a good understanding of e-safety and are aware of the risks in sharing personal information and how to keep themselves safe online.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of their rights as children and how the school promotes equality and fairness. They listen attentively in assembly and regularly reflect upon the messages conveyed. For example, pupils discuss passionately the difference between an individual's wants and their needs and the finite nature of the world's resources. This has a positive impact on their understanding of sustainability and the needs of others.

Pupils appreciate and engage extensively in the wide range of curriculum enrichment activities that the school provides, including a wide range of sports and musical activities. For example, the local tennis club and netball club provide skilled coaching sessions for pupils, resulting in good levels of pupil participation. Consequently, pupils from the school perform at a high level in a range of regional sporting and musical events.

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

The quality of teaching across the school is good. Teachers foster a positive climate for learning where pupils feel encouraged to take risks and to recognise mistakes as a step on the path to improving their skills. They use highly effective learning initiatives, such as the 'over to you' sessions, to enable pupils to make purposeful choices about how and what they learn. They use consistent strategies that sustain pupils' focus successfully, without restricting their opportunity to think for themselves. These approaches ensure that most pupils across the school develop successfully as confident independent learners.

Teachers provide a wide range of learning experiences that interest and motivate pupils well. They have incorporated the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales into their planning carefully. They have adapted the themes and topics they deliver to ensure that they provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to learn and to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities effectively. They have embedded the principles of the foundation phase fully into their planning and teaching. Teachers plan an exciting range of activities to develop pupils' skills in both the indoor and outdoor areas. They ensure an appropriate balance between adult-led activities and purposeful opportunities for pupils to work independently. All teachers plan effectively to deliver the statutory requirements of the curriculum and to develop pupils' communication, numeracy and ICT skills through themes that engage pupils' interest.

Teachers in key stage 2 plan for pupils' learning using a thematic approach that provides good coverage of all subjects. This extends most pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. Teachers take good account of the literacy and numeracy framework to ensure that planning for the development of pupils' skills is effective, particularly in relation to literacy. Opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in purposeful tasks across the curriculum are less well embedded. As a result, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills regularly enough in other areas of the curriculum. The school is developing its provision to meet the requirements of the digital competency framework well.

Most teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods, which ensure that pupils apply themselves fully in their lessons. They have a sound understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and provide tasks and challenges that engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm successfully. Teachers expect pupils to achieve well and provide an appropriately high level of challenge in the work they set. They use interesting stimuli well at the start of lessons to engage pupils from the outset. Teachers provide clear goals and instructions that enable many pupils to move forward quickly. They use questioning well to help pupils recall previous learning and to extend and assess their understanding.

All teachers provide purposeful feedback to pupils to help them to make improvements and to develop their work further. They encourage pupils to discuss aspects of their work regularly in pairs and groups. This ensures that pupils, at a very early stage, understand how well they are doing and know how to improve their work.

Teachers develop pupils' Welsh language skills well during specific Welsh language lessons. However, provision to enable pupils to practise and enhance these skills outside of Welsh lessons varies too much. Teachers promote pupils' understanding of the history, geography and culture of Wales well, for example by studying the features of different areas of Wales, such as Snowdonia, and through visits, such as to the local museum in Wrexham.

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

The school is a safe, happy and caring community that nurtures pupils' personal social, spiritual and cultural skills well. The school's 'golden principles' provide a useful framework for pupils' personal and social development. The learning environment encourages pupils to take pride in their work and to contribute effectively to school life. Teachers organise rich opportunities for pupils to reflect on their beliefs in collective worship sessions. For example, younger pupils at key stage 2 discussed the assembly provided by local clergy to explore moral questions resulting from a Bible story successfully.

Staff give pupils valuable opportunities through the school council and other pupil voice groups to exert a very positive impact on the life and work of the school. For example, the school council, digital leaders and the foundation phase council enabled pupils to express their views on the development of a new outdoor area. The school council organises an enterprise week in which all pupils take part in making items to sell at the school fair. This provides valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work. .

The school has established productive relationships with parents and gives them useful information about their child's progress and the next steps in their learning. The school has introduced an online platform, which enables pupils to access their work both within the school and at home. This enables pupils to access a range of 'flip learning' tasks where teachers provide useful learning videos to help parents and pupils to explore new concepts together prior to learning about them in school. Parents value this development and, as a result, they are more aware of what they can do at home to support their child's learning.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting eating and drinking healthily among pupils and ensures beneficial opportunities for them to take part in physical exercise sessions. Teachers ensure that pupil voice groups, such as the health council and digital leaders, receive valuable opportunities to promote pupils' wellbeing. For example, digital leaders presented a worthwhile assembly on 'keeping safe online' during digital safety week. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school ensures a suitable variety of learning experiences to help pupils to engage with the creative arts and with cultural activities. For example, pupils listen to the work of Welsh composers and benefitted from a visit by a local theatre group to introduce pupils to tales of Wales. This promoted pupils' understanding of Welsh heritage and culture well. The school choir has competed successfully in the North Wales choral festival. This contributes successfully to increasing pupils' self-confidence and their ability to work with others.

The school provides many valuable opportunities for pupils to become active citizens in the wider community. For example, pupils support several charities, including the food bank in Wrexham. Pupils represent the school well at the memorial service for the victims of the Gresford mining disaster.

The school has thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress. Teachers use this information well to identify pupils who need additional support. Teachers and support staff respond effectively to any concerns about pupil progress or additional learning needs through a wide range of interventions, including support of good quality for reading, communication, numeracy and physical development. The 'Boost' groups enable rapid response for pupils who have difficulties with a particular concept or area of the curriculum.

Senior leaders make good use of tracking systems to evaluate the impact of interventions each term. This enables staff to adapt interventions to meet pupils' needs and to ensure that they make good progress. They use tracking system well to identify and to take action when problems with attendance begin to emerge. As a result, a very few pupils are persistent absentees and nearly all pupils attend school regularly and arrive punctually.

### **Leadership and management: Excellent**

The headteacher's leadership is very effective and she has created a consistent culture of raising standards among staff. She has developed an ethos of strong collaboration and supported staff very well in fostering creative teaching of good quality across the school. The headteacher communicates her vision for the school

strongly, and staff, governors and parents have a shared understanding of the professional values that underpin the school's life and work. Staff share leadership responsibilities well at all levels across the school. The high quality of professional leadership has supported improvements in pupils' standards and the development of their independent learning skills very well.

The senior leadership team is very effective in promoting teaching of good quality and the provision of stimulating learning experiences. The headteacher ensures they develop their leadership roles extremely effectively in relation to performance management arrangements, departmental planning and curriculum meetings. The deputy and senior leaders have a strong strategic input into all of the school's processes and procedures. They encourage and promote a positive ethos of collaboration successfully and provide very effective support and guidance for all members of staff and pupils. This is a particular strength of the school. Teachers and support staff contribute successfully to initiatives aimed at improving pupils' standards, wellbeing and social skills.

Leaders ensure that the continuous professional development of all staff links clearly to the school's vision, its strategic priorities and the personal aspirations of staff. All staff benefit from a broad range of professional learning activities. Leaders are especially effective in identifying the expertise, strengths and interests of individual teachers and using these for the benefit of the school. Collaboration with other local schools to fund training sessions and to develop areas of learning is very strong and has had a successful impact on improving provision and raising standards, for example in mathematics and English.

The school has a strong culture of continuous self-evaluation, which focuses clearly on pupils' outcomes. The process is robust and very successful in enabling leaders to identify, monitor and evaluate the school's performance effectively. This ensures that staff target and challenge pupils to reach their full potential and to make achievable improvements. Senior and middle leaders use an extensive range of information on pupils' performance to evaluate pupils' achievements and progress effectively. All members of staff can easily access the school's self-evaluation document to add relevant comments and suggestions as they arise and staff discuss these during the review process.

Leaders are very clear about the priorities in the school improvement plan. These stem directly from the outcomes of the self-evaluation process. Members of the senior management team have strong individual ownership of the process. Through a structured programme of monitoring activities and meetings, leaders regularly identify the principal strengths and areas for improvement in the school's work and this informs school development planning successfully.

Governors have a thorough understanding of the school's performance and co-operate closely and effectively with leaders to ensure a clear strategic direction. They monitor the school's self-evaluation processes regularly and thoroughly. They have regular meetings with pupils to discuss areas of the curriculum, standards of work in books and latest developments in learning, for example the digital competency framework. This enables governors to gain a useful perspective on the school's provision and to challenge the school effectively.

The school is well resourced and leaders ensure purposeful use of the school's budget. Leaders manage and monitor expenditure prudently and link it carefully to the priorities in the school improvement plan. They make very effective use of finance from other sources to improve provision. For example, they use the substantial funds received annually from the Parents and Friends group to purchase ICT resources and stimulating equipment for the outdoor areas so that it becomes a valuable learning environment.

The school has targeted funds from the Pupil Development Grant sensibly for pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The grant mainly funds teaching assistants to support pupils' basic skills and wellbeing in the classroom and in intervention groups. Nearly all targeted pupils make effective progress.

## 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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