



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

A report on

**Westwood Community Primary School
Tabernacle Street
Buckley
Flintshire
CH7 2JT**

Date of inspection: May 2018

by

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

About Westwood Community Primary School

Westwood Community Primary School is in Buckley in Flintshire. It provides education for 232 pupils aged from three to eleven years old, including 27 who attend the nursery class part-time. Pupils are organised into 10 classes. The school was last inspected in 2012. The headteacher was appointed in January 2010.

The three year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 32%. This figure is well above the Welsh average of 19%. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language, and no pupils speak Welsh as their first language.

The school identifies around 42% of pupils as having additional learning needs and a very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very few pupils are cared for by the local authority. Very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background.

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 cares exceptionally well for its pupils and provides an inclusive environment where all feel valued and behaviour is good. Adults are quick to intervene whenever any pupil may be at risk of falling behind, and ensure that nearly all pupils acquire the skills that they need to succeed in their learning. As a result, nearly all pupils work hard and make good progress.

Overall, teaching is of good quality, and many teachers adapt their planning skilfully to provide learning opportunities based on pupils' interests and the questions that arise when they are learning about new subjects.

The school benefits from strong leadership that drives a clear vision of putting the wellbeing of all pupils at the heart of all that it does. Leaders share this vision successfully with the whole school community and this results in improved provision and outcomes for all pupils.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' Welsh speaking skills
- R2 Improve pupils' ability to make decisions, take on responsibilities and influence the life of the school
- R3 Improve planning to develop pupils' skills in the outdoors
- R4 Strengthen planning and provision for developing pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to adopting a flexible approach to planning, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils start school with skills and knowledge that are below the level expected for their age. Most pupils make at least good progress in their learning from their starting points. Pupils with additional learning needs make very good progress.

Nearly all pupils have strong listening skills. They pay attention well in class and show respect to each other when discussing their work or listening to each other's viewpoints. Nearly all pupils develop their speaking skills well. For example, they express their opinions confidently and clearly from an early age.

Most pupils show enjoyment in reading and are keen to read aloud to adults. In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils enjoy listening and responding to stories. They use their knowledge of letters and sounds well to decode new words. Most pupils use their reading skills effectively to read back their work. For example, in Year 1 they enthusiastically read scripts that they have written to create a television programme about The Great Fire of London. At the end of key stage 2, many pupils have strong reading skills and discuss the books they read knowledgeably. They explain complex plots succinctly and can infer meaning from the text, such as the reason for the way certain characters are feeling. They begin to use higher order reading skills effectively, such as skimming and scanning to find information quickly.

Most pupils' early writing skills are developing successfully. Nursery and reception pupils see themselves as writers. Many reception pupils are beginning to form letters correctly, such as when writing an invitation to their royal wedding party. By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils write interesting sentences, for example when writing a letter to the Jolly Postman. Most pupils at the end of key stage 2 write to a high standard across a range of genres. They use punctuation accurately and make plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. They can write extensively for a broad range of purposes and use paragraphs well. More able pupils produce writing that is lively and engages the interest of the reader well, for example when writing an original Greek myth.

Most pupils develop a sound knowledge of mathematical concepts as they move through the school so that they become confident mathematicians by the time they reach Year 6. In the foundation phase, most pupils gain a strong understanding of number, and can apply their mathematical skills to wider purposes. For example, pupils in Year 2 collect data on a tally chart and can explain the results in each column confidently and accurately. Many have a good grasp of basic number facts and they add and subtract two-digit numbers well. They develop a sound grasp of time, money, measurement and shapes.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have a good understanding of the properties of numbers and apply this knowledge well. Examples include when measuring features of a local skate park, drawing it to scale, calculating area of rectangles, triangles and the circumference of circles, and plotting a newly designed play area using standard and non-standard units.

Many pupils make a good start in developing their basic skills in Welsh. By Year 2, they know their numbers and colours and repeat simple phrases. By the end of key stage 2, many read simple texts and their own writing aloud. However, pupils are not confident enough to engage in simple conversations in Welsh, and their vocabulary is limited to simple words and phrases.

In the foundation phase, pupils use art packages to produce interesting pictures about their work. They also control a programmable toy to move across a grid. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils present a range of information on a word processing package successfully. They create graphs from data entered onto a spreadsheet, and control the movements of a character on a screen. However, overall, most pupils' ICT skills are not developed well enough.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure, and enjoy school. They are respectful of each other and welcoming to visitors. Most behave very well in classes and around the school, and the positive working relationships they have with all adults enhance their sense of wellbeing very effectively. Most have a good understanding of their responsibilities as global citizens. For example, they take part in fundraising events regularly, to support the local community and toilet twinning in Uganda and Chad. However, pupils' understanding of children's rights is less well developed.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and talk about their work confidently and with enthusiasm. Vulnerable pupils settle particularly well, learn to control their emotions and engage in lessons successfully. They develop their wellbeing from their starting points effectively. Across the school, most pupils concentrate well and use self-help strategies before asking an adult for support. Nearly all pupils know where to get help and guidance if they require it. They co-operate very well with each other when working in pairs and groups and settle to their work quickly and purposefully, and many show resilience when faced with problems and challenges. Most take pride in their work. For example, one pupil when talking about his Indian tale "The Tiger Who Couldn't Find Shelter" remarked, "I worked so hard on this for a whole week and it is brilliant!"

Most pupils develop their independent learning skills successfully, particularly in the foundation phase where they often make choices about how and what they learn. They plan a trip to the local library to gather books on their topic 'People Who Help Us'.

Most pupils use information well to help them make sensible decisions about eating healthily, for example by choosing salad at lunchtime and fruit at break times. They develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including online. However, pupils are not always physically active enough in school.

A minority of pupils are developing their leadership skills by being involved in pupil representative groups. The 'Criw Cymreig' encourage other pupils to use Welsh during the day by offering rewards, and the school council have introduced an ideas post-box in the school entrance hall. Eco committee members organise 'Eco Week', encouraging everyone to grow vegetables, which are then prepared by the school cook. Eco members also display pledges on their "Pledgehog" board, for example

their pledge to reduce the amount of electricity the school uses. However, pupils generally do not have a strong enough voice in decision-making at whole school level. Groups hold meetings and make a few decisions, but their effectiveness in seeking and representing the views of all pupils, and in communicating the impact of their work on the life of the school to them and others, is limited.

Many pupils and parents have responded positively to the school's focus on improving attendance and punctuality, and pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. Vulnerable pupils are beginning to improve their attendance in response to helpful support from the school.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of teaching is good across the school with a few outstanding elements. Nearly all staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They create a calm and respectful environment for learning successfully. Generally, teaching moves at a good pace. Teachers plan activities that engage most pupils well and provide a suitable level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Most teachers give pupils purposeful oral feedback about how well they are doing during activities and provide useful reminders to keep pupils' learning on track. This helps pupils to complete tasks successfully and to improve aspects of their work as they go along.

Nearly all teachers and learning support assistants use questioning well to encourage pupils to think about and to extend their learning. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for groups of pupils and individuals across the ability range. In general, staff are good language models and have a positive impact on the accuracy and high standards of pupils' language. For example, pupils in Year 4 learn about literary devices, such as alliteration, hyperbole and onomatopoeia, to help them consider the different features of a poem. Teachers give pupils clear written guidance on what is good in their work and what needs to be improved. Teachers provides valuable opportunities for pupils to assess their own and each other's work. Older pupils in particular enjoy and value the feedback from their classmates as this helps them to be more reflective about their own work and to consider what they need to do to improve.

Most staff understand the principles of the foundation phase well. They teach new skills, knowledge and understanding effectively and provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to learn through hands on experiences. For example, reception pupils practise counting and writing numbers and develop their problem solving skills well when they make up their own recipes using dry ingredients. Foundation phase staff provide a well thought out indoor learning environment and work hard to make the most of an old building. Nursery and reception pupils have purposeful opportunities to use the attractive and stimulating outdoor learning environment to practise and develop their skills. However, staff in the upper foundation phase do not plan sufficiently well to make consistently effective use of the outdoors to enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Teachers in key stage 2 provide a curriculum that ensures appropriate coverage of all subjects over time. They plan beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills to a high standard across these subjects. However, the planning and delivery of ICT and Welsh skills are less well developed. The school is

beginning to develop a contemporary theme-based curriculum that fully encompasses a wide range of active learning experiences to develop pupils' skills fully. However, this is still at a comparatively early stage.

Teachers adopt a flexible approach to planning that takes account of pupils' questions and suggestions well. For example, following pupils' interest in the name of a soldier on the town's cenotaph during their work on the First World War, the school researched the soldier's life with the help of the local historical society. This resulted in a comprehensive and wide ranging study of the soldier's life, culminating in all pupils being involved in the project and producing their own play based on his life and experiences. This involved the wider community and national media, and led to a link with a school in New Zealand.

Teachers ensure that pupils learn about the culture and heritage of Wales meaningfully, for example through the school eisteddfod, studying the works of famous Welsh artists, research on Welsh castles and visits to Glan Llyn and Llandudno.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school provides an exceptionally caring and inclusive atmosphere where all staff help pupils to feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Staff treat pupils equally and support their personal and emotional needs very well. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school has very effective anti-bullying procedures. It employs a restorative approach following whole-school training and as a result most pupils know how to recognise and deal with bullying, supporting both the victim and the perpetrator. Incidents of bullying are very low and, if they occur, are resolved successfully. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school has highly effective systems to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. Senior leaders and teachers monitor the progress of all groups of pupils rigorously, including pupils who are more able and those with additional learning needs. The additional learning needs co-ordinator has devised highly responsive systems to support pupils with additional learning needs and teachers use a range of valuable information to set achievable targets for all pupils. Staff regularly review these targets and, where progress is below that expected, they provide further intervention successfully. The school plans and delivers high quality support for pupils who need additional help, for example through language and phonics catch-up programmes and nurture groups. Staff make consistently good use of outside agencies to get additional advice and support. As a result, nearly all pupils who receive additional support make very good progress. This is a very strong feature of the school's work.

Staff communicate extremely effectively with parents and inform them, formally and informally, about their child's progress through discussions and annual reports. Parents receive useful information about events and the school provides them with a wide range of resources to help with learning at home. Parents appreciate the opportunities to spend time at the school, gaining an insight into how children learn,

and particularly appreciate the comprehensive range of highly beneficial courses, which help them to support their child's learning. Parents are extremely appreciative of the extensive support given by the Family Engagement Officer, who develops relationships with families before and during their child's time at the school. These strategies are particularly effective in helping the school reach and support the parents of more vulnerable pupils.

Many parents support with fundraising, join pupils on community projects such as a litter pick, and enrich pupils' learning experiences by contributing their expertise, for example in supporting a successful bid for arts funding.

There are very worthwhile opportunities for pupils to perform, for example in the highly successful summer school production, and the eisteddfod. The school makes the most of opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills and cultural knowledge. Examples include a number of art projects, including Patagonia sunshine wax resist pictures linked to a geography theme, and Andy Warhol pop art images of a pet dog as part of their work on the sixties. These activities support pupils' learning and social skills well. Staff provide pupils with suitable opportunities to take on responsibilities through pupil groups, for example the eco-committee, the school council and the 'Criw Cymreig'. However, currently they have limited impact on influencing the work of the whole school.

There are beneficial arrangements through the curriculum, assemblies, and extra-curricular visits to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school also creates an ethos with a strong sense of tolerance and respect. All staff support pupils well to develop their social and personal skills and provide extensive support for those with emotional needs. They work towards a set of agreed 'golden rules' to make the school a calm and happy place in which to work.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher has a very clear vision to achieve the best possible outcomes for all pupils within a highly nurturing and caring environment. He shares the vision extremely effectively with pupils, staff, governors and parents. In particular, the headteacher and governing body share a common aim to ensure that all pupils make the best progress from their starting points while creating a sense of pride and self-worth within the school community. School leaders work with energy, commitment and determination towards achieving these goals. As a result, they have succeeded in improving aspects of standards of teaching and learning notably. This has a particularly positive impact on vulnerable learners.

Senior leaders work together well and are strong professional role models. They ensure that all staff carry out their roles and responsibilities successfully by providing support and encouragement, and communicating high expectations. This creates an extremely purposeful ethos in the school that drives forward important school improvements effectively. Staff work together well in phase groups to develop an increasingly consistent approach to teaching and learning. They share positive features of their work successfully and this improves standards of provision across the school. For example, the foundation phase leader has shared her successful approach to involving pupils in planning their own learning activities with colleagues in the school and across the county. The headteacher welcomes advice and support from the consortium and partnerships with other schools, and uses this well to help the school move forward.

The strategic rationale for the school's curriculum is a powerful over-arching emphasis on reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment. It focuses highly effectively on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and positive attitudes to learning. As part of this work, the headteacher has recently developed a useful matrix to identify levels of vulnerability of individual pupils. Although this is in its early stages of implementation, it already deepens staff understanding of individual pupils' needs, and helps them to tailor support appropriately. However, leaders have been less successful in ensuring that the provision for developing pupils' Welsh language and ICT skills is effective, and that teachers' planning for pupils to learn in the outdoors meets their needs well enough.

Governors carry out their responsibilities well. They have been particularly effective in supporting the headteacher to address the financial challenges the school has faced recently, and raising the school's profile in the local community in order to secure the school's future. Leaders gather useful first hand evidence about pupils' standards and wellbeing and the quality of teaching regularly through a range of monitoring activities. They are beginning to involve the whole staff more meaningfully in reflecting on their own practice. These activities help to identify worthwhile priorities for improvement and to build a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they do not highlight all areas for improvement well enough, such as the shortcoming in pupils' standards of spoken Welsh. Opportunities to involve governors and pupils effectively in evaluating the school's work are at an early stage.

There are extremely robust procedures for planning for improvement. Leaders ensure that all staff focus productively on generally well-chosen priorities and the school has made good progress against its recent improvement targets. These include a highly relevant and worthwhile focus on improving attainment for a particular cohort of pupils throughout their time in the school.

The school is outward looking and supports professional development well. Through effective performance management, leaders encourage staff to increase their professional knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, with encouragement from the headteacher, senior staff attend leadership training courses. This increases their confidence and capacity to lead effectively within the school.

Leaders manage the school finances efficiently and prioritise spending carefully. This means that despite facing considerable financial challenges they fulfil most improvement priorities successfully. Overall, leaders provide good quality resources that meet most learning needs well. The school uses the pupil development grant purposefully, such as to reduce class sizes and provide individual support for vulnerable learners, which develops their skills and wellbeing highly effectively.

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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