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

A report on

**Trelewis Primary School
Trelewis
Treharris
CF46 6AH**

Date of inspection: February 2018

by

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

About Trelewis Primary School

Trelewis Primary School is in the village of Trelewis in Merthyr County Borough Council.

There are 240 pupils on roll, including 12 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are taught in eight classes, two of which are mixed age.

Around 16% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the Wales average of 19%. The school states that around 20% of pupils are on the additional learning needs register, which is similar to the Wales average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special education needs. Nearly all pupils are white British. A very few speak Welsh at home or have English as an additional language.

The headteacher took up his post in September 2017 following a 12-month period as acting headteacher. The school's previous inspection was 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

Pupils in Trelewis Primary School enjoy coming to school and the learning experiences that teachers provide. Most pupils make good progress in the development of their skills over time. They develop writing, oracy and information communication technology (ICT) skills that are particularly strong. Teachers plan well for the individual needs of pupils and challenge them to achieve at a high level. They encourage pupils to develop their independence and take responsibility for their learning. The headteacher leads the school very effectively. Staff, governors and parents share his vision for school improvement. The school's engagement with parents to help them support their children with their learning is very effective.

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

Recommendations

R1   Raise standards in mathematical development in the foundation phase

R2   Improve the consistency of feedback to pupils

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 leading the improvement of communication and engagement with parents, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils enter the school with levels of skills knowledge and understanding that are appropriate for their age. During their time at the school, they make good progress in the development of their literacy, numeracy and social skills. Many pupils make particularly good progress with their oracy and writing skills over time. Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress from their individual starting points.

As a result of well-planned opportunities to communicate with their peers and good modelling of language skills by adults, many pupils across the school develop effective speaking and listening skills. For example, most pupils in Year 2 talk clearly and listen well to others in their group when planning the best questions to ask a visiting police officer. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 show a good awareness of their audience and speak with expression when performing poems that use onomatopoeia to their peers.

Most pupils develop strong reading skills. At an early stage in the foundation phase, they develop a beneficial understanding of letter sounds and how these combine to build words. As they progress through the phase, they begin to use this skill to read with expression and good levels of understanding. They gain a useful knowledge of the features of different types of books. For example, pupils in Year 2 use a contents page efficiently to select and read their favourite poem. In key stage 2, most pupils continue to build their skills to read a wide range of texts with clarity and confidence. In Year 6, most pupils talk confidently about the plot line of a story and use inference to make appropriate predictions about what may happen next. Many reflect thoughtfully on the features of different characters and enjoy talking about their role in the story.

Throughout the school, most pupils develop effective writing skills in literacy lessons and apply these well in subjects across the curriculum. In the nursery, many pupils attempt to communicate meaning through mark making. By Year 2, most pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of writing. For example, they use their understanding of the features of a newspaper report well to create their own imaginative accounts of an accident at a theme park. The quality of handwriting and presentation throughout the school is consistently good. Nearly all pupils take pride in the appearance of their work. Most pupils develop strong basic skills in punctuation and spelling. For example, in Year 2, they use capital letters and full stops accurately to construct sentences. In key stage 2, most pupils use a wider range of punctuation including commas and speech marks. By Year 6, nearly all use paragraphs to organise their work. However, only a very few use more advanced punctuation, such as colons and semi-colons. Most pupils demonstrate a broad and creative vocabulary that they apply well in their writing. For example, a pupil in Year 6 describes how a child speaks 'boisterously' as part of a story about a child shrinking.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop an appropriate range of mathematical skills. They understand how simple data can be organised and displayed, such as when pupils in the nursery create a class pictogram to show how many people they live with at home. In Year 1, most pupils use their measuring skills effectively to

record how different materials change their length when squashed. They have a suitable understanding of place value and, with support, can show how numbers up to one hundred consist of tens and units. They develop a basic understanding of the four rules of number and a few pupils apply this knowledge well, such as when doubling 46 to make 92. However, by the end of the foundation phase a minority of pupils do not develop a good enough understanding of number at an appropriate level.

In key stage 2, most pupils learn to use their number skills with confidence. They have a good understanding of place value and use this well to complete increasingly complex calculations. For example, nearly all Year 6 pupils use their knowledge of multiplication and measure to investigate how the area of the front of mobile phones has changed over time. A few more able pupils use these skills at a higher level to calculate the change in volume of mobile phones to one decimal place. Most pupils develop a good range of wider mathematical skills, such as in shape, measure and time, which they apply effectively in subjects across the curriculum. For example, many pupils in Year 4 use their solid understanding of time to calculate the duration of journeys around the country. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils create a wide range of accurate and informative graphs. In Year 6, they present the findings of their investigation into the effects of obesity in the form of line graphs that indicate the link between the weight pupils are carrying and how fast they can run.

As they progress through the school, most pupils develop a wide range of highly effective ICT skills. Most pupils in reception use tablet computers adeptly when using applications to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. In Year 2, they take photographs and videos of their work confidently and share these with their peers through an online platform. By Year 4, most pupils search the internet successfully to gather information and present it clearly in the form of slide shows and word processed documents, such as when creating biographies of the author, Ted Hughes. They use online composition tools creatively to plan and record musical pieces that imagine what an iron man may sound like when he walks. In Year 6, most pupils understand the purpose of databases, interrogate them to answer questions and create their own records of imaginary aliens as part of their topic on space. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the measures they need to take to stay safe online.

Across the school, pupils develop their Welsh language skills to a level that is appropriate for their age and level of ability. Most pupils in the nursery join in confidently with a class song in Welsh that indicates it is time to gather on the carpet. In Year 2, most pupils talk with developing confidence about themselves, how they are feeling, and the weather. In Year 6, most pupils use a limited vocabulary to talk about television programmes they like and give basic reasons for their preferences. A very few pupils use the past tense to talk about the previous day's weather. In all year groups, most pupils demonstrate an enthusiasm for the Welsh language and understand its benefits.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils engage purposefully in their learning. They are consistently polite and treat visitors, staff and each other with respect. They show obvious pride in their school and their achievements and make good progress as a result. All pupils feel safe and secure in school. They know whom to talk to if they have a problem.

Most pupils enjoy challenging themselves to achieve at a high level. They show good levels of perseverance and determination when completing tasks and solving problems. Most pupils make decisions about their own learning with confidence and independence. For example, pupils in Year 4 create mind maps of the activities they would like to undertake as part of their 'Eureka' topic. As a result, they feel a sense of ownership in their learning and engage well during lessons.

During class time and around the school most pupils behave well. They show high levels of consideration and tolerance for others. Nearly all pupils interact well with each other in a variety of situations. A good example of this is when older pupils work collaboratively with their foundation phase reading buddies to improve their literacy skills. Most pupils work efficiently as individuals and in small groups. They listen carefully and respond appropriately to each other's contributions. For example, pupils in Year 3 work well with a partner when discussing the differences between living in a castle and a modern house.

Most pupils understand the importance of maintaining a healthy life style. They make good use of opportunities to exercise regularly, such as running on the school's 'mile track' and using the trim trail to develop their strength. They appreciate the importance of eating healthily and drinking water regularly. For example, younger pupils use their understanding of healthy foods to design a healthy sandwich for Paddington Bear.

Pupils respond positively to taking on leadership roles in a wide range of groups that have genuine impact on the life of the school. For example, the school council listened carefully to the views of pupils who expressed a need for additional play equipment to use at break times and lunchtime. As a result, school councillors worked with the parent teacher group to organise a sponsored run to raise funds and purchase extra equipment.

Nearly all pupils develop a good understanding of fairness, equality and tolerance. For example, they built their own dens to reflect the poor living conditions in which many children live around the world. Parents then donated money for a charity that works to improve housing conditions globally.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Overall, the standard of teaching is good with many strong features. In nearly all cases, teachers plan imaginative and engaging learning experiences at a level that is appropriate to pupils' ability. Teachers are effective in developing an ethos among pupils where they seek to achieve at the highest level of which they are capable. In the foundation phase, teachers plan challenges for pupils as part of their 'happy feet' activities that encourage them to work collaboratively to apply their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in Year 2 the teacher organises a range of tasks, such as creating superhero stories on the computer, working with others to identify the features of a superhero or planning questions for a forthcoming visit by a police officer. These carefully planned activities ensure that nearly all pupils make good progress in the development of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills during the session.

In key stage 2, pupils choose the 'chilli challenge' that is most appropriate for their ability and stage of learning thoughtfully. For example, in Year 6, pupils reflect carefully on their previous progress when deciding to undertake the 'hot' challenge, involving measurement of volume and calculations to one decimal places, or the 'spicy' challenge, which uses whole numbers and investigates area. As a result, most pupils make progress at a level that is suited to their ability.

In all cases, teachers and teaching assistants have positive working relationships with pupils. They listen to their needs carefully and respond in a supportive and caring manner. The quality of questioning by teachers and teaching assistants is good in most cases with an appropriate balance of closed and open-ended questions. A particularly strong feature is the opportunities provided by teachers for pupils to talk with partners and in small groups before answering the teacher's question or contributing to discussions. This is effective in developing pupils' oracy and collaborative working skills.

During lessons, most teachers provide pupils with useful verbal feedback about what they are doing well and how they can make improvements. They are clear on the aims of lessons and what pupils need to do to be successful. In many cases, they provide pupils with useful tools to reflect on how they are progressing during the lesson. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils use a traffic light system to indicate to the teacher their level of confidence in the task. As a result, most pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do during lessons. All teachers provide pupils with appropriate written feedback about their work. In a majority of cases this reflects pupils' progress against the learning intention for the lesson and indicates clear next steps. In a minority of classes, teachers provide enough useful opportunities for pupils to make improvements to their work and to develop their skills further. However, the overall quality of feedback is not consistent across the school.

The school's planned curriculum engages nearly all pupils effectively. Teachers involve pupils well in planning what and how they will learn. For example, in the foundation phase, the nursery teacher works with pupils to decide what their role-play area will contain as part of their exploration of Chinese New Year. In upper foundation phase, teachers work with pupils to plan the activities for their enhanced provision. For example, pupils in Year 2 plan to use the class computers to create superhero stories. Across the school, pupils enjoy collaborating with teachers to plan their topics and the focus for their 'big task'. As a result of these measures, nearly all learning experiences for pupils are appropriate to their interests and needs.

Teachers plan systematically for the development of pupils' skills. They use an electronic planning tool effectively to identify the skills they will teach on a termly basis, highlight assessment opportunities and monitor pupils' progress against these skills. As a result, pupils improve their skills progressively and experience the full range of the national curriculum and foundation phase requirements.

Teachers' short-term planning identifies beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, during their topic on space, pupils in Year 5 develop their number and measuring skills well, for example investigating the size of craters made in a tray of flour when dropping balls from various heights as a simulation of meteorite strikes. Teachers provide many good quality opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills. For example, pupils

in Year 6 develop a thorough understanding of the use of spreadsheets when entering formulae to help them calculate the variations in height and weight of people from different nations around the globe.

The curriculum provides interesting opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales. For example, pupils in Year 4 learn about the history of a local manor house as part of their study of the Tudors and Year 3 pupils learn about coastal erosion during a visit to Porthcawl. Many teachers model the Welsh language effectively, helping pupils to develop their language skills suitably. However, opportunities to develop pupils' Welsh language skills outside of Welsh lessons are not consistent.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school has developed accurate and efficient assessment procedures that senior leaders, teachers and teaching assistants use highly effectively to monitor pupils' progress and ensure consistently good standards. Teachers meet with the headteacher each half term to discuss how well each child is progressing. Staff use the outcome of these meetings very well to ensure that they are meeting the needs of pupils and to plan further interventions where they are required. This close monitoring of pupil achievement ensures that teachers identify and address any additional individual learning needs quickly.

Individual education plans provide specific and measurable targets for pupils in a format that parents and pupils understand. The school's additional learning needs coordinator works effectively with other staff, parents and pupils to set and review targets. The school caters for the needs of more able pupils well. For example, they work with teaching assistants on a weekly basis to develop their thinking skills through a range of challenging literacy and numeracy tasks. The school supports pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties successfully through effective intervention sessions with a specially trained teaching assistant.

The school's engagement with parents is very strong. Its termly 'learn with me' sessions are very effective in helping parents to support their children with the development of literacy, numeracy and wider skills at home. For example, the school provided parents of pupils in the foundation phase with practical numeracy resources and trained them to use these to develop pupils' understanding of place value. Staff use a wide and highly effective range of methods to maintain regular communication with parents. The school's website keeps parents informed well about events and developments and provides useful interactive resources to help them to support their child's learning. For example, sections within the website allow parents to work with their children to develop their thinking skills. Pupils' learning logs help parents in the foundation phase to understand what their children are learning and how they can extend this at home. For example, pupils in reception develop their literacy skills well when creating a written and pictorial account of their weekend activities. The class teacher uses this information creatively as part of classroom tasks the following week.

Arrangements to support pupils to make sensible lifestyle choices and to understand the importance of equality and respecting diversity are effective. This includes beneficial work with outside agencies. For example, the local community police

support officer delivers a beneficial range of workshops to pupils that develops their understanding of how to stay safe and be a responsible citizen. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school develops pupils' understanding of different cultures well. Many of these activities are effective in engaging pupils' interest. For example, a representative from UNICEF visited the school to talk to pupils about her work with people living in poverty and about her fund raising expedition to Mount Kilimanjaro that included taking the 'Trelewis teddy' to the summit.

The provision for the development of pupils' creative and performance skills is good. For example, pupils enjoyed composing their own Samba music and creating a dance, which they performed to other pupils as part of their topic on carnivals.

There are many high quality opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in the life of the school. For example, pupils in key stage 2 take on different roles as part of group work in lessons. The 'resource manager' collects suitable equipment and resources for pupils to undertake their activities and 'quality controllers' help pupils to check their spelling and grammar. These arrangements are effective in developing pupils' leadership skills. After school clubs provide good opportunities for pupils to improve their skills outside of lessons. In particular, the 'enterprise troopers' club provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop skills as entrepreneurs. The school has purposeful links with the local community that enrich pupils' learning experiences and sense of belonging, such as through participation in the annual village poppy day parade.

Leadership and management: Excellent

The headteacher provides inspirational and highly effective leadership. He has a clear vision that he shares successfully with all stakeholders. Senior leaders have a good balance of experience and skills, which contribute to a highly successful team.

School governors carry out their role effectively. They have an extensive range of skills and experience to support their work. They participate regularly in many activities to understand and challenge the work of the school. For example, they attend governors' learning days, listen to learners read and regularly attend assemblies. The headteacher, staff and pupils provide them with relevant updates about provision and standards that enable them to make informed decisions that support school improvement well.

The school has comprehensive and rigorous self-evaluation systems. These take very good account of the quality of standards and provision through evidence from a wide range of sources, including book looks, data analysis, listening to learners and engagement with parents. Senior and middle leaders involve all stakeholders in evaluating the performance of the school. As a result, they have an honest, accurate picture of what it does well and areas that need further development.

Senior leaders have established excellent procedures for school development that result in measurable improvements in communication, teaching and outcomes for pupils. For example, the focus of senior leaders on raising standards in writing has resulted in most pupils developing effective skills that they apply successfully in

subjects across the curriculum. During the last 18 months, senior leaders have worked very effectively with staff, parents and governors to improve engagement with families. As a result, the school now offers an excellent range of opportunities for parents to be fully involved in the life of the school. In particular, the regular, well attended, 'learn with me' sessions have been highly effective in developing parents' skills in helping their children with their education at home.

The school development plan has well focused priorities with purposeful actions and clear targets. Leaders use very efficient processes to implement change that result in high quality teaching and learning in nearly all cases. They value the contribution of all team members and engage them fully in strategically planned improvement activities. As a result, all members of staff feel part of the school improvement process.

Senior leaders have established a very strong learning culture in the school and provide a wide range of rich professional development opportunities for staff. For example, leaders have introduced 'teaching triads' for staff to work in groups to observe each other in the classroom and to share feedback on their professional practice. There are many opportunities for teachers to work on a regular basis with staff in their own school and others across the region. For example, teachers are part of a professional learning network to research and promote independence through thinking skills. This has had a positive impact on the ability of pupils to lead their own learning.

Performance management procedures are robust. The headteacher has high expectations of all staff and challenges and supports them to improve. In addition, he considers individual development needs, school priorities and national priorities to plan effective professional learning opportunities carefully. Teachers identify successfully their own strengths and professional development needs in line with the Welsh Government's Professional Teaching Standards. For example, senior leaders have introduced a 'walk in my shoes' activity, where teachers shadow the work of their colleagues, reflect on their classroom practice and make improvements to their teaching. As a result, all teachers are reflective, evaluative practitioners. This structured approach to sharing good practice is contributing well to raising standards of teaching and learning.

The school has an appropriate level of staffing and prioritises spending well according to school and national priorities. The school is well equipped and resources are of good quality. Leaders allocate grant funding well to support a wide range of activities that benefit targeted pupils. This includes financial support for outdoor activities and visits, and the employment of additional teaching assistants for intervention support. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the budget and manage it effectively to support the needs of 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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