



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

A report on

**Carreghofa C.P. School
Llanymynech
Powys
SY22 6PA**

Date of inspection: March 2019

by

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

About Carreghofa C.P. School

Carreghofa Primary School is in the village of Llanymynech, on the border between Powys and Shropshire. There are currently 103 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll, in four classes.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is around 9%. This is well below the national average of 18%. The school identifies 15% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is below the national average of 21%. Most pupils come from a white ethnic background and speak English as their first language. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home. About 3% of pupils are learning English as an additional language.

The headteacher took up her post in April 2013. The last inspection was in November 2011.

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 is a nurturing community where teachers and support staff know individual pupils very well and meet their social and emotional needs effectively. As a result, nearly all pupils display high levels of wellbeing. Pupils of all ages and abilities undertake roles on numerous pupil committees and have a strong voice in the school's life and work.

The school provides an interesting curriculum for pupils and there are increasing opportunities for pupils to follow their own interests. As a result, most pupils enjoy learning, make good progress from their starting points and achieve well by the end of key stage 2. Most pupils use their speaking and listening, reading and information and communication technology (ICT) skills confidently in their work across the curriculum.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which she communicates successfully. The governing body supports and challenges the school well. Teachers and teaching assistants have a secure knowledge of their roles and responsibilities and carry them out effectively. They collaborate productively with colleagues in other local schools to introduce and develop new curriculum initiatives.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the provision for pupils to use their writing and numeracy skills independently in their work across the curriculum
- R2 Raise standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation
- R3 Improve the quality of outdoor learning experiences in the foundation phase
- R4 Improve pupils' punctuality at the start of the school day

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

Overall, most pupils make good progress from their starting points as they move through the school and achieve expected, or better, standards by the end of key stage 2. Pupils with additional learning needs, including those with statements of special educational need, make good progress towards their individual targets.

Throughout the school, standards in pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. As members of school committees, many pupils become articulate speakers and communicate confidently with adults in more formal contexts, for example, when giving presentations to the governing body. Nearly all pupils listen and respond positively to teachers' questions and instructions. They listen respectfully to the contributions of other pupils during group discussions.

Across the school, many pupils have positive attitudes towards learning Welsh. In the foundation phase, they respond well to simple questions about themselves and where they live. By Year 6, many pupils successfully express their likes and dislikes. They extend their answers to questions by adding further detail. However, many pupils lack confidence in speaking Welsh outside formal Welsh lessons.

Most pupils read for a variety of purposes, both in books and online, and make good progress in developing their reading skills as they move through the school. By Year 2, most pupils use a range of strategies, including their knowledge of letters and sounds, effectively to read unfamiliar words. They read with increasing fluency and show good understanding of the difference between fiction and information texts. Many pupils recognise Welsh words in books and in the classroom environment.

During key stage 2, pupils read books by a widening range of authors and many read aloud expressively to convey meaning. A pupil in Year 4, for instance, portrayed very effectively the 'sneering attitude' of a character in a story. Many pupils use their skills of inference and deduction with increasing confidence when discussing texts during shared reading sessions. By Year 6, most pupils read fluently, with good understanding. Nearly all pupils use the internet successfully to conduct research and retrieve information. Many pupils read familiar Welsh texts with appropriate pronunciation and understanding.

Throughout the school, pupils write in a wide range of forms and for a variety of interesting purposes. However, many pupils, particularly the more able, do not use their writing skills independently to a high enough standard in their work across the curriculum. Also, the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation varies too much.

During the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress from writing individual letters and words to composing simple sentences using basic punctuation. By Year 2, the majority of pupils write entertaining information about mythical creatures and use a wider range of punctuation, including apostrophes. Many blend sounds correctly in order to spell words they want to write.

In Year 4, many pupils write sensitive diary extracts about the Aberfan disaster and use adjectives, similes and metaphors well to describe people's emotions. In Year 6, pupils write impassioned speeches against racism, inspired by Martin Luther King's, 'I have a dream', speech. Many structure their arguments well and write persuasively. Many pupils write competently in Welsh using the vocabulary and sentence patterns they have learned.

Most pupils develop a sound knowledge of mathematical concepts during mathematics lessons. Overall, however, pupils do not use their numeracy skills regularly and independently enough in their work across all areas of learning.

By the end of Year 2, most pupils recall number facts quickly. They understand how to use simple scales to balance two weights accurately and make predictions of the weight of different objects. By Year 6, most pupils use their numeracy skills effectively and confidently. In their 1960s history project, for example, they calculate the area and perimeter of a new school for the children of Aberfan.

Nearly all pupils develop a good range of ICT skills as they move through the school. In the foundation phase, most pupils know how to add a picture to text and present their work appropriately. For instance, pupils in Year 2 create videos and presentations linked to their topic about mythical creatures.

In key stage 2, nearly all pupils search the internet for information and import text, illustrations and sounds into their electronic presentations competently. They use electronic tablets and simple programs to create graphs and present data effectively.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils display high levels of wellbeing. They feel safe and valued as individuals and enjoy school. Most pupils know how to stay safe online. For example, they understand the need not to reveal passwords on shared electronic learning platforms.

Nearly all pupils behave calmly and responsibly in class and while moving around the school. In lessons, most pupils settle to their work quickly and move between tasks sensibly. Nearly all pupils show respect and courtesy towards each other, adults and visitors. They work happily individually, in pairs and in groups. They have positive attitudes to learning and discuss their work enthusiastically.

Across the school, nearly all pupils collaborate productively in their work. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 support each other when measuring and pouring liquids to create magical potions for mythical creatures. In key stage 2, most pupils show high levels of self-control and respect the contributions of others. For example, Year 6 pupils have a mature understanding of the need to allow others to speak when discussing controversial topics.

A notable feature of the school is the wide variety of responsibilities that pupils of all ages and abilities undertake through the extensive range of committees. This has a positive impact on their confidence in interacting with new people and adults. For example, digital leaders speak proudly about their successful project with pupils and teachers from other local schools to create a programmable circuit that records the number of footsteps pupils take every day.

Throughout the school, many pupils develop effective entrepreneurial skills through their involvement in a number of business ventures. They use the funds raised effectively to acquire new resources. For instance, reception and Year 1 pupils raised money by selling a photo calendar they created, with the support of local businesses, to purchase a new guinea pig for the class.

Most pupils understand the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices. For example, members of the wellbeing committee held healthy eating competitions for pupils and created leaflets for parents and carers to promote healthy food choices. Most pupils also enjoy opportunities to be physically active, such as running the daily mile. Many participate enthusiastically in a varied range of extra-curricular activities, including circuit training, gardening, creative arts and coding club that further extend their learning and support their happiness and wellbeing.

Nearly all pupils respond positively to the school's strong emphasis on core values such as encouraging inclusion and equality for all. The 'super ambassadors' help promote this value. For example, they organised a successful event with other schools, attended by the children's commissioner for Wales, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Nearly all pupils develop a good understanding of their role in promoting sustainable living. For example, pupils on the eco committee talk knowledgeably about the reasons for recycling and reusing plastic.

Most pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and respond positively to opportunities to achieve rewards for good attendance. However, a few pupils do not always arrive punctually at the start of the school day and therefore miss early morning learning activities.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Working relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are strong and help provide a positive atmosphere for learning in all classes. Teachers and support staff manage pupils' behaviour well so that nearly all lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils learn effectively. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who need additional help with their learning. As a result, these pupils contribute fully to class discussions and group activities.

Teachers use a wide variety of approaches and resources to cater for pupils' needs. Most lessons build well on pupils' previous learning and offer a good balance between teacher input and opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas. Teachers usually plan effectively to meet the needs of older and younger pupils in classes that contain mixed age groups.

In the foundation phase, teachers give pupils many opportunities in class to learn through practical experiences using a variety of man-made and natural materials. These opportunities arouse pupils' interest and eagerness to engage in their learning. However, teachers do not make the most of the outdoors to enrich and extend pupils' learning and give them experiences that they cannot have indoors.

The majority of teachers give pupils clear criteria for the successful completion of their tasks so that they understand what teachers expect of them. Teachers' verbal and written feedback helps pupils to improve their work. Pupils also benefit from regular opportunities to evaluate their own and other pupils' work, which helps them understand what they are doing well and what they need to improve.

The school provides a rich and varied curriculum for pupils. Careful planning ensures progression and avoids unnecessary repetition in pupils' learning experiences as they move through the school. A particular strength of the curriculum is the opportunity for pupils to follow their own interests during 'genius hours' on Fridays. These opportunities enable pupils to exercise choice over what and how they learn. For example, a pupil in Year 6 wanted to find out what ingredients and methods she needed to make chocolate sprinkle cakes. Other pupils, inspired by her idea, joined her. Together, they followed their project through to a successful conclusion.

The school promotes pupils' understanding of the cultural and linguistic diversity of Wales effectively. For example, it holds an annual Eisteddfod to celebrate St David's Day and pupils work with a local music trust and Sinfonia Cymru to create a concert. The school's provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills in lessons is good. Welsh speakers in the local community help develop older pupils' Welsh language skills and members of the criw Cymraeg encourage pupils to speak Welsh outside lessons. However, it is too early for the impact of these initiatives to be evident in pupils' greater confidence in speaking Welsh outside formal lessons.

There are many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their speaking and listening, reading and ICT skills in their work across the curriculum. In Year 6, the school is piloting an innovative approach to using ICT for writing in many different contexts. Early indications are that this approach is raising pupils' motivation to write, particularly boys, and the quantity and quality of writing they complete independently. In other classes, however, teachers sometimes over-direct tasks. For example, worksheets often restrict the capacity of more able pupils to use their writing and numeracy skills independently to produce the highest quality of work of which they are capable.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a nurturing community with a strong level of care and co-operation between staff and parents to the benefit of the pupils. Teachers and support staff know individual pupils very well and provide effectively for their social and emotional needs. They have a strong sense of empathy and compassion towards all pupils.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Through planned learning experiences, displays and the work of pupils who are digital leaders, it ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when working online.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Members of staff encourage pupils to participate in a wide range of activities during the day, and after school, that develop further their health and fitness. For example, many teaching assistants plan and run enjoyable extra-curricular activities, such as gardening club, that support pupils' happiness and wellbeing.

There are thorough procedures to track pupils' progress and monitor their wellbeing during their time at the school. The headteacher holds regular meetings with class teachers to discuss every pupil's academic progress and their social and emotional development. These meetings identify effectively any underperformance or additional support that pupils might need.

The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is effective. Teachers use a variety of methods to provide appropriate support for those who need additional help. A good example of this is the successful intervention to develop a group of pupils' basic skills in Year 6. Pupils' individual education plans include clear targets. Teachers and support staff implement these plans effectively to ensure that most pupils make good progress towards their targets. Parents of pupils with additional learning needs receive useful information about their child's achievements and contribute fully to reviews of their child's progress.

Parents receive regular newsletters and emails from the school informing them, for example, about policies and forthcoming events. They appreciate this contact and information and find it helpful. Occasionally, however, the school does not inform parents soon enough about planned assessments or procedures.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take an active role in suggesting improvements and making decisions about aspects of life in school. For example, the cwiw Cymraeg introduced the 'Dilys the dragon' initiative to reward the class that uses the widest range of Welsh language patterns throughout the week. The 'solve it' committee helps resolve problems brought to its attention, such as a constantly dripping tap in one of the pupils' toilets.

All pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. School assemblies cover a wide range of topics related to the school's values, such as the importance of honesty, perseverance, respect and taking responsibility. They provide valuable occasions for pupils to come together as a community, to share and reflect on the decisions they make and their relationships with others.

Rewards for good attendance and other relevant strategies are helping maintain recent improvements in pupils' attendance. However, there is some ambiguity surrounding the formal school starting time. This affects parents' and pupils' understanding of when they should arrive in the morning. As a result, a few pupils regularly miss some early morning activities and opportunities for learning.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which she communicates well to pupils, staff, governors and parents. Her vision successfully promotes the development of happy, successful learners in an inclusive and supportive environment. As a result, most pupils achieve well in many areas and have high levels of wellbeing.

Teachers and teaching assistants work conscientiously and support the headteacher well. They have a secure knowledge of their roles and responsibilities and carry them out effectively. Leaders encourage staff to try out new ideas. This promotes staff confidence to develop innovative practice, for example, in using ICT to develop the writing skills of older key stage 2 pupils.

Arrangements for the professional development of staff are successful. The management of staff performance is effective and links directly to the school's priorities and individual teachers' needs. These arrangements have a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve, for example, in reading.

Teachers collaborate effectively with colleagues in other primary and secondary schools within the local cluster. For example, they work together to develop their understanding of the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales. This is having a beneficial impact on teachers' knowledge and on the learning experiences that they provide for pupils. An effective example of this is the increased opportunities pupils have to choose the focus of their own learning.

Leaders monitor the school's work effectively. They consider a wide range of information, including assessment data, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. They use this information effectively to form a fair and mostly accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The priorities in the school development plan are appropriate and link directly to the evidence gathered during the self-evaluation process. Leaders plan suitable actions to address priorities and have achieved improvements in many areas, such as the Welsh language skills many pupils demonstrate within lessons.

Members of staff take careful account of pupils' views through the work of numerous pupil committees as a part of the school's improvement processes. For example, the literacy committee has increased the range of books in the school's library and the sports ambassadors have been instrumental in implementing the 'daily mile' in which nearly all pupils participate. Around the school, each committee has a dedicated display board, which enables them to communicate the results of their activities to everyone in the school community. Pupils' contributions to improving the life and work of the school are a notable strength.

Governors visit the school regularly to gather first-hand information. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this knowledge to support and challenge leaders successfully, for example, to evaluate the impact on pupils' spelling skills of their increased use of ICT for writing.

The headteacher and governing body monitor the school's budget and resources carefully. They target available finances well to meet pupils' needs and to support priorities in the school's development plan, for example, to purchase ICT resources. They use the pupil development grant successfully to promote the inclusion and wellbeing of eligible pupils and to support the development of their literacy and numeracy skills.

Members of staff use the indoor learning environment effectively to support pupils' learning. However, they do not exploit fully the potential of the outdoor environment, including forest school, to develop pupils' independent skills. For example, there is a limited range of resources outside classrooms for pupils in the foundation phase. Pupils do not spend enough time outdoors, regularly applying their physical, literacy and numeracy skills in their work across all areas of learning.

Leaders are proactive in seeking out extra funding to support improvement. They use the money they receive to buy resources to enrich pupils' learning experiences. For example, they have secured funding from a large supermarket to develop the outdoor areas. In addition, the parent teacher association contributes significant funds to boost the school's resources. For example, they arranged new playground markings for pupils to use in their play at break times. Overall, the school uses available resources efficiently to benefit all 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:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

© Crown Copyright 2019: This report may be re used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 31/05/2019