



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

A report on

**Penllergaer Primary School
Pontardulais Road
Penllergaer
Swansea
SA4 9DB**

Date of inspection: November 2019

by

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

About Penllergaer Primary School

Penllergaer Primary School is in the village of Penllergaer near Swansea. There are currently 377 pupils on roll from the ages of 3 to 11. This includes 44 part-time pupils in the nursery. There are two nursery classes, two single-age classes and nine mixed-age classes. The school also provides two specialist teaching facilities for pupils, from across the Swansea local authority, with profound and multiple learning difficulties

The three year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 11%. This figure is below the Welsh average of 18%. Around 17% of pupils have special educational needs. This is below the national average of 21%. A few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Nearly all pupils come from homes where English is the first language. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home. A few pupils are from an ethnic minority background.

The last inspection was in March 2016. The headteacher took up her post in January 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

Most pupils at Penllergaer Primary make consistently good progress as they move through the school. They make particularly strong progress in developing their literacy, numeracy, Welsh language and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and regularly apply these skills very well in combination during topic work. Most achieve very high levels of wellbeing during their time at school. They have a highly developed understanding of their rights and of the importance and value of diversity in society.

Staff work very well in teams to provide pupils with highly engaging learning experiences that meet their needs and interests. They provide pupils with good opportunities to influence how and what they learn and enable pupils to have a wider say in issues at school that affect them. The school's provision to develop pupils as informed citizens of Wales and the World is a particular strength.

The headteacher provides outstanding strategic leadership to the school's work. Staff in leadership positions are highly effective in their roles. The school's leadership team successfully creates a climate where pupils and staff thrive. A powerful culture of continuous improvement ensures that the school makes consistently good progress in achieving its goals and particularly strong progress in implementing national priorities.

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

Recommendations

R1 Further strengthen a very few aspects of teaching and learning experiences

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 enlightened, tolerant citizens of Swansea, Wales and the World for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Excellent

Many pupils begin school with knowledge and skills that are appropriate for their age. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils make particularly good progress. As they move through the school, pupils' use of their skills in combination within topic work is outstanding.

Throughout the foundation phase, most pupils communicate enthusiastically and with confidence. They listen carefully and talk with imagination and clarity. For instance, when outside in the construction area, they discuss how to keep the site safe. They confidently address visitors, for example by saying, 'Sorry mate, you can't come in, you need a yellow hat.' By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have highly developed speaking and listening skills. They listen politely and patiently to others and share their ideas confidently in small group situations. They express thoughts clearly and explain their reasoning well, for example when prioritising items for an evacuee's suitcase.

Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 read with fluency and expression. They use punctuation well to adjust their tone of voice, pace and expression and a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. Throughout key stage 2, many pupils read with high levels of fluency, accuracy and understanding. They skim and scan texts for information very well, for example to identify where an author has used vocabulary for effect.

Many pupils in reception make rapid progress in developing their writing skills. They move quickly from basic mark making to writing simple sentences with support. By the time they reach Year 2, many pupils use full stops and capital letters appropriately and choose vocabulary for effect, for example to write 'the lovely lady is sitting on the long bench by the lovely lake. She can see red, green, orange and red crunchy leaves.'

As pupils move through key stage 2, most develop very effective writing skills and often produce work of an exceptional standard. They use a variety of punctuation effectively and organise their work into paragraphs accurately. Standards of spelling are consistently good. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils' writing is thoughtful and includes a wide range of well-chosen vocabulary for effect. For example, when imagining life as an evacuee, a pupil writes, 'I could taste the ash of the old, musty steam train.' Standards of handwriting and presentation are particularly good. Many pupils use their writing skills very successfully across the curriculum for a wide range of purposes.

Nursery children are developing their number skills well. Most count to 10 in both English and Welsh confidently and many recognise these numbers independently. By the end of the foundation phase, pupils develop a good range of numeracy skills. They work accurately with money to calculate the correct change from £1. Many pupils develop their problem solving skills effectively and a minority reflect on and describe their learning well. For instance, they list facts that they have found out during learning activities such as, 'there are 60 minutes in an hour,' and, 'for quarter to, the big hand points to the 9'.

In key stage 2, most pupils use their mathematical skills well. They find percentages and their fraction equivalents accurately and use the four rules of number expertly to solve problems. For example, pupils in Year 4 add and subtract larger four-digit numbers when investigating rugby stadia sizes in Japan. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also apply their skills to more complex and challenging problems involving multiple operations. For instance, when designing a healthy tuck shop, pupils work within a budget, calculate costs and identify best value for money by comparing prices at different supermarkets.

Overall, pupils make exceptional progress in learning and using the Welsh language during their time at school. Most pupils show high levels of enthusiasm for Welsh and demonstrate very high standards of speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the foundation phase, many pupils use simple language patterns routinely, for example when greeting each other in the mornings, self-registering or choosing their lunch. Pupils in Year 2 read and write to a very high standard. For example, they write about the gunpowder plot independently in Welsh and read their work back with fluency, expression and understanding. By Year 6, many pupils have a very good command of a variety of sentence structures and extend their responses skilfully using appropriate conjunctions, such as 'and' and 'because'. An outstanding feature of pupils' Welsh language skills is the way they use Welsh language in their topic work, for example to read and interpret information to draw a missing person.

In the foundation phase, many pupils use their ICT skills positively to support their learning. For example, they log onto HWB independently to access resources to develop their numeracy skills. Throughout key stage 2, pupils develop a wide range of highly effective ICT skills. For example, pupils use databases to extract and analyse information, create stop motion animations and analyse scientific data by creating simple equations.

Pupils in the specialist teaching facilities make progress that is in line with their individual education plan targets. Over time and with support, they develop in confidence and learn important independence skills. Where appropriate, pupils make choices about what to have for lunch and other needs. Their communication skills develop well. The majority of pupils are able to communicate if they are happy or sad and a few respond spontaneously and appropriately during learning sessions, for instance to name colours. Nearly all pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes make very good progress.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Nearly all pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. This supports them to make outstanding progress and to take full advantage of all that school life offers.

Over time, they develop well as informed and thoughtful citizens. Their understanding of values such as honesty, fairness, tolerance and equality is outstanding. This is evident in their day-to-day work and relationships and in their contributions to the school's work, for instance in achieving the gold award for their work with an international charity. Nearly all pupils have a very strong understanding of their rights and responsibilities. They develop this particularly well through their work with the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child.

Nearly all pupils are highly motivated to learn and work particularly hard during lessons. They develop independent learning skills well in the foundation phase and use these purposefully as they progress through the school. Throughout the school, pupils engage confidently with new and unfamiliar experiences and develop a high level of resilience when encountering challenge, for example when designing a fitness programme for rugby players at the Rugby World Cup. Over time, pupils learn to understand that failure leads to success if they persevere and learn from their mistakes.

Many pupils talk confidently about their feelings and the strategies that help them to regulate their emotions. For example, they use emotion characters to help them to understand how to manage fear and anger. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school, with nearly all pupils showing great care and consideration towards others. A pupils group, the 'Wellbeing Warriors', deal effectively with minor issues at break times and lunchtimes. The behaviour of pupils in the specialist teaching facility is excellent. They settle quickly in lessons and, with support, most take part in learning activities with interest and clear enjoyment. Across the school, nearly all pupils feel safe and know whom to talk to if they have a problem.

An outstanding feature of the school is the wide range of responsibilities that pupils undertake and the very positive effect these have on pupils' wellbeing and progress. For example, the school council plays an active role in school improvement by developing child friendly policies and improving the learning environment. The 'Criw Cymreig,' provides assemblies and play Welsh games each day on the yard to promote a greater understanding and enjoyment of the Welsh language. A representative of each of the school's pupil voice groups attends the school's Senedd. This arrangement gives pupils a clear understanding of democracy in action.

Nearly all pupils actively seek the opinions of their peers about a wide range of issues with a view to making improvements. For example, use of wellbeing 'sharing, caring' suggestion boxes in classes allows pupils to put forward ideas such as the proposal to have more ICT in lessons. Staff took note of this and raised the profile of ICT across the school accordingly.

Pupils have a significant influence over their own learning experiences, for example through the 'Our Voice, Our Choice' initiative where, amongst many other examples, pupils in the foundation phase plan their own role-play areas and Years 3 and 4 pupils choose to design structures using computer software and coding to help a person's home survive an earthquake. This involvement in shaping their school experience promotes high levels of pupil wellbeing and considerable enthusiasm for and enjoyment of learning.

Nearly all pupils have a secure understanding of the benefits of eating and drinking healthily. They have a good awareness of the effect this has on their body. Most pupils take part enthusiastically in sporting activities, such as daily 'fitness fanatics'. Many pupils attend after school clubs, including choir, yoga, 'research rascals' and chess to enhance their health and wellbeing.

Pupils have a sound knowledge of how to stay safe online, The 'digital leaders' help pupils successfully to gain a better understanding of how to promote internet safety through leading assemblies, presenting in classrooms and designing posters to stay safe online.

Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent

Teachers and teaching assistants form an exceptional team of staff. Nearly all staff in mainstream and specialist classes have high expectations for the progress pupils make in their learning and the standards they achieve. There are very strong working relationships between staff and between staff and pupils. This creates a positive environment where effective learning takes place.

Staff have developed a shared understanding of the purposes of the curriculum at the school and what they are striving to achieve for pupils. They keep these at the forefront of their thinking when planning and providing an outstanding range of learning experiences. These experiences motivate and engage pupils extremely well. Staff make highly effective use of assessment information to understand the learning of their pupils and plan their next steps. They create activities that challenge pupils to develop and apply their skills at just the right level and ensure that nearly all pupils build consistently well on prior learning. This enables most pupils to make very good progress in lessons and over time.

Staff have developed innovative approaches to increase pupils' engagement and progress. This has includes using pupils' ideas to structure learning experiences. Staff use these suggestions and their own creative ideas to develop topics and 'missions' that relate well to real life situations and draw successfully upon local, national and international contexts for learning. As a result, learning experiences reflect the needs and interests of pupils at the school particularly well. Staff are highly successful in enhancing pupils' independent and collaborative learning skills. In addition, this carefully planned provision challenges pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy, ICT, Welsh language and problem solving skills in combination. For example, recent work in key stage 2 involved challenging pupils to use a wide range of skills to identify a character by investigating the contents of an abandoned suitcase.

All staff promote the school's inclusive ethos successfully. They ensure that the learning experiences provided for pupils from the school's specialist classes follow the same topics and themes as other pupils. At appropriate times, pupils from the specialist classes integrate with their mainstream peers for valuable shared learning experiences.

Staff demonstrate a high commitment to improving their capacity to develop pupils' skills. This is evident in the high quality and consistency of provision to develop pupils' Welsh language and numeracy skills through strategies such as 'drillio'. Staff plan carefully to develop the full range of pupils' ICT skills, for instance by providing experiences that enable them to engage in problem solving and modelling. Whole school approaches to develop literacy skills are highly effective. For example, the school's approach to developing pupils' capacity to write for different purposes and audiences leads to very high standards of written work. Staff in the school's specialist classes use skills such as signed speech effectively to engage with pupils and provide valuable sensory experiences to stimulate engagement and an enjoyment of learning.

Overall, staff demonstrate a strong understanding of the principles of foundation phase education and implement these consistently well in their practice. They provide a rich variety of engaging tasks as well as valuable opportunities for pupils to

learn independently and through small group activities. Across the foundation phase, pupils receive regular opportunities to follow their own interests and direct their learning within engaging classroom areas, such as the creative area. Staff make valuable use of enhanced provision to support the wellbeing of pupils, for example by encouraging pupils to explore their own feelings and emotions when working in the small world area. Staff provide worthwhile learning experiences in the outdoor environment, for example to work with real building materials in the construction area and to track down the owl in the forest school area. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunity to follow their own interests in the outdoors.

Nearly all teachers establish clear objectives and success criteria for pupils' learning. These strategies help pupils to understand how to be successful and, following activities, to reflect on how well they have done. This approach is extremely beneficial, for example in helping pupils to identify their progress in developing writing skills. Teachers use questions to help pupils to draw on prior learning and to ask them to suggest answers to problems or challenges. However, teachers do not always maximise opportunities to deepen pupils' learning through questioning and in a very few instances the pace of learning does not match pupils' individual needs well enough. Across the school, staff provide useful feedback to pupils. Increasingly, pupils use this information successfully to bring about improvements.

The school develops pupils successfully as enterprising and creative learners, for example through the 'beach boutique' project where pupils designed and sold artwork made from sea glass and recycled materials. This generated considerable revenue and resulted in a national award for entrepreneurial work.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school's work to promote tolerance, respect and diversity is exemplary. Regular involvement in international partnerships with European schools provides an invaluable experience for the pupils to develop as informed citizens. The school provides engaging learning experiences for pupils to learn about other faiths as part of its curriculum. A wide variety of visits for daily acts of collective worship, from people representing different faiths from all around the world, support all pupils' understanding of different cultures and beliefs exceptionally well. In combination, this work has a profound impact on pupils' understanding of the world they live in.

The school provides an exceptional caring and nurturing ethos for all pupils. Staff know pupils extremely well and have a strong commitment to making a positive difference to their wellbeing. The school has comprehensive systems in place for monitoring pupils' progress and wellbeing. Staff collect and analyse a wide range of information effectively to identify and respond to the needs of specific pupils. Pupils have valuable opportunities to reflect on their own wellbeing needs. Staff use this information appropriately to enhance support and guidance for pupils. Staff have very strong partnerships with a variety of agencies who provide support when required to ensure that nearly all pupils make very good progress.

Staff in the specialist teaching facilities know their pupils very well indeed. They provide high levels of care, support and guidance that assist pupils in settling into the daily routines of the school and, as a result, nearly all pupils make good progress.

The school makes good use of the limited information they receive about pupils. They work effectively with partners, including parents to determine targets for pupils.

The school supports pupils' emotional and social development very well through its emphasis on The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and monthly values. Staff include children's rights in their planning and promote these very well, for example during class discussions.

The school provides pupils, including those from the specialist classes, with valuable opportunities to influence and shape their school experience. This provision develops pupils' leadership skills and their understanding of their responsibilities highly effectively. As a result, they contribute very well to the life and work of the school. For example, the school council created a code of conduct in collaboration with other pupils for playtimes. This supports positive play at the school. Pupils' involvement in the creation of policies, such as the child friendly complaints policy, further develops their awareness of rights and responsibilities.

Pupils have a significant influence in deciding how and what they learn. For example, they place sticky notes on the 'our voice, our choice' board to indicate the topics they wish to study and the activities they want to engage with as part of their 'missions'. These often lead to further pupil choice. For example, a mission focused on developing a fruit tuck shop led to pupils deciding the range of fruit available and the best place to source the fruit from, based on cost and value.

Pupils have beneficial opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe and to learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The school makes appropriate arrangements for healthy eating and drinking. Staff offer an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs, which develop pupils' skills and interests effectively. A variety of valuable learning experiences help pupils to engage with the creative arts. For example, pupils were involved in working with creative agents, filmmakers and fashion designers to produce a Victorian fashion show based on the work of John Dilwyn Llewelyn, a famous Victorian photographer from Penllergaer.

Communication and partnerships with parents are extremely strong. For instance, the school hosts workshops to develop parents' understanding of shared e-safety and the school's use of ICT in lessons. Parents provide valuable support for extra-curricular activities such a computer simulation club. They receive detailed reports on their child's progress at various points in the school year. Effective communication through digital platforms keeps parents informed about their child's experiences at school.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Excellent

The headteacher provides outstanding strategic leadership and sets an impressive and ambitious tone for the school's work. She has worked with staff, pupils and parents to develop and implement a highly effective vision that drives a culture of continuous improvement and high standards of learning and wellbeing for all. The school's vision incorporates a powerful commitment to developing pupils' awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The headteacher creates a culture of high expectations for staff and pupils and drives professional collaboration both

within and beyond the school successfully. For example, arrangements for teachers to plan and evaluate their professional practice in small teams ensure high rates of consistency in the standard of teaching and learning experiences for pupils. Arrangements to develop staff as leaders and to distribute leadership responsibilities are highly effective.

Staff at the school benefit from highly developed performance management and professional learning opportunities, which they engage with positively. These opportunities enable them to contribute fully to the life and work of the school and to flourish professionally. For example, teaching assistants use their experience from professional development to take responsibility for leading aspects of pupils' wellbeing. Within this role, they provide teachers with practical guidance to help them improve the progress and wellbeing of pupils in need of extra support. The wellbeing of staff is a high priority at the school. Approaches such as emotion coaching support staff to understand and regulate their feelings and emotions.

The school's arrangements to evaluate its work are comprehensive. Approaches such as observations of teaching and learning as well as detailed analyses of aspects of pupils' wellbeing provide the school with an extremely accurate understanding of its many strengths and identify opportunities for further improvement. Regular and rigorous performance reviews ensure that leaders keep a close eye on rates of progress of all pupils. This process supports teachers and teaching assistants to reflect on the difference their teaching makes to pupils' progress and to consider how they might improve further. The school takes very good account of the views of pupils and parents and uses this feedback well to identify opportunities to improve aspects of provision, such as homework.

Leaders address national priorities exceptionally well. They develop and share a clear rationale for change and plan actions to achieve success. This thoughtful approach to planning and realising change is a consistently strong feature of the school's work, for example to develop pupils' digital skills. Over recent years, the school community has worked diligently to prepare for the new curriculum for Wales. This work has ensured that staff, pupils and the wider school community have shared understanding of the purposes of the new curriculum and a shared vision for developing learning experiences based on the interests and needs of pupils. Leaders have given staff and pupils the confidence and autonomy to plan creatively. As a result, pupils regularly access authentic, real-life learning experiences that challenge them to apply their skills to a high standard and support them to make high rates of progress. Leaders monitor the ongoing effectiveness of improvement work effectively. They are receptive to change but also have the professional confidence to stop actions or to reject initiatives that they do not consider beneficial to pupils.

The school's partnerships with other schools are highly influential. School-to-school working has ensured improved provision for pupils at Penllergaer and provided opportunities for the school to share many aspects of its effective practice. For example, it has enabled the school to improve approaches to support independent learning in the foundation phase and enabled the school to share its work about developing pupils' understanding of tolerance and diversity with schools from across Wales. Effective collaboration with the local high school and local cluster of schools ensures robust and effective arrangements for the moderation and standardisation of pupils' work.

Governors contribute positively to the life and work of the school. They regularly visit the school to undertake supportive activities, for example to consider pupils' progress in developing their digital skills to create databases. This work provides governors with a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas it is working to improve. Governors keep progress against improvement priorities under review. They provide the school's leaders with a good balance of support and challenge.

Leaders manage the school's resources effectively to support continuous improvement and to ensure high standards of teaching, learning and wellbeing. For example, they deploy teachers and teaching assistants well to maximise the influence of their skills and expertise. They also ensure that teachers receive good opportunities to work with different age groups across the school to develop their professional skills. Leaders ensure the effective management of the school's budget and prioritise spending to match the school's improvement priorities effectively. They use the pupil development grant appropriately to support disadvantaged pupils, for instance by funding residential visits. They use other grant funding effectively to enhance experiences for all, for example through a creative schools project.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

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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