



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

A report on

Croesty Primary School

**Coychurch Road
Pencoed
Bridgend
CF35 5LY**

Date of inspection: November 2022

by

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

About Croesty Primary School

Name of provider	Croesty Primary School
Local authority	Bridgend County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	N/A
Number of pupils on roll	203
Pupils of statutory school age	159
Number in nursery classes	19
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 23.0%)	14.8%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 16.1%)	*
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	07/11/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	04/11/2013
Start date of inspection	28/11/2022
*	

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Many pupils at Croesty Primary School make progress in their learning and develop as caring and enthusiastic learners. They enjoy learning and are positive about their school. Pupils welcome visitors into school and are keen to share and discuss their work and achievements. Most pupils engage positively with learning opportunities and are keen to achieve their best. However, opportunities for pupils to challenge themselves and improve their skills are not always planned well enough. For example, the overuse of worksheets does not allow all pupils to develop well enough as independent learners.

Staff work hard to ensure that pupils feel valued, and their well-being is a school priority. The school has a strong team ethos, where all staff work collaboratively on improvement priorities. Staff are developing their interpretation of the new Curriculum for Wales and are beginning to provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to influence their own learning. Parents are positive about curriculum developments and the variety of topics on offer for pupils. Topics involve the wider school community and allow opportunities for a range of creative learning opportunities. For example, pupils in Year 3, investigated the properties of sound, to find a way to insulate the sound of the guitar in their school production.

Leadership is in a period of transition. The newly appointed headteacher and governors have a clear vision for school development, based on a curriculum that develops a range of skills for all learners and works to ensure positive attitudes to learning. Senior leaders and governors are in the very early stages of working collaboratively to ensure self-evaluation is thorough. They are beginning to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. However, over time leadership has not evaluated pupil progress thoroughly enough, to ensure that teaching and learning challenges all learners.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve strategic leadership, evaluation work and improvement processes
- R2 Ensure that teaching and the provision for skills build effectively on prior learning and support pupils in all classes to make progress in line with their ability
- R3 Develop feedback and assessment for learning, so that pupils can clearly identify what they need to do to improve their work
- R4 Strengthen the governance of the school to ensure that the governing body develops its role as a critical friend with the capacity to hold the school to account

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will work with the local authority to review the school's progress.

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils enter school with skills expected for their age. Many pupils, including pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), make appropriate progress during their time in school. However, a minority of pupils do not make as much progress as they could as the learning tasks are not always challenging enough.

Most pupils discuss their work confidently and work well in pairs and groups. They listen attentively to others' contributions and respond appropriately. Most pupils speak clearly, confidently, and articulately through the medium of English in a range of contexts. They consider their audience and make beneficial use of technical language. For example, older pupils, as part of their science topic on sound, use vocabulary including vibration, pitch, and tone.

Most pupils make appropriate progress and have a positive attitude to developing their Welsh language skills. Pupils celebrate the culture and national identity of living in Wales through the study of famous Welsh artists and performers, such as Rhiannon Thomas and the Stereophonics.

Most pupils make good progress in the acquisition and development of their reading skills. Younger pupils listen well to stories, and most can remember characters in a story when drawing a picture afterwards. As they progress through the school, many pupils make accurate predictions about a story. Most younger pupils develop a good understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds. As they move through the school, many pupils develop into confident readers and by Year 6 use skills such as inference effectively, for example to support their predictions about what will happen next in a story.

Many pupils make suitable progress in the development of writing skills across the age groups. They apply their skills well across a range of contexts. For example, pupils in Year 3 write detailed descriptions of a character's experience entering a fantasy world as part of their project on Lights, Camera, Action, while older pupils in Year 6 write interesting musical poems on the theme Ecology. However, the reliance on scaffolding and worksheets inhibits opportunities to write at length and extend their skills.

The standard of presentation of the majority of pupils' work is good. Younger pupils confidently mark make in sand and as pupils progress through the school, they form letters correctly, with many pupils learning to join letters effectively. Many older pupils write with a clear, legible script.

Many pupils make appropriate progress in the development of their mathematical skills across the age groups. Most older pupils calculate accurately using the four operations, for example to multiply large numbers to calculate sums of money in different currencies. However, the opportunity to use and apply these skills across the curriculum areas is underdeveloped. Older pupils do not always have opportunities to extend their skills with more challenging tasks.

Many pupils make appropriate progress in the development of their digital skills and apply these skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 5 using coding skills to create virtual worlds as part of their project on 'Sustainable City'. Most pupils are aware of how to keep safe online and the importance of keeping personal information secure.

In general, pupils make good progress in the development of their physical skills, for example younger pupils develop their fine motor skills through regular finger exercises and cutting experiences. Older pupils develop their strength and co-ordination by purposeful involvement in sports including rugby, football, cricket, and athletics. Pupils enthusiastically participate in competitive school teams in rugby, athletics, and football. Pupils increase their endurance by participating in the daily morning walk around the school, designed to promote healthy lifestyles and allow pupils to start the day in a calm and positive manner.

Nearly all pupils make good progress across the school in the development of their creative skills. For example, younger pupils accompany their class teacher retelling the story of Red Riding Hood with musical instruments to provide atmosphere to the story. Older pupils, following the receipt of a letter from Cinderella asking for pupils to take some of the wedding photographs, took photos of the guests and then edited, cropped, varied picture lighting to produce a wedding album.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Most pupils enjoy school. They are welcoming and are keen to share their school and work. In the morning, most pupils enjoy their daily walk, which enables them to link with friends, talk with staff and begin to think about the day ahead. Nearly all pupils are polite and friendly to visitors and show respect to adults and their peers. They are confident and articulate when talking about their learning. For example, pupils eagerly discuss their work on perspective in photography as part of their topic.

Most pupils feel safe and secure and free from physical and verbal abuse. They believe they are respected and treated fairly. Many pupils are aware of what to do if they see bullying or feel bullied. Most older pupils are aware of how to remain safe online. For example, they know the risks of sharing passwords and personal information online. However, a very few pupils feel that, at times, staff do not deal with the inappropriate behaviour of other pupils well enough.

Most pupils' behaviour is good in class and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Most pupils have a positive attitude towards their work and follow instructions appropriately. Most pupils engage well with tasks and work effectively on their learning when learning opportunities are stimulating. However, a very few pupils become distracted when learning is not challenging, and the pace of lessons is too slow. Most pupils listen to their peers and respect the right to different opinions and ideas. For example, in pairs, older pupils shared opinions for and against the need for cinemas today, in preparation for a debate.

Many pupils are beginning to use strategies when they encounter difficulties, such as to ask a friend before asking the teacher. However, many pupils are unable to respond to or use feedback to improve their learning. Pupils have limited input into

the success criteria for tasks. In addition, these criteria are not always clear enough to allow pupils to improve their learning.

Nearly all pupils show an understanding of healthy eating. They bring healthy snacks such as fruit for mid- morning snacks and choose healthy options at dinner time. Most pupils understand the need to keep fit and active. They take part in physical activities during break time and lunchtime, and in after school sports clubs including cricket, football, and rugby. Many pupils enjoy the range of after school clubs on offer to extend and enhance their learning. For example, younger pupils enjoy a range of experiences about French life and language in the French club, including tasting food and learning about daily life in France. Many children are aware of the need to learn about and discuss their feelings.

Many older pupils take on a wide range of roles and responsibilities around the school. This includes pupils from vulnerable groups. For example, the Drips and Sparks pupil group monitor classrooms to ensure water and electricity is not wasted. In the fortnightly eco-based collective worship, this pupil group rewards the best performing classes. The Criw Cymraeg promote the Welsh language and Wales across the school. The Super Ambassadors promote children's rights. As a result, most pupils across the school are aware of children's rights and how to apply them. For example, older pupils can identify the rights Cinderella is denied by her stepsisters. Many children understand the need to celebrate diversity and be inclusive and welcoming. Year 6 pupils have recently researched influential and famous people as part of Black History Month. Most pupils appreciate suggesting activities at the beginning of a new topic and enjoy seeing these activities form part of the learning. For example, Year 6 pupils planned a movie trailer after suggesting this as part of their Lights, Camera, Action topic. However, pupils do not make significant contributions to what or how they learn, nor to the wider planning and improvement of the school.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff have warm and encouraging working relationships with pupils. They support pupils in a positive manner and use a range of sound methods to promote pupils' behaviour. As a result, most pupils conduct themselves well. Most teachers use a good range of questioning techniques to confirm pupils' current understanding, prompt ideas and encourage thinking. In the best examples, teachers use pupil responses proficiently to adapt the course of the learning activities appropriately.

Teachers have given careful consideration to the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. The developing curriculum is offering engaging learning activities. There is a clear vision for the school that is shared with staff, governors, and parents. The curriculum is designed so the four purposes are central to curriculum planning. However, plans to teach pupils skills are not effective enough overall. They do not ensure that pupils develop their skills progressively or as well as they could as they move through the school. Opportunities for pupils to use their skills in relevant and purposeful contexts are underdeveloped.

Across the school, pupils are beginning to influence the direction of their learning. For example, older pupils ask the big question 'How can I make a city sustainable?' at the start of their topic work and suggest activities that they would like to complete as part of their learning including interviews with the local wind farm manager. As a

result, pupils become more enthusiastic about tasks. However, in general, opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn are at an early stage of development.

Where teaching is most effective, teachers revisit and build on previous learning and create a positive working environment with stimulating learning activities which reflect the world pupils live in. For example, older pupils interview people from their community as well as take part in music and dance activities within their topic Aloha. Teachers ensure that the younger pupils have purposeful access to activities in the outdoor areas that promote independent learning effectively. For example, younger pupils collect natural materials to make two-dimensional shapes and use these as frames for collages using leaves and other natural materials.

Where the teaching is less effective, lessons lack pace and introductions are too long. As a result, a few pupils can become restless and lose focus on their learning.

In the best practice, many teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to assess their own and peers' work by way of both verbal and written feedback. A minority of pupils respond effectively and make appropriate improvements to their work. At times, feedback does not link closely enough to the success criteria for a piece of work. As a result, many pupils do not always have a clear enough understanding of what they have done well and what they need to do to make improvements to their work.

In many classes, the tasks provided by teachers do not consistently challenge all pupils appropriately. For example, pupils of all abilities often complete the same tasks and, consequently do not make as much progress as they could.

In the majority of classes, Welsh is modelled appropriately by staff and pupils enthusiastically engage with opportunities to use the Welsh language in their learning throughout the day. There are interesting and engaging opportunities for pupils to study places within Wales including technology centres in Cardiff as well as the museum in Swansea as part of their topic on the Second World War.

School visitors, including the local police, support pupils to learn about online safety. Visits from drama groups as well as music teachers enhance and develop pupils wider learning opportunities successfully. Staff plan well for activities that enable pupils to learn about the diverse nature of Wales and the wider world, for example through a recent topic on Africa as well as International Day celebrations. Other recent topics have included a study of Japan where the school held a Taiko drumming session and an Aloha topic where pupils enthusiastically engaged with workshops involving ukulele playing as well as Polynesian dance.

Care, support and guidance

Most staff have positive relationships with pupils and parents. Many parents feel the school enables their children to be happy and safe. They believe that the school helps their children settle well when they first start school. For example, before joining the school nursery, teachers visit children in their homes to get to know the child and their family.

The level of care, support and guidance the school provides is good. A qualified member of staff provides extra support to individual pupils and groups who are

struggling with their emotional development and well-being, in addition to support from a national charity.

Provision for ALN is led and managed well and is a strength of the school. The ALN co-ordinator has a very good understanding of national reforms and has ensured a smooth and well-informed change to new systems. The school effectively tracks the progress of pupils requiring extra literacy support and provides purposeful support to meet their needs. Pupils with ALN have a useful one-page profile that outlines their interests, how they like to be supported to learn, and their targets for improvement. This ensures that staff have clear direction to enable pupils with ALN to make progress. Beneficial support materials are available in each class, such as coloured overlays, reading pens and visual timetables. Parents are provided with support and information prior to meetings and the website ensures all parents can access the relevant information.

Pupils from vulnerable groups are supported effectively by the school. They are fully included in the life of the school and make appropriate progress in their learning.

The school actively provides opportunities for children to make healthy choices and develop healthy lifestyles. The daily walk, along with activity in lessons and in after-school clubs, enables pupils to be physically active. The school promotes healthy snacks and lunches, and snack time in younger classes is used to reinforce this message.

The school ensures all pupils are provided with opportunities to take responsibility and contribute to the life and work of the school. Members of the pupil groups monitor and encourage recycling, reducing waste and reducing energy and water consumption. Through involvement in expressive arts and sports, within and in addition to the main curriculum, pupils develop confidence and creativity. Visiting groups and educational visits are being re-introduced following the recent pandemic. These develop pupils' creative skills and enhance their learning opportunities appropriately.

The school helps pupils understand issues such as equality, diversity and inclusion appropriately, such as through influential role models, stories and poems in Black History Month. It helps pupils understand the needs and rights of others purposefully, such as the rights of children. Through a range of visits, topics and events, the school helps pupils develop a clear understanding of the wider world, alongside their own heritage and Welsh culture.

Effective procedures are in place to monitor pupils' attendance. The school collaborate well with education welfare agencies to promote good attendance. As a result, pupil attendance is improving. The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Acts of collective worship, along with a range of activities and opportunities, promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development appropriately. Pupils learn about a range of faiths and the school has strong links with the local church, which pupils visit regularly for concerts and services.

Leadership and management

The newly appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the future strategic direction of the school's work. This focuses on securing pupils' well-being and providing opportunities for all pupils to achieve their potential. Senior leaders have clearly defined roles and areas of responsibility and work conscientiously to support school improvement. However, the evaluation of their work does not enable the school to improve provision for all learners.

The school development plan takes account of national priorities. The school is making good progress in implementing change in response to recent ALN reform. Staff work collaboratively in teams to address priorities and engage in cluster work to collaborate on the Curriculum for Wales. This is beginning to have a positive influence on the range of learning experiences provided for pupils. However, leaders have not ensured that teachers use the curriculum as a means of developing pupils' skills progressively as they move through the school. This is largely due to shortcomings in evaluation and improvement processes. Currently, these processes do not focus on the difference that improvement work makes to pupils' progress. This means that senior leaders do not identify specific aspects of teaching or the curriculum that require improvement, such as feedback to pupils and provision for skills.

Pupils are developing their leadership role through a range of monitoring activities. The school council are extending their influence and have suggested initiatives like playground peacemakers. They have also contributed to policies such as the anti-bullying policy. Pupil groups take a central role in organising whole school initiatives like raising money for national charities.

Communication with parents about whole-school issues and class-specific activities is timely and comprehensive. Parents appreciate the school calendar, which allows them to make arrangements in advance of school activities. The school website, newsletters and digital platforms are informative and appreciated by parents. Staff and senior leaders know their families well and communication is positive. However, a very few parents feel that concerns are not acted upon promptly and that they do not receive information about the outcome of any concern they have raised.

Staff receive regular and relevant professional learning opportunities, for example to support their work towards implementing the Curriculum for Wales. Generally, professional learning aligns appropriately with school improvement priorities and staff performance management processes. However, due to shortcomings in the school's evaluation work, leaders do not have a clear sense of the difference that professional learning makes to the quality of teaching and learning at the school. The school uses grant funding appropriately, to ensure adequate staffing to help improve basic skills with identified pupils.

The governing body is in a period of transition with a change in leadership and membership. Governors show strong support for the school. They monitor finances carefully to ensure expenditure delivers clear benefits to pupils. Currently, governors only have a superficial understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Their role in self-evaluation does not allow them to hold the school to account and question progress against improvement priorities robustly. Governors

ensure that the school takes appropriate steps to promote the importance of healthy eating and drinking among pupils. Governors work with school leaders to promote a robust safeguarding culture.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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/carers 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' well-being, 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)

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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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