



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

A report on

**Caedraw Primary School
Caedraw Road
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8HA**

Date of inspection: May 2018

by

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

About Caedraw Primary School

Caedraw Primary School is in the town of Merthyr Tydfil. There are 214 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 16 part-time nursery age pupils. They are divided into nine classes, two of which are special educational needs resource base classes. Pupils in the resource base classes have a range of social and communication needs.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is around 18%. This is close to the national average of 19%. A very few pupils are from a minority ethnic background and a very few speak English as an additional language. The school has identified 30% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is above the national average of 21%. Very few have a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher took up his post in March 2017 and the school was last inspected in March 2010.

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

Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs and pupils in the resource base classes, make good progress as they move through the school.

The school is a happy, safe and inclusive community, which nurtures and celebrates pupils' achievements and successes. Nearly all pupils are friendly, co-operative and courteous towards each other and adults. Most concentrate on their work well and are keen to learn. They enjoy school and feel that the school values them.

The quality of teaching is consistently good. All staff maintain positive working relationships with pupils and have consistently high expectations of pupil behaviour. Teachers use their curriculum knowledge well to provide an interesting and stimulating range of lessons that engage nearly all pupils effectively.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future, which is shared by the staff, governors and parents. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this information effectively to challenge the school about its performance.

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 standards in Welsh across the school
- R2 Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum in key stage 2
- R3 Improve attendance and pupils' punctuality
- R4 Improve the quality of pupils' presentation of work across the school

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs and pupils with English as an additional language, make good progress as they move through the school. Most pupils recall previous learning well and understand what they have learnt. Nearly all pupils in the resource base classes make good or very good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and information and communications skills (ICT) skills and achieve good standards in relation to their individual targets. This is a particular strength of the school.

Most pupils' oral skills are developing well across the school. They listen attentively and use an increasing range of appropriate vocabulary when talking to each other and adults. At the end of key stage 2, most pupils speak with clarity in a range of situations. They respect each other's viewpoints and opinions and contribute very well to group and class discussions, when, for example, debating whether a television advertisement has a greater effect than one online.

Many pupils in the foundation phase read simple texts aloud and use their knowledge of phonics effectively to decode unfamiliar words. As they progress through the phase, they read with growing expression and understanding. They use their reading skills successfully across the curriculum, for example, to find information about minibeasts in books and on the internet. By the end of key stage 2, many read accurately and fluently. They develop their skills effectively when gathering information about habitats and their favourite sports stars. Many older pupils predict, explain, question and summarise information very effectively.

By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils write purposefully and vary their sentences skilfully across a suitable range of genres. They make fair attempts at spelling common words and use basic punctuation accurately, for example to enhance a newspaper report about a fictitious crime, and a letter to stress the importance of recycling.

Many pupils in key stage 2 write intelligently for different purposes. They find, select and use relevant information confidently to design a leaflet about the racing cars they've designed. Most develop a good understanding of the features of different texts and use this knowledge well when writing independently. For example, they use the features of a letter and persuasive vocabulary effectively when writing to the local mayor to persuade the council to allow them to set up a pop-up shop in the town. However, many pupils' handwriting and presentation of work across the school are often untidy.

As pupils move through the school, many make slow progress in developing their Welsh oral skills. Most respond positively to instructions and display appropriate understanding of Welsh used by teachers in Welsh lessons. However, most pupils do not make enough progress in using Welsh in less formal situations at school. In the foundation phase and in key stage 2, a majority of pupils' reading and writing skills in Welsh are at an early stage of development.

Most pupils' numeracy skills across the school are developing effectively. By Year 2, most have a good understanding of measurement, money and data. They develop their skills successfully across the areas of learning, for example, when measuring different fruit juices to make fruit cocktails. They work out correctly how much change is left after spending a given sum of money after purchasing a weekly magazine.

In key stage 2, most pupils have a good understanding of the four rules of number and use them successfully to solve problems. More able pupils interpret a range of information and use complex mathematical skills confidently. For example, they use the formula 'force equals mass x acceleration' to calculate the force Usain Bolt requires to drive off the starting blocks in a 100 metre sprint. However, pupils do not develop their numeracy skills consistently enough across the curriculum.

Most pupils use their ICT skills effectively to support their work across the curriculum. By the end of the foundation phase, nearly all pupils access their online Hwb accounts successfully to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. Most key stage 2 pupils build well on this firm foundation and use a wide range of programs to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. They create their own games for this purpose. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the chess they play on line with pupils in different parts of the world. More able pupils program the 3D printer to make different badge designs which they engrave onto glassware to sell as part of a very successful entrepreneurial project to raise funds for the school.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils are friendly and courteous towards each other and adults. Most co-operate with each other successfully and nearly all are well behaved during lessons and playtime. They respond positively to school rules and understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour. Nearly all pupils in the resource base classes behave well, relate well to others and are keen to participate in activities. Over time, they develop positive attitudes to learning, settle quickly to work and begin to cooperate well with each other.

Nearly all pupils say they feel safe at school and know whom to approach if they have any problems. Playground leaders show high levels of consideration and care as they help younger pupils at break times.

Most pupils show good levels of concentration in their work and they are keen to learn. They enjoy school and work hard. They feel that the school values them. This improves their self-confidence and supports their progress as they move through the school. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils have a secure understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Most pupils in the foundation phase and in key stage 2, suggest interesting ideas and make a decision about what they would like learn. Many pupils gain a suitable range of skills that help them to develop into independent learners and they face new tasks confidently. In the foundation phase, for example, most pupils work enthusiastically and imaginatively on a range of tasks about mini-beasts. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils show a high degree of maturity and confidence when acting out a play based on the American Folktale 'Bendmolena'.

Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay healthy, and they express this clearly when discussing their eating and drinking habits and the importance of keeping fit. They are aware of the need to attend school regularly and punctually. However, despite this, and the school's efforts to improve attendance figures, there has been a decline in attendance over the past three years compared to levels in similar schools. A few pupils arrive late in the mornings.

Pupils take pride in the roles they take in the life of the school. For example, members of different pupil councils represent their peers maturely and keep other pupils informed. The school council, for example, has given presentations to other pupils on the Rights of the Child.

The eco council has been successful in encouraging and participating in building bug hotels, installing a nature trail and providing more recycling and composting bins. They are very knowledgeable when explaining why these projects are important in promoting biodiversity and avoiding landfill.

Pupils are involved in fundraising for several charitable causes, including Children in Need, Macmillan and the local hospice. This helps them to gain a good understanding of the needs of others in their community and the wider world.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers use their curriculum knowledge well to provide an interesting and stimulating range of lessons that engage nearly all pupils effectively. In the foundation phase and in key stage 2, teachers provide valuable opportunities at the beginning of each theme for pupils to suggest ideas and make a decision about what they would like to learn.

All staff maintain positive working relationships with pupils and have consistently high expectations of pupil behaviour. Learning support staff throughout the school contribute very effectively to supporting teachers in improving standards in pupils' learning. Staff in the resource base classes have very secure knowledge and understanding of how best to support their pupils' varied learning needs.

Teachers share clear learning objectives for their lessons with pupils and these provide a good focus for learning. They use interesting stimuli well at the start of lessons to engage pupils from the outset. They sequence activities purposefully, organise pupils flexibly and adapt work skilfully to meet the different needs and abilities of pupils. Most lessons move at a suitably brisk pace and teachers use questioning well to help pupils recall previous learning and to extend and assess their understanding. In all classes, teachers regularly encourage pupils to discuss aspects of their work in pairs and groups. As a result, by the end of key stage 2, the majority of pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. In both the resource base classes, staff use information from the assessment of pupils' work well to plan the next steps in their learning. The organisation of both classes supports pupils' individual needs very successfully.

Teachers plan valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and ICT skills successfully through thematic work in a variety of curricular areas. An interesting feature is the way the school involves pupils in planning areas of particular interest

such as the fiction books they would like to read associated with the theme they are studying. However, pupils in key stage 2 have limited opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

The school provides rich and regular experiences that develop their understanding of the local area and Welsh culture. A good example of this is the regular visits to historical centres such as Cyfarthfa Castle, St Fagans and the National Museum in Cardiff. However, planning to ensure continuity and progression in the teaching of Welsh is underdeveloped

The principles of the foundation phase are embedded firmly and provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. Continuous access to the outdoor area ensures that many pupils benefit from stimulating activities indoors and outside. Teachers plan effectively to ensure a good balance between teacher-led and pupil-led activities, that provide valuable opportunities for pupils to investigate, role-play, build and practise their physical skills. This nurtures positive attitudes towards learning and encourages them to persevere for extended periods.

In key stage 2, there are a number of innovative initiatives such as 'glass from the class', in which pupils plan, develop and etch glass tumblers to sell at a hired stall at Merthyr market. The success of the venture resulted in a considerable sum of money being raised, which was used, for example, to purchase a 3D printer, which pupils have used to develop a Formula 1 prototype car. This has been extremely successful in developing their entrepreneurial skills.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy, safe and inclusive community, which nurtures and celebrates pupils' achievements and successes. A good example is the way in which children in the resource base classes integrate very successfully into many aspects of school life. The school provides valuable opportunities for all pupils to develop a greater understanding of tolerance and diversity. As the result of autism superhero training undertaken by all staff, governors and key stage 2 pupils, pupils from the resource bases receive a high level of support at all times of the school day. This contributes effectively to ensure pupils in the resource base have worthwhile opportunities to integrate with their mainstream peers.

The school has effective processes to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. Leaders analyse a wide range of data regularly and teachers use this information appropriately to measure progress and to identify pupils who need additional support. This enables more able pupils and those with special educational needs to achieve to the best of their ability. Parents and pupils help teachers purposefully to develop detailed person-centred plans that summarise clearly pupils' individual needs.

The school has forged strong links with external agencies, including the local authority's inclusion service and education psychologists. Staff in the resource base classes take full advantage of this advice to plan and deliver focused learning opportunities that enable targeted pupils to make good progress.

The school makes appropriate arrangements to promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils have valuable opportunities in the curriculum to discuss and learn about the importance of healthy eating, drinking, physical activity and internet safety. Pupils and parents value the good range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides, including dance, football, computer club, board games and chess. These have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and wellbeing.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through classroom activities and collective worship. The school helps pupils to develop leadership skills and to learn the importance of citizenship and democracy through pupil-led groups. The eco-council has regular opportunities to champion recycling at home, and the school council runs a successful tuck shop.

The school communicates well with parents through monthly newsletters and uses social media and its website to inform them about events and projects. It offers beneficial opportunities for parents to learn how to support their children at home, including literacy and numeracy workshops. The school works in partnership with the local college to offer parents a chance to learn alongside their children in a worthwhile family engagement programme. Resource base staff have very strong, supportive links with parents. They keep parents very well informed about their children's progress and provide valuable information on how they can support their child at home.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The recently appointed head teacher has engaged successfully with all staff to create a whole school ethos that places pupils' wellbeing at the centre of their work. He has a clear vision for the future, which is shared by the staff, governors and parents. The revised senior leadership team distribute their expertise well across their areas of responsibility. These are aligned closely to the national priorities of improving pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Senior leaders set high expectations to create a welcoming learning environment and have involved all stake holders in agreeing a new vision for the school, 'Looking to the Future-Edrych i'r Dyfodol'. The vision is highly visible throughout the school.

Governors are supportive of the school and well-informed about its performance in comparison to similar schools. Most governors visit the school regularly and carry out a purposeful range of activities, for example, learning walks. As a result, governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this information effectively to challenge the school about its performance and members draw on their expertise, such as financial management, to provide additional support, for the senior management team.

The process of self-evaluation is developing well. Senior leaders make good use of the information provided by parents, pupils, governors and staff to identify areas for improvement. They use a suitable range of first-hand evidence, including lesson observations, the analysis of data and the scrutiny of pupils' work, to support

self-evaluation. Leaders have developed effective links between self-evaluation procedures and planning for improvement. The priorities in the school improvement plan are clear with appropriate timescales, success criteria and resources. However, the large number of priorities makes it difficult to track progress in many areas.

A sound performance management system contributes well to the professional development of all staff. This process links effectively to school priorities and is having a positive effect on improving outcomes for pupils, especially in developing their problem-solving skills in mathematics. There are valuable opportunities for all members of staff to share experiences and good practice with colleagues in the school and in other schools. This has helped to develop more effective language practices and improved oracy skills throughout the school.

The school has robust financial arrangements and expenditure links suitably with the school's priorities. The headteacher and governing body monitor the budget carefully. Leaders plan appropriately to reduce the adverse effect of poverty on pupils' standards and wellbeing. They make good use of the pupil development grant to meet the needs of pupils eligible for free school meals. Vulnerable pupils benefit from a wide range of support activities, which impact positively on their literacy and numeracy skills and their wellbeing.

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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