



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

A report on

**Ysgol Estyn C.P.
Hawarden Road
Hope
Nr. Wrexham
Flintshire
LL12 9NL**

Date of inspection: June 2019

by

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

About Ysgol Estyn C.P.

Ysgol Estyn Community Primary School is in Hope, near Wrexham in Flintshire local authority. There are currently 238 pupils on roll between the ages of 3 and 11, including 30 part-time nursery pupils. There are eight single-age classes.

The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is 9.7%. This is 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%. A very few pupils have statements of special educational needs. Very few pupils have English as an additional language and very few come from Welsh speaking homes.

The headteacher took up his post in 2011. The school was last inspected by Estyn in 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

Ysgol Estyn is an inclusive, calm and welcoming community, where staff encourage pupils to become resilient learners and try their best. Nearly all pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to their work and they approach tasks with a sense of ambition. Nearly all pupils make good progress during their time at the school. They develop their literacy and numeracy skills successfully and make use of their Welsh language skills with enthusiasm. Staff track pupils' progress carefully to ensure that the school meets their needs effectively. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life, including the wide range of extracurricular activities on offer. They take great pride in their school. The school is well resourced and staff have developed the outside areas successfully. Leaders evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development accurately and involve all stakeholders in plans for improvement. Staff work effectively as a team. They provide support and guidance for families which secures high levels of involvement from parents. This helps them to support the pupils well and increases their chances of making good progress at the school.

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 Develop opportunities for pupils to make choices and decisions about how and what they learn
- R2 Improve provision for ICT to ensure that pupils develop the full range of ICT skills
- R3 Sharpen monitoring procedures so that they identify more clearly the specific areas that need improvement
- R4 Address the Health and Safety issues identified during the inspection

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to nursery, most pupils' skills are at or above the level expected for their age. As they move through the school, the confidence, attainment and social skills of nearly all pupils develop rapidly and, by the time they reach Year 6, most achieve very good standards, particularly in numeracy. Pupils with additional learning needs and those that are more able achieve well in relation to their abilities and personal targets.

Across the school, most pupils listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. Most are confident speakers and communicate their ideas effectively. In the foundation phase, pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well. For example, in nursery, pupils describe how strawberries have to be red and juicy in order to pick them. In Year 3, they listen attentively to each other's suggestions for writing humorous poetry.

In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils enjoy books and talk enthusiastically about the pictures and the characters. Many use appropriate expression in their reading, and use their knowledge of letter sounds effectively to work out unfamiliar words. In Year 1, many pupils read the instructions to make programmable toys work, taking care to be accurate. Pupils across key stage 2 are confident readers. Many skim and scan quickly to find specific information in texts and show good understanding of what they have read. Most Year 5 pupils, for instance, read their play scripts about their work on preventing cyber bullying and looking after friends with great confidence.

Nearly all pupils in the foundation phase are confident writers. Pupils in reception class write for a range of purposes, including writing their names and labels for the ladybirds they have made. Pupils in Year 2 make informative books about the rainforest, including interesting facts about animals that live there. In key stage 2, pupils are skilled at writing for a range of purposes. For example, pupils in Year 4 write evocative letters from Anne of Cleves to her family, using phrases like 'as I left the magnificent palace, I had tears in my eyes' to engage the reader successfully.

Across the school, most pupils develop and use their numeracy skills extremely well. In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils have a sound grasp of number. By the end of Year 2, many use and apply these skills competently to solve real life problems. In key stage 2, nearly all pupils continue to improve their numeracy skills and apply them across the curriculum to a high standard. For example, pupils in Year 3 use a range of mathematical operations, including addition, subtraction to plan a budget for a party for their class.

Throughout the school, most pupils make solid progress in developing their Welsh language skills. In the foundation phase, most respond enthusiastically to adults' instructions. They enjoy talking about how they feel and what the weather is like. By Year 2, most pupils demonstrate a high level of understanding and use Welsh phrases regularly during their play. By Year 6, many sustain a conversation about their likes and dislikes, favourite foods and their family confidently. Many read simple

texts with growing understanding and generally accurate pronunciation. Most Year 6 pupils use familiar language patterns well to write about themselves prior to starting high school. Year 4 pupils write interesting book reviews about 'in the woods in the Night', using extended language successfully.

Across the school, most pupils develop suitable skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and use these competently to support their learning. For instance, in Year 2, pupils use tablet computers confidently to record their presentations about St. Lucia. Key stage 2 pupils use an appropriate range of programs and applications to enhance their learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 recorded data in a digital chart about how many creatures they had collected on a recent visit to the River Alyn. However, in general, pupils do not use the full range of ICT skills regularly enough across the curriculum.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Pupils' attitudes to wellbeing and learning are a strong feature of the school. Behaviour from nearly all pupils during break times and in lessons is exemplary. Pupils devise their own classroom charters and set of values and, as a result, are eager to abide by them. They are caring, tolerant and highly respectful towards each other and to adults. For example, older pupils act as playground leaders to provide friendship and support to the younger pupils during lunch and break times.

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure in school and are confident that if they have any worries or concerns, staff will listen and address them. Most pupils are well-motivated, capable, confident and resilient learners. They are prepared to take risks and relish new challenges. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning contribute well to their success as they progress through the school.

Through sharing their ideas and interests at the start of new topics, a majority of pupils across the school are becoming increasingly involved in shaping their own learning. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to share their ideas and opinions. Many persevere for extended periods, for example when writing engaging stories or solving complex mathematical challenges. Many pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and they are beginning to find ways to improve their own work independently. When pupils have the opportunity, they make sensible choices to extend their learning, for example when planning their tasks linked to their topic work on India and the Vikings. However, across the school, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to decide what and how they learn often enough.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and are developing as resilient learners. They sustain high levels of concentration when working alone and cooperate well with others when working in pairs and small groups. Throughout the school, most pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities, such as becoming members of the various pupil voice groups in the school. For example, digital leaders play a vital role in helping pupils to understand the importance of staying safe online by leading online safety sessions. The school council works with kitchen staff to provide school meal taster days for pupils, to promote healthy eating. Pupils actively support a

variety of charities, including Hope House and Macmillan Cancer as well as a charity overseas, which raises money for a school in Africa. This gives them an important understanding of people less fortunate than themselves. However, their role in influencing whole-school decisions is at an early stage of development.

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of being active and living a healthy lifestyle. Most take part in an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs, which include science and fencing. Year 6 pupils go on a residential trip to Cardiff Bay and Year 5 pupils to Boreatton Park outdoor adventurous centre. This helps most older pupils to develop good social, creative, team building and physical skills.

Most pupils are developing well as ethically informed citizens. For example, Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of recycling and sustainability in the waste management industry and suggest sensible solutions to address the problems. Many children understand that the choices they make have an impact on natural resources and the environment.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of the curriculum for all pupils is varied and interesting. Teachers plan a range of engaging learning experiences and activities that encourage pupils to participate fully in their own learning. Nearly all teachers have high expectations of pupils and use effective behaviour management strategies. Working relationships between staff and pupils are very strong and this means that pupils are ready and eager to learn at the beginning of each session.

Teachers link lessons well to pupils' prior learning and use a range of teaching methods skilfully to gain pupils' interest. In the majority of classes, where teaching is strong, lessons are lively and imaginative, and activities flow purposefully. Teachers explain new ideas in a meaningful and engaging way, using music, art and video presentations to capture pupils' imagination successfully. They ask probing questions in order to expand pupils' understanding and encourage them to use their skills thoughtfully to support independent learning throughout the lesson. This helps pupils to focus clearly on what they need to do next to improve their learning.

Planning in the foundation phase is thorough and highly effective. It has a positive effect on how well pupils develop their skills, especially numeracy, across the curriculum. Regular access to the well-planned outdoor area ensures that most pupils benefit from stimulating activities, such as planning and building a house in a hot climate using crates and wood. Indoors, pupils enjoy writing lists and looking after the animals in the vet's surgery. Teachers plan pupil-led activities well. They include beneficial opportunities for pupils to investigate the world around them. For example, Year 1 pupils discuss enthusiastically the reasons why we must reduce our use of plastic. This nurtures positive attitudes towards learning and means that most pupils persevere for extended periods and demonstrate high levels of independence.

In key stage 2, teachers plan valuable opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills successfully in a variety of areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils write an emotional letter home as an evacuee and construct a sensory poem about being in an air raid shelter. Pupils in Year 6 solve complex mathematical problems, such as working out the amount of water people waste each year by

leaving the tap running when they brush their teeth, linked to their topic on sustainability. However, teachers' planning for the development of pupils' ICT skills is not systematic enough to ensure that pupils progress steadily across the full range of ICT skills. Many teachers provide beneficial verbal feedback during lessons, which helps pupils know how to improve their work. Most use a variety of effective questioning techniques to move the pupils forward in their learning. They encourage and support pupils to extend their answers to ensure there is good understanding. However, on occasions, a minority of teachers direct pupils' learning too much and this limits opportunities for them to make suggestions, and to choose how and what they would like to learn.

Provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is good. Pupils have valuable opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and heritage through studying Welsh heroes and comparing their locality with Llandudno. Nearly all teachers and teaching assistants act as effective role models through their regular use of Welsh commands and phrases in their daily interactions with pupils. This has a positive impact on pupils' standards in Welsh and, as a result, many pupils speak Welsh with confidence.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Staff provide high levels of care, support and guidance and know pupils individual needs exceptionally well. As a result, the school creates a nurturing environment that builds pupils' self-esteem successfully. Pupils learn about important values, such as honesty, respect and the need to appreciate other people. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' wellbeing, the good standards they achieve, and helps pupils to developing a greater understanding of their own rights and the rights of others.

School leaders track and monitor pupils' progress purposefully as they move through the school. Staff use this information suitably to support pupils who are not making the progress they should, and to extend those who are more able. Skilled teaching assistants deliver relevant intervention programmes regularly, which help to raise pupils' oracy, reading and mathematical skills. Staff are particularly skilled at monitoring pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable to underachievement. Bespoke interventions support their wellbeing and emotional needs effectively, and help to equip them with useful strategies for learning and managing their feelings.

There are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in productions and performances, for example through family services, Christmas productions and carol services at the local church. The school makes appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Regular cookery lessons and a fruit tuck shop help pupils to develop positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyle choices. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to be active during the school day and after school. For example, pupils use a trim trail and mini golf ranges during lunchtime. Younger foundation phase pupils have daily opportunities to ride bikes, and throw and catch balls.

There are good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. Members of the eco-committee regularly litter pick, promote recycling, and help younger pupils to understand the benefits of not using plastic straws at snack time. The use of a

'pledge tree' strengthens pupils' understanding of the need to care for their environment and, as a result, they are keen to ensure that the school saves water and electricity.

When teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas to their daily learning experiences, they respond to the challenge enthusiastically. For example, pupils in the Reception class act as 'tiny teachers' to help plan learning activities in the different areas. This empowers them to become confident, resilient and independent learners from an early age. However, this practice is not consistently good across the school and teachers do not always offer pupils enough chances to influence what and how they learn.

The school has forged highly beneficial professional relationships with parents and carers. The school's 'open door' policy, the careful use of social media, regular parent and teacher meetings, and informative newsletters ensure that parents are well informed about the life of the school and their children's progress. There is an extensive range of workshops for parents timetabled across the year. For example, nursery parents learn how to extend their children's vocabulary and to promote a love of reading. The parents of older foundation phase pupils gain worthwhile ideas to support children's numeracy skills at home. Workshops also help to upskill parents in other areas, through attending training on First Aid, online safety and developing their knowledge of the Welsh language. The school's use of its Forest School encourages pupils to develop their problem solving skills successfully. As a result, most are willing to tackle new learning experiences. The practical nature of these activities has encouraged a notable percentage of dads to attend and more than half of all parents attend at least one workshop over the year. There is a positive sense of community within the school and the locality, which encourages pupils to develop the values of loyalty, responsibility and a feeling of belonging.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. However, the inspection team identified several areas of concern relating to health and safety matters, which they brought to the attention of senior leaders and the governing body.

Leadership and management: Good

Leaders have developed a vision for the school that puts pupils at its core and focusses firmly on the individual progress and wellbeing of every child. They share this vision, 'reaching forward together,' widely and all staff contribute by supporting and nurturing pupils to help them make the most of their time at the school.

All staff understand their roles and responsibilities. They benefit from a range of valuable and relevant professional learning. For example, two members of staff attended training on how to help pupils improve their own learning. This has resulted in many staff beginning to improve their practice in this area, with pupils having greater understanding of what they need to do to move forward. Many staff collaborate in effective networks within school, with local schools and with schools across Wales. For example, the close collaboration with the local high school and its feeder primaries enables staff to share their knowledge and expertise and to promote best practice in the teaching of Welsh across the learning community. Standards in Welsh oracy, a priority on the school development plan last year, have improved as a result.

Procedures for the performance management of teaching staff are effective and link well to school improvement priorities. Leaders are embracing the prospect of the new curriculum and, as a result, staff are adapting planning to create more opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning. This has been particularly effective in the foundation phase.

The governing body is supportive and governors carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. The headteacher gives them a suitable range of information, including performance information and progress reports on the school improvement plan. Consequently, governors have a good understanding of developments in the school and are beginning to support them in moving forward.

The school has a consistent and beneficial approach to evaluating pupil progress and senior leaders meet with teachers to check that pupils are achieving as well as they can. These meetings ensure an individual approach to addressing the needs of every child and help to engage and support families. This links to the school improvement plan where wellbeing is highlighted as a priority.

The school has suitable processes to evaluate its performance and to plan for improvement. Self-evaluation procedures give leaders a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. For example, the emphasis on reading, writing and wellbeing over the past year has raised standards in these areas across the school well. Leaders use a suitable range of information to identify areas for improvements. However, these do not always focus clearly enough on standards to ensure that leaders have effective means to monitor and evaluate progress and impact on outcomes for pupils.

The headteacher and governors monitor the school's finances robustly. The school currently has an appropriate level of surplus, for which there are clear priorities, and spending decisions relate closely to targets in the school development plan.

The school uses its available resources carefully in order to improve provision and to raise standards. Over a number of years, the school has used external grants and funding effectively to improve the outdoors. The use of grants to support vulnerable groups and promote inclusion for all is highly effective. For example, a family learning officer delivers bespoke programmes to support targeted pupils with specific social and emotional needs.

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.

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