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

A report on

Llangyfelach Primary School

Pengors Road
Llangyfelach
Swansea
SA5 7JE

Date of inspection: May 2022

by

Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Llangyfelach Primary School

Name of provider	LLANGYFELACH PRIMARY SCHOOL
Local authority	Swansea
Language of the provider	English Medium
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	252
Pupils of statutory school age	168
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	54
Percentage of statutory school age 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 the primary sector is 21.3%)*	6.8%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (*The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 20.6%*)	4%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	1.6%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	3%
Date of headteacher appointment	September 2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	21/01/2014
Start date of inspection	3rd of May 2022
Additional information	

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

Llangyfelach Primary School is a calm and supportive environment where pupils feel happy and safe. Staff work hard across the school to provide pupils with the support they need in their work and their emotional and social development. For example, the 'Turn Your Frown Upside Down Club' has a positive impact on well-being and is a firm favourite of many pupils across the school.

Most pupils make good progress across the school, including those with additional learning needs. There is a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy in all classes, particularly following the pandemic, and teachers and support staff work well together to make sure pupils achieve well in using these skills. However, standards of handwriting across the school are too variable and pupils do not always present their work well enough.

Leaders and staff are thinking carefully about the school's curriculum and are beginning to develop interesting themes that encourage curiosity and link pupils' learning in different subjects together. These approaches are at an early stage of development and opportunities for pupils to be creative and understand the cultural diversity across Wales are more limited.

Teachers generally understand the needs of their pupils well. They use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to think about their learning and provide effective feedback, which pupils act upon to make their work better. Where improvement is required, teachers need to help pupils develop a clearer understanding of what they are trying to achieve and how best to go about their work.

Pupils are developing a strong voice within the school. They have opportunities to influence what they learn through their pupil groups, all of which are linked to areas of the school's curriculum. In each class, pupils are encouraged to be curious and express their ideas when working with their teachers to plan learning activities in class projects.

The headteacher has a strong vision for the school and is well supported by senior leaders and staff in moving this vision forward. For example, the school has created useful learning journals that reflect the school's values, which are beginning to support pupils in becoming more independent in their learning. Governors and leaders across the school work very well together to identify priorities for improvement. A strength of the school is the involvement of almost all staff and a range of pupils within this process.

Recommendations

R1 Share the good practice in curriculum design across the school

R2 Reduce the variability in the quality of teaching across the school by drawing on existing examples of effective practice

R3 Improve standards of handwriting and presentation across the school

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils start school with skills at the expected level for their age. While the pandemic has interrupted the progress of learning for a minority of pupils, the school has put in place purposeful support to re-establish pupils' basic skills and support their well-being. As a result, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make strong progress as they move through the school.

Nearly all pupils listen attentively to adults and their peers, respond appropriately to instructions and are keen to answer questions. Nursery pupils listen to and correctly follow their teacher's instructions, for example during a physical development activity. Older pupils speak eloquently, sensibly, and confidently in formal and informal situations. They talk freely about their learning and respond maturely to questions asked during class activities.

Most pupils read a variety of texts confidently to a level that is suitable to their age and stage of development. Pupils in nursery and reception are beginning to develop their early reading skills and recognise letters and short words easily. Most older pupils talk about books they enjoy. They vary their intonation as they read, to convey meaning and effect. They have a clear understanding of the content and context of the text they are reading. However, a minority of pupils who are less confident readers do not develop their phonics skills well enough and this affects their fluency when reading unfamiliar words.

Nearly all pupils develop their writing skills well as they progress through the school. Most convey their ideas clearly and effectively in a range of contexts. They develop and use their understanding of grammar with increasing confidence. In reception, a few pupils are developing early approaches to writing with support from adults, for example when writing an application form to join the 'Go Jetters', a group that helps make the world a better place.

Many in Years 3 and Year 4 write maturely for their age, for instance when creating detailed instructions on how to bake a Victoria sponge cake, as part of their work on the Second World War. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use alliteration, rhyme, and personification maturely, for example when writing their Ode to a Friend. Standards of handwriting and presentation are variable across the school with very few pupils developing a fluent handwriting style.

Pupils across the school make strong progress with their mathematics and numeracy skills. Reception pupils develop their understanding of number successfully, for example when working with money, they understand that if a teddy bear costs 6p they need a 5p and a 1p coin. As they progress through the school, pupils continue to develop confidence in using their numeracy skills and are beginning to develop a sound understanding of number concepts. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 use written methods competently to solve simple addition and subtraction problems and recognise and name a range of regular and irregular shapes. Many pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 develop good thinking skills in mathematics and use information well to tackle more complex problems. For example, they successfully interpret tables to

convert imperial monetary values to decimal as part of a project about the Second World War. However, while most pupils are developing strong mathematical skills, they do not always practise and extend these in more challenging contexts across the curriculum.

Most pupils across the school are beginning to develop appropriate language skills in Welsh. Younger pupils display a natural enthusiasm for Welsh, responding to basic questions from adults. Older pupils usually understand basic commands and instructions and use the resources in their classrooms to extend their written and spoken responses. The majority of older pupils use helpful scaffolds to produce extended pieces of writing in Welsh, for example when writing a Christmas letter or describing their experience as a refugee. However, the pandemic has impacted negatively on the provision for Welsh language skills and, as a result, many pupils lack confidence when using spoken Welsh.

Throughout the school, pupils make effective progress in developing and using their digital skills. Pupils of all ages use a wide range of technology to advance their learning across the curriculum. They apply their digital skills at a level appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, pupils in Year 2 carry out independent research effectively on their class topic and older pupils code an algorithm to make a toy model move.

When the opportunities arise, pupils make suitable progress in developing their creative skills. They engage enthusiastically with art and craft activities and talk with excitement about their work, for example when explaining why they have chosen media such as pencils, watercolours and felt pens for their work. Older pupils use digital tools confidently to create and edit musical phrases when investigating techniques used by a popular musician. While the restrictions imposed by the pandemic have hampered progress, opportunities for pupils to develop creative skills are fairly limited across many curriculum areas.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Behaviour throughout the school is exemplary. Nearly all pupils are proud of their school and show positive attitudes to their work. The school code helps pupils develop good relationships with each other and with adults and embedded reward systems such as the 'good to be green' strategy have a positive impact on pupil attitudes. As a result, pupils of all ages understand the importance of following rules when working together in class to promote a positive ethos.

Nearly all pupils are polite, demonstrating mutual respect and caring attitudes towards each other. This is particularly evident in the 'Turn Your Frown Upside Down' club, which supports pupils of all ages to develop a positive approach to their well-being. Pupils highlight this as a particular strength of the school and a good example of the school's commitment to their well-being.

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know whom to approach for advice and support. Well established pupil voice groups promote pupils' rights successfully. For instance, the 'Healthy, Happy, Helpers' group lead the school's work around the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Pupils in all these groups make valuable contributions to the school improvement priorities. For example, the

'Math Magicians' group have looked at pupils' work and listened to learners about their mathematics experiences in the classroom to identify what is working well and what needs to improve.

Many pupils understand the importance of regular exercise and a healthy diet. Pupils in Year 3 learn how to design a balanced meal as part of their project about opening a local café. Across the school, many pupils attend extra-curricular sporting activities and are proud to represent their school in local competitions. The physical and social development of pupils is well supported through projects such as the 'Good Thymes Gardening Project', where pupils and community groups work together to improve the outdoor environment.

Pupils understand their role within the local community and the wider world. They are developing well as ethical and informed citizens and demonstrate this in many ways. For example, pupils design and produce Christmas Cards for the elderly that are sent out along with donations from the local food bank. More recently, pupils have supported the local appeal aimed at helping people in the Ukraine.

Pupils often respond positively to teachers' verbal feedback and suggest ways forward to improve their learning. The majority of pupils are starting to develop their independent skills well and use the school's question matrix to make choices about what and how they learn. Older pupils are beginning to use the school's learning journals effectively to understand what makes a good learner and how to apply this knowledge to their independent work. However, a minority of pupils in all classes still rely too heavily on teacher led instruction.

Owing to the coronavirus pandemic, inspectors will not report pupils' rates of attendance during the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. Inspectors will, however, consider the school's provision for monitoring and improving attendance as part of inspection area 4 (care, support and guidance)

Teaching and learning experiences

Leaders, staff and pupils have worked together to develop the school's vision for the new Curriculum for Wales. Staff are beginning to plan and provide a range of engaging learning experiences that reflect the ethos and expectations of the new curriculum. They have worked collaboratively to develop a shared understanding of progression across all areas of learning and experience and provide suitable opportunities for pupil voice groups to influence learning experiences.

Staff are developing a range of class projects that stimulate pupils' interests and build successfully upon their existing knowledge and understanding. Where they are most effective, these themes are engaging and provide opportunities for pupils to apply and deepen their skills across the curriculum. For example, a recent topic looked at the impact of the Second World War 2 on the local area including the impact that the 'blitz' had on Swansea. Pupils enjoyed relating this to their local area and worked effectively when applying their skills creatively across the curriculum. As a result, pupils talked with knowledge and passion about their learning. However, in a minority of cases, the planned learning experiences do not allow pupils to make meaningful links between subjects or develop their understanding of the cultural diversity of Wales well enough.

Following the recent easing of pandemic restrictions, the school is beginning to re-introduce a range of trips and visits to enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils and staff work alongside the Penllergaer Trust to improve the local environment. Staff are beginning to use the school's limited outdoor space effectively. For example, they use 'Welly Wednesday' tasks to help pupils learn about the environment.

Teachers have a clear understanding of the developmental needs of younger pupils and are developing a range of appropriate learning experiences to help them practise and develop their skills in less formal situations. Pupils in nursery and reception have opportunities to play freely with an appropriate range of resources that are made available to them. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have access to a good range of engaging activities, which they choose independently, for example to use books to research different types of shells or solve a mathematics challenge involving ice-creams.

Teachers and support staff manage pupils' behaviour well and treat them with respect. Nearly all teachers have a good subject knowledge and explain and develop key concepts effectively, such as how the water cycle works. Most teachers develop pupils' thinking and understanding effectively by asking searching questions. Occasionally however, they do not provide pupils with enough time to talk together and develop their thinking well enough.

Many teachers use a range of strategies to support pupils to develop as effective learners. These include having clear learning intentions and providing valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and their peers' progress. For example, pupils in Year 6 use well modelled examples of poems performed by the teacher to improve their own work and critique each other's. However, the quality of this practice is inconsistent across the school and, in a minority of cases, pupils do not always understand the purpose or expected outcomes of their learning.

The school has an agreed marking policy that pupils and staff use consistently to highlight areas to improve pupils' work. The majority of staff use this conscientiously to provide pupils with useful feedback to move their learning forward. For example, they set questions that require pupils to extend their responses in science or to further explain their thinking in solving problems in mathematics. However, in a minority of instances, feedback is limited to basic mistakes and does not help pupils understand the next steps in their learning.

Teachers use a range of assessment information purposefully to help inform their planning and to identify those pupils that need support. They quickly identify pupils who may need additional support and work with a dedicated team of teaching assistants to ensure that appropriate and sensitive provision is put in place. This provision is used flexibly and monitored appropriately for its impact on pupils' progress. For example, a range of short term 'boost' interventions ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to develop their numeracy and literacy skills enabling them to take a full part in classroom-based learning. Strategies such as looking through pupils' books as a team of staff support a shared and accurate understanding of pupil progression at the school.

Care, support and guidance

The school supports the emotional, health and social needs of pupils well. This is embedded in the life and work of the school and includes appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. For example, the curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy life choices when creating an allotment in the school grounds to highlight the importance of eating fresh fruit and vegetables.

Through the many pupil voice groups, the school provides pupils with frequent, worthwhile opportunities to contribute to important decisions. This is a strength of the school and provides all pupils with opportunities to suggest not only what and how they learn, but also to influence policy and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's plans. As a result, pupils engage positively with school life and feel proud to be part of its family. For example, the schools 'Criw Iaith' develop and implement plans for raising the profile of the Welsh language across the school using videos and assemblies.

The school has robust systems to identify the specific needs of pupils and provides them with well-considered support for their physical health and emotional well-being. The additional learning needs co-ordinator works effectively in partnership with teaching assistants, other schools, and outside agencies to provide valuable support for learners with additional learning needs. This has been effective in supporting pupils' learning and well-being following the recent pandemic.

The school has an inclusive culture that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is enhanced by the school's code that focuses on pupils playing fairly, co-operating with each other, building positive relationships, respecting others and valuing their achievements. It encourages pupils to celebrate similarities and differences and helps them to begin to understand important issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. The school promotes empathy and compassion effectively by encouraging pupils to consider other people's circumstances and offer help when they can, for example by contributing to charities such as Children in Need and to support people in the Ukraine.

Staff are beginning to develop opportunities to encourage pupils to use their imagination and to engage with the creative arts through their studies. For example, pupils have recently been part of a whole school project to design a mural to depict the school's aims, vision and values. Pupils worked with representatives from the local community to highlight words that are important to them and painted images to depict each word to decorate the school foyer. Pupils also took part in a whole school art project to enhance the school toilets using images from the local area.

Recent developments in curriculum planning are beginning to help pupils to develop an increased understanding of their identity, heritage, and culture, and how they relate to the wider world. However, this aspect is at an early stage of development.

The school has a robust approach to safeguarding and the monitoring of attendance which creates an effective culture of safety and well-being within the school community and online. Staff, pupils, and governors promote this culture well, including the provision for ensuring pupils' on-line safety, which is very effective and has been recognised by the achievement of a national award. As a result, the

school's arrangements to keep pupils safe meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management

The headteacher works effectively with senior leaders and governors at Llangyfelach Primary School to place pupils' well-being and progress at the heart of the school's vision and ethos. Alongside a dedicated and effective team of staff, leaders ensure that pupils progress well and demonstrate a positive attitude towards their school and to each other.

The leadership team supports the headteacher effectively. They set high expectations and draw purposefully on the skills of staff to create a shared understanding of professional values and expectations for pupils' learning. As a result, all staff have a clear focus on ensuring that pupils make good progress from their individual starting points and carry out their responsibility to support pupils' well-being diligently.

The school's processes to evaluate its effectiveness are well embedded and based on a wide range of first-hand evidence. The systems to improve quality include listening to learners and looking at their work, lesson observations and the appropriate use of assessment information. As a result, in general, leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development and use this information purposefully to set appropriate targets for improvement. They make sure that all staff work together to focus on areas that the school has identified as a priority and evaluate the success of actions effectively. One of the strengths of the school's approach is the wide range of staff and pupils involved in monitoring activities. They contribute to regular reviews of progress towards improvement goals and have an up to date understanding of what the school is doing well and in what areas it needs to improve. However, in a very few cases, self-evaluation processes do not identify important areas for improvement, for example the inconsistencies in effective teaching across the school.

In general, leaders and staff have developed productive relationships with parents and communicate regularly and efficiently through the school app, newsletters and emails. The Parent, Teachers and Friends Association are highly active within the school and have raised significant funds to help improve learning opportunities for pupils. For example, they have funded art projects, helped purchase ICT equipment including virtual reality goggles, and supported the development of outdoor climbing trails. While the views of parents are sought, for example through questionnaires, it is not always clear to all stakeholders how these responses impact on school improvement.

The governing body is, knowledgeable and supports the school well. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and hold him to account suitably as critical friends. Senior leaders inform the governors regularly about the standards that pupils achieve. They arrange for them to take part in activities to gain direct understanding of the work of the school, which benefits school improvement. For example, by working alongside teachers and pupils in learning walks and looking at the quality of pupils' work, governors develop a valuable understanding of the school's current practices.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's context within its community and support the school well in addressing issues of deprivation. The school uses the pupil development grant purposefully to improve pupils' outcomes through intervention programmes, which are delivered effectively by a team of dedicated teaching assistants. Additional designated funding is used purposefully, for example to buy resources to prevent digital exclusion. Governors work with leaders to ensure that suitable policies and procedures are in in place to promote the importance of healthy eating and drinking among pupils.

Procedures to manage the performance of staff are robust and develop staff's knowledge and skills effectively. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to relevant opportunities to support their professional development and they link this closely to school improvement priorities. However, as a result of the pandemic, staff have had limited opportunities to work collaboratively with their colleagues and those in other schools, to share good practice and refine approaches to teaching and curriculum design.

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

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This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh).