



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

A report on

Coedffranc Primary School

**Stanley Road
Skewen
Neath
SA10 6LP**

Date of inspection: October 2022

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Coedffranc Primary School

Name of provider	Coedffranc Primary School
Local authority	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	418
Pupils of statutory school age	295
Number in nursery classes	70
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%)	30.7%
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%)	21.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4.4%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/11/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	04/02/2014
Start date of inspection	24/10/2022

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

When considering the school's impressive improvements over recent years, the influence that leadership has had should not be underestimated. The headteacher has created a powerful team ethos amongst staff, which is built on positive relationships, trust and collaboration. This approach brings out the very best in the school's staff by encouraging and enabling them to make the very best use of their skills and experience, for example by providing outstanding support for families in the local community. School leaders address national and local priorities well, including curriculum and additional learning needs (ALN) reform. Leaders across the school, including school governors, have consistently high expectations of themselves and staff and high aspirations for all pupils.

Nearly all pupils enjoy their time at Coedffranc Primary School. They develop high levels of respect for the adults who look after them and trust that staff will always act in their best interests. They behave well, engage positively with the varied range of learning experiences and opportunities that school provides and develop a strong sense of belonging to the school community. During their time at the school, most pupils, including those in the Phoenix Centre make good overall progress. They develop positive attitudes to reading and speak with enthusiasm about their work across the curriculum, especially opportunities to be creative and physically active. They develop good mathematical skills and knowledge but do not use these skills often enough or as well as they could in their work across the curriculum. Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are keen to do well and to take on new challenges. In a few classes, pupils are beginning to develop useful skills that help them to reflect on their learning and to think about how they could improve their work. However, pupils do not generally have enough influence over their own learning or in decision making processes.

Staff know the pupils, their needs and interests very well. In the mainstream school and the specialist Phoenix Centre, they provide high levels of care, support and guidance that support pupils to enjoy school and participate effectively in learning. Staff provide a broad and balanced curriculum that matches the spirit and aspirations of the Curriculum for Wales. This is evident in work to explore concepts such as 'Belonging' that provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, using their locality and its features as a stimulus for much of their learning. Teachers use a range of strategies, such as effective questioning techniques to enhance learning. In a few instances, teachers provide sequences of lessons that support pupils to build their skills progressively. However, teachers' planning for progression across the school is inconsistent overall. At times, this limits their ability to plan precisely for pupils' next steps in learning.

Recommendations

- R1 Further develop a shared understanding of staff expectations for pupil progression through the school and improve the use of assessment strategies to support pupil progress more effectively
- R2 Improve opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum at the level of which they are capable
- R3 Extend pupils' influence over their learning and the life and work of the school

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare case studies on its work in relation to its family and community strategy and leadership development, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

When they join school in the nursery, around half of pupils have personal, social and communication skills that are at about the level expected for their age. Many of these very young pupils have attended the school's family provision before joining the nursery class. This develops their early learning skills and supports their well-being effectively.

During their time at school, most pupils, including those from more disadvantaged backgrounds and those with additional learning needs (ALN), in classes across the school and the Phoenix Centre, make good progress from their starting points. A very few more able pupils do not make as much progress as they could as their activities are not always sufficiently challenging.

Most pupils recall prior learning effectively, for example pupils use their knowledge of sentence structures to answer a range of questions in Welsh with confidence. Most pupils listen attentively to adults and their peers and respond appropriately, treating others with courtesy and respect. As they move through school, most pupils make good progress in developing their oracy skills and speak confidently to adults. They apply these skills effectively across a wide range of contexts. For example, pupils in Year 2 study their locality and discuss and rank the most and least important buildings. They provide valid reasons to justify their responses.

Older pupils develop an extensive vocabulary. They discuss emotive language and use it to explain how refugees may be feeling. They challenge peers' points of view thoughtfully if they disagree and adapt their talk to suit the audience. Nearly all pupils are eager to engage in simple Welsh dialogue and a few give extended answers to questions.

Most pupils in reception class are beginning to recognise letters and letter sounds and are starting to combine letters to form simple words. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils read fluently with suitable intonation. They use a range of strategies to decode words and to infer meaning from complex texts. A majority of pupils read and pronounce Welsh words confidently. In the older age groups, most pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read purposefully across a range of genres.

Most pupils make good progress with their writing skills. With guidance, many reception pupils, form letters with increasing accuracy. As they move through the school, they develop their writing skills well across a range of contexts. For example, Year 1 pupils create a poster to inform the public that the 'Stick Man' is lost and to promote his safe return. By Year 4, they sequence sentences and use a wide range of punctuation correctly. They spell unfamiliar words accurately and use descriptive language carefully to engage the reader. Older pupils spell a range of complex words accurately and use dictionaries proficiently to check their spelling. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 write well to create personal descriptions in Welsh using a range of vocabulary and extended sentence patterns.

Most pupils make appropriate progress in developing their mathematical skills. For example, pupils in reception create repeating patterns using a range of items and count objects confidently. Year 6 pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of algebra whilst solving simple equations. Across the school, many pupils are beginning to develop their mathematical reasoning skills appropriately in mathematics lessons. However, in general, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum to the level of which they are capable.

Older pupils' digital skills are developing well, and they use technology appropriately across a wide range of activities. For example, Year 4 pupils work collaboratively to put together a multimedia presentation about their favourite Welsh singer, using purposeful effects and links to videos. Older pupils use formulae in spreadsheets confidently to calculate the cost of a shopping list and correctly predict the effect of changing a formula on the total in a linked cell. Younger pupils use their digital skills appropriately to support their learning in a few worthwhile instances.

Many pupils progress well in their physical development during their time at school and gain a sound understanding of the effects of physical activity on the body. Pupils across the school develop their artistic and creative skills well through purposeful and engaging activities, such as music, drama and art lessons.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Overall, pupils at Coedffranc Primary school feel safe and cared for. They enjoy the nurturing and supportive environment and sense of belonging to the school community. Most pupils benefit from the strong working relationships with staff. Across the school, pupils know who to turn to if they are upset. They are confident that adults will listen to them and support them to address any issue they have. This trust underpins the caring relationships in the school. Nearly all pupils are polite and caring towards one another, staff and visitors. Nearly all pupils behave very well in lessons and as they move around the school.

Most pupils engage with the learning experiences positively. They work effectively with their peers in pairs or groups to support each other's learning. In a few instances, pupils understand how to take responsibility for their own learning, for example, a few classes have developed charters which support pupils to reflect on whether they have been effective learners. Most pupils are beginning to develop attitudes and behaviours that help them become independent learners. However, due to too much variability in teachers' expectations and approaches to teaching, pupils do not always develop independent learning skills, such as evaluating and reflecting on their own learning, as well as they could.

Nearly all pupils value and respect the opinions and contributions of others, for example when Year 5 pupils discuss and prioritise the community's needs. Across the school, pupils develop a good understanding of their rights as children and the rights of children across the world. They build a strong awareness of issues relating to fairness and equity. Pupil voice groups lead assemblies and focus on important matters such as diversity and inclusion in the school. This supports pupils' development as ethical and informed citizens.

Pupils who undertake leadership roles do so with enthusiasm and purpose. For example, Year 6 prefects are proud to support younger pupils through peer tutoring.

Pupils take good advantage of opportunities to use their voice. They have contributed towards enhancing their learning environment, for example by creating class charters, designing the school logo and improving the outdoor play environment. Participation in groups such as the School Council and Criw Cymraeg promotes self-esteem appropriately. However, pupils' influence in leading their own learning is less well developed.

Over time pupils develop a suitable understanding of how to act sustainably, for instance through their work to learn whether plastic is 'fantastic or drastic'. Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating. They keep their bodies fit by taking regular exercise in lessons and additional sports activity clubs. Most older pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe online.

Nearly all pupils are aware of the importance of regular attendance in school and understand the school's expectations.

Teaching and learning experiences

Across the school, staff develop strong working relationships with pupils. They have high expectations of their behaviour and encourage them to have high expectations of themselves as learners.

Many teachers use a range of approaches to engage pupils in their learning. They use questioning effectively and occasionally adapt their teaching skilfully to address misconceptions and support pupils' understanding. They create valuable opportunities for pupils to work together and are beginning to support pupils to reflect successfully on their learning.

A few teachers plan sequences of lessons that build pupils' skills and understanding progressively. Younger pupils, for example, draft persuasive letters to the council, following a series of activities linked to thinking about their locality and older pupils improve their analysis of poetry, building on opportunities to think about authors' techniques. Teachers are working to develop a shared understanding of what pupils' progress in skills and learning across the curriculum should look like as they move through the school. However, this work is at a relatively early stage of development and planning for the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding over sequences of lessons is not currently the norm. Teachers are not always clear about their expectations of pupils' progress in lessons and over time. This limits their capacity to use ongoing assessment to plan for next steps in learning. It also means that pupils are sometimes unsure about the purpose of their work and the steps they need to take to make progress in different aspects of their learning.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively throughout the school to support all pupils, including those with additional needs and those in the Phoenix Centre, to make good progress in many aspects of their learning. In particular, the innovative ways in which they support teachers and leaders to build a positive culture of reading contributes to pupils' love of reading in school and at home.

Leaders and teachers share a clear vision for the school's curriculum and work closely together to create whole school themes which provide rich learning experiences. The current topic, 'Belonging', for example, enables pupils to share appropriate information about their lives with others and to learn more about people and places in their local area, in Wales and the world. Younger pupils think about

which places in their community are most and least important to them and older pupils use a range of sources of information to explore the lives and feelings of the 'Windrush' generation.

Teachers are beginning to adapt their planning to help pupils to make links in their learning and to transfer aspects of their knowledge and skills to other areas of the curriculum. The school's recent focus on developing pupils' oracy skills is effective in developing their confidence. This, combined with a focus on critical thinking, enables many pupils to speak maturely by the end of their time in school. For example, pupils in Year 6 take part in group discussion and debate to gather perspectives on an historic event. They form opinions, question each other's viewpoints and find interesting ways to express what they learn. Teachers ensure that pupils generally develop their knowledge of mathematical concepts systematically. Pupils in reception to Year 2 particularly benefit from opportunities to explore numbers in a variety of practical ways. However, across the school, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Most teachers plan appropriately for pupils to develop their digital, creative and problem-solving skills. For example, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 plant seeds and flowers to create a habitat for bees. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about nature during forest school sessions and have opportunities to care for and improve their school grounds and areas in their locality such as the local park, where they plant flowers and make sure it is litter free. Generally, however, teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop learning in the outdoor environment.

The school provides authentic opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the history and culture of Wales and the issues that affect them today. They imitate the work of Welsh artists, celebrate special days and learn about how people migrating to other countries take Welsh traditions and music with them. In most classes, teachers encourage pupils to practise their Welsh language and as a result, pupils ask and answer questions confidently when chatting with visitors.

Staff develop pupils' understanding of diversity well. From an early age, pupils think about similarities and differences between themselves and others. As they move through the school, they learn about the history and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, for example through life stories of influential figures such as Katherine Johnson. Older pupils interview representatives of Save the Children as part of their work on rights. They learn about children affected by conflict and about countries where girls are not allowed to go to school.

Care, support and guidance

The school provides high levels of care, support and guidance. Leaders and staff work hard to establish strong relationships with pupils and their families. Staff know pupils well and respond to their social and emotional needs sensitively.

The whole school focus on well-being creates a safe, nurturing and inclusive learning environment. Most staff are knowledgeable about how to support pupils with their social and emotional needs and have a clear, consistent approach. As a result, most pupils regulate their emotions well and know how to seek support when they need it.

The ALN co-ordinator and staff from the Phoenix Centre provide valuable specialist support and guidance for all staff. This enables them to support learners successfully and to share good practice across the school. The school uses assessment processes, termly reviews and interventions appropriately to ensure that those receiving additional support make good progress from their starting points.

The school has developed outstanding processes for engaging and supporting the families of pupils in the school and those whose children have not yet started school. This is a strength of the school. The well-qualified family support worker offers a wide range of valuable training for parents and is highly effective in her role. For example, parents and carers benefit from baby massage sessions, and from learning through play sessions where they learn to support their children with developing a love of reading from an early age. This provision is strengthened through worthwhile links with external agencies. A notable example of this is the close working partnership with health visitors who support families and signpost the support on offer from the school. This early engagement with parents impacts positively on pupils' skills as they enter the school and strengthens the school's place at the centre of the community.

Many pupils have opportunities to be part of pupil voice groups and these groups make valuable contributions to the work of the school. For example, pupils on the school council have designed the new markings on the school yard to improve physical activity at lunchtimes. In a few classes, pupils contribute purposeful ideas when planning authentic contexts for their learning. However, in general, pupils do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning or to influence the work of the school without adult guidance.

The school's curriculum supports pupils to develop an understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales and their place in the wider world. Pupils learn about Welsh landmarks and famous people in Welsh history. They compare their experiences with those of children around the world well. For example, a whole school focus on 'Belonging' supports pupils to develop a sense of how they belong in school, in the local community and as global citizens.

Pupils have regular opportunities for reflection and develop a good understanding of the values and beliefs of others through lessons and as part of their collective worship. Pupils are aware of the rights of the child and develop a strong sense of what is right and wrong. They visit local places of worship to learn about Christianity and other faiths. This contributes to them developing a good understanding of equality and diversity in their community. The school's provision supports pupils to become more ethically informed through participating in fundraising events such as collections for the foodbank or Children in Need events.

The school provides a wide range of rich experiences for pupils to develop their physical and creative skills well. Many pupils take part in sports activities and tournaments, competitions such as a road safety quiz and a range of afterschool provision. During the school day, they especially enjoy Welsh language physical education, drama and music sessions.

The school regularly invites guests and visitors who thoughtfully and sensitively share the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life and

consequently raise pupils' aspirations. Visitors, including those from the Welsh rugby team, support pupils to develop values such as perseverance and commitment, and the First Minister gives pupils insights into the way in which Wales is governed.

Processes to promote positive rates of pupils' attendance are appropriate. The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's highly effective leadership has been transformational to the life and work of the school. His enabling leadership style facilitates effective continuous improvement and supports the development of a strong team culture. The consistent emphasis on developing and maintaining positive relationships across the whole community and the capacity to bring the best out of people is a significant strength of the leadership at the school.

The school has developed and implemented a clear vision that meet the needs of pupils, families and the local community particularly well. This ensures that staff work with a shared sense of purpose to promote high expectations for pupils' progress and well-being as well as ensuring that they develop a sense of belonging to the school and the local community. Specific initiatives, such as the development of the family-centred approach to learning, exemplify the effective way that the school turns its vision into action through effective strategic leadership. The school works effectively to raise pupils' aspirations, for example by inviting high profile personalities from the world of sport, science and Welsh politics to the school. This provides pupils with valuable opportunities to identify the characteristics they may need to develop to support them to achieve their own goals in life.

Arrangements to distribute roles, responsibilities and to develop leadership capacity are highly effective. Senior leaders draw particularly well on staff experiences and skills to improve provision, progress and outcomes for pupils. For example, the leadership of the school's family support provision by its family engagement officer is exceptional. This work is extremely beneficial to the lives of pupils and families in the locality in many ways, for example by supporting parents with pre-school support and facilitating engagement with a network of vital support services. Overall, the school works well with parents, for example through a productive partnership with the Parent Teachers' Association. Staff communicate well with parents to share information about what is happening at school, but arrangements to share information about pupil progress are less well developed.

Departmental leaders of learning ensure that teachers and teaching assistants across the school maintain a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning experiences. The school's ALN co-ordinator works very well with the leader of the school's specialist Phoenix Centre to ensure that the school's ALN provision is consistently effective for pupils. The centre leader influences whole school improvement positively and provides professional learning to centre and mainstream staff, for example, introducing zones of regulation. This training has impacted positively on the behaviour of all pupils. This strong leadership also ensures that progress towards ALN reform is good.

Leaders ensure that the school makes good progress in addressing other national priorities. The school has designed and started to deliver its local interpretation of the Curriculum for Wales successfully. Leaders focus sharply on improving pupils' literacy and communication skills. Pupils and families benefit from the school's strong commitment to developing a culture of reading from the time they join the school until the time they leave. This includes access to books and storytelling sessions for families before pupils start at school, a structured approach to developing reading skills, regular contact with the local library and additional reading sessions for older pupils outside of the school day. Leaders ensure that pupils have regular and worthwhile opportunities to use the Welsh language.

The school's commitment to tackling poverty and social disadvantage permeates its work. Leaders engage purposefully with research and with educational settings from the United Kingdom and the United States to inform decisions about provision, for example to shape the family support strategy. They use the pupil development grant well to fund skilled staff to implement a sustainable whole school approach to well-being, to support pupils' development of skills and to provide access to experiences.

The school's evaluation and improvement processes are extensive and effective. Leaders identify relevant priorities and take suitable actions to bring about desired improvements. Staff keep progress towards improvement goals under constant review. The confidence and capacity within the school's staff to adapt plans intuitively to improve practice further is a particular strength. Arrangements to support professional learning are regular and effective and support school improvement well. For example, professional learning has strengthened the school's provision to develop pupils' reading and ensured highly effective processes to support the well-being of pupils. Leaders ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping learners safe.

Governors are strong advocates for the school. They provide valuable support when needed, for instance when the buildings have needed urgent and extensive repair. Governors know the school and the community it serves well. They understand the school's improvement priorities and the reasons that lie behind them. They support leaders to implement and monitor improvement work appropriately, for instance by agreeing to allocate funding and by visiting the school to see developments at first hand. Governors make appropriate arrangements for healthy eating and drinking. School leaders manage finances carefully and allocate funds to support improvement appropriately.

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).