



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

**A report on**

**Parkland Primary School**

**Sketty Park Drive  
Sketty  
SA2 8NG**

**Date of inspection: May 2023**

**by**

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

## About Parkland Primary School

Name of provider	Parkland Primary School
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	646
Pupils of statutory school age	526
Number in nursery classes	120
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%)	13.6%
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%)	6.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	27.2%
Date of headteacher appointment	03/01/2011
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	02/09/2013
Start date of inspection	15/05/2023
<p>The school has a specialist teaching facility (STF) class for pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties. These pupils attend school from across the local authority. The facility caters for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6. This is known locally as Y Bont Fawr. The school are also trialling their own facility for younger pupils. This is known as Y Bont Fawr.</p>	

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](https://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

Parkland Primary School is a happy, vibrant school where pupils thrive. The school is highly inclusive ensuring that all pupils including those with additional learning needs (ALN) feel safe, happy and ready to learn. This develops pupils' passion for learning and determination to succeed. As a result, nearly all pupils make strong progress in their learning from their individual starting points. Across the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They forge positive relationships with their peers and adults alike and demonstrate high levels of respect for one another's cultures.

The school provides a wide variety of exciting and innovative learning experiences that develop pupils' skills effectively and promote a love of learning. The approach to developing pupils' ability to continuously improve the quality of their work is particularly effective. This ensures that most pupils respond well to feedback from their teachers and their peers. As a result, they make strong progress. However, in a few instances the learning environment does not always provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to develop their independent learning and problem-solving skills to their full potential. In a few cases, teachers do not always provide opportunities for younger pupils to explore their environment and to investigate their own questions.

Staff support the well-being of the whole community successfully. There are strong relationships with parents and families and the school provides an effective range of support, often in collaboration with several outside agencies. Provision for pupils with ALN is highly beneficial. The work of the school's specialist teaching facility 'Y Bont Fawr' is particularly effective. Pupils are fully included in the life of the school and nearly all make strong progress.

Leadership of the school is outstanding. The headteacher provides exemplary leadership working alongside an effective team of leaders and a dedicated governing body. Together they have high expectations for all. Leaders use a range of evaluation and improvement processes very well to sustain high quality provision at the school and to bring about further improvements. They foster a strong culture of learning across the school where all staff benefit from a well-developed system of professional learning. This has a positive impact on many aspects of the school's work.

## Recommendations

R1 Further improve the teaching and the learning environment to support the development of pupils' independent learning skills

## 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 a case study on its work in relation to its highly effective programme of professional learning and the impact this has had on developing pupils' thinking skills and the schools' work to develop assessment in line with curriculum for Wales, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

During their time at the school, most pupils including those eligible for free school meals and those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make strong and rapid progress in the development of their skills from their individual starting points. Nearly all pupils in the Specialist Teaching Facility, Y Bont Fawr, make good progress over time, especially in relation to their literacy and numeracy skills.

Nearly all pupils across the school are confident, articulate speakers. Younger pupils speak enthusiastically about things that are important to them. They speak confidently across a wide range of contexts and use subject specific language effectively, for example when referring to symmetrical patterns as they design and make a crown for King Charles III. Most older pupils listen carefully to each other's point of view and respond appropriately. They speak articulately and confidently for a wide range of purposes, for instance to reflect on the skills they have learnt and why these are important in helping them to make progress. For example, when Year 6 pupils debate the best forms of energy sources, they use subject specific vocabulary accurately and respond effectively to any challenges to their points of view.

Most younger pupils develop their reading skills well. They enjoy listening to stories and identify features in illustrations successfully. As they develop, they use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read simple words and use a range of useful strategies to make sense of unknown words. As they move through the school, most pupils read fluently and with expression. They acquire a wide range of reading skills. For example, they use inference and deduction skills effectively to discuss character and plot. Most pupils develop a passion for reading. They enjoy making book choices and review what they have read enthusiastically.

From their individual starting points, nearly all pupils' writing develops well and is a strength across the school. The youngest pupils enjoy participating in mark making activities and begin to write letters that are known to them. As they progress in their writing skills, most pupils begin to recognise and use simple punctuation. They use their phonetic knowledge to spell three letter words and make good attempts when writing unknown words. As they move through the school, nearly all pupils write for a range of purposes successfully matching their writing effectively to their audience. They produce high quality pieces of work, such as narratives, using an adventurous choice of vocabulary, accurate punctuation, spelling and grammar. Overall, most pupils produce high quality pieces of written work across all areas of the curriculum.

Most of the youngest pupils develop a good range of mathematical skills. For example, they sort and classify when playing with shapes and begin to count the resources in their play. Pupils in Y Bont Fawr discuss their thinking confidently and

use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary. Most older pupils show resilience and perseverance when challenged in their mathematical thinking. For example, they use a variety of methods to calculate real life financial problems choosing the most effective method for themselves. Overall, most pupils develop secure numeracy skills and apply these competently to other areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils make good progress in using and understanding Welsh and demonstrate a positive attitude towards the language. The youngest pupils talk clearly greeting their friends and familiar adults. Most older pupils speak confidently using a range of verbs and begin to extend their sentences using a range of connectives.

Most pupils develop a beneficial range of digital skills during their time at the school. Younger pupils begin to use tablets to create artwork successfully. As they move through the school, most pupils learn how to code and they use data bases effectively, such as when they calculate the number of passengers on board the Titanic.

Across the school, most pupils develop their physical skills well. For example, when younger pupils use scissors to cut and hold mark making tools, they develop strong fine motor skills. Older pupils work collaboratively during dance. They understand and use a range of movements to build on a sequence of moves effectively.

Most pupils develop their creative skills well and make good progress in using these skills across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop a wide range of musical skills including the ability to play a musical instrument.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils are proud of their school and feel happy and safe in its nurturing environment. They value the care and support that they receive from staff highly. Nearly all pupils know what to do if they are worried or anxious and they feel well-supported by their peers. Most pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. For example, they are aware of the dangers associated with the use of social media and of the importance of keeping passwords protected.

Most pupils are kind and considerate towards each other and adults within the school. They forge positive relationships with each other and provide appropriate support or help to those in need. Most older pupils enjoy participating in the school playground buddy scheme where they help to ensure that other children have enjoyable playtimes. Most pupils respect the rights of others and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They enjoy celebrating and learning about one another's cultures and they have a strong understanding of the importance of equity for all. For example, they develop empathy for the rights of different people through their work learning about the rights of the child.

Nearly all pupils relish the learning opportunities that the school provides. They are hungry to learn. They make valuable contributions in lessons which enhances the learning experience for all. Most pupils respond thoughtfully to feedback during their lessons. This prompts pupils to make considered improvements to their work.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour during lessons, assemblies and as they move around the school. Most pupils make seamless transitions between learning tasks. They settle quickly and are ready to learn when they arrive in class.

Nearly all pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep their bodies and minds healthy. For example, they make healthy snack choices at break time and a few ride their bikes to school to stay fit. Nearly all pupils enjoy and value the range of extra-curricular opportunities offered to them. They attend clubs with infectious enthusiasm and dedication and the clubs have a positive impact on their well-being and skills.

As they move through the school, most pupils develop a strong understanding of the importance of protecting the environment and they consider carefully a range of world issues such as climate change. For example, when older pupils debate different energy sources, they present strong cases around the pros and cons of renewable sources to their peers.

Most pupils, including those with ALN, take on leadership roles with enthusiasm via involvement in the extensive range of pupil voice groups across the school. Through these responsibilities they are beginning to influence the work of the school. For example, the Digital Heroes help improve pupils' awareness of cyber bullying.

Following the Pandemic whole school attendance, including the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals, shows improvement.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

The school provides an effective curriculum that is broad and balanced, meets the needs of its pupils well and aligns appropriately with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. Staff have collaborated purposefully with pupils and parents to develop a vision where the school provides learning experiences that are engaging, enjoyable and accessible to all. For example, the school ensures all older pupils receive free musical instrument tuition. Pupils are beginning to influence their learning purposefully, such as when they select activities they would like to complete during their work on a particular theme.

Teachers and teaching assistants collaborate effectively to plan and deliver a range of enriching experiences that capture pupils' imagination, spark their curiosity and nurture in them a strong desire to learn. As a result, nearly all pupils enjoy their learning and are committed to producing work of the highest possible standard. There is a purposeful working relationship between adults and pupils based on mutual respect and a love for learning. This promotes a productive and vibrant atmosphere throughout the school.

Teachers and teaching assistants use an effective range of questioning techniques to support pupils' learning. Through timely, high-quality feedback, they ensure that pupils know precisely what they have done well and what they need to do to make improvements to their work. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and, as a result, pupils have autonomy in making improvements to their work. This is a strength of the school.

Staff know the pupils well and use assessment information skilfully to plan for the next steps in pupils' learning. They design a range of enriching and interesting learning experiences carefully. These opportunities support nearly all pupils to make strong progress in developing their literacy, digital and numeracy skills over time. Staff ensure that there are frequent opportunities for pupils to apply these skills across the curriculum. For example, when younger pupils calculate how many sandwiches Paddington will need for his coronation party, they develop their understanding of number successfully.

The school ensures that pupils develop an awareness of the Welsh language and culture effectively. For example, during their theme 'Canary in a Coalmine', pupils learn about the mining industry in the Swansea area and the cultural and economic importance to the local communities. Teachers and support staff use the Welsh language regularly and naturally throughout the day. They promote a positive attitude to the language and most pupils enjoy using familiar phrases with staff, visitors and their peers.

The school provides highly effective opportunities for pupils to develop personal and social skills throughout their time at school. The relationships aspect of the school curriculum is particularly well developed. As a result, nearly all pupils develop as rounded individuals with high levels of respect.

Generally, teachers have high expectations for all pupils and ensure that there is an appropriate pace to activities. This ensures that learning moves forward briskly. However, in a few instances, teachers and teaching assistants provide too much direction during learning experiences and the learning environment for younger pupils does not always provide sufficient opportunity to develop their independent learning and problem-solving skills to their full potential. The tasks are often too closed and do not allow pupils to explore their environment or support them to answer questions arising from their own curiosity.

In Y Bont Fawr, staff know their pupils well and create positive working relationships. There are effective daily routines that develop pupils' listening, oracy and social skills through short, sharp, purposeful activities. Staff are very good role models. They respect the contributions of all pupils and use questioning skills appropriately to extend pupils' learning and reinforce understanding. They use a good range of teaching approaches and strategies, that meet the needs of the pupils well.

Teachers provide regular termly updates for parents and carers on pupil progress and these include useful advice for further learning. These ensure that parents are well informed about their child's progress.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school is a highly inclusive, caring community where the well-being of everyone is a priority. Staff ensure that pupils have equity of access to all aspects of school life. The school provides a wide range of well-being support for its pupils. For example, support staff provide emotional support to pupils needing help to regulate their emotions. The well-being team work closely with a wide range of agencies to support pupils and their families. As a result, parents are confident in approaching the school with concerns and appreciate the support provided.



The school provides effective support for pupils with ALN. There are clear systems for the identification and monitoring of pupils needing additional support. A wide range of strategies and interventions help to improve pupils' skills. Support staff lead these effectively. Staff encourage parents to play a full role in the support around their child, and the school works well with a range of other agencies who provide specialist support for pupils' emotional, health, and social needs. As a result, most pupils with ALN make strong progress towards their individual learning goals. The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCO) has a good understanding of national reform and uses her up to date knowledge to train all staff. For example, she provides training to ensure that individual development plans meet the needs of pupils well.

The specialist teaching facility, Y Bont Fawr, provides a nurturing and supportive environment and teachers set high expectations for its pupils. The school ensures that pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life such as attendance at residential trips and participation in pupil voice groups. The school is currently piloting a specialist teaching class for its younger pupils with additional learning needs. This is at an early stage of development.

The school embraces its very diverse community and provides many opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their identity, heritage and culture. These opportunities are embedded within the school curriculum and permeate school life. As a result, nearly all pupils are respectful of one another's cultures. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn about faiths within the school community and ensures that pupils learn to respect and value the heritage and culture of Wales. For example, during International Mother Language Day the school celebrates the use of Welsh as well as the different languages of pupils attending the school.

Regular acts of collective worship provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to come together and reflect on important moral and social issues, such as honesty, trust, responsibility, respect and tolerance. The school ensures that pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of equality and diversity. For example, older pupils investigate gender stereotyping in the gaming industry as part of their curriculum work. The school also ensures that pupils are aware of world issues and their rights as a child. For example, older pupils explore the differences between a democracy and a dictatorship and develop a good understanding of the rights of asylum seekers in Wales.

The school provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and to have a voice in school life. For example, the Money Makers group help to co-ordinate school efforts to raise money for charity. However, opportunities for pupils to have a wider influence are at an early stage of development.

Staff run a wealth of extra-curricular activities that pupils enjoy attending. For example, the school orchestra club provides all pupils with the opportunity to learn to play an instrument and to perform to a variety of audiences. The school provides this at no cost to families ensuring that finance is not a barrier to participation.

The school provides an attractive, safe and secure environment where pupils thrive. There is a positive culture of safeguarding where the well-being of the whole school community is a priority. The family engagement officer and dedicated staff track and

monitor pupil attendance robustly. As a result, most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, attend school more regularly following the pandemic.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is a highly effective leader who sets high expectations for herself and the whole school community. She leads with compassion and prioritises the well-being of pupils and staff alike. As a result, Parkland Primary is a vibrant, happy school where everyone feels valued.

The headteacher is ably supported by two extremely capable deputy headteachers and a team of effective phase leaders. This structure ensures that leadership is distributed appropriately across the school.

All leaders share a clear vision across the school community where everyone is committed to pupils thriving in a safe and happy environment where diversity is valued and celebrated.

The school has a robust cycle of self-evaluation and improvement planning which all stakeholders contribute to appropriately. Leaders and governors use a range of first-hand evidence well to inform decisions taken to secure improvements in teaching and learning. As a result, they are clear about the school's strengths and its areas that need to improve. They use this information effectively to continuously refine aspects of the school's work for the benefit of pupils.

The headteacher and governing body ensure that the school works towards the national education priorities for Wales. For example, leaders have taken a strategic approach to the development of the school's new curriculum. They provide strong guidance and support to all staff and create a culture of self-reflection and refinement. As a result, the school's curriculum design has been appropriately adapted and embedded into the life of the school. In addition, leaders and governors pay due regard to the impact of poverty on attainment. For example, following a review of school processes, the school has set out clear actions to support pupils and families where finance is a barrier to learning.

Leaders have a secure understanding of the progress made by pupils. Pupil learning reviews and careful monitoring of the impact of actions taken, enable leaders to successfully evaluate grant spending. For example, the school's work to monitor the impact of its pupil development grant plan is robust. As a result, most pupils targeted to receive support, make strong progress in their learning.

Governors provide effective strategic support to the school. They are extremely knowledgeable and passionate about their work and they skilfully use their expertise to assist the headteacher with key issues such as finance. They help to promote a positive culture of safeguarding. Governors carefully monitor the quality of school meals provided to pupils and they ensure the school promotes healthy eating and drinking appropriately.

Leaders provide a highly effective system of teacher development. Teachers use digital technology successfully to assess their own teaching and pupil learning. This supports teachers to reflect suitably on their practice and provides a worthwhile

platform for staff to share strong practice across the school. For example, opportunities for teachers to share practice in guided reading have led to improvements in teaching and learning. In addition, leaders provide staff with appropriate opportunities to meet regularly and share practice through organised 'Teach Meets.' This has a worthwhile impact on teacher's understanding of a variety of concepts such their understanding of the development of pupils' thinking skills.

A wide range of professional learning opportunities for staff link appropriately to school improvement priorities. This supports specific areas of school improvement effectively such as work to implement a whole school approach to emotional, mental health and well-being for pupils. As a result, the school provides consistently high levels of care and support to pupils across the school. Senior leaders and governors use performance management processes successfully and there is a supportive learning culture for all staff. The headteacher ensures that staff engage in appropriate professional learning to develop leadership at all levels. This includes participation in regional and national leadership programmes.

The school collaborates with a wide range of professionals to further develop staff learning and to share the practice of the school more widely. For example, a senior leader is currently sharing the school's strong practice in the relationship aspect of the curriculum on a national scale. The school supports the development of trainee teachers and is a lead practice school for initial teacher training in partnership with a local university.

## 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](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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