



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

**A report on**

**Cornist Park C.P. School**

**Ffordd yr Ysgol  
Flint  
CH6 5ET**

**Date of inspection: June 2023**

**by**

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

## About Cornist Park C.P. School

Name of provider	Cornist Park C.P. School
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	282
Pupils of statutory school age	241
Number in nursery classes	41
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%)	23.1%
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%)	5.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.2%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/02/2014
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/03/2015
Start date of inspection	19/06/2023

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

Cornist Park CP School is a happy and caring community where pupils work and play together confidently. Staff focus well on pupils' well-being, and this allows pupils to thrive in the school's inclusive environment. Pupils say that they feel safe, secure, and happy in school. They know that adults in the school care for them and that they can turn to them when they face challenges or have difficulties. Support for pupils' emotional well-being is highly effective. This is particularly evident in the positive encouragement staff provide for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).

Staff have worked hard to create a calm and nurturing ethos, which contributes to effective learning. Most pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. They form strong relationships with adults and one another and show respect and courtesy for all members of the school community. Classrooms and outdoor spaces are productive, active learning environments. This ensures that most pupils focus well in lessons and demonstrate interest in their learning.

Teachers and support staff plan engaging learning experiences that help to ensure most pupils make good progress with their skills during lessons and over time. They listen carefully to what pupils want to learn and weave their ideas into well-planned sequences of lessons that build systematically on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Most teaching is purposeful and enables pupils to develop their skills in real life contexts. However, the provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills and numeracy across the curriculum is less well developed.

School leaders have high expectations of themselves and everyone within the school community to do their best for pupils. There is a strong culture of professional learning embedded across the school where teachers and support staff's talents and interests are developed and valued. Leaders know the school well and are open and honest about its strengths and areas for improvement. For example, the school recognises a need to improve how it challenges pupils to achieve to the best of their ability and to ensure that feedback to pupils helps to move them forward with their learning.

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that teaching provides appropriate challenge for all pupils and that feedback is effective in helping them further improve their work
- R2 Further develop opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how they organise and present their work and to decide for themselves how they respond to learning tasks
- R3 Further develop the curriculum to ensure that the school provides a systematic whole school approach to the development of pupils' Welsh language skills and their use of numeracy skills across the curriculum

## 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 the strategic development of support staff skills and its impact on pupils' learning and well-being, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals (FSM), make good progress in their learning during their time in school. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) progress well from their individual starting points and achieve well against their personal targets.

Over time, many pupils make strong progress in developing and using their oracy skills. In the early years, they begin to develop their confidence as speakers, for example when discussing why the three little pigs needed to hide from the wolf. They listen well to others and respond readily to questions. By Year 6, many speak with confidence and fluency, for example when reflecting on the different perspectives expressed in war time letters.

With encouragement from staff, pupils in nursery and reception soon develop an interest in books. They enjoy listening to stories and many retell them eagerly to friends and visitors. They recognise and name a range of sounds and use this knowledge to start to read simple, stage-appropriate texts. By Year 2, many pupils develop positive reading behaviours and valuable skills. They attempt unfamiliar words using a variety of phonic strategies purposefully. By Year 6, many pupils have developed a secure range of strategies to read fluently and independently, applying their reading skills effectively to support their learning in other subjects.

Many pupils show enthusiasm for writing. By Year 2, many write an increasing range of sentences effectively, and begin to develop their independent writing skills. They develop their ideas creatively and imaginatively, for example when writing autumn poems. Older pupils develop a good understanding of the characteristics of different genres and write more extended pieces independently, such as when writing interesting stories about landing in a lost magical world. By Year 6, many write perceptively for a wide range of purposes across the curriculum with limited errors in spelling or punctuation. They choose words carefully to enhance their writing for the reader, for example when writing about a family facing discrimination.

The development of pupils' Welsh language skills has been hampered by recent missed learning opportunities resulting from the pandemic. Many pupils have a positive attitude to learning Welsh and respond to teachers' instructions well. Many pupils in the Nursery class respond well to instructions by the teacher and sing songs

in Welsh enthusiastically. As pupils progress through the school, many answer with basic responses during discussions with teachers and each other, for example when sharing personal information. By Year 6, many pupils show an appropriate understanding of spoken language in familiar situations. However, they do not use their oral Welsh language skills confidently enough in other areas of the curriculum and around the school.

Many pupils develop their mathematical skills well. Effective early language development supports pupils in nursery and reception to grasp mathematical concepts, such as direction, position, number, size and sequence. By Year 2, many have a secure grasp of basic number facts, recognise shape and develop confidence in telling the time. Older pupils work well with the four rules of number, shape and measure and develop sound data handling skills. They describe their thinking and reasoning well and explain how they have reached conclusions. By Year 6, many pupils use a wide range of methods competently to calculate in their heads and on paper when solving problems. Generally, however, pupils do not use their numeracy skills at a similar level in other areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils use a good range of digital skills across the school and can talk at length about these and how they use them. Most pupils use digital tools successfully to support their learning across the curriculum. Older pupils create high quality animations linking sound and images based on their class book. By Year 6, most pupils create databases and spreadsheets successfully to calculate profit or loss.

From an early age, pupils enjoy using their creative and artistic skills. Many demonstrate good fine motor skills, using scissors, glue and paint brushes confidently. Many younger pupils demonstrate good creative skills, for example when creating animal masks and use musical instruments imaginatively to represent sounds made by various animals. Older pupils work creatively with a wide range of materials when reflecting on and emulating the work of a local Welsh artist. Many pupils participate enthusiastically and energetically in a wide range of physical activity. This has a positive effect on their confidence, their ability to work together, and their fitness and well-being.

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

Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and are confident in the school environment. They feel well supported by staff, know where to turn if they need support and are confident that staff will listen and deal appropriately with any concerns. They say that they feel safe in school and free from issues of bullying. They behave well in lessons and during break times, when playing games and socialising. They are considerate and respectful, and relate well to each other and to adults. Most have a clear understanding of the need for rules and the concept of fairness. They have the confidence to resolve friendship issues independently before needing to approach an adult for support. They appreciate the range of well-being opportunities available to help them manage their feelings and develop resilience.

Most pupils are happy and proud of their school and show positive attitudes to their learning. From an early age, most settle quickly into their morning routine of choosing tasks in different areas of provision. They move around the school sensibly and purposefully, collaborating well with their peers and helping staff to organise

equipment. Across the school, most pupils engage well with their tasks, work effectively with their learning partners, and support each other successfully in small groups. They listen carefully to what their friends and teachers say and respond to their ideas thoughtfully. Most pupils concentrate well, avoid distractions, and complete their tasks. At times, a very few pupils lack concentration and fail to engage adequately with their tasks.

Nearly all pupils take part in planning their termly topics. Many pupils show an increasing ability to plan together and to express an opinion about what they are learning. This results in many pupils displaying high levels of interest and engagement in their work. When given the opportunity, many carry out tasks with limited support. However, in a few classes, pupils are over-reliant on adult direction and do not make enough decisions about how they organise and present their work. This limits opportunities for pupils to think for themselves.

Pupils, from an early age, are encouraged to reflect on their learning. When provided with the opportunity, many pupils respond well to feedback from adults and their peers to improve their work and develop their skills further. This improves their self-confidence and supports their progress as they move through the school. However, on occasions, pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of what their next steps in learning are.

Many pupils make good use of opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a range of roles and pupil voice committees. For example, reading ambassadors host the nursery reading tea party and actively encourage pupils across the school to undertake a reading challenge. The digital heroes visit a local care home to support residents with online safety providing. This provides a worthwhile opportunity for pupils to communicate with the elderly in their local community and showcase their digital skills and knowledge. While undertaking these roles, many pupils present themselves with confidence and can explain where their work has made a difference to school life. This helps them to develop confidence, resilience, and empathy for others, and gives them a valuable insight into how decisions are made.

Most pupils have a clear understanding of the concept of fairness, respect and tolerance, and they are beginning to develop a suitable understanding of cultural diversity in modern Wales. They demonstrate an appropriate understanding of some of the ethical issues facing the world, such as the need to protect the environment. They are proud of their efforts in support of national and local charities. These initiatives have a positive effect on their awareness of the needs of others in their community and the wider world and help them to develop as ethical and responsible citizens.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when online. For example, they know not to share their passwords. Most pupils understand the importance of looking after their own well-being. Nearly all pupils know the benefits of keeping healthy and fit. They talk knowledgeably about healthy food choices for snacks and the need to drink water regularly. They appreciate the importance of taking regular exercise, involving themselves actively in a range of activities during and after the school day. This has a positive effect on their confidence, their ability to work with others, their fitness and emotional well-being.

## Teaching and learning experiences

The school has a clear, shared vision for learning that reflects the principles and culture of the Curriculum for Wales. The school's vision reflects the context of the school well. Leaders and staff work closely with pupils, parents, and governors to develop a purposeful curriculum based on the school's core values that reflects the local area. Working collaboratively with local schools, they trial new ideas thoughtfully and evaluate the impact of these new approaches, including the introduction of French on pupils' learning. The four purposes are central to staff planning and the introduction of 'Fflint' the Dragon supports pupils' understanding of these purposes well. As a result, most pupils know, understand, and can demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes they are aspiring to achieve during their time at the school.

Teachers work together productively to plan interesting cross-curriculum topics, that are relevant to pupils' interests and engage them well. They ensure that pupils contribute their ideas and suggestions in the planning process, for example planning topics such as 'pirates, jungles and space'. This provides pupils with a sense of ownership in their learning. Teachers identify valuable opportunities for pupils to build on previous learning and ensure that learning experiences provide opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and digital skills in engaging contexts. Most teachers are strong language role models and constantly reinforce the use of subject specific terminology to broaden pupils' vocabulary. However, whole-school systematic planning to develop pupils' Welsh oracy skills and numeracy skills across the curriculum is at an early stage of development.

Teachers carefully consider their locality, the history and culture of Wales and the wider world when planning units of work. They frequently place learning into a relevant, real-world context, for example when investigating how the village of Rhosllannerchrugog was impacted during World War 2. They take full advantage of national heritage sites such as Flint castle, and the achievement of local sports personalities when planning. They also provide pupils with worthwhile opportunities to compare life in Wales and other countries, such as Africa and the Netherlands.

Staff create attractive and engaging learning areas including working walls, accessible resources, and displays of pupils' work that support pupils' learning well. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to work in the school's extensive and stimulating outdoor environment including the forest school. This enables pupils to learn about caring for living things and the environment and to engage with each other and with adults confidently. For example, 'Wellies in the Woods' sessions provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils and their parents to learn and play together in the outdoors. This has a positive impact on pupils' eagerness to learn.

Teachers enhance learning opportunities through the use a range of visits, residential opportunities and engaging extra-curricular activities. Well-attended after-school activities such as American football, animation, drama, and music develop pupils' literacy, physical and creative skills well.

Teachers create a calm, purposeful atmosphere where pupils feel safe to make mistakes and ask for help. Support staff have a clear understanding of their roles and work very effectively with teachers to provide high quality support for pupils' learning and well-being. Together, they manage pupils' behaviour positively and sensitively,

ensuring that they meet the needs of nearly all pupils, including those with ALN. Most teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods to stimulate and encourage pupils to learn, to reinforce understanding of basic concepts and skills, and to encourage pupil independence. However, at times, learning tasks do not always provide sufficient challenge or extend pupils' learning well enough. In a few classes, where teaching is less effective, teachers tend to guide activities too much. This limits opportunities for pupils to decide for themselves how they organise and present their own work effectively.

In most classes, teachers provide clear instructions that support pupils to know what they need to do to be successful. They use questioning effectively to move pupils' learning on and to support understanding according to the needs of pupils, ensuring that they are appropriately challenged. In the best examples they share and adapt success criteria and challenge pupils to consider how they can improve their work. However, the quality of teacher feedback across the school varies and does not always have sufficient impact on improving the quality of pupil work.

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

The school is a happy, caring, and nurturing community where staff and pupils show a high level of respect and care for each other. This is a compelling feature of the school, providing strong foundations for pupils and a sense of belonging that is valued greatly by pupils and staff. Staff know their pupils, their backgrounds and the local community very well. Procedures for managing challenging behaviour are effective. The readiness of staff to listen to pupils' concerns contributes significantly to promoting the positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils and the calm ethos that pervades the school.

The school promotes very beneficial nurture provision to support pupils' well-being. This is a warm, welcoming, and a safe place for pupils to develop their emotional intelligence and to help them build the resilience to work through any challenging circumstances they may face. Support staff provide quality support programmes to develop pupils' emotional well-being and respond sensitively to pupils' individual needs. This ensures that pupils gain confidence and show enthusiasm towards learning as well as improvements in their social skills as they work towards their individual targets.

The school has an inclusive ethos and offers effective provision to support pupils with ALN. The additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) has a thorough understanding of the individual needs of the pupils. Arrangements for identifying and responding to the needs of specific pupils are rigorous. Staff involve pupils, parents, and the views of outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists and a dyslexia consultant, to plan interventions and evaluate their impact. Consequently, most pupils with ALN receive well-planned personal support that successfully addresses their needs. The school provides support staff with beneficial opportunities to specialise in and lead a wide range of intervention programmes to support pupils with ALN. For example, literacy catch up support sessions have a positive impact in improving pupils' reading ability. Nearly all pupils who follow additional intervention programmes make good progress, often within a short space of time.



There are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills. For example, the school council is pro-active in promoting 'Rights of the Child'. Members lead school assemblies and create child friendly posters to share key messages with their peers. They develop a strong sense of responsibility and contribute effectively towards encouraging other pupils to better understand their own role within a diverse world.

The school choir takes an active part within the community of Flint, for example by performing in the mayor's inauguration. Older pupils have visited the local council chambers. As a result, they have enhanced their understanding of how decisions are made locally, and this helps them to develop as ethically informed citizens. These experiences enable the pupils to develop their social skills within the wider community.

The school's environment and collective worship promote pupils' spiritual, moral, ethical development well. This provides pupils with valuable opportunities to consider the concept of 'right and wrong' and the importance of forgiveness, tolerance and caring. Teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to consider the consequences of prejudice and discrimination and to understanding the importance of fairness, equality and inclusion within their daily lives. This helps pupils to understand and to respect diversity within their own locality as well as within the wider community. Teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture, religion and heritage of other people, such as the Mayan tribe of Central America, and how this differs from their own culture and heritage.

The school makes appropriate provision to promote Welsh culture through a variety of activities such as working creatively with a local Welsh artist or evaluating pupils' responses to contemporary Welsh music. The inclusion of popular songs at the beginning of a Welsh assembly for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 proudly raises their awareness of their history and heritage.

Staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle. As a result, nearly all pupils know how to eat healthily and are eager to take part enthusiastically in various sporting events and new initiatives, such as the after-school American football sessions.

The safeguarding culture is robust, and all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in contributing towards pupils' safety and well-being. There is effective provision to support pupils to keep themselves safe when working online. The school has sound strategies in place to promote good pupil attendance including daily monitoring, regular communication with parents and follow-up work supported by the local authority. The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has a clear vision, provides strong leadership, and sets a clear strategic direction for the school. She is well supported by the deputy head and leaders at all levels. They are passionate about the school and the community it serves and put staff and pupil well-being at the heart of school life. Leaders embrace the school's vision 'Freedom to Flourish' firmly and convey it effectively to all staff,

pupils, governors and parents. They know their community well and work with dedication to promote a sense of close-knit community.

Leaders model professional values and behaviour that contribute purposefully to effective collaboration amongst staff. This results in a strong team ethos where dedicated, hardworking staff collaborate effectively. Together they have created a positive safeguarding culture and a welcoming, nurturing environment where pupils feel safe and valued. This leads to mutual support and respect between staff and pupils.

The school has robust self-evaluation processes, which ensure that leaders know the school well. They work effectively with staff to develop a collective responsibility for self-evaluation and school improvement and hold staff to account appropriately. Staff show a strong commitment to promoting continuous and sustainable improvements. Together, they gather and analyse a wide range of first-hand evidence to evaluate the progress of school initiatives and the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Information is used effectively to make decisions about the school's priorities for improvement. They hold regular meetings to consider individual pupils' progress, ensuring that pupils who are found to be underperforming are identified quickly and suitable provision is put in place.

Among leaders and staff there is a strong awareness and commitment to address local and national priorities. They are aspirational for pupils' futures and pursue opportunities to influence pupils' lives positively, for example by making the Curriculum for Wales a reality for pupils, ensuring that ALN reforms are addressed successfully and improving pupils' reading and oracy skills. They have correctly identified the need to improve assessment for learning procedures, extend opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum and to improve pupils' Welsh language skills.

Leaders have created a professional learning climate where staff's talents and interests are developed and valued. Professional development is strategically planned to ensure that all staff have purposeful opportunities to engage in professional learning that impacts positively on their development, the direction of the school, and outcomes for pupils. For example, a member of staff is attending a Welsh Sabbatical with the focus on improving pupils' Welsh language skills. Staff often undertake professional development with colleagues from local schools. This is particularly beneficial in ensuring the best outcomes for pupils during the transition to secondary school.

A notable feature is the way the school involves all support staff in improving their professional knowledge and skills to improve pupil outcomes. Leaders have created and implemented a rigorous and robust strategic approach that ensures support staff are able to access and achieve the teaching assistant standards effectively. They are fully engaged in identifying the aims and priorities for their professional learning and evaluating the impact on their practice and the learners. All support staff have access to high quality coaching and mentoring. This ensures that interventions are well matched to the skills of a dedicated team. Support staff develop ownership of their intervention programmes and areas of learning leading to improvements in pupil progress across the school.

Leaders and staff establish suitable links with parents. There is regular communication using digital platforms and parents are invited into school to take part in a range of activities including Wellies in the wood and Welsh crafting. The reintroduction of family learning events provides parents with valuable opportunities to work alongside their children and support them at home.

The governing body is well informed and supports the work of the school well. The open and honest relationship between leaders and members of the governing body ensures that they have a suitable understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Members of the governing body have recently restarted their visits to school to take part in discussions with staff and pupils about elements of provision. This supports their understanding of current priorities and strengthens their involvement as critical friends. The governing body ensures that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily.

School leaders and governors manage their school budget well and careful financial planning ensures that the school has sufficient funds to deliver plans in the coming year. The school monitors and allocates grant funding carefully, including the pupil development grant, ensuring that a range of intervention strategies are available to support eligible pupils.

## 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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