



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

A report on

Albert C.P. School

**Albert Road
Penarth
CF64 1BX**

Date of inspection: July 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh

About Albert C.P. School

Name of provider	Albert C.P. School
Local authority	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	431
Pupils of statutory school age	323
Number in nursery classes	58
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%)	6.6%
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%)	5.9%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	6.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	24/11/2015
Start date of inspection	03/07/2023

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

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Albert Primary School is a warm and caring school, where staff place a high priority on the well-being of its pupils. This has resulted in pupils who are happy to attend school and enjoy participating in their learning and the life of the school.

Most pupils' behaviour is good. They have good relationships with each other and their teachers. During their time at the school, most pupils make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points, including those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Most pupils develop strong oracy, reading and writing skills. Across the school, the development of pupils' writing skills is a strength of the school. Most pupils develop a sound competency in their mathematical skills and transfer this knowledge to other areas of the curriculum. Most pupils develop appropriate Welsh language skills during their time at the school. Across the school however, teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities for them to develop their independent, problem-solving, thinking and creative skills well enough in lessons and activities.

Leaders and teachers are beginning to design a curriculum that reflects the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. They use termly immersion days to ignite pupils' interests in their thematic work and allow opportunities for them to contribute to what they would like to learn. However, teachers do not consider well enough the local context of the school and its community or pay appropriate attention of the pupils' interests and fascinations in their curriculum planning.

Leaders have developed a clear vision for the school, which highly values pupils' well-being. Leaders work with the governing body on delivering the national priorities within the school, for example the roll out of ALN reform successfully. However, leaders have not considered well enough how teaching and learning reflects the philosophy of the Curriculum for Wales within the school. In addition, leaders do not involve governors and staff regularly enough in their self-evaluation processes.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve teaching to ensure that all pupils develop strong independent, critical, creative, and problem-solving skills
- R2 Develop the school curriculum to include relevant and authentic learning experiences that meet the needs of learners
- R3 Strengthen self-evaluation processes and include staff and governors

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

In general, most pupils enter school with skills and knowledge at or above expectations. As they move through the school, most pupils including those with ALN, free school meals and English as an additional language make strong progress from their starting points.

Many pupils across the school are confident, articulate speakers. They talk clearly about their learning and listen well to their peers and teachers. As they move through the school most pupils include a widening range of subject specific vocabulary and continue to develop their speaking and listening skills well. For example, older pupils explain articulately the pressures of social media and how this effects their emotional health and well-being.

Most pupils' reading skills develop well. Most younger pupils enjoy listening to stories and take good notice of the illustrations. As they develop, they use their knowledge of letters and sounds and a suitable range of strategies to effectively decode unknown words. However, a few younger pupils read texts accurately but lack fluency and understanding. This limits the progress they make in other aspects of their learning. For example, when reading texts to support them write a fact file, they struggle to make sense of the information provided. By the time pupils are ready to leave the school they have acquired a wide range of higher reading skills. They develop a passion for reading and most older pupils read fluently with expression and understanding and speak confidentially about what they have read.

Across the school, pupils' writing skills are developing well and this is a strength of the school. Many younger pupils begin to write independently, for example when writing a recount of a recent school trip. They find and copy words from word banks to help them construct sentences and they have a good understanding of simple punctuation. However, there is limited opportunity for pupils to use their emerging knowledge of letters and sounds to write independently and make attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. Most older pupils write purposefully and have a good grasp of techniques that enhance their work. They use their imagination and experiment with vocabulary to create engaging stories, for example when describing the setting for their work on the Spanish Armada. As they move through the school, pupils write extended pieces of work in literacy and across the curriculum. They take time to reflect on their work, draft and edit to refine their writing. Overall, most pupils produce high quality pieces of written work across all areas of the curriculum.

Across the school, pupils' development of their Welsh language skills is variable. Many younger pupils join in conversations using simple vocabulary, for example when asking for ice creams in the role play area. By the time they reach Year 3, many pupils confidentially hold short conversations with a partner, for example when discussing their feelings and Year 6 pupils describe where they live and their likes and dislikes. However, overall, older pupils' Welsh language skills are underdeveloped and do not build on well enough from previous learning.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. For example, younger pupils recognise and name numerals and recall a wide variety of two-dimensional shapes. By Year 2, most pupils have a secure understanding of appropriate number facts and apply this knowledge well to other aspects of their learning, for example when role playing shopping with coins. Older pupils sustain progress well, carrying out a range of calculations confidently. Across the school, most pupils develop a secure understanding of data handling. They use Venn diagrams to sort items, use tally charts to collect data and complete simple tables to record data. Most pupils transfer their knowledge to other areas of learning effectively. For example, older pupils measure liquids and solids in their science lessons, record their results accurately in tables and present their findings in line graphs.

Most pupils develop a beneficial range of digital skills that helps them to support their learning. Younger pupils use a range of online tools and programmes to support their development of their literacy and mathematical skills. Year 2 pupils use animation tools to create a story for reception pupils based on their theme of pirates. Older pupils make light sensors to find out the best place to grow their runner beans in the classroom.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their physical skills. The youngest pupils move confidently around the indoor and outdoor areas and develop good coordination when using small tools. Most pupils across the school enjoy participating in physical activity during PE lessons and develop a useful range of skills.

Pupils develop an appropriate range of creative skills and make suitable progress in using these skills across the curriculum. Younger pupils use natural resources to create images and patterns based on their thematic work. Older pupils use a range of techniques to produce creative images, for example using a variety of filters to photograph melting ice at close range.

Many older pupils develop suitable thinking and problem-solving skills through their science lessons. They demonstrate clear thinking when planning and drawing conclusions in their investigations, for example when considering the best conditions for plant growth. However generally across the school pupils do not develop their thinking, problem-solving and creative skills well enough.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

During their time at school, pupils develop positive working relationships with staff and respectful friendships with each other. They have a clear understanding of the school's expectations of behaviour and, as a result, most pupils are courteous and polite to staff and visitors. Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know who to turn to if they need help.

Most pupils enjoy learning and usually listen and participate appropriately in lessons. Many enjoy working in pairs and groups, sharing ideas and happily take turns. They are often proud of their work and keen to share their learning with visitors. Many pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are often highly engaged in tasks and show enthusiasm for learning. However, during lessons where teachers provide too much support and

direction, a few pupils lose interest and do not develop their independent learning skills effectively.

When given opportunities to talk about their learning with staff and visitors, pupils further develop their understanding of the concepts they study. As they move through the school, pupils begin to suggest ways to extend their learning. Younger pupils make suggestions in response to the questions they are asked when sharing stories. They begin to relate their learning to their own lives, for example when discussing when they might see a rainbow. Pupils in Year 3 suggest representing data they have collected as pie charts rather than bar graphs. Pupils in Year 6 conclude that their science investigation would benefit from further testing to ensure their results are more accurate. By the time they leave the school, many pupils are starting to make decisions about their learning. They begin to make stronger connections to their life experiences and to potential future careers.

Pupils value the feedback they receive from teachers during lessons. They use success criteria effectively, for example when writing at length, to identify what they need to do to improve. Older pupils contribute well to opportunities to reflect on their own and others' work and understand how this helps them to learn. However, overall, pupils do not have enough opportunities to think through problems, formulate their own ideas, or identify their next steps in learning.

Many pupils in Years 4 to 6 take on suitable leadership roles, for example as members of the School Council, Eco Committee and Criw Cymraeg. The Eco Committee plant flowers around the school grounds and visit a recycling centre to further their understanding of sustainability. A few pupils represent the Criw Cymraeg at the National Eisteddfod, and the School Council regularly raises money for charity. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to play a full part in the life and work of the school, to influence decision-making or to contribute their ideas about how they learn.

Pupils learn how to become healthy and confident, and understand how diet, physical activity, and mental health impact on their quality of life. Nearly all pupils enjoy opportunities to be active at playtime and during lessons such as rugby, netball, and dance. They develop a sound understanding of how to stay safe online, keeping their personal details private and talking to a trusted adult if issues arise.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff across the school develop good working relationships with pupils. They foster respectful and trusting relationships were most pupils feel valued. This creates a good atmosphere for learning and as a result most pupils settle quickly to their work and behave well in lessons.

Most teachers explain tasks clearly to pupils and help them understand what to do and how to do it. They share learning goals with pupils during lessons outlining their expectations. However, these are often too broad and do not always match the intended outcomes of the learning. Where teaching is most effective, teachers pause learning to check for pupils' understanding and use questions well to help them explain their learning. Most teachers provide useful prompts for learning for pupils to follow that help them improve their work. They share success criteria appropriately, which supports pupils to evaluate their own work. As a result, most pupils understand

what they are doing well. Generally, across the school, however, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities during lessons and activities to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their learning.

The school uses a wide range of assessments to measure pupils' attainment, track their progress and identify those who may need additional support. Pupils requiring additional support are monitored and evaluated closely to ensure that they make appropriate progress. Teachers, however, do not always use the information collected from assessments well enough to inform pupils' next steps in learning or make relevant changes to their teaching. As a result, pupils are not always suitably challenged during lessons and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Reports to parents are clear and informative. They give useful information about their child's progress and personal and social skills, along with improvement targets for the future.

The school has based its curriculum design around the six areas of learning and through the development of three overarching themes. These themes form the centre of the school's vision based on creating a sense of belonging, a knowledge of diversity and a strong understanding of well-being. The school's immersion days at the start of each theme successfully capture pupils' ideas for what they want to learn. The school is beginning to develop a progressive curriculum through its collaborate work with their local schools. In the best examples, teachers plan exciting visits and experiences to stimulate learning. For example, Year 6 pupils visit the National Museum as part of their literacy work on writing tour guides. The school, however, has not considered well enough how it will develop its own curriculum in line with Curriculum for Wales. Whole-school topics are not based on the needs of the school, its locality and community and the interests and fascinations of the pupils well enough. As a result, pupils do not make the relevant links to their own lives and their community in their learning.

Staff develop a positive culture of reading throughout the school. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to share books with each other, their teachers and at home. The school provides suitable arrangements for pupils to develop their use of Welsh within Welsh lessons. Across the school, teachers plan appropriately for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. As a result, most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematical skills. However, planning for the progression of wider skills is less well-developed such as they development of pupils creative and problem-solving skills.

The school has a strong ethos in developing pupils' emotional health and well-being. Teachers provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They sensitively discuss personal safety with pupils and how to recognise unsafe online relationships. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of other cultures. For example, younger pupils research people and places and the traditions of Brazil, and older pupils study the impact of climate change globally.

Care, support and guidance

Staff at Albert Primary School create a caring community for pupils and their families. They build strong relationships with parents and carers, providing them with useful

information that enables them to support their child's learning at home. Leaders, teachers and learning support assistants respond sensitively to pupils' emotional needs, enabling them to develop confidence and resilience. This caring and supportive ethos helps all pupils to settle comfortably into school life and contributes to their well-being and happiness. Staff involve nearly all parents in the life of the school through events, workshops, and regular opportunities to discuss their children's learning and progress.

The school's ALNCo (additional learning needs co-ordinator) has developed a comprehensive system of support for staff, pupils, and parents. Nearly all staff receive suitable training that enables them to identify, provide and review the support that best meets pupils' needs. The ALNCo monitors the impact of support carefully and works with staff to ensure that intervention engages pupils successfully in their learning. As a result, the support for pupils with additional needs is effective and nearly all make at least expected progress from their individual starting points.

Teachers are beginning to consider ways to enrich the curriculum, for example through immersion days and visits linked to the topics they plan. A trip to a local manor house as part of a topic on the Tudors, for example, provides pupils with rich and authentic learning experiences that enable them to transfer what they learn back to the classroom. Visitors to the school raise pupils' aspirations and, on occasion, thoughtful experiences provide valuable opportunities for pupils to consider possible career pathways. Older pupils benefited greatly from the opportunity to create, plan, organise and evaluate a tour of the National Museum. The school's work on religion, values and relationships supports pupils' spiritual development appropriately. This work encourages them to think about their own well-being and the impact of their actions on others. Many pupils take part in sports activities and tournaments. They particularly enjoy the many after-school clubs on offer such as chess, Spanish and football.

The school provides opportunities for older pupils to join pupil leadership groups. On occasion, these groups seek the views of pupils across the school. For example, the School Council recently surveyed pupils about how the school could improve the clubs available to them. However, pupils are often selected by staff, and do not set suitable priorities for actions during the year. As a result, opportunities for pupils to develop as leaders through these experiences, are limited.

The school provides regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on the values and beliefs of others and develop their spiritual, moral, and social awareness through lessons and as part of their collective worship. They learn about the culture and heritage of Wales, singing the National Anthem when supporting national sports teams, performing folk dances, and exploring the buildings, art, and literature of the country. As they move through the school, pupils begin to think about human rights. For example, pupils in Year 2 learn how to help others if they witness bullying and pupils in Year 4 analyse the impact of pollution on our water supply. Older pupils consider the plight of people affected by climate change and begin to advocate for change for women in the workplace. These experiences are beginning to support pupils' understanding of equality and diversity well.

The school has robust systems for monitoring pupils' attendance and contacts parents in a timely manner when there are concerns. The school curriculum supports

pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. The school has developed sound systems to ensure the safety of all pupils, and all leaders and staff promote an active culture of safeguarding across the school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have a shared vision for the school based on pupils developing a can-do attitude and a positive love of learning. They consider the well-being and happiness of pupils in all aspects of school life, creating a caring and supportive community. Staff use this vision to set high expectations for standards in key areas of learning, including reading, writing and mathematics. However, leaders do not always communicate the same high expectations for pupils to make the same progress in the wider curriculum. For example, many activities limit opportunities for younger pupils to direct their own learning, be creative and solve problems independently.

The governing body is highly supportive of the work of the school, they have a sound understanding of school priorities and the progress the school is making towards raising standards. They use their professional experience to support school leaders with national and local priorities, particularly that linked to the progress of ALN reform. Governors have a good understanding of the school budget and support senior leaders well with making difficult financial decisions. They make good use of additional funding when available, for example, funding from the local church enabled pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend a residential visit. Governors ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. However, leaders do not plan regular opportunities for governors to be involved in supporting self-evaluation activities. As a result, governors rely heavily on the information presented by school leaders rather than gain first-hand knowledge to assure quality.

Senior leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning regularly and work with teachers to set individual performance targets against school priorities and teaching standards. However, the development of teaching and learning strategies to reflect the philosophy of the Curriculum for Wales is underdeveloped and impacts negatively on classroom provision, in particular those of the younger pupils. For example, they do not ensure that teachers provide stimulating and engaging experiences that challenge pupils appropriately and deepen their learning.

Senior leaders communicate regularly with parents and provide opportunities for parents to visit school and engage in their child's learning. For example, parents of older pupils attend weekly online safety lessons with their child.

Leaders plan beneficial opportunities to evaluate pupil progress and aspects of school life that directly impact learners. On occasion, the school makes good use of pupils and parents in this process and value their contributions, for example providing an opportunity for parents to share their opinions on the usefulness of pupils' reports to parents. As a direct result of regular monitoring, senior leaders have a good understanding of the impact of school improvement actions on provision and progress, for example the positive impact of introducing French as an international language. However, there are limited opportunities for all staff to contribute purposefully to self-evaluation processes at the school. As a result, they rely heavily

on the information given to them from senior leaders around the outcomes of activities such as analysis of pupil data.

Senior staff work closely with schools in their local area to develop the 'Curriculum for Albert' and progression planning for learners. As a result, the school has introduced a range of beneficial assessment strategies to support pupils' understanding of what they are doing well. In most classrooms, pupils respond positively to these strategies and show good progress, especially in writing. The school is beginning to gather and analyse progress data for individual pupils and groups of learners. This information is used well across the school to ensure that professional dialogue linked to pupil progress is purposeful and informs teachers' planning.

Senior leaders plan worthwhile opportunities for teachers to observe good practice in other schools in their local area. For example, the recent focus on improving the teaching of mathematics across the school has resulted in most pupils across school making good progress in their mathematical and numeracy skills. The school plans purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills and use the expertise of teachers within the school to deliver Welsh lessons to pupils throughout the school. Leaders have robust procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensure that all staff understand and promote the school's safeguarding culture.

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

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