



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

A report on

Manorbier V.C.P. School

**Jameston Community Hall,
St James' Place, Jameston,
Pembrokeshire
SA70 8QB**

Date of inspection: December 2023

by

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

About Manorbier V.C.P. School

Name of provider	Manorbier V.C.P. School
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	VCP
Number of pupils on roll	19
Pupils of statutory school age	16
Number in nursery classes	0
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 23.7%)	25.3%
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 13.2%)	26.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2015
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	04/12/2023

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

The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to placing the school at the heart of the community. Following an uncertain period after a fire at the school's permanent site, they have created a warm and nurturing environment for pupils to continue to learn and grow in a temporary location. This ensures that pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school. Most pupils show care and respect for each other and for staff and many engage well in lessons. The school works effectively to develop its support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).

The school is developing a curriculum that reflects the needs of pupils and their community. The focus on well-being supports vulnerable pupils to begin to develop appropriate attitudes to learning and enables all pupils to contribute their ideas about what and how they learn. Teachers often provide interesting lessons and are beginning to plan authentic and creative learning experiences that help pupils to make progress. Younger pupils develop their independence well. Older pupils are beginning to think more deeply about their learning, asking, and answering questions and working together to solve problems. The school is beginning to develop opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning but opportunities for older pupils in particular to improve their work following feedback are limited.

Pupils develop their reading skills well. They make strong progress in Welsh and develop as confident speakers. This is a significant strength of the school. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils in all areas of the curriculum. They do not plan carefully enough for pupils to build their writing and digital skills successfully. As a result, they do not always make the progress they are capable of.

The headteacher and teachers carry out a useful range of self-evaluation and improvement processes. They accurately identify priorities for school improvement, provide high quality professional development for all staff, and monitor progress suitably. However, leaders do not always evaluate the quality of teaching well enough by considering the difference that it makes to pupils' progress.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that monitoring and evaluation processes focus on the difference that teaching and learning experiences makes to pupils' progress
- R2 Improve pupils' writing and digital skills
- R3 Ensure that feedback to pupils is timely and that they have suitable opportunities to improve their work

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

During their time at school, many pupils make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points. Pupils with ALN generally make suitable progress towards their individual targets. There is no notable difference in the progress of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and their peers. Pupils who are more able do not always make the progress they are capable of.

Most pupils make strong progress in developing their speaking skills across the school. They have a well-developed vocabulary and are keen to learn and use new words in both English and Welsh. When sequencing a story, younger pupils talk about the reasons for their solutions and justify their thinking. They listen attentively to adults and to each other. They allow other pupils time to speak without interrupting. Most older pupils listen carefully to visitors and talk at length about their work. They add suitable detail to provide a clear picture of their learning. For example, they describe what school life was like for Victorian children and give their opinion about the severity of different punishments. However, they do not always listen to other pupils carefully enough during discussion and group activities.

Most pupils develop their reading skills well across the school. Younger pupils use a range of strategies effectively to make sense of the texts they read. They have a good understanding of phonics and use this knowledge well to help them decode new and unfamiliar words. More able younger pupils read with confidence and fluency. For example, they read instructions about how to make soap aloud, for others to follow. Most older pupils read fluently with suitable intonation. They enjoy reading and describe their reading preferences effectively.

Many pupils make suitable progress in developing their writing skills. Younger pupils develop good pencil control and begin to form letters accurately. They write well-formed sentences using capital letters and full stops. In most cases, they make plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. Most older pupils recognise features such as alliteration and are beginning to use this effectively to add interest to their writing. They do not always use punctuation accurately but when they edit pieces of work, they generally recognise mistakes they have made and suggest appropriate corrections. Overall, older pupils do not write at length often enough and this inhibits their development as writers.

Most pupils make very strong progress in developing their Welsh language skills. They are eager to communicate in Welsh and confident to talk to others. They have a wide vocabulary and are keen to learn new words and phrases. Younger pupils respond positively to commands and follow instructions well, for example when

taking part in physical outdoor activities. Older pupils ask and answer a range of questions with increasing understanding.

As pupils move through the school, most make suitable progress in developing their numeracy skills and a few make strong progress. The youngest pupils begin to calculate simple number problems. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils manipulate numbers and explore inverse operations using larger numbers. They use a tally chart to record their initial thinking about whether it is most cost effective to make or buy jam tarts and compare the results after they have made accurate costings. Many older pupils have good recall of basic number facts and a good understanding of the properties of shapes. They make accurate calculations using the four rules of number. They are at an early stage of using methods to check that their answers are correct. Pupils are beginning to apply their numeracy skills appropriately to solving mathematical problems.

Across the school, most pupils develop a suitable range of digital skills. Many younger pupils programme digital toys confidently. Most pupils select appropriate programs to enhance and support their work across the curriculum. Nearly all older pupils save and retrieve their work efficiently. They are confident when word processing and produce interesting presentations on a range of topics. They are beginning to use coding to manipulate animations. However, pupils' knowledge and use of spreadsheets and databases is under-developed.

Most pupils develop their creative skills well. For example, younger pupils create leaf characters and record themselves describing their character both in Welsh and English. Older pupils observe the work of Kandinsky carefully and talk about what they like about his paintings. They create their own designs by emulating his style and explain why they have used particular features in their work.

Younger pupils develop their physical skills well. They show control when running and jumping and throw and catch a large ball with increasing skill and confidence.

Many pupils develop their thinking skills effectively. For example, older pupils explore different soil samples and offer valid suggestions for the locations the soils came from.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Across the school, most pupils are friendly and courteous to staff and visitors. They develop positive working relationships with all staff and interact respectfully with their peers. They know who to ask for help and are confident that staff will provide the support and care they need. As a result, they are happy and feel safe at school.

Nearly all pupils behave well at breaktimes and overall, many pupils behave well during lessons. They understand the school's expectations of behaviour and generally respond well to gentle reminders. The majority of pupils listen well and participate appropriately in lessons. They are often proud of their achievements.

Younger pupils engage well with their learning when working with staff. They are beginning to develop independence and enjoy opportunities to explore learning, readily selecting the resources they need. They are growing in confidence and

happily talk about their work, explaining how they are tackling tasks. Older pupils offer suggestions and ideas during lessons, when given the opportunity. They ask and answer questions, drawing on their knowledge and understanding of concepts and of the local area. For example, they compare soil samples, identifying them as coastal, woodland or garden, giving valid reasons for their choices. On occasion, when pupils are less interested in their work, they become easily distracted, and a few do not engage suitably with their learning.

Pupils appreciate the verbal feedback they receive during lessons, and opportunities to reflect on their learning. However, pupils do not generally have enough opportunities to respond to feedback appropriately. They are often unsure of the purpose of their work or how to improve it.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to learn about and improve the lives of others. They celebrate special days such as World Book Day, reflect on important events such as Remembrance Day and support charity days such as Children in Need. Pupils are beginning to influence the work of the school, for example by asking staff to provide more play equipment for breaktimes. The school's Criw Cymraeg promotes the Welsh language successfully in partnership with staff. This is a strength of the school. Pupils across the school contribute their ideas about what they learn and are beginning to offer their ideas about how they will learn.

Pupils learn about how diet, physical activity, and mental health impacts on their quality of life. Many pupils are developing useful strategies for regulating their behaviour, for example when feeling anxious. Nearly all pupils enjoy opportunities to be active at playtime and during lessons. They particularly enjoy opportunities to learn to swim and to become more adventurous through activities such as rock climbing.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers are developing a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales. They make good use of the local area to provide authentic contexts for learning. This includes ongoing work with the Arts Council for Wales and the Lead Creative Schools project to develop a children's guide to the parish. The National Theatre, a local storyteller, sculptor, residents and the local church have all been involved in this project.

There are purposeful opportunities for pupils to contribute to what and how they learn. Teachers take good account of pupils' ideas when planning themes, but they also ensure that they plan suitably for a range of skills across the curriculum.

Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to consider global issues and those of equality and diversity, such as considering issues around climate change and pollution. There are appropriate arrangements for pupils to learn about faiths, cultures and customs from around the world and about what makes a healthy relationship.

There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. However, pupils do not have opportunities to write at length often enough or to redraft their work to eradicate common mistakes. Overall, pupils have

good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills, but they do not apply these to solving problems consistently enough across the curriculum

Pupils have suitable opportunities to use their digital skills for a range of purposes to support their work in a variety of contexts. However, teachers do not always correct pupils' digital work, including their digital writing, or allow them time to redraft and improve their work.

Across the school, teachers and support staff establish and maintain positive working relationships with pupils. They suggest ways for pupils to maintain focus when they find concentrating on their learning challenging. In general, they have effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour.

Staff are effective language role models in English and Welsh and introduce other languages to the pupils, such as French and Czech to enrich their language skills. The development of pupils' Welsh language skills is a particular strength of the school and teachers use Welsh routinely to give instructions and on occasion to conduct most of the lesson. There are good opportunities for pupils to study the culture and heritage of Wales and to develop a sense of belonging to their school and local community.

Teachers demonstrate good curriculum knowledge. Overall, they explain the purpose of tasks clearly and make sure that pupils know what is expected of them. Generally, the pace of learning in lessons is inconsistent. Where teaching is most effective, teachers ensure that learning develops at a good pace so that it engages pupils well and supports them to make good progress. However, there are times when, due to a lack of pace, pupils lose interest and do not focus on the task in hand to produce the standard of work they are capable of in the time available. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils are too low and the level of challenge does not match individual needs well enough.

Where teaching is effective, teachers plan interesting learning experiences that develop pupils' curiosity and thinking skills successfully. They use a range of teaching approaches and skilful questioning to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum. For example, teachers encourage younger pupils to predict what will happen when making soap and to make calculations about how much they will need to sell the soap for to make a profit.

Teachers provide useful verbal feedback during lessons, which generally encourages pupils to engage with their learning well and to focus on improving aspects of their work. They also provide suitable written feedback to pupils, but they do not always ensure that older pupils respond to this feedback in a timely manner or with sufficient detail. Where feedback is effective, pupils are clear about what they need to do and how to improve their work. However, too often, it does not support pupils to identify the next steps in their learning well enough.

School reports to parents provide detailed information about their child's progress and their attitudes to learning and include targets for improvement.

Care, support and guidance

Following a period of significant challenge, staff have created a highly caring and nurturing community for pupils and their families, offering a warm welcome for all. This strong ethos of care and compassion contributes greatly to pupils' well-being and happiness. The school's highly committed staff work tirelessly to ensure that pupils' lives and learning continue without disruption or distress.

Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants build strong relationships with parents. As a result, they develop a secure understanding of pupils' emotional needs and provide sensitive individual and targeted support. This support enables many pupils to develop a sense of belonging and security, as they learn to regulate their behaviour and emotions appropriately.

The school provides valuable support for pupils with additional needs. Leaders have created useful systems for identifying the most beneficial support for vulnerable pupils and monitor the impact of interventions appropriately, adapting the support when necessary to meet pupils' needs. As a result, most pupils with ALN make suitable progress from their starting points.

Teachers enrich the school's curriculum through a range of stimulating visits linked to the topics they plan. Pupils benefit from visits to the theatre, local museums and to places of interest such as St David's Cathedral. The oldest pupils benefit from regular visits to the local secondary school where they meet pupils from other schools and begin to experience the subjects on offer. The school acts thoughtfully to reduce the impact of socio-economic disadvantage, supporting all pupils to enjoy the full curriculum.

Pupils enjoy learning about the culture and heritage of Wales, for example when finding out about the people of their locality, past and present who have shaped history. They develop their knowledge of language, literacy, history and geography when exploring links to Patagonia following the travels of members of the local community and gain a deeper knowledge of the local area when creating a digital guide to Manorbier. Across the school, pupils especially benefit from exciting opportunities to work with artists and musicians, developing a wide range of creative skills, expanding their thinking and beginning to raise their aspirations for future careers and pastimes.

The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to reflect on their values and beliefs. They enjoy exploring celebrations and investigating the stories behind them. They benefit from opportunities to learn more about how the important messages they discover can guide them in their own lives. Older pupils are beginning to consider the importance of human rights and their impact on improving children's lives. They compare the lives of children living in Victorian Britain to the lives of children from across the world today.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff are clear about their responsibilities and the actions they need to take if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance robustly and identify those pupils whose attendance falls below an acceptable level. Staff communicate with families

appropriately to support them and, as a result, attendance is improving; however, pupils' punctuality needs attention.

Leadership and management

Leaders, staff and governors share a vision to create an inclusive, caring environment and a diverse range of learning experiences. The school's focus on well-being is beginning to support many pupils with emotional and social needs to improve their behaviour, and its evolving curriculum is improving engagement.

Leaders have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, including the quality of teaching across the school. They have prioritised improving pupils' writing skills and developing approaches to feedback to focus more closely on progress. However, this work is at an early stage and the impact is yet to be seen in securing the expected progress for all pupils.

Leaders at all levels work purposefully to address Welsh government priorities. They are developing a curriculum that aligns to the principles of Curriculum for Wales, reflecting the local area and community, as well as global cultures. Leaders, staff and pupils promote and speak Welsh throughout the day, celebrating the language and improving pupils' skills. The immersive experiences the school provides, both in school and through residential visits, enable pupils to develop confidence and enthusiasm when communicating in Welsh.

All staff benefit from the strong culture of collaboration and teamwork leaders create. The headteacher and teachers work closely together to develop different areas of the curriculum, and all staff ably support the headteacher with other leadership roles and responsibilities. Staff recognise the positive impact of regular professional discussion and the importance of contributing to the school's monitoring and self-evaluation processes. Leaders are developing appropriate systems to monitor the quality of teaching to improve consistency. Performance management arrangements, for example, enable leaders and teachers to identify most of the aspects of learning and teaching in need of improvement. Overall, leaders identify and secure the appropriate training needed to bring about these improvements.

The headteacher is a positive role-model. She is committed to encouraging teachers and teaching assistants to pursue higher qualifications, to work in partnership with other schools and professionals to share practice, and to undertake purposeful research to support school improvement. The school's work with international rural schools, and schools across Wales, for example, has strengthened the school's curriculum. Its work to improve Welsh and international language skills is noteworthy. Teachers benefit from valuable opportunities to work with teachers and leaders in local schools. They work closely with teachers at the secondary school, for example, to create a worthwhile programme of transition.

Leaders undertake a useful range of monitoring activities to arrive at an appropriate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, the evaluation of this work generally focuses more on what teachers do and less on the impact of school improvement strategies on the progress pupils make. As a result, leaders do not accurately identify a few aspects of teaching in need of improvement.

The governing body is highly committed to supporting the school. Governors are beginning to provide a suitable level of challenge, for example to ensure that pupils continue to access outdoor learning and have a sense of stability while they are educated in their temporary school building.

Governors have a sound understanding of the school's finances and work closely with the headteacher to manage and deploy resources appropriately. They use grant funding effectively to support the needs of pupils, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantage. Governors are beginning to develop their role in the self-evaluation process with the support of staff. They have a sound understanding of their role in maintaining the school's safeguarding culture and purposefully carry out their statutory duty in relation to healthy eating and drinking at the school.

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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