



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

A report on

**Maes yr Haul Primary School
Broadlands
Ffordd Tirion
CF31 5EG**

Date of inspection: May 2018

by

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

About Maes yr Haul Primary School

Maes yr Haul Primary School is on the Broadlands Estate in Bridgend. Currently, there are 582 pupils on roll. Pupils are taught in 18 classes, which include seven mixed age classes and a part-time nursery class. There are 18 full-time and four part-time teachers, as well as 16 full time and five part-time support staff, in the school.

Most pupils speak English at home, and a very few are learning English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh at home and most are from a white British background. The three year rolling average for pupils eligible for free school meals is 6%, which is considerably lower than the national average of 19%. The school identifies that 11% of pupils have additional learning needs, which is lower than the national average of 21%.

The headteacher has been in post since 2016. The school was last inspected in January 2011.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The school is a happy and vibrant learning community where pupils make good progress. Pupils' communication skills are particularly strong, and they apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills effectively in an exceptionally rich range of contexts. Across the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are courteous towards visitors and work extremely well with each other. The school provides very well-developed opportunities for pupils to keep fit and supports their emotional wellbeing highly effectively. There are exceptionally good opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and resilience and acquire creative skills. The senior leadership team is strong. It has a powerful and productive vision for providing a fully rounded education for the school's pupils, which it shares effectively with all stakeholders.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Excellent
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' Welsh speaking skills
- R2 Improve the opportunities for younger pupils to explore their environment independently and make choices about their learning

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 for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils start school with skills around the expected level for their age and stage of development. During their time there they make good progress, particularly in developing their speaking skills and in their application of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in different contexts. Most pupils with additional learning needs progress very well from their individual starting points.

Nearly all pupils develop very effective communication skills. In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils speak confidently to each other and to adults and develop their vocabulary well. For example, nursery pupils use words like 'squelchy' 'sticky' and 'cold' to describe different sensations when they stand in bare feet on sand, grass and paint. By key stage 2, most pupils communicate extremely effectively. This is a notable feature in the school. They adapt their speech well to match the task and their audience, use language precisely in lessons and develop a rich vocabulary.

In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils enjoy books and stories and go on to develop their skills successfully as they move through the school. By Year 6, they discuss different authors with enthusiasm and compare characters and characteristics intelligently. Across the school, nearly all pupils use their reading skills regularly and effectively in lessons to research information and follow instructions. Most foundation phase pupils develop strong early writing skills. In Year 2, pupils collaborate together purposefully to produce playscripts of a very high quality that include appropriate language for stage directions, use adjectives to describe different characters effectively, and use punctuation successfully for effect. However, in general, foundation phase pupils are less successful at writing without support from adults. Most pupils in key stage 2 develop mature writing styles and write well across a wide range of genres. For example, pupils in Year 4 write a moving poem to mark Remembrance Day and adapt their writing style successfully to give clear instructions about how to catch a dragon. By Year 6, most pupils write fluently, skilfully and confidently for different purposes across the curriculum. Handwriting is generally joined and fluent. However, pupils do not always use punctuation such as capital letters consistently enough.

In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their numeracy skills well. They make a strong start in the nursery and reception classes where they develop worthwhile number skills. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils apply their skills effectively in different contexts, such as to work out how to spend a budget to set up a dinosaur theme park. In key stage 2, pupils build on this learning successfully and apply their skills in a range of contexts purposefully. For example, as part of their Tudor project, they weigh ingredients to cook a pottage, prepare a balance sheet and work out how much to charge their parents for the soup in order to make a good profit.

The majority of pupils in the foundation phase develop their Welsh language oracy skills appropriately. By Year 2, many respond to simple questions and most have a good vocabulary range. However, few recall sentence patterns sufficiently well to

sustain a conversation. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils discuss their likes and dislikes within the context of their hobbies suitably. They describe themselves and family members using appropriate vocabulary and sentence patterns. Across the school, most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning the language. However, many lack a sufficient grasp of a range of sentence patterns and vocabulary to communicate confidently in different situations. Most pupils develop good reading and writing skills. By Year 6, they read age appropriate texts well and write with increasing fluency and accuracy.

Nearly all pupils develop highly effective ICT skills. For example, older foundation phase pupils use tablet computers and a green screen to record play scripts, and use these effectively to evaluate their performance. In key stage 2, nearly all pupils use desk top publishing and animation skills extremely confidently. They create spreadsheets, use data bases and develop scatter graphs skilfully.

Nearly all pupils develop their physical and creative skills well. For example, most create art work in the style of different artists skilfully. However, they do not develop their ability to experiment freely and cultivate their own style to the same standard.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning develop exceptionally well throughout the school. Their behaviour in lessons and on the yard is exemplary. They treat each other fairly and with respect. They are very courteous and show a high standard of care and consideration towards each other. This is a strength of the school.

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure. They know who to talk to if they are worried or upset, and pupils with individual needs develop their confidence and resilience well through sensitive interventions. A full range of pupils take turns to act as playground monitors and look out for any pupils who are unhappy or lonely on the yard. This, alongside the nurturing environment throughout the school, has a very positive effect on relationships and as a result playtime is an enjoyable experience for nearly all pupils.

Pupils' understanding of how to make healthy choices is very well developed and they are extremely positive about eating well and being physically active. Year 6 pupils act as good role models when they sell fruit at well-organised stations at break times. This helps them build relationships with younger pupils, contributing to the strong sense of community in the school. Pupils develop healthy attitudes towards food and learn about choosing ingredients carefully during regular cooking activities. For example, they compare the quality and taste of expensive ingredients and 'budget' ingredients while baking cookies. There is a strong culture of participating in physical activity in the school and nearly all pupils enjoy being physically active in class, during playtimes and through taking part in extra-curricular activities. They attend basketball, football and netball after school clubs and participate enthusiastically in regular physical education lessons. Most pupils walk to school and a few ride their bikes or come on scooters regularly. Nearly all pupils understand and talk knowledgeably about how to stay safe online. For example, older pupils know that they should not share their password with others. Digital leaders share and reinforce these important messages with their peers well, such as through presentations in school assemblies.

As they mature, nearly all pupils develop their confidence and resilience exceptionally well. A full range of pupils belong to decision-making groups. These include the school council, eco-committee and sports council, as well as the digital leaders and Criw Cymraeg. They all take on their leadership roles with integrity and are fully committed to their responsibilities. Their work has a significant impact on the school's ethos and life. For example, the school council has studied the main purposes of the revised curriculum for Wales carefully. It interpreted these using child-friendly language and icons to make them clear to all pupils. As a result, older pupils in particular understand the main purposes underlying the curriculum well, and this contributes effectively to their exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. The eco-committee, through projects such as raising money to help build toilets in developing countries, helps other pupils to understand the importance of helping others and acting sustainably. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of values such as tolerance and kindness. These are evident throughout the school and pupils talk about them thoughtfully. Pupils reflect on these values regularly, and this contributes very effectively to the strong relationships and warm ethos in the school.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exceptional. Nearly all pupils, from the nursery to Year 6, engage exceptionally well in their learning. They are eager to learn and self-motivated. They collaborate highly successfully with each other to carry out tasks, such as creating stop start animations in Year 2 and artwork from recycled ICT equipment in Year 5. They sustain their concentration for extended periods and persevere with tasks showing a high level of resilience. This is notable throughout the school. By the end of the foundation phase, nearly all pupils work independently in small groups extremely successfully. For example, Year 2 pupils settle very quickly and purposefully to tasks in the outdoors, such as working out how to build a pyramid from sugar cubes. However, the youngest foundation phase pupils tend to be over reliant on staff direction and do not develop their abilities to choose freely and follow their own interests well enough. Pupils in Year 6 discuss their work in a very thoughtful and mature manner. They develop extremely effective strategies for helping themselves when they find their work challenging. For example, they use trial and error methods when calculating percentages of numbers. Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance has been consistently good over at least the past four years.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The quality of teaching is good with strong features. Teachers provide a wide range of exciting and stimulating opportunities that engage nearly all pupils very successfully. They plan rich tasks based on real life experiences. These are highly effective in motivating pupils and provide valuable opportunities for them to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills purposefully in a range of different contexts. Notable examples include the Tudor market enterprise organised by key stage 2 pupils, where they complete a research project, draw up business plans, create produce to sell to parents and apply their numeracy skills highly successfully to ensure maximum profits from sales. Planning to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is thorough and well thought out. Teachers plan together well to ensure consistency across year groups. This meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils in mixed age classes, effectively. Most teachers have high expectations and use a range of teaching methods that support pupils' learning well. In many lessons, teachers set a brisk pace and

question pupils skilfully to challenge their thinking and develop their understanding. However, in the early foundation phase, over direction by adults limits opportunities for pupils to develop and follow their own interests and creative styles. Nearly all teachers manage behaviour very effectively, creating an exceptionally calm and purposeful learning environment that enables pupils to learn productively.

Most teachers give clear instructions, and share learning intentions with pupils consistently well. They provide effective feedback, which helps pupils know what they need to do to progress. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to learn through assessing their own work and that of others, using computer applications particularly effectively. This helps deepen pupils' understanding effectively. All adults model good language patterns and use a rich and ambitious vocabulary linked to the topics. This contributes to developing pupils' communication skills highly effectively. In general, teachers and learning support officers work together successfully and provide timely intervention and guidance to ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress from their starting points.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum and is making good progress in working towards the revised curriculum for Wales. This includes involving pupils in planning activities around the six areas of learning and experience. For example, in a topic on 'Discovery and Exploration', Year 6 pupils choreographed a dance based on the planets that contributed effectively to their understanding of expressive arts. The schemes of work are based around a wide and interesting range of topics and teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to contribute towards what they want to learn within these. They build systematically on pupils' prior learning and knowledge effectively, providing useful continuity. The quality of the curriculum contributes significantly to pupils' exceptional engagement in their work. In the foundation phase, pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills through well-planned adult directed learning experiences. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to develop and follow their own interests, and learn through exploring the learning environment.

Learning opportunities promote pupils' understanding of their Welsh context and heritage effectively. In particular, the school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to emulate the work of Welsh artists such as Catrin Williams and Lizzie Spikes. Teachers often choose a Welsh context to develop pupils' skills. For example, when in the foundation phase pupils work on developing a dinosaur theme park, pupils plot its location on a map of Wales. There is a strong Welsh ethos in the school and, as a result, nearly all pupils have a very positive attitude towards the language and culture. However, the provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is variable and, as a result, pupils' progress in Welsh is uneven.

There are many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to visit areas of interest linked to their topics, which enrich their learning and engage their interest effectively. These include a visit to Llancaiach Fawr to learn about life in Tudor times and to Dan yr Ogof caves as part of a project about the life of dinosaurs.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school provides a caring, and uplifting learning environment, which supports pupils' personal development exceptionally well.

Provision for developing pupils' personal and social skills, including their confidence, emotional health, resilience and engagement in learning, is particularly strong. The school has a well-established tradition of ensuring highly worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in performing arts activities. For example, large numbers of pupils have exceptional opportunities to take on a wide variety of roles as part of exciting and inspiring performances of musicals, which take place annually. These include taking on the responsibility for stage management and organisational tasks as well as performing roles. There are two well-attended school choirs, who perform regularly in the community and further afield, including a highly memorable recent trip to Paris to sing at a theme park as part of its St David's Day celebrations. The school ensures that all pupils have valuable opportunities to play musical instruments. For example, foundation phase pupils have keyboard lessons, while pupils in key stage 2 develop their rhythmic skills playing percussion instruments. The school's samba band has provided exceptional opportunities for pupils to take part in a national music festival. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their appreciation of art. For example, they study a wide range of artists to become familiar with different artistic styles. These particularly rich opportunities contribute highly successfully towards increasing pupils' self-confidence and developing them as well-rounded individuals, in addition to providing stimulating and unforgettable experiences.

There are highly effective systems to support and promote high standards of behaviour in the school. These include a strong focus on the school's values, which helps pupils learn to show respect and courtesy, and develops their tolerance extremely well.

The school provides consistently high quality opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and take part in decision-making both in their classes and through a range of groups such as the school council, pupil voice team, and eco-committee and enrichment team. These all help prepare pupils very well to become active citizens and take their place in the community. There is a strong emphasis on consulting pupils and involving them in deciding what and how they learn. For example, older pupils experiment with finding the most comfortable position for them to carry out their work most effectively, including standing up, using bean bags or sitting on the floor.

The school promotes healthy attitudes very successfully and has created a strong culture of healthy living. Members of staff are very good role models for pupils. They take part in sporting activities regularly and this sets a good example for all pupils. There are good arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

There are highly developed opportunities for pupils to build their awareness and understanding of other parts of the world, different cultures and issues relating to equality and diversity. These include high quality opportunities to share books with pupils in Greek schools as part of a collaborative project for 'Read Aloud Day 2018'. The school encourages a worthwhile involvement in the local community such as through raising money for the local hospice and supporting the food bank.

There are clear systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and wellbeing. Nearly all teachers use this information well to both support and challenge pupils effectively.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is effective. The school prepares useful individual education plans, which focus positively on improving pupils' emotional wellbeing as well as their literacy and numeracy skills. Worthwhile intervention programmes support identified pupils' needs well and ensure that they make very good progress from their different starting points. Learning support officers work purposefully with individual pupils and use a range of different strategies sensitively and successfully. The school collaborates well with many outside agencies to meet specific needs, such as to support young pupils' language development. The additional learning needs co-ordinator oversees this work very well and there are regular meetings to evaluate pupils' progress, ensuring that their needs are met effectively.

The school communicates effectively with parents and develops productive relationships through highly worthwhile partnership activities. For example, there is an open door culture, which provides regular and valuable opportunities for parents to share any concerns, and worthwhile family engagement activities such as literacy and numeracy workshops. The school provides particularly worthwhile opportunities to share topic work with parents. This builds strong relationships within the school community while creating a highly purposeful context for pupils' learning.

Leadership and management: Good

Members of the newly formed senior leadership team work very well together to provide high quality education for all pupils. All staff share a common vision that aims to ensure that pupils achieve well, have high levels of wellbeing and become lifelong learners. Middle leaders support the senior leadership team effectively. For example, they lead the school's work on the new professional standards for teachers. This increases the leadership capacity within the school and allows teachers to make worthwhile contributions to the school's strategic direction. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are good professional role models and have high expectations of pupils, teachers and learning support officers.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They implement comprehensive monitoring and evaluation processes that draw effectively on a wide range of first hand evidence. Leaders use information from monitoring activities purposefully to plan school improvement priorities. However, leaders' use of the views of pupils and parents in self-evaluation processes is less well developed. Staff work well together towards achieving school improvement priorities. For example, as a result of a whole school focus on improving pupils' reading skills, pupils have improved their range of reading comprehension strategies. In a relatively short time, senior leaders have improved systems and processes to ensure that the school's work makes a positive difference to standards of teaching and learning. For example, they have simplified systems for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. This enables leaders and teachers to monitor the progress that individual pupils make regularly and to provide support and intervention for pupils who do not make expected progress. However, important areas such as improving pupils' Welsh speaking skills and providing opportunities for younger pupils to work independently remain priorities for improvement.

The headteacher has a strong vision for the school as a professional learning organisation. Teachers and learning support officers benefit from a good range of professional development opportunities. These include engaging with teachers within their own and other schools to work on a common focus, such as improving feedback to pupils. As a result, teachers now use a greater range of strategies to help pupils improve their work. Professional development opportunities link well to the school's priorities. Senior leaders manage teachers' performance effectively and provide clear feedback on what they do well and what they need to improve. The headteacher has improved processes for managing the performance of learning support officers and as a result development opportunities link well to their roles and responsibilities. The school has formed a beneficial partnership with a teacher training institution to develop and mentor student teachers. This has a positive impact on teaching and learning as student teachers share new strategies and provide opportunities for school staff to develop mentoring and leadership skills.

Senior leaders take very good account of national priorities, including developing pupils' ICT skills and a whole school focus on the revised curriculum for Wales. Teachers and pupils have worked together to incorporate the four core purposes of the curriculum into their topics and themes. As a result of this work, pupils have a much greater say in what and how they learn.

The governing body provides strong support for the school. Governors know the school well. They visit school regularly to gather first hand evidence, for example on pupils' behaviour and engagement in learning. Members of the governing body bring a good range of skills and expertise to the school, for example in procuring services. They use their skills effectively to challenge the school's leaders as they refine processes, for example about attendance and staffing.

There are effective arrangements to manage the school's finances and resources. Leaders use grant funding effectively to support targeted pupils, for example through providing interventions that support pupils' literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. Senior leaders monitor and evaluate these programmes effectively to ensure that they raise pupils' standards successfully and provide value for money.

The school provides a stimulating, engaging and very well-resourced learning environment for pupils, and staff use this effectively. For example, staff use indoor and outdoor learning areas well to provide purposeful learning experiences for pupils, including cooking and gardening.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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

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

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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