



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

A report on

Queensferry CP School

**Queensferry Campus
Queensferry
Deeside
Flintshire
CH5 1SE**

Date of inspection: November 2023

by

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

About Queensferry CP School

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| Name of provider | Queensferry CP School |
| Local authority | Flintshire County Council |
| Language of the provider | English |
| Type of school | Primary |
| Religious character | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 137 |
| Pupils of statutory school age | 115 |
| Number in nursery classes | 10 |
| 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%) | 54.5% |
| 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%) | 27.8% |
| Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home | |
| Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language | 15.7% |
| Date of headteacher appointment | 01/09/2021 |
| Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable) | 29/09/2015 |
| Start date of inspection | 06/11/2023 |

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

Queensferry Primary School is a happy, vibrant school where pupils thrive. The school is highly inclusive, ensuring that all pupils feel safe and happy. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud to be a part of such a reassuring learning environment. As a result, most pupils make strong progress in their learning from their individual starting points. Most pupils forge positive relationships with their peers and adults alike and demonstrate high levels of respect for one another's cultures. Pupils know that staff expect them to behave well and respect everyone in the school and the community. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in opportunities to improve aspects of the school.

The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership and knows the school well. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff. Staff and senior leaders trust each other and form an effective, successful team. The team works purposefully alongside the governing body to secure improvements for the school. Together, they understand school strengths and areas for development and plan accurate strategic actions to secure improvement.

Staff offer pupils a variety of learning experiences, which help to keep pupils interested in their learning. As a result, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), engage well in their learning, make good progress and achieve well. However, in a few instances teachers over-direct learning and do not provide feedback swiftly enough. This hinders pupils' independence and their understanding of what they need to do next and how to do it.

The school's curriculum takes account of pupils' interests. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilful and support pupils to develop a range of skills well. However, provision to develop pupils' writing and numeracy across the curriculum is less well developed. Teachers are beginning to develop assessment processes suitably. However, assessment is not used consistently across the school to plan for pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils do not evaluate their own progress.

The school places a strong emphasis on supporting the well-being of all. Leaders and staff adopt a beneficial community focused approach, providing a range of support for individual pupils and their families. Provision for pupils with ALN is comprehensive and leaders ensure that provision is suitably adapted to meet pupils' needs. There is a strong culture of safeguarding.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning including when responding to feedback and understanding their next steps
- R2 Formalise consistent assessment processes across the school to evaluate pupils' progress and inform teachers' planning

- R3 Provide regular opportunities for pupils to write at length, improve their writing and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils begin school with levels of understanding and skills below those expected for their age. During their time in school, most pupils make effective progress. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), those with ALN and pupils affected by socio-economic disadvantage make successful progress from their individual starting points.

Most pupils are attentive listeners, and many are confident speakers. A majority of younger pupils communicate their ideas enthusiastically to adults and each other. For example, when in the construction area pupils discuss the replica they create of local community buildings and suggest ways to improve their model. As they progress through the school, most pupils' language skills develop well and their vocabulary grows. By the time pupils are in the older classes, they explain themselves articulately when discussing their work.

Most pupils make sound progress in developing their reading skills. Younger pupils develop their knowledge of letters and sounds well. As they move through the school, pupils use strategies successfully to read unfamiliar words and discuss their reading with understanding. By the time they are in Year 6, many pupils use expression well when reading aloud. A few pupils discuss their favourite authors, giving reasons for their choices.

Across the school, many pupils develop their basic writing skills appropriately. The youngest pupils make marks using a variety of writing tools. Year 1 pupils write simple sentences using given sentence structures. They form their letters carefully and spell simple, familiar words well. As they progress, pupils develop their spelling, punctuation and handwriting appropriately. By the time pupils are in the oldest year groups many present their work neatly, joining their letters fluidly and their spelling is generally accurate. Older pupils are beginning to amend their writing to make improvements. However, generally pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length or to improve their writing.

Most pupils develop secure mathematical knowledge as they progress through the school. When provided with the opportunity, a majority of pupils apply these skills competently in their learning across the curriculum. Younger pupils organise amounts to 10 accurately in ascending and descending order. Year 2 and Year 3 pupils

estimate the number of seeds inside a pumpkin and record the digits accurately according to their place value of tens and units. Most older pupils are developing their confidence as mathematicians, handling larger numbers, for example when comparing amounts to 100,000 and using symbols to denote the greater and smaller numbers. However, pupils are not provided with opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in other areas of learning regularly enough.

Many pupils use basic Welsh vocabulary and known sentences. For example, they respond to simple questions to communicate successfully about how they are feeling and what they like and dislike. During classroom activities, pupils pronounce words and phrases accurately. Older pupils use sentence stems and vocabulary to extend descriptive sentences to explain how proficient they are at a range of activities including singing and playing rugby.

Nearly all pupils use a range of digital skills suitably and enthusiastically to support their learning. Younger pupils take photographs of their learning, which they upload to their work files independently. As they move through the school, pupils' competence grows and they apply a range of digital skills when creating presentations and slide shows, developing a database of local amenities and using code to create games.

Most pupils develop their physical and creative skills well. The youngest control droplets of coloured water from pipettes to carefully mix new colours. As they move through the school, pupils improve these skills well through a range activities. For example, they work collaboratively to develop movements into dance sequences and develop their strength when building dens and scaling trees.

Many pupils work independently of adults. They collaborate well with each other to discuss their work and overcome challenges. However, on occasion their work is over-directed by staff and in a minority of occasions pupils are not sure how well they are progressing and what their next steps are. When working alone, a majority sustain their concentration to focus on their learning and show perseverance to complete their tasks.

Overall, pupils develop their curiosity and thinking skills effectively when working inside and outdoors. They evaluate risk and decide on the best ways to avoid hazards. The youngest pupils discuss what will happen if they remove their bridge from a road they construct. Year 2 and Year 3 pupils discuss how to stack large tyres to make them stable enough to hold their weight when they stand on them. Older pupils plan how best to balance and manage their approach when climbing into a hammock successfully.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

During their time in school, nearly all pupils develop positive working relationships with staff and respectful friendships with each other. Many pupils feel safe at school and know who to turn to if they need help. 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. When needed, they develop and use suitable strategies to be calm and to re-focus on their learning.

Most pupils enjoy learning and generally listen well and participate appropriately in lessons. They enjoy working together, sharing ideas and happily take turns. They are often proud of their work and are keen to share their learning with visitors. Many pupils are often fully engaged in tasks. Most pupils value and understand the feedback they receive in their lessons. However, on occasion, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to improve their learning, formulate their own ideas or identify their next steps in learning. During lessons where teachers and support staff provide too much support and direction, a few pupils lose interest and do not develop their independent skills effectively.

Most pupils understand how to stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking water, and having an active lifestyle. For example, learners in Nursery and Reception design healthy lunchboxes and all pupils in the school participate in play sessions at lunchtimes run collaboratively by school and local leisure centre staff. Many pupils enjoy extra-curricular activities, including dance and football.

Most pupils develop a broad understanding of cultural diversity and eagerly share what they have learnt about the local environment and its history. They develop as ethical and knowledgeable citizens and show a strong awareness of what it is to be a good friend and how to help others. Their positive attitudes increase the pupils' awareness of their actions towards creating a caring and tolerant society. Most pupils enjoy celebrating their own culture and language and that of their peers and have an appropriate understanding of what it is like to live in modern day Wales. They demonstrate a broad understanding of cultural diversity through their study of different faiths. This leads to pupils showing respect for the beliefs of others and an understanding that society is multi-cultural.

Most pupils play harmoniously together and interact well with adults at break and lunchtimes. They enjoy learning in the outdoor areas. This supports their learning and well-being effectively. For example, younger pupils follow recipes to make pumpkin soup while outside, developing their literacy and collaborative skills.

Many pupils feel safe in school and have a sound awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe online. They know they must not share their passwords with others. During discussions, nearly all pupils explain sensibly that they have high levels of trust for staff and that they are content to discuss any concerns with them. They are confident that staff will listen to them and take account of their concerns.

Many pupils take on leadership roles successfully, for example as members of one of the various pupil leadership groups, including the Eco Council and School Council, which is a strength of the school. In these roles, pupils are actively involved in school-wide decision making. Pupils in the School Council are aware of the school's improvement priorities and drive school improvement. They have created oracy corners in all classrooms to develop conversation and vocabulary. This has contributed to the improved standards of oracy across the school. The Eco Council has written an action plan and successfully share the actions with the whole-school community via a communication app and newsletters to raise awareness of the importance of sustainability and healthy eating.

Teaching and learning experiences

Nearly all staff develop highly beneficial working relationships with pupils. They are effective role models. Teachers are enthusiastic and skilled, ask open questions and teach at a swift pace to engage pupils in their learning. As a result, pupils feel listened to and are confident to ask questions if they need support with their learning. Staff know pupils well and encourage them to participate while they are working and interacting with their peers. However, on occasion, staff over direct pupils' learning, stifling the development of pupils' independent learning skills.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff have worked closely with pupils, parents and governors to create a vision for the school's curriculum. They ensure that the curriculum is relevant and accessible to all pupils. They use creative teaching approaches to engage pupils in a wide range of interesting learning experiences that build on their previous learning and develop their skills suitably.

Teachers create attractive learning areas. These include quiet calm corners, accessible resources and displays of pupils' work that support pupils' learning well. They have good, up-to-date subject knowledge and use a variety of effective teaching methods to encourage active learning from all pupils. Support staff work alongside teachers skilfully and contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Staff manage pupils' behaviour competently, ensuring that most pupils are engaged and remain on task during lessons.

Teachers have a secure understanding of the concepts and skills they are teaching. They collaboratively plan lessons to engage pupils and ensure that pupils can achieve at levels suitable to their development and make effective progress. Teachers successfully use the outdoors to develop pupils' independence and problem-solving skills. For example, pupils work individually and collaboratively to plan and make bird feeders to attract birds to the outdoor learning area.

Staff develop pupils' reading, oracy, basic writing and mathematical skills effectively. Teachers provide appropriate and regular opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their reading, oracy and digital skills. However, teachers do not always plan and provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, improve their writing or to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

In most classes, teachers have high expectations of pupils. They provide clear instructions which support pupils to know what they need to do to be successful. Overall, staff use effective techniques to question and prompt pupils to further their thinking. Many teachers provide valuable immediate verbal feedback, and written feedback, which generally enables pupils to improve their learning. However, this is inconsistent across the school and as a result a few pupils do not always understand how well they are progressing, how to improve their work or what to do next.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about their locality and the language, culture and heritage of Wales. Many staff consistently promote the Welsh language across the school by using Welsh vocabulary appropriately in the classroom when greeting and giving instructions to pupils.

Teachers have developed a shared understanding of progression and have clear expectations of what they intend pupils to achieve. They use a range of assessments to gather data and to track and monitor pupils' progress carefully. Teachers and leaders use this information to discuss every pupil's learning in 'progress pit stop' meetings each term. They use these dialogues well to plan for pupils' next steps in learning on a termly basis. Teachers' use of formative assessment approaches in the short term is in the early stages of development and pupils are not involved in the process of evaluating their learning to understand their own progress.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a caring and inclusive community, which has a positive impact on the development of pupils' learning, social and emotional skills. Leaders prioritise well-being, ensuring an atmosphere of respect between staff and pupils. This leads to pupils feeling safe and cared for in a trusting setting. All staff respond effectively to pupils' needs and promptly address any emotional difficulties. They use a range of strategies consistently, in line with the school's Wellbeing Offer and the Behaviour Pledge. For pupils who need more specialised provision, bespoke support is provided. This is beneficial to pupils' well-being and secures good and courteous behaviour across the school. This is a strength of the school.

The provision for pupils identified with ALN is robust. The ALN co-ordinator and staff monitor pupil progress carefully. They plan tailored programmes of support and deliver an effective range of interventions across the school. This makes a positive difference to pupils' well-being and progress. The school works closely with local partners to enhance learning. For example, the local high school provides a dance teacher to develop pupils' physical skills. Staff include parents purposefully in discussions about their child's progress. This ensures strong partnerships between the school and parents.

Whole-school acts of collective worship provide worthwhile contributions to pupils' spiritual and moral development through opportunities for pupils to reflect on important aspects of life. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about social and cultural developments in local and global contexts. For example, when studying the global effect of pollution on food chains they learn of the harm caused by disrupting a member of the food chain. Staff encourage pupils to consider their community, their roles as part of that community, and their cultural beliefs and backgrounds. The school plans a range of activities for pupils to learn about children's rights, including their right to play, to eat healthily and to have an active lifestyle. Opportunities to develop pupils' Welsh identity are developing appropriately through cultural events, including visiting local places of interest such as Flint Castle and studying the history of Queensferry.

The school has a range of pupil leadership groups. Pupils take on leadership roles that enable them to make meaningful decisions about the school. The Eco Council have written an action plan, encouraging classes to grow more fruit and vegetables. As a result of the school's work, pupils are developing effectively as active citizens. The school provides opportunities for pupils to make valuable contributions to the locality, such as carrying out litter picks and organising tree planting with their families in partnership with the school. These experiences help pupils to develop empathy and respect for their local area successfully.

The school provides a range of stimulating visits to places such as the inflatable park in the local leisure centre and a residential trip to Glan Llyn. These activities have a positive effect on most pupils' communication skills and resilience. After-school clubs and lunchtime activities provide pupils with a range of valuable opportunities to engage in sport and physical activity. These opportunities enhance pupils' physical development and foster their enjoyment in an active lifestyle successfully.

Leaders monitor pupil attendance carefully. The school has robust procedures for monitoring attendance. Although attendance has improved compared to last year, pupils eligible for free school meals have a notably higher rate of absence compared to other pupils.

Staff promote a highly robust culture of safeguarding ensuring that the welfare of all is a priority. The school adopts a strong multi-agency approach to providing appropriate support for pupils and their families.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is a strong role model who sets the strategic direction for the school accurately. Her sensitive and efficient leadership has a positive impact on all areas of the school. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and leaders at all levels. She is passionate about the well-being of pupils and staff and successfully places a high priority on this. The school is a welcoming and nurturing environment where there is mutual support and respect between staff and pupils. Leaders promote the partnership with parents well. They know their community well and work with dedication to ensure that all families are supported productively.

The school's vision for inspiring pupils through a love of learning, underpins the school's work. The teamwork that exists within the school is a strength and ensures that everyone contributes effectively to realising the vision successfully. Staff are dedicated and hardworking and strive to ensure that pupils' well-being and learning are at the heart of their work. All staff have created a positive safeguarding culture where pupils and staff feel valued and know who to go to if the need arises.

Leaders work successfully with staff to develop a collective responsibility for self-evaluation and school improvement. They gather a wide range of information about the school's work, from parents, pupils and governors, and use it diligently to make appropriate decisions about the school's priorities. Plans for improvement are manageable and identify the school's priorities accurately. These actions have recently successfully realised improvements in pupils' behaviour, oracy and communication skills. Leaders and governors have a clear focus on their approach to improvement and ensure that local and national priorities are addressed alongside school priorities, such as successful implementing of the new ALN Bill and ensuring that it benefits pupils.

The governing body is conscientious and supports the headteacher purposefully. Governors are developing well in their role as critical friends. They know their school community well and use this knowledge when formulating approaches to achieve improvement priorities. Governors visit the school to gather information to inform their decision-making. Leaders and teachers provide governors with regular updates regarding pupil progress, staff development and the school's progress towards its

identified areas for school improvement. These clear lines of communication and governors' visits to the school ensure that governors are well informed about the school's progress. Governors are clear regarding their roles in relation to establishing and promoting healthy eating and drinking in the school.

School leaders and governors manage their school budget well and careful financial planning ensures that the school achieves its plans for improvement. Leaders and governors monitor the school's finances carefully to make sure that expenditure directly benefits pupils and provides good value for money. The school monitors and allocates the pupil development grant and other grant funding carefully, ensuring that a range of intervention strategies are available to support identified pupils.

Leaders and staff establish regular and effective communication with parents using digital platforms. Leaders invite parents into school to take part in a range of activities to benefit their families including budgeting and healthy cooking. Leaders provide family learning events including parental first aid and helping parents to support their children's reading. This gives parents the opportunity to work alongside their children and better support them at home.

School leaders create a strong culture of professional learning across the school. The school involves all teachers and teaching assistants in purposeful opportunities to improve their professional knowledge and skills. This is a notable feature of the school. The planned professional development of staff impacts positively on their own development, the direction of the school and outcomes for 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)

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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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