



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

**A report on**

**Ninian Park Primary School  
Virgil Street  
Grangetown  
Cardiff  
CF11 8TF**

**Date of inspection: November 2016**

**by**

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

## Summary

The pupils at Ninian Park Primary School make strong progress from their starting points and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning, but attendance rates are not as high as they could be. There is effective planning to develop pupils' skills as they move through the school. Teaching is of good quality in a few classes, but too much is adequate overall. The provision in the Foundation Phase does not give pupils enough opportunities to make choices about what and how they learn or to learn in the outdoors. Pupils receive good care, support and guidance. The headteacher leads the school well. She has tightened systems and processes throughout the school and brought about significant improvement in a short period. She has strong support from the governing body. The roles of middle managers require further development.

The school will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to maintain high standards and improve the quality of provision by addressing the recommendations.

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve the provision in the Foundation Phase
- R2 Raise the quality of teaching so that it drives forward pupils' learning more effectively
- R3 Increase attendance rates
- R4 Build the capacity of middle managers to monitor and to improve standards and the quality of provision across the school
- R5 Improve assemblies to make them better experiences for pupils

## Main findings

### 1: Standards

**Good**

About two-thirds of pupils start school with skills and understanding that are below the level expected for their age. Most pupils enter the nursery with little or no English. As they move through the key stages, most pupils make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Most pupils acquire good English language skills as they progress through the school.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils listen attentively. As they become more familiar with English, they talk increasingly well with other pupils and with adults about their work. Most develop their knowledge of letters and sounds well. Many read at a suitable level and make sensible attempts at sounding out unfamiliar words. Pupils' writing skills develop appropriately. Many write stories and accounts well, for example when writing about the Fire of London, describing a trip to a fire station or retelling a fairy tale in their own words. Pupils' handwriting develops reasonably well in many cases, but not all pupils form individual letters appropriately.

In key stage 2, pupils engage well in talk with their teachers and with other pupils. They discuss their work readily and offer thoughtful responses to questions. Older and more able pupils speak with a high degree of confidence and expression. Pupils develop well as readers as they move through the key stage. They read accurately and with good understanding. They know the conventions of fiction and non-fiction books well. Many have favourite authors and can explain their preferences purposefully. They extract information from texts to support their work across the curriculum, but do not always filter the information well enough. Pupils' writing skills develop well across a wide range of genres. The writing of more able pupils is particularly strong where they present information or opinions. For example, they write effectively about stadium tragedies, the differences between online and offline friends and the arguments for and against building on flood plains. Pupils write evocative poems about the Blitz and letters home from an evacuee. Most pupils join their handwriting and, by the end of Year 6, it is usually fluent and neat.

Pupils develop their numeracy skills well. By the end of Year 2, many have a good grasp of basic number facts and they add and subtract two-digit numbers reasonably well. They develop a sound grasp of time, money, measurement and shapes. They use tally charts and bar graphs well, for example to show the plants and trees in Mr Twit's garden. In key stage 2, pupils apply their skills successfully in real-life situations, for example when buying items in a shop, working out profit and loss, and planning a journey according to a specific budget. They develop their understanding of negative numbers suitably in work on temperature and time zones. Pupils generally apply their numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum, for example in science when calculating the mean distance travelled by toy trucks down slopes set at different angles. Pupils develop their estimation skills well in relation to measurement, but less so when judging whether they have sensible answers to their calculations.

Across the school, most pupils develop suitable skills in information and communication technology (ICT). In the Foundation Phase, pupils access ICT well to support the development of their reading skills. They record and present their work appropriately using tablet computers. In key stage 2, pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to write instructions to operate a device or to change the appearance of an on-screen object. Many pupils use word-processing to draft and present their work, but tend not to use as many features of the software as they could. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of constructing and using spreadsheets and databases is limited. Most have good understanding of how to remain safe online.

Pupils' Welsh language skills develop well alongside their rapid acquisition of English as an additional language. In the Foundation Phase, pupils learn a few simple phrases and develop a reasonable knowledge of a basic set of Welsh words. By the end of key stage 2, pupils construct purposeful Welsh sentences, using a suitable range of vocabulary and connectives. Many engage confidently in conversation using basic sentence patterns appropriately. Older pupils read texts fluently and with correct pronunciation. They write across a suitable range of genres, including letters and play scripts.

Overall, there is an improving trend in pupils' performance over recent years at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 when compared with that in similar schools.

Pupils' performance at the expected and higher levels tends to be better at the end of Year 6 than at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 2, the performance of pupils in literacy and mathematical development tends to place the school in the lower 50% when compared with similar schools. At the end of Year 6, the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science tends to place the school in the higher 50%.

At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals has improved over recent years. There is now no gap between their performance and that of other pupils. Overall, girls tend to perform better as a group than boys at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6, boys and girls perform equally well in mathematics and science, but girls continue to do better in English.

<b>2: Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

Nearly all pupils show respect and consideration for each other and for the different cultures within the school community. They are confident that adults and other pupils will help them if they have a problem. Nearly all behave sensibly in lessons and around the school. They are polite and have high expectations for their learning. Most pupils take pride in improving their school and speak positively about the impact of their suggestions, such as when they introduce a Welsh playground game or promote anti-bullying. They take on a wide range of roles in school, showing enthusiasm for their opportunities to contribute to school life or to support others.

Pupils are well aware of the need to eat healthily and to exercise. The work they undertake across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities, such as the 'Food and Fun' club for pupils and parents, raises their awareness of healthy lifestyles

effectively. Many pupils show a good understanding of aspects of safety, such as when they find out about filtering drinking water, staying safe near rivers, road safety awareness and in sessions on how to keep safe on the internet.

Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic in lessons. They follow instructions effectively and are respectful when others are talking. They listen carefully to their views and offer suitable responses. Most concentrate well and stay on task for appropriate lengths of time. Nearly all pupils settle to their work quickly and work purposefully. Most are keen to discuss their work and they can explain how their learning might help them in later life, for example in a certain career or in the world of work. Most pupils persevere well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language show a high level of determination in developing and practising their language skills. Overall, pupils' independent learning skills are rather limited. In the Foundation Phase and in a few key stage 2 classes, pupils tend to rely too much on adults to direct them in their learning. Older pupils occasionally lack confidence in checking their work or explaining how they came to their answers.

Attendance rates are improving over time, but the school remains in the lower 50% when compared with similar schools. There is little difference in the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals and that of other pupils. Over the last two years, persistent absence and lateness show a marked declining trend. Nearly all pupils arrive at school on time.

<b>3: Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Adequate, needs improvement</b>
---	------------------------------------

Overall, the quality of teaching is adequate and needs improvement. There are strong aspects to teaching in classes, but important aspects require improvement in too many. Many teachers plan work that provides a suitable level of challenge for most pupils. They use structured programmes well to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. In a minority of classes, the stimulus for lessons is exciting and engages pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. In these sessions, learning is fun, activities are purposeful and pupils make strong progress. However, in a majority of classes, particularly in the Foundation Phase, lessons do not always move at a suitable pace or allow pupils to take an active enough part in activities. In a few classes, staff use questioning well to develop pupils' learning, but this is not consistent across the school.

Most staff manage pupils' behaviour well. Teachers use a consistent approach when dealing with misbehaviour or inattention, and pupils understand teachers' expectations. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils, particularly those who have English as an additional language.

Most teachers provide pupils with useful feedback about how well they have completed tasks and what they can do to improve their work. In many classes, teachers remind pupils of the purpose of the lesson effectively and ask them to reflect on how well they have achieved the learning objective. They give pupils suitable time to improve their work. Older pupils are beginning to assess the quality of their own work and that of other pupils and to think carefully about how to improve it next time. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately and use information from assessments to set suitable half-termly targets for pupils.

Overall, the quality of teachers' planning is appropriate. There is suitable coverage of the national curriculum and the areas of learning in the Foundation Phase. Teachers plan a good range of activities for pupils to use the skills they acquire in English lessons across the curriculum. This makes sure that pupils develop skills progressively as they move through the school. Provision to develop pupils' skills in numeracy and ICT is appropriate. Opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills are more limited.

In the Foundation Phase, teachers direct most tasks. This means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to choose what and how they would like to learn or to develop independent learning skills. For example, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use the outdoor environment for imaginative and creative play or to develop a suitable range of investigative skills.

Teachers plan a wide range of educational visits to places such as Cilfynydd, Cardiff Bay and Barry Island. These enhance the curriculum effectively. Staff offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities that support pupils' learning well, for example in sport and digital learning. The provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is effective and pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales.

<b>4: Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
--------------------------------------	-------------

Provision for pupils who need additional support is strong and the school uses a wide range of programmes that meet their needs successfully. Leaders and teachers use assessment information well to plan effective support in classes and through withdrawal groups. For example, support teachers plan withdrawal sessions for pupils who are acquiring English to introduce new words and phrases that they will need to help them with science work. Staff help pupils who are new to the school to settle quickly by using playground activities that promote social skills. There is good support for pupils with emotional needs. This includes individual play and art programmes, which engage pupils well and are successful in improving behaviour.

The school offers a good range of opportunities for parents to learn how to support their children's wellbeing, for example through workshops that promote healthy eating. Leaders have improved strategies for promoting attendance and these are now more robust. The school ensures that parents and pupils are aware of the value of attending school regularly and of arriving on time. These strategies are successful as far fewer pupils are late at the start of the school day and persistent absence has declined sharply. However, overall attendance rates remain not as high as they could be.

There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to be healthy, for example by selling fruit and vegetables at playtime. The curriculum provides worthwhile activities for pupils to participate in sports, such as gymnastics and swimming. A suitable range of after-school sports clubs promotes pupils' fitness well.

The many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example through the school and eco councils and as digital leaders, develop pupils' leadership skills well.

There are also opportunities for pupils to play a role in the wider community, for example by providing food for local foodbanks.

The school is an extremely caring community that celebrates the diversity of its pupils well. All pupils take part in the full range of school activities. Leaders offer good opportunities for pupils to engage in trips and visits and staff use theatre companies well to engage pupils with live drama performances. Assemblies at the end of the school day do not provide worthwhile experiences for pupils.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

<b>5: Leadership and management</b>
-------------------------------------

<b>Good</b>
-------------

The school works well in partnership with the regional consortium, for example to strengthen the senior leadership capacity. The revised staffing structure sets out clear roles and responsibilities that staff understand well. Leaders have improved the deployment of teaching assistants, who now support pupils more effectively.

Self-evaluation processes are developing well. The analysis of information about pupils' performance is rigorous. Leaders make good use of this information to identify important whole-school improvement priorities and to keep progress against these priorities under review. Self-evaluation processes draw on a good range of first-hand evidence, such as observations of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' books. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Middle leaders often check whether other staff comply with recent initiatives, but they do not evaluate enough the difference that these strategies make to pupils' progress.

Improvement planning arrangements are effective. Leaders implement improvement initiatives and manage change successfully. For example, effective staff training and the sensible re-organisation of arrangements for grouping pupils have led to improved progress in developing pupils' reading and writing skills. Further arrangements to improve the professional skills of staff are developing well, for example through the outstanding teacher programme and partnerships with other local schools. However, leaders do not always take full advantage of the expertise of the highest performing teachers to model and share best practice across the school. Effective processes for the performance management of staff, support school improvement successfully. The school has made rapid progress in raising standards for pupils recently, particularly at the end of key stage 2. However, there has been slower progress in the Foundation Phase and in ensuring that the quality of teaching is at least good in all classes.

There are effective arrangements to manage the school's finances and resources. Leaders use grant funding well to make progress against national and local priorities, for example to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The school makes particularly good use of funding to support pupils from ethnic minority groups. Carefully planned projects, such as the language immersion strategy, have a profound and positive impact on helping pupils to understand and to use English successfully.

The governing body is effective and discharges its statutory duties well. Governors keep most aspects of the schools' work under regular review. They understand the school's context, its strengths and priorities for improvement. Governors use this knowledge to support and challenge the school to improve important aspects of its work, for example its documentation for improvement planning. This supports them well in holding leaders to account for the standards that pupils achieve.

## About the school

Ninian Park Primary School is in the Grangetown area of Cardiff.

Currently, there are 545 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11, including 77 nursery children who attend part-time. The number of pupils at the school has increased over recent years. There are 17 single-year classes and 2 nursery classes.

About 26% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average (19%). Around 92% of pupils are from 40 different ethnic minority groups, with Asian ethnicity making up around half the school population. About 84% of pupils have English as an additional language, and around 70% of those are new to English or are at an early acquisition stage. No pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school identifies that around 18% of pupils have additional learning needs. This is lower than the national average of 25%. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. There have been 2 fixed-term exclusions during the past 12 months.

The headteacher took up her post formally in September 2016, though she was the acting headteacher from September 2015. The school's previous inspection was in October 2009.

## Appendix 1: Summary table of inspection areas

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Adequate, needs improvement</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

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

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

## Appendix 2: Performance data

### 6812101 - NINIAN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Number of pupils on roll	548
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	25.4
FSM band	4 (24%<FSM<=32%)

#### Foundation Phase

	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Number of pupils in Year 2 cohort</b>	54	55	52	46
<b>Achieving the Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) (%)</b>	70.4	83.6	84.6	84.8
Benchmark quartile	4	3	3	3
<b>Language, literacy and communication skills - English (LCE)</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	54	55	52	46
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	75.9	85.5	84.6	84.8
Benchmark quartile	4	3	3	3
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	13.0	16.4	21.2	30.4
Benchmark quartile	4	4	4	3
<b>Language, literacy and communication skills - Welsh (LCW)</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	*	*	*	*
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
<b>Mathematical development (MDT)</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	54	55	52	46
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	79.6	87.3	86.5	87.0
Benchmark quartile	4	3	3	3
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	14.8	16.4	23.1	32.6
Benchmark quartile	4	4	3	2
<b>Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity (PSD)</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	54	55	52	46
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	75.9	92.7	98.1	91.3
Benchmark quartile	4	3	2	3
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	9.3	16.4	38.5	56.5
Benchmark quartile	4	4	3	2

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving outcome 5 or above in PSD, LCE/LCW, and MDT in combination.

\* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A report on Ninian Park Primary School  
November 2016

**6812101 - NINIAN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Number of pupils on roll	548
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	25.4
FSM band	4 (24%<FSM<=32%)

**Key stage 2**

	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Number of pupils in Year 6 cohort</b>	50	47	56	49
<b>Achieving the core subject indicator (CSI) (%)</b>	72.0	85.1	82.1	91.8
Benchmark quartile	4	2	3	2
<b>English</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	50	47	56	49
Achieving level 4+ (%)	76.0	89.4	85.7	91.8
Benchmark quartile	4	2	3	2
Achieving level 5+ (%)	30.0	29.8	23.2	46.9
Benchmark quartile	3	3	4	1
<b>Welsh first language</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	*	*	*	*
Achieving level 4+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
Achieving level 5+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
<b>Mathematics</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	50	47	56	49
Achieving level 4+ (%)	74.0	87.2	83.9	95.9
Benchmark quartile	4	3	4	1
Achieving level 5+ (%)	28.0	34.0	37.5	42.9
Benchmark quartile	3	2	2	2
<b>Science</b>				
Number of pupils in cohort	50	47	56	49
Achieving level 4+ (%)	84.0	89.4	85.7	95.9
Benchmark quartile	4	3	3	2
Achieving level 5+ (%)	28.0	46.8	14.3	40.8
Benchmark quartile	3	1	4	2

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

\* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

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

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

We used this inspection to pilot developments to the common inspection framework, the inspection process and the inspection report format. We will review these arrangements and make any changes required before introducing them nationally in September 2017.

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](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)

**© Crown Copyright 2017: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

**Publication date: 03/02/2017**