ESTYN

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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Trelai Primary School
Bishopston Road
Ely
Cardiff
CF5 5DY**

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by

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

Outcome of monitoring

Trelai Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in May 2015.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards of pupils' attainment in literacy, numeracy and Welsh

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

In the foundation phase, many pupils are beginning to make good progress in developing their writing skills. They develop well from making marks on paper at the start of the reception class to producing suitable pieces of extended writing by Year 2. Many Year 2 pupils are beginning to plan their writing successfully, for example by creating story maps. They present their written work legibly. Many pupils use basic punctuation such as full stops and capital letters appropriately. They use a suitable range of adjectives successfully, for example when retelling the story of the three little pigs. Many year 2 pupils read with suitable fluency and understanding. They use an appropriate range of strategies, such as picture clues and their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words.

In key stage 2, many pupils write well for a good range of purposes. They show a sound understanding of the features of different types of writing, for example when producing newspaper reports about the bombing of Swansea during the Second World War. They use a suitable range of punctuation correctly, spell with increasing accuracy and organise their work appropriately into paragraphs. Many pupils present their work with care. They apply their writing skills at a similar standard in other subjects. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils read with appropriate fluency and understanding from a suitable range of books. More able pupils talk enthusiastically about their preferences for different types of books and give concise synopses of the stories they have read. A minority of pupils do not read well enough when working in other subjects, for example when reading to research their topic work. This limits their progress in other subjects.

In the foundation phase, many pupils show a suitable understanding of basic number facts, time and money. A few pupils who are more able use their reasoning skills well to solve word problems. They are beginning to use their number skills appropriately in work across the curriculum. In key stage 2, a majority of pupils make suitable progress in their understanding of number, shape and data handling. They use an appropriate range of strategies to solve number problems in real-life contexts. For example, they work out how much change they should receive after paying for a meal. A few more able pupils add and divide large numbers correctly when solving multi-step problems. However, across key stage 2, a minority of pupils struggle with basic number operations and have a limited understanding of place value. Across the school, pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of making. This

is often because the activities on offer do not provide the right level of challenge, especially for more able pupils. As a result, very few pupils work at levels beyond those expected for their age. A majority of pupils apply their skills at an appropriate level in their topic work.

Across the school, many pupils have positive attitudes to learning Welsh. In the foundation phase, many pupils use basic Welsh words and phrases with enthusiasm and growing confidence. They ask and answer simple questions suitably, such as asking someone their name, or how they are feeling. Pupils read basic stories competently and show a suitable understanding of the text.

Younger pupils in key stage 2 ask and answer questions to gather information about the likes and dislikes of their friends. Many Year 6 pupils respond appropriately to questions in Welsh, for example to explain where they live or to describe the weather. They use past tense patterns with growing confidence, for example to talk about places they have been. They read well with good understanding from suitable texts. The standard of pupils' pronunciation of Welsh words is developing well.

Recommendation 2: Improve the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals across the school and of boys in the Foundation Phase

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has effective arrangements to assess and monitor the progress of specific groups of pupils. This includes boys and those eligible for free school meals. Overall, teachers are beginning to use this information appropriately, for example to set suitable targets for key stage 2 pupils. Teachers generally plan lessons that engage boys and those eligible for free school meals successfully and support them to make good progress from their individual starting points. For example, they use topics such as superheroes as a stimulus for activities in foundation phase areas of learning that capture the interests of boys. Additional strategies such as an accelerated reading programme and individual support from teaching assistants help pupils to make progress in developing key skills. This improved provision has supported higher proportions of pupils within these groups to reach their individual learning targets. The proportion of pupils that are eligible for free school meals who achieve the standards expected for their age is increasing. However, across the school, boys' performance remains relatively weak in comparison with that of girls.

Recommendation 3: Improve attendance and reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school continues to focus appropriately on promoting the need for pupils to attend school regularly and to be punctual, for example in assemblies and by providing pupils with certificates and rewards for good attendance. As a result, most pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly.

The deputy head teacher has worked successfully with a school support manager to implement an individual pupil tracking system. They use this to monitor the

attendance of cohorts and individual pupils effectively. The school support manager contacts parents on a daily basis when pupils are absent and addresses issues of lateness at the school gate. This has had a positive impact on reducing the number of vulnerable pupils who are persistent low-attenders.

Parents receive regular newsletters and information about their child's attendance at the end of each term. The school and the educational welfare officer keep careful records of their actions in following up absence. However, although attendance has improved slightly very recently, overall attendance remains too low. The school has remained in the bottom 25% of similar schools for at least the last 5 years.

Leaders have developed effective strategies to improve behaviour and reduce exclusions. For example, they have simplified the school rules to help pupils understand more readily the expectation placed upon them. Senior leaders use a range of useful information, including class behaviour report forms, to identify patterns in pupils' behaviour. They meet with the local authority's behaviour support team on a weekly basis and discuss individual pupils and trends across the school. This helps leaders identify suitable actions to support staff in improving pupils' behaviour successfully. In addition, the local authority has established two specialist behaviour classes. Pupils attend this provision during the mornings, and attend their mainstream class for part of the afternoon.

These strategies have reduced the instances of very poor, disruptive behaviour of a few pupils effectively. Overall, pupils respond well to the school's systems for managing behaviour and this is having a notable impact on pupils' learning environment and experiences. In 2016-2017, there were fewer exclusions than in previous years, and so far this academic year, there have been no exclusions.

Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of teaching so that learning experiences meet the needs of all pupils and build effectively on pupils' prior learning and increase opportunities for pupils to learn independently

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Most teachers understand their responsibilities for pupils' progress, and leaders' high expectations for the quality of teaching and learning. Overall, leaders support and challenge teachers well and, as a result, classroom practice has improved since the core inspection. Across the school, there are a few examples of exemplary classroom practice, although good and better teaching is not yet the norm in all classes.

A majority of lessons proceed at a suitable pace. Most teachers share lesson objectives and success criteria for tasks with pupils. These help pupils to know how to be successful in their work. Pupils generally respond well to this approach. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning appropriately to help pupils to recall previous learning and to assess their understanding.

A majority of teachers and teaching assistants use a suitable range of teaching strategies and resources to engage and maintain most pupils' interest successfully. For example, they use songs, rhymes and practical activities effectively to motivate

pupils and to improve their spelling and number skills. However, on occasions, a few teachers over direct pupils' learning. In these instances, pupils become passive and bored and, as a result, they do not engage well enough with the tasks. In a few lessons, teachers do not always match activities closely enough to pupils' starting points. For example, on occasions more able pupils find the work too easy and finish very quickly, while a few less able pupils are not able to complete the task, and become discouraged.

There are useful strategies to improve the quality and consistency of teaching across the school. For instance, year group teachers have planning, preparation and assessment time together. This enables them to discuss and share ideas and to provide valuable support for each other. Teachers and learning support assistants have useful opportunities to visit other schools to observe effective practice.

Whole-school systems for planning and assessment have improved teachers' ability to plan more systematically to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and subject skills as they move through the school. Teachers moderate their assessments of pupils' work with increasing accuracy. This has raised many teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and strengthened their understanding of the skills that pupils working at a particular level should demonstrate. However, a minority of teachers do not yet consider assessment information carefully enough to plan future learning, especially for pupils who are more able. Consequently, the quality of teachers' planning and teaching does not help all pupils to build consistently on their prior achievements.

While there have been recent improvements and there are pockets of highly effective practice, overall leaders rightly recognise the need to ensure that all teaching is consistently of a good quality. There is some ongoing turbulence in staffing, for example a number of vacant and temporary teaching posts remain. In a very few classes, despite leaders' best efforts, the quality of teaching is still not good enough.

Recommendation 5: Improve the quality and impact of teachers' marking and make effective use of assessment for learning across the school

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Many teachers use a suitable range of assessment for learning strategies well as part of their day-to-day teaching practice. For example, they share success criteria effectively to help pupils to learn and to use the features of different types of writing. They provide useful feedback so that pupils understand what they have done well and what they can improve. Overall, many pupils understand and respond well to the school's approaches to providing feedback, for instance they recognise that work highlighted in green presents them with an opportunity to correct their work. However, not all teachers challenge pupils as well as they might when giving pupils feedback about written work. For example, pupils rarely improve the quality of the content of their writing through a drafting process. Instead, they copy out their work and include corrections to spellings and punctuation.

Pupils regularly assess their own work and the work of their peers. For example, when completing mathematics activities, Year 6 pupils explain their method of solving

a problem to a peer and Year 2 pupils discuss whether or not they have met the success criteria following a piece of writing. In a minority of classes, there are effective plenary sessions that help pupils to identify strengths and areas for improvement in their work.

The school has developed effective arrangements to set targets for pupils. As a result, many pupils have a clear understanding of their most important learning goals. These processes have helped to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement and progress and are beginning to help raise standards.

Recommendation 6: Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management at all levels

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The appointment of a substantive headteacher has brought greater stability to the school's leadership arrangements. She provides the school with a clear vision and an effective strategy for improvement. There are appropriate plans for the future staffing and organisation of the school, which takes good account of the need to continue to raise pupils' standards.

There is a new leadership structure, which devolves leadership and management roles appropriately across the reinvigorated senior leadership team. Clear job descriptions and effective communication ensure that everyone is aware of their duties and responsibilities. Senior leaders now monitor teachers' work closely, for example through observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' work and listening to learners. They use data effectively to hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their class, during the termly individual performance reviews. As a result, there are improvements to the consistency of the provision, and in the accelerated progress that identified pupils make as a result of a range of intervention programmes.

In addition, all staff may choose to join a subject aspect leadership team (SALT). These teams provide worthwhile opportunities for staff at all levels to develop their leadership skills and contribute to the school's work and future priorities. Furthermore, they are effective in building leadership capacity in the school.

Leaders ensure that they undertake the performance management of staff appropriately. This includes meeting regularly with teachers and setting targets for pupil performance and professional development. Leaders address poor performance appropriately, promptly and robustly. They provide well-focused support for teachers to improve their practice, for example making good use of the expertise within the staff team. Although there are still pockets of weaker practice, the quality of teaching is becoming more consistent across the school. However, it is still too early to see the full impact of the new leadership team's work in improving outcomes for all pupils.

Recommendation 7: Improve self-evaluation and improvement planning processes so that they are effective in raising standards of teaching, learning and wellbeing

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

There are good arrangements to monitor and evaluate the school's work. The headteacher provides clear guidance for all staff about the systematic process of gathering and analysing evidence at different times in the academic year. The new senior leadership team evaluates standards of learning and teaching more consistently. For example, senior leaders observe lessons, and listen to learners' views. Middle leaders review pupils' books and all staff analyse pupil performance data. This gives all staff a useful overview of the quality of the school's work. The self-evaluation report is honest and accurate.

School improvement planning links closely to the outcomes of self-evaluation. There are suitable targets for improvement, although these focus primarily on the outcomes of teacher assessment at the end of the foundation phase and key stage 2. Plans now make explicit what will happen in practice, for example, to improve pupils' reading skills. As a result, leaders monitor progress against the plan's actions, and evaluate progress with increasing accuracy.

Leaders hold regular pupil progress meetings with class teachers and teaching assistants. These ensure that staff monitor pupils' progress against their individual targets appropriately. This enables leaders to challenge staff about the performance of individual pupils, review targets and to identify opportunities to provide additional support. This has become an accepted and embedded part of school practice. Overall, improvement processes are beginning to have a positive influence on the school's work. However, it is still too early to see their full impact on raising pupils' standards.

Recommendation 8: Improve the governing body's role in strategic planning and securing improvement, and in the management of resources

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Governors now focus their work strategically on improving pupils' outcomes. This is supporting the school to address long-standing issues of underperformance in leadership, teaching and learning. For example, governors supported the restructure of the school's leadership team and made key appointments that are beginning to secure improvements for pupils. The governing body meets regularly and has an appropriate range of committees to support the school's work. They undertake important aspects of their role such as monitoring expenditure and reviewing policies appropriately.

Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They monitor progress against improvement goals appropriately. For example, by monitoring the post inspection action plan. They receive detailed performance information in reports from the headteacher and use this information appropriately to challenge the school further. They receive suitable feedback on actions taking place within the school. For example, senior and middle leaders attend governing body meetings to present and discuss pupils' progress and outcomes.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.