



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

A report on

**Fleur-De-Lys Primary School
School Street
Fleur-De-Lys
Blackwood
NP12 3UX**

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by

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

About Fleur de Lis Primary School

Fleur de Lis Primary School is in the village of Fleur de Lis in Caerphilly local authority. There are 127 pupils including 15 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school has four mixed-age classes and a nursery class. The rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 15%. This is below the national average of 18%. The school identifies 19% of pupils as having additional learning needs, this figure is below the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have statements of special educational needs. A very few pupils come from Welsh speaking homes and a very few pupils have English as an additional language.

Estyn last inspected the school in June 2013. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2013 and is a shared headteacher between Fleur de Lis Primary School and Pengam Primary School.

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

Most pupils make good progress in developing their skills as they move through the school. They apply themselves well to their stimulating lessons and benefit from the good quality teaching that they receive. Throughout the school, most pupils with additional needs achieve well.

Almost all pupils behave very well and have a positive attitude to their learning. In lessons, nearly all pupils are attentive to their teachers and are eager to do well. Most develop their personal and social skills to a high standard and show respect and concern for others. The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership to an improving school. Governors understand their role and support the school effectively.

Self-evaluation processes identify appropriate strengths and areas for development. The school has a good record in making improvements. For example, the school has enhanced its approaches to use of indoor and outdoor learning in the foundation phase. Teachers make effective use of these spaces to encourage imaginative and creative learning through play.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the ability of pupils in key stage 2 to write at length and to develop their handwriting skills
- R2 Improve the standards of oracy in Welsh
- R3 Ensure pupils have opportunities to apply and develop their numeracy and data handling skills using ICT

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

As they move through the school, most pupils make at least good progress and a minority make very good progress by the end of key stage 2. Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress from their starting points.

In the foundation phase, most pupils listen attentively to adults and respond appropriately to questions. For example, in the nursery class they join in well with actions when hearing a story about a bear hunt. Most pupils develop their speaking skills well. In the reception and Year 1 class many recall stories and participate with good understanding when asked by their teacher to identify true or false facts about Noah and his ark. Most develop their reading skills effectively and read with understanding. They use their knowledge of sounds well to tackle unfamiliar words. In Year 2, more able pupils read fluently and discuss characters and events and predict what might happen next. Many pupils write successfully for various purposes, such as writing instructions to make a jam sandwich or to give an account of a school trip. They use basic punctuation to organise their work into simple sentences and form letters correctly.

Most pupils in key stage 2 have good listening skills and speak confidently and clearly in class. For example, many pupils listen well to partners when working in pairs to make a computer quiz about Victorian school days. Most pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate good understanding of what they read in different texts in lessons. In the Year 5 and 6 class most read a poem with good expression and many identify features such as personification, simile and metaphor successfully. They use dictionaries and internet searches effectively to learn about difficult vocabulary. Year 6 pupils demonstrate enthusiasm about reading together when talking about the novels of Michael Morpurgo. Most pupils in key stage 2 write lists of facts and instructions in appropriate ways. They label charts and illustrations in their books appropriately and most pupils record their scientific experiments well. Many plan the content of their writing for different purposes successfully. However, too many pupils in key stage 2 do not develop joined writing effectively and work only in print. This limits their ability to write fluently or at greater length.

Most pupils develop their mathematical skills well. In foundation phase, most learn to count correctly and apply their numeracy skills confidently in different areas of learning. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils apply suitable calculation strategies using the four rules of number to solve problems. Most use their number skills accurately in science experiments when measuring distances, or weighing and timing different variables. For example, pupils measure the viscosity of liquids effectively by timing how far different liquids move over a period. They record their findings and most interpret the results correctly. Many use line graphs usefully, for example to compare the rate at which various fruits lose liquid over several days. Most show a good understanding of units of measurement and the use of decimals when measuring.

As they move through the school, many pupils develop their skills in information and communications technology (ICT) suitably. In foundation phase, most use tablet computers readily to record their activities with photographs and moving images.

They confidently use art and picture collage programmes to experiment with colour. As they move through the school, many pupils become familiar with presentation software. Most develop their skills to research on the internet and extract images and information competently. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils use word processing packages confidently to re-draft, illustrate and present their written work. However, pupils' understanding of spreadsheets and use of ICT to present data to show findings from projects or science experiments is underdeveloped.

In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils greet adults and make their lunch choices in Welsh confidently. In Year 2, many respond correctly when asked their name and a minority can describe their feelings in a simple way. In key stage 2, most pupils write sequences of sentences correctly, with reasonably accurate attempts at spelling familiar words. They read from an appropriate range of texts with good pronunciation and understanding. Most have a positive attitude to learning the language. However, few have sufficient grasp of a range of vocabulary and sentence patterns to engage in conversation in different situations.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

A strength of the school is the positive attitude and enthusiasm most pupils have for learning. In classes, almost all pupils are attentive to their teachers and eager to do well. In key stage 2, most pupils work together effectively. They collaborate well when working in pairs or groups. In the foundation phase, most pupils develop their independence well and make choices as they move from one activity to another.

Pupils of all ages play well together on the playgrounds happily. Nearly all share spaces fairly and play football and use other equipment safely and with reasonable concern for each other. Playground monitors set out and store the play equipment and operate the fruit tuck shops efficiently. Older pupils are very effective in ensuring the foundation pupils receive the fruit purchased for them and help them make choices.

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure in school and enjoy their playtimes and extra-curricular activities. They are confident that adults will listen to their concerns and deal with any problems.

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise. Pupils of different ages talk knowledgeably about sensible food choices and many older pupils know what makes up a healthy lunch box. Most are aware of the importance of physical activity. Pupils in key stage 2 speak with understanding about why it benefits them to have physical education lessons. Nearly all pupils participate in running the 'daily mile'. They complete this as a programmed part of every school day where they aim to complete up to ten laps of the school yard. Pupils support extra-curricular sports well. They speak enthusiastically about different sports they enjoy in school, such as cross-country and netball. They are proud that all pupils have opportunities to take part in whatever sports they wish.

Pupils throughout the school take on roles of responsibility purposefully. Many speak enthusiastically about the range of leadership roles available to them, including 'Criw Cymraeg', digital leaders and the eco-council as well other monitor duties. The school council meets regularly and its members are elected by secret ballot. Many

pupils have a good awareness of these roles and know what their representatives do and how they contribute to their school life. For example, they know the eco-council is currently helping the school work towards an award and that this helps them learn about sustainability.

Most pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. They relate positively to visual displays recording the attendance of each class and school competitions to encourage high levels of attendance.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Teachers consider the needs of nearly all pupils successfully when planning lessons. They operate a curriculum based on termly themes, organised to avoid unwanted repetition in mixed-age classes. These themes provide good breadth of learning. Stimulating 'wow days' introduce new topics to interest learners from the outset. For example, teachers and pupils participate in a Victorian school day with role play, costumes and use of artefacts to enhance the experience. Many pupils talk about these experiences enthusiastically.

Foundation phase teachers take full account of the principles of the foundation phase in their planning of lessons. All have a strong understanding of how best to develop learning for young children. They create stimulating learning environments indoors and outdoors that provide varied opportunities for pupils to choose learning activities. For example, on 'Wild Wood Wednesdays' teachers exploit skilfully the wooded environment in the school grounds to explore themes of autumn and colour. They create exciting activities related well to the current indoor learning themes. As a result, most pupils in the foundation phase develop independent learning skills effectively at an early age. Teachers in the foundation phase deploy learning support assistants purposefully to support indoor and outdoor learning.

In most lessons, teachers in key stage 2 use a good variety of resources that enthuse their pupils. They ensure that they match tasks effectively to the ability and age range of pupils in their lessons. Teachers model language well and use effective questioning to check pupils' understanding or to extend their learning. Learning support assistants in key stage 2 enhance provision significantly. They are particularly effective when working with groups to help pupils improve their reading or numeracy skills. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, for example in mathematics when they work in pairs to make sensible estimates before carrying out a task.

The school supplements the curriculum well with educational visits and enriching experiences. For instance, a visit to a chocolate producer successfully promotes a range of writing and number work based on the manufacturing of chocolate. Teachers provide good opportunities for learners to develop their creativity in activities such as designing textiles or taking part in the school choir. Pupils support extra-curricular provision well.

Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and follow agreed approaches to address any problems consistently. They highlight good conduct and reinforce positive behaviour effectively.

Throughout the school teachers explain learning objectives carefully. They use various check sheets, matched to the age and ability of learners, effectively. These help pupils understand what they have to do to succeed and teachers provide useful feedback for pupils to recognise the next steps in their learning.

Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils. They ensure that there are good opportunities for pupils to apply skills their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide variety of contexts. This is particularly evident in numeracy in key stage 2, where pupils complete calculations relating to current sporting events or analyse statistics from second world war history.

The provision for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in specific lessons is generally appropriate. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use and improve their Welsh oracy skills throughout the day. Teachers promote pupils' understanding of the culture, history and geography of Wales well. For example, the school celebrates St David's Day with an eisteddfod and pupils visit local places of interest, such as the Roman remains at Caerleon and Cardiff Castle. The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to learn traditional tales, such as Gelert and Llyn Y Fan Fach and to study lives of Welsh poets, artists and sports personalities. As a result, pupils have a good awareness of their Welsh identity.

Teachers provide pupils with effective opportunities to develop a range of ICT skills, but there are not enough opportunities for them to develop their understanding of data handling and spreadsheets.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a welcoming and caring ethos in a safe and secure learning environment. Staff treat all pupils equally and fairly.

The school operates effective tracking systems to monitor pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour. There are appropriate procedures to standardise teachers' judgements to ensure their assessment of pupils' learning is accurate. The headteacher ensures all staff in the school are involved in these processes.

Teachers use the tracking and assessment information they collect to provide beneficial intervention programmes for pupils in need of support. The additional learning needs co-ordinator monitors and supports pupils with additional needs effectively. Teachers produce useful individual education plans that include suitable targets for improvement. Pupils and teachers, together with parents, regularly review progress in meeting the individual targets. Most pupils with additional needs make good progress. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school has effective arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking. There are regular opportunities for physical education within the curriculum. Pupils learn through their lessons and taking part in the daily mile about the effects of exercise on their bodies. There is a good range of after-school clubs offering sporting activities and also cookery, gardening and musical activities, such as the school choir. These help pupils to develop their creative and social skills.

Pupils have devised their own class and school rules. This has added positively to their understanding of why rules are necessary. There are good opportunities for pupils to make choices about their learning activities. For example, in key stage 2 pupils review, on wall charts, the topics they are studying and make suggestions for additional activities. There is a useful 'school voice group' that specifically involves pupils not prominent in other leadership roles. This makes sure that all pupils feel that they are listened to and that their opinions are valued. Whole-school assemblies invite pupils to reflect on the 'value of the month' such as cooperation. Teachers reinforce these values in lessons and in wall displays to promote positive social behaviour effectively.

The school fosters good working relationships with outside agencies and seeks appropriate advice where necessary. This has positive impact on the ability of staff to provide effective support for more vulnerable pupils. Schools within the local cluster meet beneficially to share best practice for pupils with additional needs.

Most parents speak positively about the school and agree that there is effective communication. The school provides plentiful opportunities for them to engage and learn about their child's progress to help improve their capacity to support at home. Parents particularly value the computer and mobile phone application used by the school because it provides up-to-date, immediate information. Most parents feel confident when approaching the school with any issues regarding their child's education or wellbeing. They find the headteacher and staff accessible and helpful. Parents value the school's end of year reports. These provide useful information about progress and the next steps pupils need to take.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership. Her effective communication skills contribute well to the school's productive relationships with all stakeholders. As a result, staff, parents and governors feel valued and share the school's vision for ensuring the wellbeing of pupils and raising standards. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy headteacher, who has responsibility for the school for half of the week. Systems are clear, and all members of staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities and fulfil their roles diligently. There is a strong team ethos in the school and teachers work together effectively to deliver strategic priorities for improvement.

Leaders set high expectations and provide good quality support and challenge to improve staff performance. There are robust strategies to monitor, evaluate and improve provision for pupils. These have contributed successfully to the good quality teaching throughout the school. Staff meetings focus well on ensuring that all teachers are involved in monitoring standards of achievement and the quality of provision. This has a positive impact on school practice. A notable example of success is the consistent approach to providing feedback to help pupils recognise next steps in their learning.

The school is an effective learning community. Staff regularly share good practice with a range of local schools. These include reciprocal visits to observe teaching, to monitor pupils' books and improve provision. A good example of the effectiveness of this collaborative work is evident in the high quality of indoor and outdoor learning

experiences for pupils in the foundation phase. The performance management process is rigorous and targets link well to school priorities and the professional learning needs of individuals. All members of staff have access to a relevant range of training opportunities to develop their expertise. These have positive impact on their own performance and on pupils' outcomes. For example, the training for learning support assistants to deliver reading programmes has a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils with additional learning needs.

The school uses a wide range of first-hand evidence to evaluate its effectiveness. This includes analysis of test and assessment data, classroom observations and learning walks. All members of staff and governors are fully involved in the self-evaluation process. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

The self-evaluation process informs the school's priorities for improvement successfully. The school is focusing on a manageable number of priorities to be achieved within a realistic timescale. Leaders ensure that financial planning links well to the priorities for improvement and lines of accountability for delivery and monitoring are clear. School leaders evaluate progress towards targets carefully and nearly all areas identified as needing further development inform future plans appropriately. For example, teachers recognise the need to continue raising standards in pupils' writing. However, the school has not identified the continued need to improve standards of Welsh oracy. Overall, the school has a good record of securing improved outcomes for pupils.

The school is well resourced, with sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to deliver all aspects of the curriculum. The learning support assistants provide valuable support for individual and groups of pupils, both within classes and in small withdrawal groups. The headteacher and governors manage the budget efficiently and are working closely with the local authority to achieve a balanced budget. Leaders make good use of the pupil development grant to support pupils eligible for free school meals to ensure their wellbeing and develop their skills. These pupils have full access to all school activities and most make good progress from their individual starting points.

The governing body is highly supportive and knows the school and the community it serves very well. The headteacher, members of staff and groups of pupils regularly provide the governors with detailed accounts of the work of the school. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing and know the priorities for improvement. The governors hold the school to account effectively, for example when discussing and setting targets for improving school attendance.

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.

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