



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

A report on

**Pontprennau Primary School
Heol Pontprennau
Cardiff
CF23 8LL**

Date of inspection: May 2019

by

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

About Pontprennau Primary School

Pontprennau Primary School serves the community of Pontprennau in the east of Cardiff. There are 318 pupils at the school, including 96 who attend nursery on a part-time basis. The school has nine, single-age classes. The school opened in September 2015 and is intended to grow year-on-year to provide eventually for pupils of the full primary age range. The school currently has no pupils above Year 3.

The average of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is around 9%. This is below the national average of 18%. The school identifies 18% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This figure is below the national average of 21%. Around 23% of pupils have English as an additional language. No pupils come from Welsh speaking homes.

The school has not previously been inspected. The headteacher took up post in September 2015.

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

Summary

The headteacher has established a clear vision that guides the school's work appropriately. This ensures a positive and inclusive environment for learning. However, other aspects of leadership, including the work of governors and the senior leadership team are at an early stage of development and do not have sufficient influence on the school's work.

Teachers and learning support staff provide a broad and balanced curriculum and stimulating lessons that succeed in motivating and engaging pupils. They work well in accordance with the principles of foundation phase education and provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn and develop their skills both indoors and outside.

As they move through the foundation phase, many pupils make expected progress in their language and communication skills and in their mathematical development. A minority make better than expected progress by the end of Year 2. However, pupils' progress in developing their writing skills is too limited by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3, particularly for the more able.

Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards their individual targets.

Nearly all pupils behave very well. They have positive attitudes, are keen to learn and feel safe and secure in school. Most develop their social skills well and show respect and concern for others.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve the presentation and quality of pupils' written work, particularly for the more able
- R2 Ensure that all members of the senior leadership team provide effective strategic direction to aspects of the school's work and improve the capacity of the governing body to support and challenge the school
- R3 Improve self-evaluation and improvement processes so that they identify and address shortcomings in leadership, provision and pupils' outcomes
- R4 Ensure that all communication with parents is clear, timely and effective

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

As they move through the foundation phase, many pupils make expected progress in their language and communication skills and mathematical development. A minority make better than expected progress by the end of Year 2. However, pupils' progress in developing their writing skills is too limited by the end of Year 2 and as they move through Year 3, particularly for the more able.

Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards their individual goals and targets. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall and in their communication skills.

Most pupils in the foundation phase, develop good speaking skills. They listen attentively to adults and respond appropriately to questions. For example, in the nursery and reception classes, pupils join in well with adults in role-play areas when 'serving' them in the hairdressing salon. In Year 2, most pupils explain clearly how they have conducted a survey about favourite pets in their class. They describe accurately how they use tally sheets and simple graphs. In key stage 2, most pupils have good speaking and listening skills, which they use well to support their learning. For example, they correctly use scientific terms such as 'oesophagus' and 'intestines' and many pupils describe accurately the sequences of human digestion.

In the nursery, many pupils develop a useful understanding of letters and associated sounds. As they move through foundation phase, most develop their reading skills well and learn to tackle unfamiliar words effectively. In Year 2, many pupils have a good understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and their different uses. More able pupils read fluently, discuss characters and predict what might happen next in their books. Many Year 3 pupils use their reading skills well in lessons to read instructions from texts or the class screen.

Most pupils develop their early mark-making skills effectively. In the reception classes, many begin to write short sentences independently using the beginning and end sounds of words well. Many learn to print with letters that are correctly orientated and a majority begin to develop their spelling skills appropriately. By Year 2, many write in a wide range of formats such as a creative diary entry for a child living a hundred years ago, stories, recipes or an account of a school visit to the Royal Mint at Llantrisant. Most Year 3 pupils continue to write for a variety of purposes such as describing when a falconer visited their school with birds of prey, or to record projects they have undertaken. However, pupils towards the end of foundation phase and in the first year of key stage 2 do not write enough at length. Overall, the more able pupils in particular do not use a wide enough range of punctuation or vocabulary and sentence building skills are limited. Pupils' handwriting skills are underdeveloped and presentation of written work is too often untidy.

Many foundation phase pupils make good progress in Welsh and develop a useful understanding of basic words and phrases. They pronounce familiar words well and answer adults' questions such as 'are you ready?' when spoken in Welsh. Many in

Year 2 use Welsh correctly in a simple game about the weather. In Year 3, many pupils begin to use the language more confidently. A majority read well in Welsh, recognise many common words and use their phonic skills to decode text.

Throughout the school, most pupils develop their mathematical skills well. In the foundation phase, most learn to count correctly and apply their skills to tasks. For example, Year 1 pupils are confident in counting, halving numbers or correctly describing how they cut shapes into halves and quarters. In Year 2, many pupils are confident of place value. Most use numbers up to 100 well and rapidly recognise odd and even numbers. Most apply their numbers skills well in other areas of work such as recording outcomes of surveys or simple money calculations. Year 3 pupils make good progress in developing use of the four rules of number to solve problems. Most apply their skills well in different activities. For example, in project work they set themselves numerical targets for different physical activities and measure their success effectively by timing and scoring various outcomes.

Most pupils develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) well. Many use tablet computers readily to record activities with photographs. They use art and picture collage programs to experiment with colour confidently and make animations. Most pupils in Year 2 are confident when using the Hwb digital platform to make graphs and charts. They develop an appropriate awareness of how to save their work. Most older pupils confidently use quick response codes in their work to access recordings or images required in their tasks. Many Year 3 pupils continue to build their skills well. For example, they begin to use the school's computers to search for information and experiment effectively making video media files. Most pupils develop an appropriate knowledge of how to stay safe online.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

In lessons, when on the playgrounds and moving around the school, nearly all pupils' behaviour is consistently good. Nearly all pupils treat visitors and adults with respect and are keen to be helpful. They have a clear pride in their school.

The positive attitude and enthusiasm most pupils have for learning is a strength of the school. In classes, nearly all pupils are attentive to their teachers and eager to do well. From their arrival in the morning most pupils throughout the school are keen to participate immediately. They respond well to the range of tasks presented to them throughout the day. Nearly all work positively with adults and when given more independent activities.

Most pupils participate enthusiastically in class discussions. Most are constructive and as they move through the school learn to collaborate effectively when working in pairs or groups. For example, in Year 3 they work effectively in groups to create and perform a 'rap' to their classmates.

Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure in school. They are eager to be outside and enjoy their playtimes enthusiastically. They are confident that adults will listen to their concerns and deal with any problems. Pupils of different ages play together happily and responsibly. When using play apparatus or playing ball games they demonstrate suitable respect for each other's space. They show an inclusive attitude to their peers with additional needs.

Most pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of eating healthily. Pupils of different ages talk knowledgeably about sensible food choices, healthy lunch boxes and many bring fruit to school for healthy snacks. Pupils in the breakfast club can explain why the breakfasts offered are a healthy start to the day.

Nearly all pupils from Year 1 upwards complete a 'daily mile' during their afternoon session. This is a structured activity offering progressively challenging levels of participation. Most are aware of the importance of physical activity and explain correctly why their daily mile benefits them. Many pupils speak enthusiastically about sports and physical education activities that they enjoy in school such as football, and extra-curricular sports and dance activities.

Pupils explain how they have opportunities in lessons to make decisions about their following week's activities. For example, Year 2 pupils use their 'pupil voice' notice board to make decisions about their following week's topics. Pupils vote for their representatives on the school council and know that they have chosen the name 'Kids Committee'. They know there is a suggestion box and show awareness of projects promoted by pupils such as the recent school competition to make a model of a healthy lunchbox. However, the activities of the 'Kids Committee' are limited and remain at an early stage of development.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Teachers have a good knowledge of how young children learn. They understand the foundation phase principles and implement them effectively, for instance by providing a good balance of teacher-led and child-led activities. Staff make imaginative use of the school's varied spaces to create exciting learning environments indoors and outside. For example, most nursery pupils practise their early practical and mark making skills effectively in indoor craft areas that are well presented. They improve their physical skills successfully riding trikes using their outdoor painted roadways and crossing. Pupils in Year 1 improve their creative skills effectively in the outdoor mud kitchen or music and performance areas.

Staff plan well for the development of pupils' reading, numeracy and ICT skills through a range of purposeful cross-curricular projects. For example, in Year 2 'Paws, Claws and Whiskers' provides interesting opportunities for pupils to research, write and record data about animals. In key stage 2, the motivating curriculum continues through topics such as 'Scrumdiddlyumptious', which is effective in stimulating pupils in Year 3 to explore a variety of aspects of healthy eating, exercise and related science. However, provision to develop pupils' writing skills, particularly for older and more able pupils, does not support them to achieve the standards they should.

Nearly all teachers plan and deliver lessons creatively at a suitable pace. Across the school, teachers have a secure command of the topics and skills they teach. They question pupils skilfully and nearly all teachers and support staff are good language role models. They use every opportunity to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school, teachers deploy learning support assistants effectively and all work together purposefully with teachers to enhance provision significantly. Many teaching assistants are confident in questioning pupils and assessing and noting pupils' progress during activities. Nearly all staff develop good, supportive

working relationships with pupils and use positive strategies to manage their behaviour.

Nearly all teachers explain learning objectives in lessons and assist pupils in judging how well they are making progress. For example, most teachers provide good opportunities in lessons for pupils to pause and self-assess, or work with friends to think about how well they are doing. They provide pupils with useful feedback in their books and indicate next steps in learning to which many pupils respond. However, teachers' feedback does not always challenge more able pupils well enough to improve their work.

Teachers supplement the curriculum well with educational visits and enriching experiences. Visitors to school contribute to the curriculum well. For example, a local artist visits the school to work with pupils of all ages. Pupils' awareness and understanding of Welsh culture and heritage are further enhanced through visits to historical sites or locations of significance such as Cardiff Bay. The school takes appropriate account of the digital competence framework and the new curriculum for Wales in designing its own curriculum.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a caring and inclusive community. There are strong levels of respect, trust and co-operation between staff and pupils. Through the curriculum and daily practices, teachers promote pupils' understanding of respect for others and tolerance effectively. The school provides active ways in which these may be understood. For example, in an assembly, pupils discuss with a teacher how she observes Ramadan. Wall displays celebrate different cultures that exist within the school community. The school strongly promotes awareness of equality by encouraging all to participate fully and by including those with challenging physical additional needs in school life.

Staff provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to engage with culture and the arts. For example, pupils have opportunities to sing in Welsh or to contribute to the design of wall murals in the school. Provision to support pupils to be physically active and healthy is effective. This includes regular physical education lessons and opportunities to learn about the importance of a balanced diet. Extra-curricular activities such as sports, dance and cookery complement the curriculum well.

The school provides a secure and safe environment. It promotes successfully pupils' understanding of how to keep safe, including when online. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school has comprehensive systems in place that track and monitor all pupils' progress. Staff make effective use of data to identify pupils with additional learning needs and those who require additional help to develop basic skills. They ensure that pupils receive support that matches their level of need well, for example by deploying well-trained learning support assistants effectively or by engaging successfully with specialist agencies. As a result, most pupils with additional learning needs and those who require additional support make good progress towards their individual targets. Teachers ensure that nearly all parents of pupils with special or

additional needs are suitably informed of their child's progress. The school provides specialist workshops and useful support groups have met with parents. For example, an autism charity group visits school to share knowledge of how autistic children make progress.

There is an appropriate schedule of opportunities during the school year for parents to meet class teachers to discuss their children's progress. Useful annual reports give parents an accurate picture of their child's progress and include specific targets for improvement. The school shares information with parents by various methods, including newsletters, the school website and various electronic communications. However, methods of communication are not used consistently. As a result, all parents are not always made clear in a timely way about school events and pupil activities.

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

Throughout its building and current development phases, the headteacher has focused clearly on the creation of a high-quality learning environment into which the new school has developed successfully. She has a clear vision for the school, which focuses appropriately on raising standards and developing pupils as individuals within an inclusive setting.

The headteacher has recently put in place suitable arrangements to delegate leadership responsibilities to senior staff. Other staff in leadership roles are beginning to work collaboratively but as yet these roles have a limited influence on school improvement. All teachers, including new and temporary staff, have clear roles and responsibilities. These are beginning to help them understand the school's expectations. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher strongly. For example, she has overseen the introduction of the school's nurture provision. This is having a positive effect on improving pupil attitudes to learning and addressing their emotional needs.

Leaders have established appropriate systems to evaluate the school's performance. Activities, such as classroom observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and learning walks provide leaders with useful information. However, this work does not identify well enough shortcomings in aspects of provision and pupils' progress, such as the standard of pupils' extended writing, presentation and handwriting.

Performance management and professional learning experiences for teachers are beneficial. They ensure valuable opportunities for staff to improve their skills and to share good practice with other schools. Teaching assistants work effectively across the school and attend regular training that has a positive impact on the school's provision. The school has recently established links with a similar school in a neighbouring county to work collaboratively on raising literacy and creative standards and with other local special schools on improving provision for vulnerable pupils.

The school has extensive outdoor learning space, which is well developed. The school maintains an attractive environment indoors. Staff create stimulating spaces such as the nursery and well-structured, shared areas throughout the school in which pupils learn happily. Teachers allocate internal space effectively, for example to provide a nurture group in a carefully resourced classroom with experienced and skilled staff. This provision benefits pupils immensely

The governing body has appointed around a half of its members recently. They are keen to visit and work with the school. For example, on 'Governor Days' they visit the school to talk with children, have lunch with them and develop understanding of specific aspects of the school's work. Governors receive detailed information about aspects of leadership, provision and pupils' standards in termly headteacher reports. They are beginning to contribute to the school's self-evaluation processes and to develop their role in providing support and challenge. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of the newly structured governing body.

The school currently has a deficit budget that has developed in recent years. The governing body, in partnership with the local authority, have appropriate plans in place to eliminate the deficit by the end of the current financial year.

Copies of the report

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

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

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

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

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

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