



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: Significant Improvement**

**Llanfabon Infants School
Bryncelyn Avenue
Nelson
Treharris
CF46 6HL**

Date of visit: April 2019

by

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

Outcome of visit

Llanfabon Infants is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

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

Progress since the last inspection

R1 Improve communication with staff and stakeholders

The headteacher, along with all staff, governors and the newly established parents' forum, developed a shared vision and values for the school. The governing body agreed and introduced the new statements at the beginning of the academic year and, as a result, the school community now has a shared vision to drive improvement forward successfully.

Leaders have created effective communication systems. The introduction of a communications protocol ensures that all staff are clear about how and what information is available to them, and the timescale for receiving this. For example, all staff receive a weekly schedule that outlines clearly events taking place throughout the school. There are well-planned termly calendars that show staff all planned events including leadership meetings and monitoring activities. Evidence from parent and staff questionnaires show that nearly all stakeholders feel well informed and that they can contribute to school improvement.

The headteacher ensures that there are regular, formal opportunities for all staff to meet with their line managers. The school facilitates non-contact time for teaching assistants to get together once a week.

All staff, governors and parents know and understand the school's strategic priorities. Senior leaders work alongside all staff to assess progress against the strategic actions regularly. This has improved staff wellbeing and helped to create an appropriate climate for change

Since the core inspection, communication with governors has improved and become more effective. The headteacher's reports to governors are suitably detailed. They include a range of relevant information and data about the day-to-day management of the school and outline progress against the post inspection action plan. As a result, governors are empowered to support leaders more effectively in strategic planning and decision-making.

R2 Develop pupils as independent learners

Across the school, there is an effective focus on supporting pupils to develop as independent learners. Through visits to other schools and purposeful reflection on their practice staff are developing a suitable understanding of independent learning and a range of appropriate strategies to support this.

Teachers have developed appropriate classroom environments that provide suitable opportunities for pupils to practise and embed their skills independently. Where

these work particularly well, teachers choose resources carefully and match them to pupils' stage of development effectively. For example, nursery pupils consolidate their understanding of big and small while they play with real carrots of different sizes in the home corner. All classes have suitable access to outdoor learning environments. Pupils use these increasingly regularly to work independently. However, opportunities for pupils to explore and experiment freely, and develop their skills meaningfully without adult support in the outdoor environment are still at a relatively early stage.

Across the school, teachers set regular challenges in their numeracy, writing, creative and construction areas. They involve pupils suitably in deciding what these challenges might be, linked to their current theme or topic. Nearly all pupils make purposeful choices throughout the school day about where they want to work and what challenges they will tackle. However, at times, challenges do not support pupils well enough to extend their learning, such as when they require pupils to make an identified end product. Teachers are beginning to encourage pupils to choose their preferred method for recording work, and there is a progressive whole school approach to teaching pupils about how to take responsibility for their own learning.

Staff are beginning to observe pupils' independent learning to identify the skills they are developing and appropriate ways forward. This is beginning to contribute to a greater understanding of how they can support pupils' independent learning most effectively. However, this aspect of the school's work is at an early stage of development.

R3 Improve self-evaluation and strategic planning, including a more effective approach to professional learning

Senior leaders, including governors, are beginning to have an increased role in developing and shaping school improvement. Leaders have developed a robust annual monitoring and self-evaluation cycle. This provides staff with accurate and focused evidence to feed into the school's self-evaluation. Senior and middle leaders, carry out focused monitoring that includes book scrutiny, learning walks and listening to learners. The evidence gathered supports leaders to refine strategic plans and, as a result, the numbers of areas identified for improvement are now more manageable. Since the core inspection the quality of strategic planning and school improvement has improved considerably.

Governors are beginning to take part in learning walks. These enable them to meet staff and pupils and to find out more about the foundation phase areas of learning and pupils' standards. Governors meet with pupil leaders, who explain their roles and responsibilities and how they use the challenge boards as a part of their learning. This gives governors a useful perspective on pupils' views of the school.

Senior leaders have provided effective opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning. All staff participate in well planned, suitable development activities linked to foundation phase pedagogy, practice and pupil wellbeing. This has led to improvements in many classroom environments and in pupils' opportunities to work independently. Leaders monitor the progress and impact of identified actions well. Performance management processes are developing suitably. Staff identify their developmental needs during discussions with their line managers

and this feeds directly into professional learning opportunities. For example, a few staff requested to join a project about improving teaching within the local cluster. This has supported their development as middle leaders effectively and boosted staff morale.

R4 Ensure that all pupils, particularly the more able, make good progress in their learning

In many classes, most pupils are interested and engaged in lessons. They focus well on their learning and sustain their interest appropriately during adult-led sessions. For example, in Year 2, nearly all pupils join in enthusiastically when identifying up to four digit numbers during a warm up session. However, a few pupils struggle to maintain their concentration when they are required to listen for too long in whole group sessions.

Most pupils concentrate and persevere well when they work in the different areas and respond purposefully to challenges that they have helped to set. For example, more able reception pupils, work together successfully to build a shelter out of large blocks. They show appreciation for the ideas of others and problem solve effectively when they run out of blocks. In many classes, most pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills successfully in a suitable range of different contexts. For example, in Year 2, many pupils apply their developing understanding of symmetry effectively to sort national flags into groups. They apply their writing skills independently to create an attractive invitation to the scarecrow's wedding. As a result, many pupils make good progress in their learning.

Nearly all teachers track pupils' progress carefully. They identify pupils who are at different stages of development appropriately, including the more able pupils. However, teachers do not track pupils eligible for free school meals well enough as a separate group to ensure that they progress as well as their peers. Teachers take different abilities and stages of development into account appropriately in their planning. Most teachers have high expectations of more able pupils and challenge them to extend their learning successfully. For example, they set challenges at different levels of difficulty and encourage pupils to attempt the most difficult tasks. Most pupils respond to these well. In Year 2, most pupils talk knowledgeably about their work and see themselves as confident and capable learners.

R5 Ensure staff have clear roles and responsibilities

The headteacher and senior leaders have developed an effective staffing structure that is clear and understood by all stakeholders. All staff have relevant, up-to-date, detailed job descriptions that have been agreed and signed. Staff roles and responsibilities are clear and concise. Documentation is useful and effective and, as a result, staff have a very good understanding of what is expected of them and what they can expect from leaders. This has improved the morale of staff and created a good sense of teamwork across the school.

Staff meetings are regular and efficient. The headteacher provides clear agendas in advance for all staff. She documents all meetings effectively, highlighting impact and further actions required. The headteacher shares important messages identified in leadership meetings with all staff to ensure effective communication. Teaching assistants have an open invitation to staff meetings, as well as their own weekly

meetings with the headteacher. All meeting minutes are available on the shared drive and emailed to all staff. As a result of these improvements, nearly all are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to school improvement..

R6 Improve attendance and punctuality

The school has implemented useful strategies to promote and support good attendance since the core inspection. Initiatives such as ‘attendance challenge week’ and celebration assemblies have raised awareness of the importance of regular attendance. The headteacher informs parents effectively by sending out termly attendance letters and sharing attendance data in regular newsletters.

School leaders monitor and track pupils’ attendance carefully. This allows them to identify any pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and to follow this up appropriately. The headteacher works closely with the education welfare officer and follows the advice offered effectively. Leaders invite targeted families to attendance meetings that offer support, and this has led to measurable improvements in the attendance of a majority of pupils. However, leaders do not track the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals carefully enough to be able to target their support for this group of pupils successfully.

The school has made helpful changes to procedures at the start of the school day. Leaders set high expectations for pupils to arrive on time and for lessons to begin promptly. Class teachers take turns to welcome pupils at the school door every morning along with the headteacher. This provides useful contact between parents and school staff and gives a clear signal that the school day has started. It allows teachers to be in their classrooms ready to greet pupils and begin the day’s learning in a calm atmosphere. These measures have improved pupils’ punctuality.

R7 Address the safeguarding and wellbeing issues raised during the inspection

The school has addressed all the safeguarding and wellbeing issues raised during the core inspection.

Senior leaders and the governing body have ensured statutory and relevant policies, such as behaviour and toileting, are in place and have been agreed formally and adopted by the governing body. The school has identified the headteacher as the designated safeguarding person and the deputy headteacher as the deputy designated safeguarding person.

The school has effective tracking systems for recording poor behaviour, bullying and discrimination. These, together with the introduction of a positive behaviour strategy have helped to reduce incidences of poor behaviour significantly. Individual staff complete all records appropriately and store them confidentially. There is a full and comprehensive risk assessment for use of the forest school. This includes appropriate adult to pupil ratios and control measures for effective communication should an accident occur.

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