



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**

**Eastern Primary School
Incline Row
Taibach
Port Talbot
SA13 1TT**

Date of visit: October 2018

by

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

Outcome of visit

Eastern Primary School 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 special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Improve pupils' skills in reading and writing

Teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills that focus well on developing their fluency, reading for meaning and information finding. Teachers deliver these activities consistently, effectively, and progressively, and this has a beneficial impact on the standard of many pupils' reading and upon their self-confidence.

In the foundation phase, most pupils enjoy reading and talk confidently about stories that are familiar to them. They make effective links between letters and sounds and use this to read simple texts appropriately. By the end of Year 2 many pupils read fluently and at a level expected for their age. They use phonic strategies well to read familiar and unfamiliar texts.

In key stage 2, many pupils read at a standard at or above that expected for their age. They are beginning to use a variety of decoding strategies to read unfamiliar words. They read confidently and fluently with good understanding, paying appropriate attention to punctuation. They explain what they have read succinctly and predict next steps logically. However, a minority are less confident when using higher order reading skills, for example when answering inferential questions.

A whole-school framework for the teaching of writing ensures a consistent approach and a systematic coverage of skills. The implementation of a whole school handwriting policy has had a beneficial effect on the standard of presentation across the school. As a result, many pupils take pride in their presentation and are proud of their work. However, in a few instances, the standard of presentation remains inconsistent.

In the foundation phase, many pupils write a series of sentences to express their ideas well. The introduction of a common, progressive method of teaching sentence structure has resulted in many pupils using a more varied vocabulary to add interest to their writing. By the end of Year 2, many pupils write at length confidently in a wide variety of contexts, such as when recounting their visit to the theatre. Pupils that are more able enjoy developing their ideas and produce good quality pieces of writing. However, a minority do not spell high frequency words correctly.

In key stage 2, many pupils use a wide range of sentence structures to add variety to their work. They use a purposeful range of adjectives and imaginative vocabulary to enrich their writing for the reader. Many pupils develop their ideas in a coherent and structured manner. By Year 6, many write well in a broad range of contexts. For example, they write interesting and imaginative biographies about themselves as successful adults. Many pupils use punctuation appropriately. They write consistently well in a broad range of contexts across the curriculum.

R2. Improve pupils' skills in numeracy

Leaders have implemented a consistent approach to planning numeracy across the curriculum. Detailed medium-term planning sets out clearly which numeracy skills teachers will introduce on a termly basis. Teachers plan an effective range of activities that challenge most pupils to develop their skills to the best of their ability. As a result, most pupils make good progress. Many pupils talk about these activities confidently, and show good perseverance with their tasks.

In the foundation phase, most pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately, for example when using their reasoning skills to predict and discover how many blocks they need to build a staircase in the reception class. By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils record data successfully and use this data to produce accurate graphs of their results and to draw sensible conclusions. In key stage 2, many older pupils use and interpret data successfully, for example when measuring the time different pupils take to run four lengths of the football pitch, working out the range and mean accurately.

The school has introduced structured mathematical reasoning sessions in each class. This provides effective support for staff and ensures consistent expectations of the pupils. Pupils experience regular guided reasoning activities with an effective focus on problem solving through open-ended investigations. This work is having a positive impact on most pupils' confidence in reasoning activities. In the foundation phase for example, pupils use their knowledge of doubling to calculate the amount of food and drink needed for a party to celebrate the class rabbit's birthday. In key stage 2, many pupils calculate the sales of a rock band's album accurately as part of their thematic work. These regular activities have a positive impact on standards in numeracy across the school. However, across key stage 2, a few pupils have limited opportunities to apply their numeracy skills at a suitably challenging level.

R3. Improve pupils' skills in Welsh

The school has implemented schemes of work for Welsh that provide an effective structure to the curriculum. Teachers make good use of these schemes to plan Welsh lessons each week. To support pupils' language development further, the school has introduced a daily 'slot drilio'. Teachers deliver these sessions well and nearly all pupils respond enthusiastically to the tasks. As a result, many pupils express themselves confidently in familiar contexts.

The subject leader supports staff well, and provides teachers with interesting and practical resources. As a result, there is increased consistency in delivery across the school. This has a beneficial effect on the standard of pupils' Welsh oracy skills. Many pupils now demonstrate increased confidence when using a wide range of sentence structures and vocabulary.

By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils express their likes and dislikes appropriately. They use longer sentence structures well to talk about others, such as members of their close family. By the end of key stage 2, a majority of pupils are beginning to speak confidently in both the present and past tense. However, a few pupils lack confidence when speaking, and need prompting to respond when discussing familiar situations. Throughout the school, many pupils recognise a good range of familiar words in texts and pronounce these correctly. However, many lack confidence when reading and require support to develop fluency and age appropriate skills. In the foundation phase, many pupils write familiar words and phrases to reinforce the vocabulary that they learn in class. Across key stage 2, pupils are developing a wider vocabulary when writing in an increasing range of contexts.

R4. Put in place provision for skills that is systematic and properly co-ordinated

Leaders, with the support of local authority representatives, have developed a systematic approach to planning skills across the curriculum that is consistent and progressive. This ensures all curriculum areas and religious education are covered thoroughly across the school. The planning cycle and themed approach means that pupils do not repeat topics at the same level during their time at the school and have useful opportunities to consolidate skills and build upon prior learning. Planning for the areas of learning meet the requirements of the foundation phase framework appropriately. It identifies purposeful opportunities for pupils to engage in independent learning.

Throughout the school, teachers plan a broad range of interesting opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. In most classes across the school, teachers give effective consideration to the particular skills they wish pupils to develop in a particular context. As a result, many pupils develop these skills systematically and make good progress with their learning.

Teachers use their planning well to deliver learning opportunities that meet the needs of most pupils. However, they do not always challenge all more able pupils at a suitable level. Overall, the school's provision for skills has a positive impact on pupils' standards and progress.

R5. Ensure that the procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and rigorous

The school has addressed all of the shortcomings in safeguarding procedures identified in the core inspection.

R6. Strengthen the provision for supporting pupils with additional learning needs

The school has developed strong links with a range of specialist services and outside agencies, to benefit those pupils who need additional support and guidance. Leaders make referrals to these services in a timely manner and this ensures that the appropriate provision is available to pupils when needed. Leaders have put in place robust systems to ensure the early identification of pupils who require additional support. For example, the school works closely with the families of pre-school children to help the children reach their language development milestones. This ensures that staff begin interventions for targeted pupils at the earliest opportunity. Staff also assess all pupils' speech and language skills at the start of the foundation phase. The success of these initiatives results in fewer pupils needing interventions in the older age groups. The school provides a wide and effective range of targeted interventions to support pupils with additional learning needs throughout the school. These ensure that targeted pupils make good progress, for example many pupils who receive reading interventions make more than the expected level of progress.

Leaders map all support initiatives rigorously, and monitor and track pupils' progress systematically. They use the data wisely to ensure that they have a clear understanding of which pupils receive support and assess the next steps in their development effectively.

All teachers have received training to improve the quality of pupils' individual education plans. These useful documents now contain suitable targets that meet the needs of the individual pupils well. Teachers share the plans with parents and monitor progress towards the completion of the targets regularly. The school provides weekly drop in sessions for parents to attend and discuss any issues regarding their children's needs. As a result, many pupils who receive support make good progress towards their individual goals. However, on a few occasions, the targets do not take into account the most current advice from outside agencies on how best to move the learning forward.

R7. Improve the effectiveness of leadership to ensure clear strategic direction and high expectations

The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body share their vision for school improvement very successfully. As a result, all staff understand the school's priorities for improvement and their role in bringing these about.

Senior leaders fulfil their responsibilities well and provide valuable training and support for staff in priority areas such as writing and numeracy. A majority of teachers are beginning to take on important lead roles to support the school's drive for improvement. They contribute towards forming the school's strategic direction usefully, such as improving the provision for Welsh. Leaders share high expectations with staff, for example when evaluating the quality of teaching. As a result, all staff have high expectations of pupils and themselves.

Senior leaders use their meetings effectively to share information on the school's progress against its improvement priorities. These meetings help them to recognise the areas in which the school is making suitable progress, and identify actions that they need to take to ensure that it continues to move forward. This is having a positive influence on pupils' standards. Through regular meetings, leaders make sure that all staff are aware of pupils' progress and areas that need to be improved. They share outcomes of monitoring activities effectively. As a result, staff have a clear understanding of what leaders expect.

The governing body continues to support the school conscientiously. Governors communicate their expectations of progress well and challenge leaders rigorously, for example about pupils' progress towards expected targets. This work has a notable effect on the school's progress and pupils' standards. Many governors contribute well to the strategic direction of the school, for example through taking part in book scrutiny, listening to pupils read regularly, listening to learners and through meetings with leaders in the subject areas for which they are responsible.

R8. Implement suitable monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement planning processes

School leaders have developed a robust and useful timetable of self-evaluation activities that helps to ensure that they monitor standards and provision in a structured manner. They use a wide range of monitoring strategies, such as focused learning walks, lesson observations and book scrutiny to monitor progress. These strategies allow leaders to consider many areas of the school's work thoroughly and provides them with a clear picture of how well staff are implementing improvement initiatives. It also provides them with a good understanding of their impact on pupil outcomes and progress.

Self-evaluation activities focus effectively on evaluating the quality of pupils' work and of teachers' planning. These activities evaluate well where strengths lie and where practitioners need to make further improvement. With support from the local authority and headteacher, subject leaders and teachers' monitoring has an improved focus and identifies strengths and areas for improvement appropriately. Overall, these processes allow leaders to understand where improvement initiatives are effective and allows them to plan for further improvement purposefully. Nearly all reports focus successfully on what pupils and staff do well and what they need to improve further. Leaders are beginning to involve pupils beneficially in evaluating the school's provision and in considering improvement processes.

The governing body contributes effectively to the first-hand evaluation of the school successfully. Most of its members play an active role in helping to evaluate the school's progress towards achieving its improvement priorities. These activities help the governing body to understand the school's progress and help to identify clearly areas that need further improvement. Many governors contribute effectively to the school's development planning processes and have a firm grasp of the school's priorities for improvement.

R9. Ensure that performance management processes meet statutory requirements

Since the core inspection, school leaders have implemented an effective policy and set out comprehensive procedures for performance management. This includes carrying out midterm and annual reviews that help teachers and leaders to understand and work towards identified targets. Leaders ensure that staff targets link very closely to improvement priorities in the school's post inspection action plan. Similarly, the governing body ensures that performance targets for the headteacher link well to key strategic priorities, such as the need to improve pupils' standards. These processes are supported by valuable training and support opportunities for the teachers. For example, developing and sharing strategies for introducing structured mathematical reasoning activities across the school. As a result, pupils' standards have improved in the key areas targeted through the performance management process.