



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

A report on

Nantymoel Primary School

**Gwendoline Street
Nantymoel
Bridgend
CF32 7PL**

Date of inspection: January 2023

by

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

About Nantymoel Primary School

Name of provider	Nantymoel Primary School
Local authority	Bridgend County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	200
Pupils of statutory school age	173
Number in nursery classes	27
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 23.0%)	33.5%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 16.1%)	11.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	06/01/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/09/2014
Start date of inspection	30/01/2023

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection. Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Nantymoel Primary School is a caring and inclusive school, which encourages pupils to learn in a positive atmosphere and to be happy. This is clearly reflected in the school's vision, 'Laugh, Learn and Achieve'. Pupils' readiness to learn during lessons is good and this is due to the strong working relationships that exist with their teachers and other staff and their knowledge that all staff care deeply for them.

All staff provide a high level of support and care for pupils in all aspects of school life. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and well-being. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and they are determined to persevere and learn successfully. As a result, they develop effective literacy and numeracy skills. In the younger classes, teachers are beginning to develop authentic opportunities, which reflect the Curriculum for Wales and its four purposes. In the older classes, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their literacy, numeracy and digital skills in other areas of learning. In addition, teachers regularly structure activities too tightly and guide pupils' learning too much. As a result, they do not generally use these skills as well as they could and there are few opportunities for pupils to become independent learners.

Governors know the school very well and fulfil their role as critical friend, asking challenging questions about decision-making, which supports the headteacher in moving the school forward. Parents know that the headteacher and governors make decisions in the best interests of the pupils. However, leadership at all levels is under-developed and, although the school is addressing the additional learning needs reform suitably, it is not moving quickly enough in addressing the Curriculum for Wales.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all staff undertake statutory Prevent training
- R2 Strengthen leadership to ensure that it identifies and addresses key areas for improvement
- R3 Ensure consistently high expectations amongst staff of what pupils can achieve in Years 3 to 6
- R4 Provide opportunities for pupils to influence what and how they learn and to develop skills as independent learners
- R5 Develop a whole-school approach to curriculum development and provide opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in meaningful, authentic contexts

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

A majority of pupils enter school with skills, especially language skills, which are below those expected for their age. During their time at school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make good progress in their basic skills. However, they do not have good enough opportunities to apply these skills and therefore do not develop sufficiently the ability to use their literacy and numeracy skills in all areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils in the nursery and reception classes develop their speaking and listening skills quickly, learning new vocabulary in the context of meaningful activities. They listen attentively and respond sensibly in lessons. For example, they sell stamps in the post office role play area and remind adults where they should be placed on the letter. As they move from nursery to Year 2, they ask and answer questions confidently while discussing tasks. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils' listening skills play a significant part in their learning, and they combine their speaking and listening skills effectively to relate sensitively to one another. For example, they listen to the beat in music and add their own rhythm as part of a class band. Most older pupils work very well collaboratively. They listen attentively and respond to the contribution of others well, even when they have something that they are keen to say themselves. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils are reflective listeners, showing empathy and sensitivity.

Most pupils develop their reading skills rapidly. The youngest pupils learn the sounds of letters quickly and, by Year 2, most pupils know how to tackle unfamiliar words and have a number of effective strategies for doing so. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to make good progress in their reading skills. They know how to use an index and glossary and discuss the plot in stories intelligently. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, most pupils are fluent readers.

Most pupils in the reception class make beneficial progress in learning to form letters and continue this into Year 1. Most Year 2 pupils develop their writing skills very well, covering a variety of different writing genres and an understanding of their features. For example, they write a letter to Mr Bear, a character from their class book using appropriate tone and vocabulary. Most pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 make sound progress in their punctuation and grammar and learn to spell complex words accurately. They begin to write in paragraphs and develop expressive language in context, for example, 'the fans witnessed the most magnificent, electrifying game ever.' However, opportunities for extended writing are limited and, although many older pupils write well, the overuse of worksheets and over-direction by teachers prevent them from expressing themselves independently and across the curriculum.

Most younger pupils make good progress in their ability to speak Welsh. By Year 2, many begin to use Welsh confidently and recall previously learnt sentence patterns well. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to acquire new vocabulary and, by Years 5 and 6, most can extend sentences and hold a simple conversation on a range of topics.

Most younger pupils make good progress in developing their numeracy skills. They use numbers confidently, collect information and record their results in simple tables and graphs. For instance, Reception pupils sort and categorise sea creatures according to criteria. By Year 2, many pupils use mathematical principles well. From Year 3 to Year 6, many pupils demonstrate sound mathematical skills. For example, pupils in Year 5 convert improper fractions to mixed numbers and use their skills to solve mathematical problems. Pupils throughout the school gain a good understanding of number. However, most older pupils do not apply their numeracy skills consistently in real-life situations.

Pupils' digital skills across the school are developing sufficiently. Pupils in the nursery class use the interactive white board independently to identify numbers and letters and, by the time they reach Year 2, pupils can independently upload their own work onto an online platform. Many pupils in the older classes use a limited range of multi-media software. For example, they create informative presentations on topics related to their work. However, pupils' use of spreadsheets and databases is less well developed.

Pupils develop their problem-solving skills effectively. Younger pupils work hard at tasks that demand some contemplation and are beginning to explain their thinking. Older pupils discuss issues intelligently, particularly relating to their rights and global concerns. However, their skills to plan, execute and evaluate using these advanced skills are underdeveloped.

Most pupils develop good artistic and creative skills. For example, the youngest create pictures using natural materials they have gathered from outside. Across the school, most pupils embrace opportunities to experiment creatively, using a range of media such as Year 3 pupils creating mosaics relating to their topic on the Romans. Regular physical education lessons ensure that pupils develop their physical skills appropriately across the school.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

The behaviour of nearly all pupils is exemplary when in lessons, moving around school and during break times. They are polite, friendly, and courteous towards each other, staff and visitors, and this is a very strong feature of the school. For example, pupils describe the school as caring, loving, safe and kind and this ethos is evident in all aspects of school life.

Pupils are proud of their school and feel safe and secure within its positive, inclusive, and nurturing environment. They are confident that staff will listen to their concerns and deal with any problems that arise. Nearly all pupils work and play well together, have positive attitudes to learning and work hard and enthusiastically to complete activities.

Nearly all younger pupils are beginning to develop confidence and behaviours that help them become independent learners. However, due to too much variability in teachers' expectations and too many activities that are overly adult directed, older pupils do not develop strong independent learning skills, such as evaluating and reflecting on their own learning, as well as they could.

Most pupils believe that their contribution to school life is valued and conveyed purposefully in the school vision, 'Laugh, learn, achieve – together we succeed'. They reflect thoughtfully on why there is a need for rights and rules within their school and the local community. This leads to a respectful ethos where pupils show empathy and consideration towards each other.

Nearly all pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They understand the importance of a balanced diet and how to keep both their bodies and minds fit and healthy. For example, pupils bring only fruit to school for snack time. They participate in a variety of physical activities with enthusiasm, including extra-curricular activities such as football, rugby, and netball. Most pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

Many pupils enjoy taking positions of responsibility, such as being a class councillor, or a member of the eco committee. They develop their leadership skills confidently and feel that they have real ownership of the meetings, impressively typing their own meeting minutes and recording their discussions and outcomes.

Most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what it means to be an ethically informed citizen. Their work has a positive impact on school life and on the wider community, such as when pupils in Reception identify the environmental implications of single use plastic and categorise and label the rubbish they collect.

Pupils are attending school more regularly this year compared with last year, when the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact nationally on school attendance. Considerably fewer pupils are persistently absent this year compared to last year.

Teaching and learning experiences

All teachers and support staff across the school have strong working relationships with pupils. Classrooms are calm and pupils interact respectfully and thoughtfully with each other. Learning support officers are allocated purposefully across the school and within classrooms to support pupils' learning well.

Teachers in the younger classes plan a suitable range of activities to support learning. For example, reception pupils create a pictogram from litter collected across the school grounds. However, many teachers across the school do not use the school's extensive outdoor spaces well enough to support the curriculum.

Within the younger classes, teachers plan well to meet the needs of all learners. As a result, most pupils have a clear understanding of what to do and how to do it, and many approach their learning with a growing independence and determination to succeed. Where teaching is most effective, teachers plan appropriate and engaging learning experiences that match pupils' abilities well. However, in a minority of older classes, teachers do not ensure that activities meet the needs of pupils well enough or challenge them at a suitable level. Too much time is taken on routines that have no impact upon improving learning. As a result, most pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not develop as independent learners. Older pupils do not have sufficient influence over what and how they learn.

The school's vision for the development of the Curriculum for Wales is in the early stages of development. Staff do not work together well enough and opportunities to engage with professional learning designed to support a purposeful, creative, broad and balanced curriculum are limited.

Teachers plan topics linked to texts, for example 'Pam Cymru and Where do I belong?' These themes, together with a number of published resources, form the basis for planned learning. However, there is no cohesive overview of the curriculum, which restricts the effectiveness to plan topic work and progressive lessons to engage all pupils effectively. The quality of provision to support pupils' skills development across the curriculum is also under-developed.

The curriculum is enhanced by an increasing number of visits and real-life experiences that take account of the local area and the wider area of South Wales. The school celebrates famous local people and people who have achieved well from the community, for example the Olympian Lynn Davies. This helps to motivate pupils to have high aspirations about what they could achieve in life.

In nearly all classes, teachers have clear objectives for lessons that build appropriately on previous learning. They identify where pupils are able to improve their work appropriately. Nearly all teachers provide clear verbal feedback that helps pupils to expand their ideas and answers. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to respond to this feedback and improve their own work or the work of others sufficiently well. The school has clear systems to ensure that pupils' skills in English and mathematics develop systematically and progressively. However, at present, this focus takes up a significant proportion of the school week, meaning that opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in other curriculum areas are not sufficient.

Care, support and guidance

The quality of the care, support and guidance for the pupils is a significant strength of the school. Relationships are strong and staff and pupils show a high level of respect and appreciation for each other. As a result, nearly all pupils are proud of their school and its ethos.

The school provides very effective social and emotional support for all pupils and delivers bespoke support programmes for individuals and groups. They utilise purposeful strategies to create a positive atmosphere around the school that enhances pupils' happiness. These have a favourable impact on pupils' sense of well-being and motivate pupils to develop resilient attitudes to their learning. For example, vulnerable pupils have additional nurture sessions to consider any worries and talk about their feelings, and develop effective strategies to regulate their emotions.

The provision for pupils identified as having ALN is good. The school uses effective systems for tracking and monitoring progress. They use the results of this to ensure that pupils with educational, emotional, social or health needs receive the provision and intervention that suits them best. Comprehensive pupil progress meetings result in staff members developing a deep understanding of the needs of pupils. The school has given appropriate priority to the changes to statutory duties resulting from the

Welsh Government's reform of ALN legislation. The school liaises well with external agencies and seeks the views of families effectively. These arrangements ensure that most targeted pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities.

The school encourages pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to take on leadership roles effectively in a variety of purposeful groups. This provision broadens pupils' understanding of the importance of becoming enterprising, creative contributors within the school community. As a result, the school is beginning to cultivate opportunities successfully for pupils to participate in making decisions to improve the school and take ownership of their roles.

The school has a beneficial range of opportunities that help pupils develop a good understanding of Welsh culture and heritage. For example, younger pupils make and send cards to celebrate St Dwynwen's Day and study a local artist and writer, and the whole school takes part in the 'Urdd Jambor'.

Pupils engage willingly with school life and feel proud of the school's family ethos and its important role in the community. Parents value their relationship with the school and appreciate the support and guidance given during the pandemic when regular contact with families ensured that pupils were able to continue to learn and make progress.

The school places appropriate emphasis on providing a varied range of visits and visitors that support the curriculum and engage pupils in their learning. These include visiting Cardiff Museum, Porthcawl beach and St. Fagan's Museum. Pupils benefit from visits by an opera company, the local police officer and Ogmere historical society.

All staff understand their roles and responsibilities in contributing to pupils' safety and well-being, including online safety, ensuring that this is a prominent element of school life. The headteacher embeds a culture of purposeful safeguarding processes among all staff and these practices are an integral part of their daily responsibilities. However, the headteacher and staff have not accessed up-to-date Prevent training as part of their statutory duty.

The school's curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of concepts and values such as diversity, inclusion, and equity. The school teaches pupils to be respectful, tolerant, and empathetic. Staff promote co-operation, reinforce whole school expectations of tolerance and consideration, and expect socially responsible behaviour from pupils. They engage well with national events, such as Children in Need, to provide an authentic context for pupils to develop their values and understanding of the needs of others.

The school has comprehensive systems for monitoring pupils' attendance. It has effective arrangements to contact the home when pupils are absent and works effectively with outside agencies to improve attendance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which places pupils' well-being at the centre. She works closely with staff to provide supportive leadership that sets

clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. This is supported by all staff, who act as very positive role models for pupils. There are good professional working relationships between staff and the headteacher, and this helps to create a happy school for pupils and their families.

The partnership between the school and parents is a strength and parents are proud that they and their children are part of such a warm and inclusive school community. Nearly all parents speak very highly of the commitment of the headteacher and staff and the care they show for their children.

Leaders and governors place a high priority on promoting nearly all aspects of safeguarding across the school. However, staff have not taken part in statutory Prevent training. Leaders have developed successful systems and approaches that benefit vulnerable pupils, including those from low-income backgrounds, to overcome barriers to their learning. This work has enabled leaders to create a suitable foundation for school improvement. Leaders address some of the national priorities, such as additional needs reform, suitably. However, leadership has not yet had a sufficient impact on improving some important aspects of the school's work, particularly the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, tracking skills across the curriculum for continuity and progression, whole-school planning and developing the older pupils as independent learners.

The distribution of leadership roles is generally clear and has been recently reviewed. The school is beginning to develop leadership across phases, for example in areas such as mastery of mathematics and oracy strategies. However, structures to develop strategic working across year groups and phases are at an early stage of development. Middle leaders have a shared understanding of the overarching improvement priorities of the school, but senior leaders have not identified clearly enough the strengths and areas for improvement and the responsibilities of staff. This makes it difficult for the headteacher to hold individuals to account and impedes the school's ability to make improvements in important areas of the curriculum. The school has identified the need to develop distributed leadership in the current school development plan, but the planning for the growth of leadership skills at all levels is still limited, and this hinders the development of the staff team and their ability to support school improvement.

There are appropriate processes for performance management for teachers. Processes to formalise and structure performance management for support staff are in the early stages of development. Staff objectives focus suitably on the school's priorities and link to professional learning opportunities. The headteacher recognises the importance of these activities in supporting individual needs, as well as those of the school, and has succeeded in creating a positive culture and ethos around professional learning. However, generally, professional learning for improving teaching and leadership is not linked well enough to the Curriculum for Wales and self-evaluation findings. In particular, it does not support middle leaders' ability to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Governors are experienced, skilled and knowledgeable about the school's work. They gather first-hand evidence through activities, such as listening to learners and learning walks, to help them carry out their roles as critical friends. Governors are aware of arrangements to promote pupils' healthy eating, drinking and attendance.

The headteacher's financial management of the school is effective. She works well with governors to monitor expenditure closely and to balance short-term and longer-term needs appropriately. Leaders ensure that the pupil development grant is used well to benefit eligible pupils, for example through employing skilful support staff to deliver provision.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

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

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 publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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