



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

A report on

Coedylan Primary School

**Tyfica Road
Graigwen
Pontypridd
RCT
CF37 2DB**

Date of inspection: February 2023

by

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

About Coed-y-Lan Primary School

Name of provider	Coedylan Primary School
Local authority	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	156
Pupils of statutory school age	105
Number in nursery classes	25
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%)	11.9%
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%)	5.7%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	*
Date of headteacher appointment	02/09/2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	16/01/2015
Start date of inspection	13/02/2023

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

Over time, leadership at all levels at the school has not been effective enough. This has led to poor teaching and learning experiences that limit pupils' progress during their time at school. Currently the school has interim leadership arrangements that are beginning to have a positive influence on a few aspects of the school's work. However, these arrangements have not had time to address the many long-standing deficiencies at the school, particularly in teaching and learning.

Overall, the school's curriculum and the delivery of it do not support pupils to make sufficient progress. Staff do not ensure that pupils develop their skills progressively as they move through the school. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) does not support this group of learners well enough. School leaders ensure that provision for pupils' personal and social development is beneficial in helping them to understand how to stay safe and reflect on important values such as kindness and respect.

Pupils at Coed-y-Lan Primary School show respect and consideration to each other, staff and visitors. They are courteous and polite and nearly all of them behave impeccably. Pupils in leadership roles take their responsibilities seriously. They have helped to improve the school through deciding on new playground equipment and discussing how to improve parking outside the school gates. They promote aspects of safety in school well. However, these groups have been established very recently and it is therefore too early to measure their impact.

The interim leadership team has begun to evaluate the school's provision appropriately. This has enabled them to establish a realistic picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, due to staffing instability, they have not been able to share responsibilities effectively among staff or build a whole-school ethos, where staff feel valued for their contributions.

A safeguarding issue was brought to the attention of the school during the inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve leadership at all levels
- R2 Improve teaching and assessment across the school
- R3 Improve the curriculum and provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills
- R4 Improve provision for pupils with ALN
- R5 Address the safeguarding issue that was identified during the inspection

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress on a termly basis.

Main evaluation

Learning

Overall, during their time at school, pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), do not make enough progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Although many aspects of pupils' skills are relatively weak, their progress as speakers, listeners and readers is generally appropriate. Most pupils listen carefully, speak confidently, and express their ideas sensibly. Younger pupils talk about their work enthusiastically, for instance when they describe excitedly how a troll came to visit the school and they need to follow the clues to find him. Many older pupils communicate well in English. They offer answers and express opinions eloquently. For example, in Years 5 and 6, many pupils explain thoughtfully how dark chocolate will melt more slowly than milk or white chocolate due to the cocoa content.

Many pupils develop their reading skills effectively. By Year 2, they read accurately and decode unfamiliar words successfully. By Year 6, many pupils read complex texts with good understanding, both in class and independently, when researching topics, such as how Pontypridd has changed since 1850. As a result, many pupils are confident readers, and they find information, from various texts and relevant websites, to enrich their work across the curriculum, for example when researching their own family trees and creating a booklet on the football World Cup.

Pupils' progress in their development as writers is inconsistent as they move through the school. By the time they reach Year 6, not enough pupils have made the progress they should. This is largely due to considerable variability in the quality of teaching and ineffective planning for the progressive development of pupils' writing skills.

Many younger pupils develop fine motor skills appropriately, for example creating characters from playdoh. Many pupils progress appropriately from mark making in the youngest classes to forming letters, words, and sentences during their time in Year 1. By Year 2, many pupils make satisfactory progress and use some varied vocabulary and language patterns to write basic recounts and design leaflets and posters. For example, they create a poster to hang in a doctor's surgery as part of their work about the health service. However, many pupils from Year 2 do not write well independently due to lack of opportunity.

The majority of pupils use basic punctuation adequately but spelling of high frequency words is inconsistent. Many do not present their work neatly. When directed by adults, they structure their work well and show an appropriate understanding of effective punctuation and varied vocabulary. However, many pupils do not write at length independently due to overly prescriptive and instructional teaching as well as low teacher expectations. For example, pupils spend a great deal of time on low level tasks such as writing out 20 sentences to highlight an adverb in each sentence.

The progress that most pupils make in developing their Welsh oracy skills during their time at the school is minimal. Most answer with basic responses during discussions with teachers and each other.

Many younger pupils develop their mathematical skills effectively. For example, they order the size of footprints from smallest to largest and then measure them using non-standard measures. By Year 2, many pupils develop secure mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding. They work with numbers comfortably, for example buying food with money in the role play shop and work out costs, totals and change. They record results in simple tables and charts that teachers have prepared for them.

From Year 3 to Year 6, the majority of pupils demonstrate appropriate mathematical skills. In the best examples, a minority of pupils make worthwhile progress when challenged to complete extension tasks. Older pupils occasionally use taught strategies well, such as when they order the heights of mountains and convert from one unit of measurement to another. However, a majority of pupils do not make enough progress in important aspects of their mathematical skills, especially developing their ability to work with numbers. This is often due to a lack of opportunity.

Across the school, pupils' progress in developing their digital skills is restricted, due to inadequate resources and a lack of purposeful learning opportunities.

In the nursery, pupils are beginning to develop their independent skills by making choices about their learning. As they move through the school, pupils' independent skills do not develop well enough because adults over-direct the learning and teachers do not always deploy teaching assistants effectively.

Most pupils develop appropriate creative skills. For example, younger pupils mix colours to create colour wheels. Older pupils create "raps" about Pontypridd and perform them to each other. In addition, most pupils develop their physical skills successfully, for instance through dance lessons, swimming sessions for the older pupils, a good range of extra-curricular clubs and twice weekly PE sessions.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

The behaviour of nearly all pupils in class, around the school and at playtimes is excellent. Nearly all pupils are polite, welcoming and respectful to each other and adults in the school. Most pupils feel they are listened to, and they are confident that any problems they bring to the attention of adults will be dealt with effectively and sensitively. Most pupils feel safe in school and understand what to do to stay safe online.

Many pupils work together harmoniously. They collaborate well when given the opportunity. They listen carefully to instructions and presentations from adults and show positive attitudes to the learning experiences provided for them.

Most pupils understand how to keep healthy by eating a balanced diet and being active. However, a minority of pupils do not apply this understanding and do not make healthy lunchbox choices. Most pupils enjoy taking exercise and take part in

the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. These include basketball and netball clubs. They also enjoy and appreciate the twice weekly PE lessons.

Pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 embrace the opportunities to take on leadership roles by being part of the school Senedd, which includes Criw Cymraeg, Eco and Digital Leaders and Healthy Schools representatives. These pupil-led groups ensure that all pupils including those eligible for free school meals and those with ALN are involved in decision-making. They are beginning to make a difference at the school, for example by suggesting how the garden at the back of the school can be used and how they could improve playtime provision. Most pupils show a clear understanding of their responsibilities within their community and as global citizens. For example, they are beginning to consider the impact of climate change in other countries.

Many older pupils are developing as ethically informed citizens. They study the diverse nature of the world and the rights of children through their topic 'One World, Diverse Lives'. Younger pupils use a good range of vocabulary to express their feelings and talk about the impact of their emotions.

Most pupils start the day ready to learn. Many pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for their learning and are motivated to do well. In a majority of lessons, pupils focus appropriately and sustain concentration. However, too often, adults lead the learning, and this contributes to pupils becoming passive learners. Pupils do not develop perseverance or resilience well enough.

Older pupils are beginning to develop a few useful entrepreneurial skills linked with their topic. They are designing and making chocolate wrappers and plan to sell their chocolate at the local market. In general, pupils' problem-solving skills do not develop well due to lack of opportunities.

Overall, pupils do not have the opportunity to respond to teachers' feedback. They generally receive limited comments to support their progress in lessons or in their books. A minority of pupils make the appropriate response when prompted but this is inconsistent. Pupils have little understanding on how to purposefully evaluate their own work or the work of their peers. As a result, they do not know what they should do to improve their work.

Teaching and learning experiences

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and, in nearly all classes, this creates an environment where pupils feel happy, safe, and confident to ask for support.

Teachers are beginning to adapt their planning to consider the areas of learning and experience, in line with the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. This work is at an early stage of development and teachers place too much emphasis on planning the activities rather than focusing on what skills the pupils need to learn. Teaching does not ensure that pupils build their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively. The current whole school topic, using the locality as a stimulus, aims to provide experiences linked to the pupils' immediate surroundings as they explore the history, culture and changes that have taken place in Pontypridd. Older pupils enjoyed a visit to the town's market to speak to the local people about the world of

work. However, across the school, the range of teaching and learning experiences is limited and they do not consider the interests and needs of the pupils well enough.

Staff do not plan and implement an effective curriculum for the youngest pupils. Resources within the classrooms are limited, and these pupils do not benefit from meaningful, outdoor learning experiences. This limits their development and progress. Recent changes have started to bring about positive change. The provision is beginning to be adapted appropriately to meet the needs of most pupils so that they receive a suitable combination of focused tasks and opportunities to learn through play.

The school's provision to develop pupils' writing, numeracy and digital skills is not effective enough. An over-reliance on worksheets prevents pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, from writing at length. Teachers generally ensure that pupils develop an appropriate understanding of mathematical concepts but do not provide opportunities for pupils to apply this learning in their work across the curriculum. Teachers provide a few useful opportunities for pupils to use basic digital skills, but they do not ensure that pupils develop the full range of skills required.

As pupils move through the school, provision to support the needs of all pupils is inconsistent and, in many instances, teachers do not always challenge the more able pupils sufficiently, or support those with additional needs well enough. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, and overly direct the learning, which often limits the progress that pupils make in lessons and over time. In a majority of classes, teaching assistants are not deployed effectively enough to support pupils' progress. They are not given suitable direction and are unsure of their role in how to best support the pupils, particularly those with ALN.

Assessment procedures are not used effectively to inform teaching and learning or to measure progress for groups of learners. The quality of feedback in books and lessons is inconsistent across the school and, where comments have been made by teachers, pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond. As a result, most pupils are unsure of their own strengths and areas for improvement. They are not involved in assessing their own learning or that of their peers.

Many teachers provide a few opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, linguistic and diverse nature of Wales. For example, during the football World Cup, pupils learned the words and meaning of the song 'Yma O hyd'. All pupils also participate in an annual Eisteddfod. However, the school does not plan well enough for the structured development of pupils' Welsh language skills. As a result, most pupils lack enthusiasm and do not make suitable progress in developing their communication skills in Welsh.

Care, support and guidance

The school provides a welcoming environment. Generally, there are positive and respectful relationships between pupils and staff. Staff promote the importance of good behaviour, courtesy and respect successfully. This ensures that, across the school, pupils show care, empathy and compassion throughout the school day.

The school has recently started to ensure that the health and well-being of pupils is a priority. Staff provide a variety of opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills in planned lessons and extend these experiences in after-school clubs such as rugby, dance and basketball. Although the school helps pupils understand what they need to do to look after themselves, it does not have effective arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Daily acts of collective worship support pupils' spiritual development well and visitors from the local church enhance these celebrations. The school provides relevant opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths around the world. For example, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are invited to make presentations on their own faith and what it means to them.

The school's support for pupils with ALN is weak and staff do not monitor the progress of pupils in this group well enough. This limits their capacity to identify and plan the provision to meet their needs. Teaching assistants deliver a limited range of interventions in a minority of classes. Teachers do not plan for the deployment of teaching assistants well enough or ensure that they know their role in supporting pupils' learning.

The school plans a range of activities suitably to develop pupils' understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales. They link this to important events in the calendar. For example, as part of Black History month, older pupils learn about a local role model and extreme sportsman, Richard Parks. There are good opportunities for older pupils to learn about equality and diversity through their topic, 'One World, Diverse Lives', a title chosen by the pupils.

The school's provision ensures that pupils are beginning to understand environmental change and the part that humans play in this change. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to influence aspects of the school's life and work. For example, the Senedd allows pupils from the older classes to lead sub-committees such as digital leaders and the eco committee. However, this work is in the very early stages of development.

The school makes good use of visitors to enrich pupils' experiences. For instance, regular visits from the music service support pupils to develop their creative skills and the recent "Cynefin" project, which included a visit to the local market, enables pupils gain a deeper understanding of the history of their local community and raise pupils' awareness of employment opportunities in Wales.

A limited range of trips and visits for pupils support the curriculum and help to engage pupils in their learning. For example, pupils regularly visit the local library and museum.

There is appropriate communication with parents, for example through regular newsletters and annual reports. The school has a comprehensive range of strategies and processes to promote and monitor attendance. Persistent absenteeism is monitored and addressed effectively. The school's processes ensure good rates of attendance.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet requirements and are a cause for concern.

Leadership and management

Over time, leadership at all levels at the school has not been effective enough. This has led to poor teaching and learning experiences that limit pupils' progress during their time at school. Leaders have not addressed shortcomings in the quality of teaching and learning and self-evaluation processes have not identified key aspects that require improvement. They have not supported a coherent approach to teaching and learning or a purposeful collaborative working environment. This has led to low staff morale and poor levels of well-being for some staff members. Very recently, leaders have introduced clear structures and procedures to bring about school improvement, but it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these arrangements.

The school is experiencing a period of instability. Currently there is an acting headteacher and a headteacher from a local school has been seconded to Coed-y-Lan to provide additional support. In a short period of time, the acting leadership team has identified important priorities for improvement, including the need to improve the quality of teaching. They are in the early stages of implementing their improvement strategy.

Over time, processes to manage the performance of staff have been ineffective. Very recently, leaders have introduced new performance management arrangements for all staff, but these have not been in place long enough to have an impact on improving teaching and learning. Due to the instability in staffing, the school provides limited opportunities for staff to undertake professional learning that focuses on improving teaching and learning. The acting leadership team has put measures in place to begin to address these issues.

Leaders have not ensured sufficient progress in relation to national priorities. This includes provision for pupils with ALN. The provision to support and monitor the progress for this group of pupils is ineffective. The school is beginning to develop its curriculum in line with the Curriculum for Wales. Leaders engage with other local schools in this process and enable teachers to develop an overview for the school's curriculum. However, at this time, the impact of this work on pupils' learning is limited. The school does not plan well enough for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills.

The school does not always monitor the impact of their spending on school improvement sufficiently to ensure that it has the desired effect. Leaders do not evaluate the impact that grant funding has on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils well enough.

Until very recently, school governance has been weak and has not supported the school to provide a good enough standard of education for its pupils. Recent changes to the governing body have strengthened its capacity. Governors are beginning to support the school and now have good oversight of its finances. Accurate reports to governors, compiled by the school's acting leadership team, ensure that they are now developing a better understanding of the school's current

performance. Governors do not ensure that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school seeks to build positive and caring relationships with parents, who are complimentary about the school. More recently, parents have been involved in creating the school's new vision and values. A few partnerships with the wider community are developing appropriately. For example, a project with the local market has impacted positively on pupils' understanding of local history.

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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