



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

A report on
Neyland Community School

**John Street
Neyland
Milford Haven
Pembrokeshire
SA73 1TH**

Date of inspection: March 2023

by

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

About Neyland Community School

Name of provider	Neyland Community School
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	306
Pupils of statutory school age	218
Number in nursery classes	47
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%)	16.5%
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%)	22.9%
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)	01/09/2014
Start date of inspection	20/03/2023

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

Neyland Community School is a vibrant and inclusive place where pupils, staff and families feel welcome and supported. A notable strength of the school is the strong caring ethos and the trust and respect between pupils and staff. Pupils know that adults in the school care for them and that they can turn to them when they face challenges or have difficulties. Senior leaders have worked hard to create this ethos and it plays a key role in ensuring the sound progress that pupils make and the positive attitudes they develop as they move through the school.

During their time at school, most pupils generally make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. However, they make limited progress learning and speaking Welsh.

The school provides a rich, broad and balanced range of learning experiences and additional provision. Overall, it meets the educational and wider needs and interests of pupils well. Teachers ensure that most learning is purposeful and that, it enables pupils to use existing or newly learnt skills appropriately. However, they do not always provide effective ongoing feedback during lessons or have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

School leaders have developed a positive culture of teamwork amongst the staff and the local community. They provide valuable support for families. The governing body plays an important part in the life of the school and provides appropriate support and challenge.

The school identifies the areas of its work that are most effective and those aspects that need to be improved appropriately. However, monitoring activities do not always focus well enough on evaluating the difference that teaching and learning experiences make to pupils' progress in learning.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve self- evaluation processes
- R2 Ensure that teachers provide more effective ongoing feedback during lessons and have a higher expectation of what pupils achieve
- R3 Ensure that there is a better balance between adult led and pupil led learning experiences for the youngest pupils
- R4 Improve Welsh oracy skills

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils begin school with skills at around the level expected for their age. During their time in the school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least good progress in improving their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Nearly all pupils who are eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers.

Standards of oracy are good. Most pupils in all year groups listen well to adults and to each other. Pupils throughout the school have good speaking skills. Most younger pupils speak confidently, for example when describing what they would take to space in their rocket. Older pupils express themselves clearly when preparing for a debate about the benefits and drawbacks of fossil fuels and talking about whether they prefer the artwork of Nerys Levy or Henry Russell.

Younger pupils listen to adults using familiar Welsh words and phrases and respond appropriately. However, most older pupils lack confidence in speaking Welsh beyond the use of simple greetings.

Most pupils develop a good range of digital skills as they move through the school. In the younger classes, they begin to understand the importance of logically ordering instructions for a floor robot to move it across a grid. They build on this well as they move through the school, using coding to create games. Most pupils across the school use information they gather on the internet to generate engaging presentations to share their learning. Pupils know that not all information on the internet is trustworthy and develop a sound understanding of how to stay safe online.

Most pupils have appropriate reading skills. Younger readers develop an understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds and use this knowledge well to help them to read. Most older pupils express preferences for favourite texts and authors. They read at an appropriate level for their age. They read non-fiction information texts and stories mostly accurately and extract relevant information well. For example, they read texts about animals and answer questions on what they have read accurately. They talk in detail about the characters and events in stories.

Many pupils make suitable progress with writing. Younger pupils are beginning to form letters and spell cvc words accurately. In Year 2, most pupils write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters, for example when writing a postcard. Most older pupils use the features of different types of writing and write in an appropriate range of forms of non-fiction appropriately. They apply these skills well in their work across the curriculum. For example, they write diaries and letters to convey their personal thoughts and feelings effectively. They understand the need to write for different purposes. A majority of older pupils spell and punctuate their writing correctly. However, across the school, pupils do not write creatively or at length often enough. Generally, pupils do not show enough care when presenting their work.

Many pupils develop suitable mathematical skills as they progress through the school. In nursery, many pupils understand the concept of lighter and heavier. They

recognise and count numbers to 10 and a few go beyond. By Year 3, many pupils work out fractions of a whole number. Many older pupils plot line graphs and use percentages to calculate the distribution of the world's wealth. Across the school, many pupils use numeracy skills appropriately to support their learning in other subjects.

Many pupils work creatively in a range of contexts. Younger pupils enjoy using block construction materials creatively. They collaborate well together and persevere to overcome problems. For example, they reorganise their model to work around a shortage of particular pieces. Most pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 work collaboratively to create model rockets from recycled materials. Most older pupils effectively explore ways of creating different shades of colour using watercolour paints and develop their skills well. Across the school, pupils look at the work of a range of artists, such as Dorian Spencer Davies, and use what they have learnt to influence their own work.

In general, many pupils make good progress in the development of their physical skills. Older pupils develop their strength and co-ordination when jumping and twisting onto and off benches into specific poses and show effective catching and throwing skills during physical education lessons.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Most pupils in the school develop positive attitudes to school life and learning. They feel it is a safe environment, free from bullying or harassment, and are happy at school.

Most pupils show interest in their work and are keen to explore unfamiliar areas of learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy finding out about different forms of sustainable energy and choosing the most appropriate way to present their findings, such as through a slide presentation or as a short video.

Most pupils work well collaboratively. They show consideration and respect for the views of others and work well together to complete activities, for example when working in pairs to make bird houses from recycled pieces of wood. Most pupils sustain concentration and avoid distractions successfully.

Most older pupils demonstrate appropriate problem-solving skills and perseverance. They concentrate well to complete tasks, and many learn from previous mistakes. For instance, pupils in a mathematics catch up intervention group refer to previous errors to correctly adapt their approach to multiplying numbers. In a few cases, pupils consider and modify their approach to solving a problem. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 try different approaches to make their model rockets travel further. However, the very youngest pupils do not develop their problem-solving skills as well as they could due to a lack of opportunity to explore and experiment.

A majority of younger pupils are beginning to develop the skills to reflect on the success of their learning. They build on this suitably as they move through the school. By Year 6, many pupils are beginning to identify what they have done well and how they might improve further.

Across the school, during lessons and at breaktimes, most pupils behave well and respond appropriately to adults. They are friendly and courteous and show respect to their peers and staff. They are very welcoming and polite to visitors and are keen to discuss their work and experiences at school. Pupils who need additional support to regulate their emotions are beginning to develop strategies that help them to do this successfully.

Pupils enjoy the various activities that support their well-being. For example, through being active in the outdoor spaces as part of 'Fantastic Friday', pupils learn key social skills and develop their physical fitness. Most pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet. They speak enthusiastically about after-school activities and how they further develop the skills they have learned during lessons, such as improving their physical skills in the fitness club and their science and technology skills in the STEM club.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school offers a broad range of learning experiences, many of which engage pupils' interests well and inspire them to learn.

Provision to develop pupils' skills is appropriate. Collaborative planning between teachers ensures that many aspects of pupils' skills develop progressively as they move through the school.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy skills by contributing to class discussions and presenting their work to others. Pupils benefit from a rich reading environment that contains accessible high-quality literature, which supports the development of reading skills well. Many pupils have opportunities to write for different purposes. However, pupils do not write creatively or at length often enough. Expectations regarding pupils' presentation of work are not always high enough. Pupils have regular opportunities to develop their numeracy skills. However, teachers do not always take full advantage of occasions when they could make learning more relevant to real life situations. Provision to develop pupils' digital skills is good. However, teaching does not support pupils to make enough progress in learning and using the Welsh language.

Lessons throughout the school support pupils' understanding of the challenges faced by minority ethnic people. For example, pupils learn about how famous activists such as Rosa Parks have fought for their rights.

The school introduces new curriculum topics with exciting 'Sparkly Starters'. This is effective in helping pupils generate questions about what they would like to learn and is effective in ensuring that learning experiences are matched to pupils' interests.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive, resulting in a supportive environment where pupil behaviour is managed well.

Many teachers have good subject knowledge and use clear learning objectives to plan learning experiences. In many classes, the pace of teaching, clarity of explanations and use of effective questioning maintain pupils' interest well. In a few lessons, pupils are directed to improve their work in response to verbal feedback

effectively. However, teachers and support staff do not always provide prompt support or have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Younger pupils have a few valuable opportunities to learn independently through play and exploration. For example, reception pupils are able to solve a bridge-building challenge by choosing appropriate materials. However, in general, adults provide too much direction, which limits opportunities for pupils to explore and solve problems.

Many visits to places of interest enrich pupils' learning effectively. For example, younger pupils take walks around their local area to find out about the services available there. Visitors to school enrich pupils' learning further. For example, local musicians have supported pupils to create their own songs.

Care, support and guidance

The school is an inclusive and welcoming community where staff encourage pupils to contribute to its caring and friendly ethos successfully. The strong relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are a positive feature of the school. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and they respond sensitively to the pupils' emotional and social needs. For example, through effective use of the well-planned nurture room and timely 'touch point' sessions, pupils learn to manage their emotions so that they can continue with their learning. This reassuring and caring atmosphere helps nearly all pupils to settle well into school life and it contributes positively to their happiness in school.

The provision to support pupils with ALN is successful. The school's ALN co-ordinator works effectively in partnership with other staff. Together, they ensure that pupils' needs are identified early and that support for individuals and groups of pupils begins promptly. Through the active use of the one-page profiles, staff have a deeper understanding of the needs of pupils and specific targets are used to support their learning. The school works beneficially with a range of specialist services to secure additional resources and timely specialist support to pupils with a range of needs. These arrangements ensure that pupils with ALN make good progress overall.

The school ensures that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities take on leadership roles in a variety of purposeful groups. Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to participate in making decisions to improve the school. For example, the eco warriors take an active role in monitoring cars in the school car park to improve air quality and school prefects have participated in book look activities suggesting areas for improvement.

The school has begun to promote the Welsh culture and language positively. For example, all pupils have the opportunity to participate in the school eisteddfod celebrations. The school places a strong emphasis on providing a rich and varied range of trips that support the curriculum and engage pupils in their learning. These include local visits to Pembroke Castle and a residential visit to Stackpole for older pupils. These experiences provide varied opportunities for pupils to learn about the local area and develop a range of skills. The school offers a number of beneficial after-school clubs to enhance pupils' experiences and enjoyment of school, for example reading club and fitness club.

Staff enable pupils to develop an empathy for the challenges that face members of the local community. They use the experiences positively so that pupils develop respect and understand that supporting others is important. For example, pupils work alongside people suffering from dementia on a music project. The school builds positive relationships with pupils and families to ensure that parents take an active role in pupils' learning. They provide opportunities for parents to engage in workshops with pupils and on their own for example creating art and craft work linked to improving literacy through the 'Springboard Project'. The school also provides a weekly opportunity for parents to learn Welsh in order to promote the use of the language in the home and in the wider community.

The school promotes the importance of good attendance and adopts a suitable range of strategies to monitor and address poor attendance. For example, the daily 'Walking Bus' strategy supports and encourages pupils to attend school regularly.

The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management

Leaders have worked purposefully to establish the school as a positive and constructive learning community. This has included a strong focus on developing a supportive team ethos. Leaders place high importance on the well-being of all members of the school community. They have put effective strategies to improve pupils' attitudes to school and to learning in place, for example to help pupils regulate their own behaviour. As a result, staff work purposefully as a committed team, most pupils' behaviour is good and most engage positively in their learning.

Leaders have high expectations of themselves and of others. They set clear goals for themselves and for staff, focused on improving practice and provision. They support teachers purposefully and address underperformance constructively.

Leaders monitor and allocate the school's resources well. They use specific grants, such as the pupil development grant, purposefully and thoughtfully. For example, they provide needed emotional support to identified pupils and use 'Minibus Mondays' to give pupils positive learning experiences that support their well-being, such as visiting a local beach.

The governing body knows the school and supports leaders well. Governors have a good understanding of the school's finances and ensure that resources are allocated towards areas of need beneficially. They are beginning to use visits to the school to ensure that they gain a stronger, more detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are beginning to use this knowledge to question school leaders purposefully. However, they do not have a strong understanding of how the school is going about addressing shortcomings in pupils' learning.

The headteacher has set in place a comprehensive range of monitoring activities that involve staff and leaders. Pupils are also beginning to be involved thoughtfully in self-evaluation activities. For example, prefects helped monitor books and identify where their classroom activities are suitably challenging. The evaluation of data, and regular

pupil progress meetings with teachers, give leaders a broad and helpful overview of areas that need improvement, such as pupils' writing skills. However, monitoring activities do not always focus sharply enough on identifying strengths and shortcomings in pupils' learning. In a few cases, monitoring by senior leaders does not always identify well enough a few issues in their areas of responsibility, such as the length of time the youngest pupils spend doing formal, adult-led learning.

Leaders identify and implement appropriate strategies to bring about improvements. For example, strategies to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning have impacted positively throughout the school. Teachers are beginning to think about how the areas of learning and experience for which they have responsibility can be improved, such as pupils' mathematics and numeracy skills. In a majority of cases, they identify strategies that can be put in place usefully. However, at present there are not clear enough strategies to address identified shortcomings in pupils' learning. In a few cases, current improvement strategies have not had enough time to impact, for example in improving pupils' Welsh language skills.

Leaders plan a useful range of professional learning activities for staff that match well with individuals' and with the school's needs. For example, staff training to improve pupils' oracy skills has had a positive impact on pupils' standards. The development of staff's understanding of how to deal with traumatic experiences and pupils' behaviour has contributed notably to the establishment of a calm and purposeful learning environment at the school. Leaders are beginning to use strengths in the school to help improve teaching. For example, they have developed videos that teachers can watch to give them ideas about how to improve their teaching of mathematics concepts well.

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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