



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

A report on

Catwg Primary School

**Main Road
Cadoxton
Neath
SA10 8BL**

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

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

About Catwg Primary School

Name of provider	Catwg Primary School
Local authority	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	229
Pupils of statutory school age	176
Number in nursery classes	33
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%)	18.9%
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%)	18.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	
Date of headteacher appointment	05/09/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	06/07/2015
Start date of inspection	02/10/2023

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

Catwg Primary School is a warm and caring school, where staff place a high priority on the well-being of its pupils. This results in pupils who are very happy and feel safe in the school environment. Across the school, most pupils make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points, including pupils in the hearing-impaired classes (HIC) and those with additional learning needs (ALN). However, the tendency to over-direct the teaching and a lack of challenge impact on the expected progress of more able pupils.

Relationships between staff and pupils, and between each other, are exceptional. All pupils are very supportive of each other and have very positive attitudes to school life. They behave extremely well during lessons and when moving around the school. Teachers are beginning to design a rich and varied curriculum, which engages most pupils in their learning.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities that develop and enhance a wide range of skills effectively and inspire pupils to take up new interests. These experiences develop pupils' life skills and well-being positively. Pupils enjoy their lessons, but their contribution towards their own learning is inconsistent across the school and their role as representatives of the pupils is underdeveloped.

Most pupils across the school develop strong oracy and reading skills. This is also true of the development of pupils' comprehensive grasp of number work in mathematics. However, from Year 3 to Year 6, teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities for them to develop the full range of mathematical concepts consistently. In addition, there are few opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.

The newly appointed headteacher provides clear strategic leadership. The school's vision, mission and values are evident in the work of senior leaders, staff and governors. He has developed a strong team ethos where all staff feel valued and are passionate about providing a quality education for all pupils.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 have sufficient opportunities to experience all mathematical concepts and to apply their numeracy skills regularly in their work across the curriculum
- R2 Ensure that teaching consistently provides opportunities to develop older pupils' independent skills and challenges all pupils, particularly those who are more able
- R3 Provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to influence what and how they learn and to contribute to the development of the school

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

As they move through the school, many pupils make good progress from their starting points. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those with ALN make good progress against their targets. However, more able pupils do not always achieve well enough. Most pupils in the hearing-impaired bases achieve well in line with their needs and abilities.

Pupils' English oracy skills are a strength. In the nursery, many pupils talk with ease and share ideas well when preparing food for their bird boxes. As they move to Year 1, they build on their skills well, and confidently retell the story of the 'Little Red Hen', for example. Most pupils continue making good progress as they move across the school and by Year 6, they become articulate speakers. They give clear explanations about their work and respond maturely to each other's suggestions in class. In addition, most pupils demonstrate strong oracy skills when thinking through and solving problems.

Across the school, most pupils make suitable progress in developing their Welsh oracy skills. They use basic vocabulary with good pronunciation and respond correctly when questioned. Although progress continues from Year 3 to Year 6 and pupils vocabulary increases, very few pupils use their Welsh language skills outside planned Welsh lessons and activities.

Most pupils' reading skills develop well. Most younger pupils enjoy listening to stories and take good notice of the illustrations to aid their understanding. They quickly learn to use their knowledge of letters and sounds and a suitable range of strategies to effectively decode unknown words. Pupils from Year 3 upwards use a variety of texts accurately to support their learning across the curriculum, for example to present facts on the key features of the Roman era competently. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they have acquired a wide range of higher reading skills. They read fluently with expression and understanding and speak confidently about what they have read.

The standards of discrete writing skills across the school are strong. Most pupils make good progress in developing their ability to write. They create marks to express themselves in the nursery and write confidently about themselves in Year 2. By Year 4, many pupils explain their ideas in writing suitably, use imaginative vocabulary in their stories develop a series of sentences to tell a story and begin to organise their writing using paragraphs. In Year 6, many pupils create a few engaging pieces of writing, such as presenting the benefits of reducing the speed limit in the community. They use mature vocabulary and descriptive language confidently. The standard of

spelling across the school is good. Pupils write to a similar standard across the curriculum but opportunities to write at length are inconsistent.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of numbers and the number system. They apply their previous learning successfully, learn new methods of calculation and use these confidently in different contexts, such as a whole school entrepreneurial project. Overall, most pupils represent data simply in graphs and charts. However, pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 do not always make the progress they could in developing their data handling skills or other mathematical concepts, such as shape and space. This is due to a lack of planning for the progressive development of these skills. Overall, the majority of pupils do not apply their numeracy skills often enough in other areas of learning.

Across the school most pupils' digital skills develop appropriately and they have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. They use a range of software confidently to support and record their learning. They use information and communication technology (ICT) programmes with ease to research, communicate information and create interesting presentations. Overall, pupils are developing purposefully their coding skills and use of spreadsheets and databases.

Most pupils' physical skills develop soundly in movement lessons and daily activities in the outdoor area from nursery to Year 2. Most pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 build on these skills successfully in regularly planned lessons and in after-school clubs. Overall, many pupils are developing their creative skills effectively, exploring and experimenting with different media well.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils arrive at school with eagerness and enthusiasm. They clearly love school and are extremely happy to be part of the school community. Nearly all pupils feel relaxed and ready to learn. They feel safe, secure, and treated fairly.

Nearly all pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They settle quickly, independently and calmly at the start of each lesson. Most pupils discuss their work in detail, recalling previously learnt facts with ease. For instance, nursery pupils remember what physical movement they can use on different apparatus and share this information with their peers effectively. Most pupils work well together in pairs or small groups. For example, pupils in Year 4 describe a variety of artefacts from the Second World War, listening carefully to the suggestions of their peers and taking it in turns to make their own contribution.

Most pupils are enthusiastic and positive about their learning. When given an opportunity, they tackle new challenges with confidence and show resilience. Most pupils from the nursery to the Year 2 work confidently as independent learners as they move onto the next stage of their work without adult guidance. When Year 2 pupils use construction materials to build a moving vehicle, they share resources well, show perseverance and determination to resolve a mechanical issue. Most pupils are very supportive of each other and offer advice or a helping hand readily. Overall, most pupils display an excellent level of engagement in their work and respond positively to feedback from their teachers. However, the independent skills

of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 are underdeveloped, the teaching is over-directed and the level of challenge is too low.

During the last year, nearly all pupils have shared with the senior leadership team what they would like to change in the school. As a result, leaders have made changes to the playground area and introduced a range of inclusive extra-curricular clubs, such as signing and well-being. Many pupils, including those with ALN, pupils who are eligible for free school meals and pupils from the Hearing Impairment Class (HIC), become members of a variety of pupil voice groups. Overall, however, the role of pupils in shaping whole-school decisions is underdeveloped. In addition, because of a lack of opportunity, pupils are not sufficiently involved in choosing what and how they would like to learn.

Most pupils show a mature attitude to ethical issues within the school. They apply their sound knowledge of rights and responsibilities to understanding issues of fairness in their daily life. Through planned activities, such as workshops to understand the needs of their peers in the HIC, contribution to a local food bank and raising money for national charities, the pupils develop a strong sense of empathy. In addition, they support an organisation that promotes peace and have adopted the motto of 'treat others as you would want to be treated', across the school. Nearly all pupils demonstrate this by showing the utmost respect for each other and all adults. However, overall, they do not always understand how the principles of equality and children's rights apply to Wales and beyond, for example the right of children to have an education in developing countries.

Most pupils understand and can discuss at length the importance of eating healthily. They take every opportunity to improve their physical skills through numerous lessons, lunchtime and after-school sports clubs and engage enthusiastically in competitions with other schools.

Teaching and learning experiences

Across the school, staff develop positive working relationships with pupils. Together, the teachers and capable support staff support pupils' learning effectively. They encourage respect and understanding, which leads to the positive ethos in the school.

The school is beginning to plan and deliver enriching and engaging learning activities that incorporate the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. The change in planning has successfully led to an increase in the breadth of experiences for pupils. As a result, activities fully engage the pupils in their learning and they make good progress in broadening their knowledge and understanding. The school's curriculum focuses on developing life skills purposefully, through concepts such as 'bravery'. The use of a wide range of thinking skills strategies enables all pupils to participate meaningfully in their activities. However, opportunities for pupils to contribute to what and how they learn are at an early stage of development.

On the whole, teachers plan learning experiences that enable most pupils to acquire effective skills in speaking and listening, reading, and writing in authentic contexts. Teachers skilfully integrate the use of ICT programmes to support the pupils' learning. Although the provision to develop pupils' number skills is strong, teachers

do not always plan effectively for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 to develop a range of mathematical concepts, such as shape and space and measuring. In addition, there are inconsistent opportunities for them to apply these skills in other areas of their learning.

Provision for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills in Welsh is purposeful. The staff use the role of 'Helpwr Heddiw' regularly and this impacts successfully on the pupils' enthusiasm to use their Welsh skills in planned Welsh sessions. In addition, there are suitable opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of their Welsh identity through studying local artists and leading figures in Wales. However, pupils do not reflect on the cultural, linguistic and diverse nature of the wider world often enough.

In classes, teachers provide clear explanations to pupils to ensure that they are fully aware of what they need to do to succeed in their tasks. Teachers provide pupils with valuable verbal feedback throughout lessons. Their reassuring comments develop pupils' confidence and successfully strengthen pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils from nursery to Year 2 benefit from using the outdoor learning area. This contributes successfully to their development as independent learners as well as to their enjoyment, interest and well-being. However, over-directed lessons by staff from Year 3 to Year 6 inhibit the pupils from developing their skills independently. In addition, teachers do not provide suitable challenge, particularly for more able pupils.

Overall, teachers make effective use of assessment procedures to track the progress of pupils and this helps teachers to plan for the progressive development of pupils' skills over time. During lessons, teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress. However, their written feedback does not support pupils well enough to improve their work.

The school arranges a range of varied visits to places of interest in the local area and further afield. For example, pupils visit the local park to learn traditional skills in weaving and about the natural environment. In addition, the school makes good use of an annual residential trip to an outward-bound centre. This provides valuable opportunities for pupils to engage in challenging physical activities and to work with others as part of a team. Staff also use visitors to the school purposefully to support and develop pupils' understanding of the world of work, for example by learning about the life of a vet and a volunteer who saves lives at sea. The school provides extensive extra-curricular activities, which successfully extend pupils' experiences and skills well. Many pupils enjoy attending the choir, for example, where they develop confidence and collaborate with each other successfully.

Care, support and guidance

Catwg Primary school has a warm, friendly, and empathetic ethos that helps support excellent pupil behaviour. The highly positive relationships between pupils and adults are a strong feature of the school. They contribute effectively to pupils' level of happiness and sense of well-being. The sense of belonging among pupils means that they are eager to come to school each day and has a positive influence on attendance over time.

Provision to support pupils with additional learning needs is one of the school's strengths. The additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) is highly effective in her role and ensures that there are comprehensive arrangements in place to identify, support and monitor pupils with additional learning needs across the school. She works in partnership with the lead teacher in the HIC and together they provide a well-planned and inclusive provision for all pupils. The one-page profiles and individual development plans outline pupils' needs and necessary support clearly. The school works closely with pupils' families and liaises well with specialist external agencies, where appropriate, to support pupils and their families. As a result of monitoring and evaluating the provision regularly, most pupils with ALN make good progress against their targets.

The school provides carefully adapted support for those pupils that attend the hearing-impaired classes. The teacher and learning support assistants ensure a caring, welcoming environment in which pupils feel well supported and encouraged to achieve their learning and well-being objectives.

Teachers ensure valuable opportunities to develop pupils' moral awareness and social skills in class and year group assemblies. Through collective discussions, staff provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on key values and how they might apply to their daily lives such as kindness, respect and resilience. Teachers plan a range of purposeful activities for pupils to explore their rights as children within the school and local community. They skilfully ask questions and ideas on current issues, such as the impact of social media on pupils' lives. As a result, pupils across the school confidently distinguish between right and wrong. The school encourages pupils from different groups, such as pupils from the HIC class and those eligible to have free school meals to take on responsibility. However, overall, there are very few opportunities for pupils to make meaningful decisions about the development of the school.

The school provides an inclusive environment for all pupils and promotes equality well. As a result, the pupils are beginning to develop a sound understanding of the importance of respecting other peoples' religions. However, the school does not provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of this in the wider world often enough. In addition, there are very few activities planned for pupils to reflect on their own, and others', spiritual and ethical beliefs.

Provision to develop pupils' physical health is good. The school provides numerous opportunities during lessons and in after-school clubs to develop pupils' physical skills. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to access a range of competitive sports, for example, pupils compete in the cluster sporting events in rugby. Activities during Well-being Wednesday develop pupils' sound understanding of the importance of both a healthy body and a healthy mind. Staff ensure that there are suitable opportunities to teach the pupils about eating healthily.

Staff use the outdoor space creatively and offer a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to cultivate their expressive art skills purposefully. The pupils develop their self-confidence well by taking part in school concerts and services in the local church. Opportunities to develop pupils' sense of their Welsh identity are developing well through cultural events, taking part in the school Eisteddfod and by visiting local places of interest. Through close links with the community and valuable

opportunities in school, pupils of all ages develop a sound understanding of how to run a business.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and staff provide a caring and secure environment for pupils, which meets requirements and is not a cause for concern. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' regular attendance are sound.

Leadership and management

Since his appointment last year, the headteacher has implemented robust and effective leadership strategies. He has developed a strong senior leadership team and, jointly, they ensure that all members of staff understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively. During the year, the headteacher has worked diligently with the staff and governors to develop a whole-school vision and to implement improvement in the school's strategic and day-to-day practices. In addition, the headteacher has created a safe and secure environment for the pupils.

The headteacher has high expectations of himself, staff and pupils. Staff model and promote professional values and behaviour that contribute positively to the school environment. They have high standards and are ambitious for their pupils. The headteacher has strengthened the ability of staff to work as an effective team. The working relationships between staff and with pupils reflect the school's inclusive ethos successfully. The school places a high priority on ensuring that all staff understand their role in delivering teaching across the school particular strength is the way that teaching assistants effectively join with teachers in supporting different areas of learning and experience.

During the year, the senior management team has established a valuable cycle of school self-evaluation processes. All staff have conducted comprehensive monitoring activities which have a clear focus on improving the provision and the school's performance. In a short space of time, leaders have shown the capacity to implement improvement strategy well, for example successfully improving younger pupils' reading skills. However, whilst progress on the development of number work has been effective, leaders have failed to recognise the important gaps in the provision of the maths curriculum.

The school's performance management arrangements match with whole-school priorities well. Professional learning opportunities are utilised effectively to strengthen staff knowledge and understanding. For example, the training for curriculum design has resulted in teachers' 'concepts' planning, which has led to successful cross phase collaboration. The school is making good progress in implementing change in response to the Welsh Government's ALN reform, and more recently the school priorities align with national and local priorities well. Although leaders are beginning to plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in formal and informal situations, it is too early to see its full effect on provision, standards and pupils' progress.

The school shares important information with parents in a timely and clear way. Leaders establish productive relationships with families and most parents feel that they have easy access to leaders to offer suggestions or to raise any issues, which they feel the school deals with promptly.

Members of the governing body are very supportive of, all of the school's work. They contribute effectively to monitoring activities and this helps them to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge of pupils' standards of learning. They receive reports from the headteacher each term that highlight the school's life and work. Governors work effectively with leaders and pupils by ensuring that the school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. They have an in depth understanding of the requirements of their duties and responsibilities.

Leaders and governors manage finances effectively and organise the school's resources effectively. They review spending regularly and take suitable actions where necessary. The school uses the pupil development grant creatively to improve the literacy and numeracy skills and well-being of pupils eligible for free school meals and those from low-income households. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points. Grant expenditure also allows beneficial professional learning opportunities in response to national priorities. School leaders establish and maintain a strong safeguarding culture at the school.

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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