



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

A report on

Roch C.P. School

**Roch
Haverfordwest
Pembrokeshire
SA62 6JU**

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

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

About Roch C.P. School

Name of provider	Roch C.P. School
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	144
Pupils of statutory school age	118
Number in nursery classes	6
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%)	6.1%
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%)	8.5%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	04/01/2016
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	17/11/2015
Start date of inspection	16/10/2023

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

Roch C.P. School is a caring and supportive school community, focused on pupils' well-being.

Across the school, teachers provide exciting learning experiences that make good use of the locality and build on pupils' interests. They promote the Welsh language, culture and heritage well. In addition, there are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in sport and music.

Generally, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Most have positive attitudes to learning and, as a result, they make steady progress in most lessons. There is a strong, established culture of safeguarding, and there is no doubt that all adults have pupils' safety and well-being at heart. However, a few matters concerning record keeping were drawn to leaders' attention during the inspection.

Over time, most pupils make steady progress in acquiring the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need. They make effective progress in speaking and listening, developing their digital and creative skills and in learning the Welsh language. Most make suitable progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. However, opportunities to challenge the most able pupils are sometimes restricted by worksheets and over directed tasks. Similarly, in a few instances, less able pupils or those with barriers to their learning are not provided with appropriate learning activities.

Leaders make appropriate plans for ongoing improvement. Generally, these result in tangible improvements, for example in introducing a new curriculum. However, leaders' monitoring, evaluation and review processes are not consistently methodical and systematic enough to lead to improvements to classroom practice and pupils' outcomes.

Recommendations

- R1 Address the safeguarding record keeping concerns that were identified during the inspection
- R2 Sharpen monitoring, evaluation and review processes to focus tightly on improvement to classroom practice and pupils' outcomes
- R3 Ensure that the classroom provision across the school delivers appropriate challenges for all pupils, including the more able, those with barriers to their learning and those with additional needs

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

Nearly all pupils start in the nursery class with levels of communication, personal and social skills at or above the expected level for their age. Overall, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding appropriately across the areas of learning and experience. Most pupils, including the few who are eligible for free school meals, make at least the progress they should. However, the most able and those who need additional support, on occasions, make slower progress because the provision does not always challenge them, or match their needs well enough.

In the younger classes, many pupils listen appropriately and follow instructions. Most speak confidently and have good language and communication skills for their age. They interact successfully with adults and each other. As they move through the school, most pupils make good progress with their oracy skills and use a wide vocabulary. By Year 6, most pupils listen well and respond thoughtfully to adults' questions. They recall information and facts and make links in their learning, for example recalling reported information about historic UFO sightings at Broadhaven.

Throughout the school, most pupils develop their reading skills well. They are enthusiastic about reading and develop a love of books, supported by a new and well-resourced school library. Younger pupils develop a good understanding of letter sounds and use picture cues to support their early reading skills. By Year 2, most pupils read simple texts fluently and with expression. Older pupils read self-chosen books and class texts at an appropriate level and develop their comprehension skills suitably. However, as they read with more competence and understanding, they do not develop reading skills, such as skimming, scanning, inference, and deduction, well enough.

Most pupils' writing skills develop suitably and nearly all pupils write for a range of purposes, using a range of stimuli, across the curriculum. However, pupils' progress in writing is inconsistent. More able pupils particularly do not develop their fluency in extended writing well enough, often because their writing is constrained by worksheets. A few pupils find writing at length laborious and difficult.

The school has a strong Welsh language ethos, and most pupils use familiar language patterns well across the school. Most younger pupils respond enthusiastically to basic instructions and greetings. They enjoy singing songs in Welsh and count to ten and beyond. By Year 2, most pupils ask and answer straightforward questions confidently. By the time they leave Roch, many pupils are proficient in using more complex sentences and a wider range of vocabulary, for example to read in Welsh about alien visitors to the locality.

As they move through the school, most pupils develop their mathematics skills appropriately. Most pupils develop a secure understanding of numbers and place value. Younger pupils use two-dimensional shapes to form patterns and know the properties of familiar shapes. Older pupils manipulate data accurately, for example calculating the range and mean of a dataset and arranging the rows in ascending or descending order, by different variables. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 apply their numeracy skills well. For example, during a visit to the local chapel graveyard they select from the variety of subtraction methods that they have practised in class, to calculate the ages and birthdates of the deceased.

Older pupils particularly develop their creative and physical skills well. For example, in Years 4 and 5, pupils develop and refine a variety of skills as they select, measure, cut and assemble fabrics to represent weather symbols, as part of their 'Great Storm' topic. Pupils in the Nursery and Reception class work collaboratively to create a class robot from a cardboard box. Many of the youngest pupils develop their gross motor skills well and ride balance bikes adeptly, and many older pupils play a range of team sports collaboratively with increasing skill. They improve their resilience as they practise and refine their skills through a range of activities such as swimming, ball skills and team games.

Across the school, most pupils develop a wide range of digital skills to support their learning and to help them communicate and manipulate information successfully. Many younger pupils confidently programme digital toys, and log into digital devices independently. Older pupils develop proficient digital skills and apply these well across the curriculum. For example, Years 5 and 6 use digital devices collaboratively to create original pieces of sci-fi music to add to their recorded news reports.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils show pride in their school and the majority feel safe within its nurturing environment. Most feel that adults listen carefully to their views, and they know who to speak to if they need help.

The warm and caring relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school. This enables most pupils to learn and develop as well-rounded individuals. Nearly all pupils are courteous and welcoming to adults and visitors. Most pupils behave well in class and around the school. Nearly all pupils show care for each other and respect the contributions of other pupils. However, a very few pupils refuse to engage fully with learning activities. When this happens, they disrupt the learning of others.

During lessons, most pupils demonstrate a positive attitude towards their learning and show suitable levels of engagement and concentration. Generally, pupils listen attentively to teachers' instructions and concentrate well on their work during lessons. They collaborate successfully in pairs and in groups, and most make worthwhile contributions to class discussions. In the youngest classes particularly, most pupils develop their independent learning skills well. Across the school, pupils enjoy following instructions and remain on task to complete activities. Where the tasks are more challenging, many pupils are beginning to develop resilience and persevere with their work.

Many pupils enjoy taking part in extra-curricular activities and representing the school in competitions, for example football, netball, and cross country. Most pupils clearly enjoy learning and playing outdoors. There are regular opportunities to play on the extensive school grounds, that effectively promote pupils' well-being.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily. They understand the benefit of physical exercise on their health and many develop the skills to talk about and manage their feelings. This has been enhanced with the introduction of several new initiatives to support pupils in managing their emotions. As a result, most pupils have a secure knowledge of the importance of developing good physical and emotional well-being.

Many pupils are increasingly becoming ethical and informed citizens. They demonstrate a growing sense of empathy and compassion towards others through their values tree, and their awareness of diversity and equality is developing appropriately. For example, older pupils worked with the Children's Laureate to create poems exploring their own identity and their place in the world. Most pupils show a developing awareness of the children's rights and can explain how these have an impact on other pupils' and their own daily lives.

Most pupils know how to stay safe online and how to recognise potential risks. For example, older pupils confidently explain the actions they would take to keep safe when engaged in online chats and games.

Most pupils value the oral feedback they receive from teachers during lessons. Older pupils contribute well to opportunities to reflect on their own work and are beginning to understand how this helps them to learn. However, overall, pupils do not have enough opportunities to think through problems, reflect on their work or identify their next steps in learning.

Levels of attendance remain lower than they were before the pandemic. A few pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school has a clear vision for the curriculum that stems from its distinctive, rural locality and a strong culture of cynefin. Staff ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced by providing many inventive learning opportunities intrinsically linked to the history and culture of Roch and Wales. For instance, older pupils effectively research the impact of climate change on the Pembrokeshire coastline. Pupils enjoy their time outdoors connecting with nature. The youngest pupils learn valuable skills and knowledge as well as developing their active play. However, on occasions in the older classes, staff miss valuable opportunities to use the immediate outdoor areas to support specific skills or area of learning.

Teachers worked with the local secondary schools to design Roch's personalised curriculum, starting with the skills that pupils need by the end of their time at the school. The school's curriculum themes are exciting and engaging and allow most pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding well. Class teachers consult with pupils to develop learning in line with termly themes. This allows pupils to take ownership of their learning, and influence the topics that teachers deliver, according

to their interests. However, teachers do not plan well enough to ensure that pupils develop and use their skills progressively in their work across the curriculum.

In the youngest class, the provision supports nearly all pupils to develop independence and enthusiasm in their learning. Pupils across the school have opportunities to make mistakes, explore and problem-solve in a safe and structured environment. However, on occasions across the school, teachers tend to over direct the learning. Where this happens, pupils do not have the opportunity to think and learn independently.

The school's varied curriculum enables most pupils to develop a wide vocabulary and good oracy and communication skills. In the most effective lessons teachers use language to challenge pupils. For example, in the Nursery and Reception class pupils use the word 'malfunction' to describe what was wrong with a robot. In lessons, there is appropriate provision for reading, writing, numeracy and digital skills. However, too often teachers rely on generic prompts and worksheets that do not always match pupils' needs well enough. A few find the tasks too easy, and a few do not understand what is expected of them. When pupils are engaged in their learning, behaviour is generally good. However, on a very few occasions and particularly where the match of task is incorrect, pupils' concentration wanes, they go off task and their behaviour deteriorates.

The school community shares high aspirations for the development of Welsh language skills and celebrates Welsh culture with pride. Most teachers develop pupils' Welsh language skills well, both in formal situations and incidentally throughout the day. Colourful displays promote the Welsh culture well. For example, older pupils create high-quality artwork, inspired by the work of Welsh artist Mary Lloyd Jones. There are worthwhile opportunities to extend the pupils' broader learning experiences in a Welsh context. For example, pupils had the opportunity to compose a cluster song with a Welsh language singer songwriter, and also to attend a concert given by a Welsh language rock band. Despite the school's remote location, nearly all pupils have opportunities to investigate and understand the culturally diverse nature of modern-day Wales.

Most adults explain new concepts well and provide clear guidance that enable pupils to undertake their work appropriately. They outline tasks clearly to pupils and help them understand what to do and how to do it. Many teachers have strong subject knowledge and provide clear objectives for pupils' learning. They use a range of good quality resources and develop purposeful learning environments to engage and support learners.

In lessons, most teachers use a variety of effective questions to assess pupils' understanding and to rectify any misconceptions. However, not all teachers further extend thinking by asking probing questions. Adults, including skilled learning support assistants, use verbal feedback well during lessons to help pupils take their next steps and move forward in their learning. Often, teachers use the opportunity to provide older pupils with valuable written feedback. In the best cases, feedback allows pupils to further refine their work, for example to redraft their writing.

Nearly all staff develop strong working relationships with pupils. Teaching assistants work successfully alongside teachers and contribute positively to the promotion of

pupils' learning and well-being. They encourage pupils to be respectful and courteous, which leads to a supportive ethos that permeates the school.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a welcoming community where well-being is a priority. The school's ethos and vision ensure that all pupils have regular opportunities to participate fully in the life of the school. Together with pupils and parents, all staff build positive professional relationships with learners and their families across the school.

Most pupils have a strong sense of cultural identity. They enjoy celebrating their own culture and language and that of their peers, and have an appropriate understanding of diversity, equalities and inequalities, and modern-day Wales.

Staff support pupils to discuss children's rights and how to be responsible citizens in society. They refer to the United Nations' articles on the rights of the child and the need to treat everyone with respect. Pupils enjoy taking part in community events, such as officially opening a National Trust footpath linking the village of Roch to the coast path at Newgale Beach and fundraising for national charities. Teachers provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of sustainability.

Leaders promote an active culture of safeguarding across the school and have developed sound systems to ensure pupils' safety. However, a few matters concerned with record keeping were drawn to leaders' attention during the inspection.

The provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Staff ensure that pupils consider moral values such as trust, honesty and respect through whole-school assemblies and class work. They also support pupils in a positive manner to develop an awareness of right and wrong. The school has reviewed their behaviour management strategy as a result of staff training and discussions with pupils, and recently introduced a new initiative. However, this is at an early stage of development and currently, there are inconsistencies in the way adults manage pupils' behaviour, and the use of rewards and sanctions across the school. It is too early to evaluate the impact of the new strategy, but during this period of change, inappropriate behaviour is not always acknowledged or dealt with effectively enough.

The headteacher fulfils the role of the school's ALNCo (additional learning needs co-ordinator) appropriately, in addition to his many other responsibilities. Staff identify pupils' needs at an early stage to provide them with support and school liaises well with a wide range of external agencies. Working together, practitioners across the school have developed their knowledge of many additional needs, for example those pupils who have experienced trauma in their lives, in addition to specific barriers to learning. The school provides an appropriate range of interventions, alongside emotional and well-being support programmes, that are delivered by skilled learning support assistants. However, on occasions, the support for pupils with ALN on a day-to-day basis in class is not adapted precisely enough to address their individual and specific needs. In addition, the school's assessment systems do not support the review and evaluation of this group of pupils' progress well enough.

There are suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and to have a voice in school life, particularly in influencing their own learning in the classrooms and within their topics. However, opportunities for pupils to have a wider influence in decision-making, for example through the work of the school council, are limited.

Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in performances and events locally. For example, there are worthwhile experiences for pupils to compete in the school eisteddfod and various sports competitions. These experiences are effective in developing many pupils' self-confidence, in addition to their ability to work productively as a member of a team.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear vision for the school that is shared by everyone and focused on meeting pupils' needs. They understand and work effectively with the local community to the benefit of the pupils. There are strong partnership workings, for example with other schools and providers including the local playgroup.

There is a strong emphasis on pupils' and staff well-being throughout the school. Leaders have ensured that all staff understand and promote the school's safeguarding culture. Together, leaders have fostered a caring and supportive school community. They have a good understanding of pupils' home circumstances and what will make a positive difference to their lives.

There has been a period of staffing turbulence recently that has resulted in a few inconsistencies to the provision. Nevertheless, overall, the staff undertake their roles and responsibilities professionally and conscientiously. They collaborate well together to deliver effective classroom provision that enables most pupils to make progress in line with expectations.

Leaders and staff work together to understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement and devise appropriately planned actions for future development. Leaders listen to learners and their colleagues' views about how to improve the provision. However, their monitoring activities are wide ranging and are not always well enough focused on evaluating the impact of the planned improvements on pupils' outcomes. For example, where pupils from the same cohort are placed in across more than one class, leaders' monitoring does not consider where their progress differs.

There are suitable performance management arrangements and worthwhile opportunities for professional learning, for example regarding improvements to the curriculum and the provision for teaching reading. However, currently the quality assurance process is not planned methodically and systematically enough and does not result in clearly documented evidence. This means that staff do not receive formal feedback to identify what they do well, or where they could make improvements to the quality of their classroom practice and their learners' outcomes.

Leaders pay good attention to local and national priorities. For example, they have made beneficial progress in promoting the Welsh language and designing the

school's bespoke Curriculum for Wales. They make effective use of grants to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable to under achievement, for example subsidising opportunities that they may otherwise struggle to take advantage of, such as school trips and visits, free breaktime fruit, and the loan of laptops. There is a valuable free uniform exchange, to support families. In addition, all older pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument.

Parents are loyal supporters of the school and its ethos. For example, the Friends of Roch School fund trips and visits as part of the curriculum offer, to make sure that no child is left out. Recently, the school has restarted monthly parents' newsletters, following the pandemic. However, on occasions, parents do not receive pertinent or sensitive information or explanations readily enough, for example about their child's new class and teacher for the forthcoming school year, or to support them in understanding changes to the reading scheme.

Governors know the school and its pupils, parents and the local community well. They are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of many of the challenges the school faces. Their visits to school provide opportunities to meet with teachers and leaders and to inform themselves first-hand about the school and its work. Governors ensure that the school promotes healthy eating and drinking. The school manages its limited finances effectively. There are a suitable number of staff and resources, and spending is monitored carefully.

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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Publication date: 18/12/2023