



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

## **Report following monitoring**

**Level of follow-up: Special measures**

**Richmond Park Primary School  
Priory Street  
Carmarthen  
Carmarthenshire  
SA31 1HF**

**Date of visit: November 2023**

**by**

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

## Outcome of visit

Richmond Park Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

As a result, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **R1. Improve leadership and ensure that evaluation processes focus on identifying the difference that teaching and learning experiences make to pupils' progress**

Leadership across the school is now strong. The headteacher provides clear strategic direction and has high expectations around the quality of teaching and learning and communicates these well. Governors and the recently appointed assistant headteachers provide effective support and leadership. They help to create a positive ethos of continued improvement where staff are reflective and unafraid to ask for support. Regular staff meetings provide purposeful opportunities for staff to discuss how they can improve teaching and learning.

Leaders provide a beneficial range of support and development to help staff to improve their practice. They signpost staff to relevant professional learning, model teaching and work alongside staff to support their development in key areas. For example, senior leaders have modelled effective approaches to teaching reading and writing. Leaders carefully evaluate the impact that professional development and support has on the quality of teaching and learning, adjusting professional development approaches when necessary. This has resulted in improved staff knowledge and notable improvements in teaching and learning.

The headteacher uses performance management processes effectively and she robustly holds teachers to account. Senior leaders support her well in this work. The recent introduction of 'staff profiles' helps to provide staff with ownership of their professional development. As a result, staff feel more confident and have regular professional dialogue about areas of strength and areas for improvement. Leaders have now established clear expectations for the teaching of reading, writing, mathematical skills and Welsh at the school. They ensure that their feedback to staff impacts appropriately on practice. For example, the foundation learning lead has worked with staff to improve the consistency in the organisation of learning environments across the phase.

Leaders carry out a range of self-evaluation activities with a clear focus on learning. They have adopted a worthwhile approach to school improvement looking at areas for improvement holistically. This supports leaders to have a clear understanding of school strengths and areas for improvement. For example, leaders have identified the need to refine mathematics schemes to provide further opportunity for pupils to develop their reasoning skills. Leaders now provide governors with more focused

reports on progress in teaching and learning. However, work to involve governors in gathering first-hand evidence is at an early stage of development.

Leaders have thoughtfully considered how they can involve pupils and parents in their school improvement journey and have captured pupil and parent views on reading through questionnaires. As a result, a new pupil leadership team, 'The Bookworms,' has been established and the school has run worthwhile parent sessions to share how reading is taught at the school.

Leaders have prioritised funding to purchase suitable resources to enhance provision for pupils and to support the improvement of reading skills. For example, pupils are beginning to benefit from the recently established school library.

## **R2. Improve teaching and assessment, particularly from Year 3 to Year 6**

The quality of teaching and assessment shows notable improvement across the school. Overall, teachers deliver engaging learning experiences that support pupils to make good progress. Teachers now have a more consistent approach to the development of pupils' skills. For example, there is a systematic approach to the teaching of reading that ensures many pupils make appropriate progress from their individual starting points. In most cases, teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners.

Most teachers now have high expectations of pupils and use the school's approach to the teaching of skills, such as literacy, numeracy and Welsh, effectively. This helps to ensure that teachers provide appropriate levels of challenge for pupils. Regular professional learning has helped staff to develop their practice effectively. For example, they have a clear understanding of how to improve pupils' writing through the use of effective feedback and questioning. As a result, pupils' skills develop progressively and over time.

Overall, teachers use questioning successfully to check and expand pupils' understanding. They generally use support staff well to carry out focused observations or assessments of pupils' learning. This provides teachers with beneficial information to help them plan the next steps in learning or make changes to the learning environment. For example, in the younger classes, teachers use feedback from teaching assistants to adjust provision so that it suitably challenges and engages pupils in their learning.

The school's approach to marking pupils' work is now more consistent. For example, most teachers identify pupils' strengths in writing as well as areas for improvement. Pupils often respond to teachers' marking, for example by answering a post task question or challenge that a teacher has left for them. However, a few teachers are at the early stages of improving their feedback to pupils.

## **R3. Improve the curriculum and provision for the progressive development of pupils' skills**

The school's curriculum is now more coherent providing a broad and balanced range of stimulating activities that support the development of pupils' skills well. Teachers now plan effectively to ensure that pupils build on their learning from previous

lessons and classes. This contributes successfully to ensuring that most pupils make good progress in the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding during lessons and over time.

In most cases, teachers plan topics, lessons and activities that interest and stimulate pupils. Pupils find these most engaging where they link to real life and authentic activities, for example when using their literacy, numeracy and social skills to read recipes and bake cakes for a charity fund raising coffee morning.

The school's focus on improving pupils' writing has resulted in improvements in the quality and consistency of their work. Teachers now have a clear understanding of how to develop pupils' writing skills progressively. They consistently plan well to ensure that lessons build on relevant skills and specific subject knowledge. Pupils now use their understanding of the features of different texts to write across a wide range of genres and in other areas of the curriculum. In nearly all cases, this is at a similar level to their specific literacy lessons.

Recently, the school has focused more on developing pupils' reading skills. Effective professional learning for staff now ensures consistent approaches to teaching reading across the school. As a result, pupils' skills have improved and there is a positive reading culture in the school. For example, many pupils are keen to talk about the books they are reading at home and in school, and what they like about them. Pupils increasingly use their reading skills to support their learning across the curriculum. For example, they use online resources to find out about St Fagan's Museum considering any words they are unsure of and researching their meaning.

The use of Welsh is embedded into the life of the school. Staff frequently use the language as part of daily routines, to give instruction and to converse generally with pupils and each other. The school's scheme of work for Welsh is beginning to help pupils to develop their skills progressively over time.

The school has a clear and consistent approach towards the development of pupils' numeracy skills. It has introduced a scheme of work for the progressive development of pupils' mathematics skills and is now adapting this to ensure that pupils have sufficient competency before moving on to new topics. The school has begun to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics skills across the curriculum. Teachers plan well to ensure that, when pupils practise and apply their mathematics skills in their topic work, it is at a suitably challenging level and builds on recent learning during mathematics lessons. For example, during a cookery session, pupils in Year 6 apply the skills they learnt in their mathematics lesson effectively to convert milligrams to grams and kilograms. The school ensures suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills and has implemented a consistent approach to support pupils to solve mathematical problems from Year 3 to Year 6.

#### **R4. Address the safeguarding issue that was identified during the inspection**

The school has addressed the safeguarding concerns that were identified during the core inspection.

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