



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: Significant improvement

**Saltney Ferry C.P. School
Saltney Ferry Road
Saltney Ferry
Chester
Flintshire
CH4 0BN**

Date of visit: February 2024

by

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

Outcome of visit

Saltney Ferry 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 significant improvement.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Improve pupils' reading and writing skills

Leaders have introduced a suitable range of initiatives to support the development of pupils' reading skills across the school. For example, guided reading sessions and targeted support for individual pupils all ensure that many pupils' reading skills develop soundly. As they move through the school, most pupils develop a positive attitude towards reading. For example, younger pupils develop a love of reading through retelling the story of the three bears confidently.

Many younger pupils develop a useful understanding of letters and sounds quickly and use this well to help them read unfamiliar words and simple texts with increasing confidence. By Year 3, a majority of pupils develop an appropriate range of strategies to read suitably. They respond to what they read and express their viewpoints confidently, for instance whether they think a character in a story has behaved well. However, a minority do not engage with a wide enough range of texts or read aloud fluently. By Year 5 and Year 6, many pupils read accurately in broad range of contexts, for instance when researching information on different places in Wales. They read texts with increasing fluency and vary their tone purposefully. They consider what they read thoughtfully and use this to predict what might happen in a story with close reference to the text.

Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills and to ensure that they expand and deepen their understanding of spelling and punctuation systematically as they move through the school. As a result, a majority of pupils' writing skills develop well, particularly at the upper end of the school.

Most pupils' early writing skills develop effectively. The youngest pupils make marks purposefully and confidently both inside and outside of the classroom. They form letters correctly and write simple words appropriately. By Year 2, many pupils develop their writing skills suitably. They are beginning to write well in a range of contexts and use a varied vocabulary to add interest to their writing, for example when adapting traditional stories. By Year 6, many pupils' writing is thoughtful and engaging. They use a good range of punctuation to structure their work and generally spell accurately. Many are developing a fluent handwriting style and present their work with care. In a few classes, over-direction by staff hinders pupils' progress in writing freely and independently.

R2. Improve pupils' Welsh language and their digital skills

Throughout the school, teachers use Welsh with pupils regularly and purposefully. They ensure that pupils have beneficial opportunities to practise and develop their Welsh language skills in Welsh lessons and throughout the curriculum. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils take pride in their Welsh heritage and language. As a result, many pupils' Welsh language skills are developing well.

In nursery and reception, many pupils respond well to adults when they speak Welsh. For example, when staff ask them about the weather they respond confidently with words, such as 'bwrw glaw' (raining). They greet others using 'bore da' confidently and understand and use simple words confidently throughout the day. By Year 2, many pupils have a good vocabulary, for instance when discussing with their friends how they are feeling. A majority are beginning to use Welsh in their everyday activities independently, for example when asking others if they can have a pencil or rubber in Welsh independently. In Year 5 and Year 6, most pupils share their likes and dislikes, and talk to others about what they want to do, accurately. Many are beginning to develop an understanding of how to use simple sentences in different tenses. For example, they ask others what the weather is like today, what the weather was like yesterday and what they think the weather will be like tomorrow.

Teachers provide pupils with a strong range of opportunities to develop their digital skills in specific lessons and build regular opportunities into the wider curriculum for pupils to use these skills purposefully. This ensures that many pupils develop their digital skills competently.

In the youngest classes, a majority of pupils use tablet computers purposefully. For example, they scan QR codes independently to access videos of their teacher explaining different tasks. Many pupils in Year 1 log-on to their tablet computers independently, record videos and take photographs to create simple 'stop-go' animations. By Year 5 and Year 6, many pupils use a broad range of digital skills confidently. They log-on to their on-line classrooms to locate assignments and save their work competently. They choose carefully from an appropriate range of apps to record and share their learning, for instance using different apps to make imaginative presentations following their research about different animals. Many are beginning to develop a useful understanding of how to use spreadsheets to record and manipulate data simply. For example, they record data about temperatures in Wales and are beginning to understand how to use simple formula to find the average of those temperatures. Many pupils understand how to use basic coding, for example when coding a micro-computer to count the number of steps they take during an activity.

R3. Ensure that teachers maintain high expectations, and challenge all pupils to achieve consistently

A majority of teachers are newly appointed to the school since the core inspection. Leaders have provided a useful range of professional learning to help teachers understand important principles, such as how to ensure that pupils are challenged appropriately and how to use classroom assessment practices to help pupils make suitable progress. In general, teachers implement these practices well.

In many sessions, teachers plan pupils' learning effectively and have clear objectives for the learning experiences. In most cases, they have suitably high expectations of all pupils and challenge them to achieve appropriately. For example, when creating an information leaflet, teachers challenge pupils to use more descriptive phrases or write part of the leaflet in Welsh. However, in a few instances group work does not challenge all pupils sufficiently well.

All teachers use skilful questioning to challenge pupils' thinking and to help develop their understanding. Where this is particularly effective, teachers use questioning to help pupils recall prior learning and link it thoughtfully with their current learning activities. Many teachers monitor pupils while they are working and intervene at appropriate times to provide effective support or challenge. However, in few cases this is not always done well enough and as a result a minority of pupils make too little useful progress in learning sessions.

Most teachers provide pupils with helpful oral feedback that enables them to know what they have achieved well and what they need to do next to improve. In many cases, teachers' written feedback supports pupils' learning purposefully. Teachers generally provide older pupils with beneficial opportunities to consider this feedback and make suitable improvements to their work. Many older pupils are beginning to evaluate their own work and that of their peers helpfully. They understand that they need to follow the guidance that teachers have given them, and do so positively.

R4. Implement effective procedures to evaluate the work of the school and address identified areas for improvement robustly

There have been significant changes to the leadership structure of the school since the core inspection in September 2022. At present, the school is being led by an acting headteacher, who is the school's substantive deputy headteacher.

Following the core inspection, leaders at the school set in place suitable strategies to evaluate areas of the school's work, such as how well teachers implement whole-school initiatives in classes. These processes led to leaders having a clear picture of how well pupils were making progress and where further improvements were needed. For example, they helped to identify the strong progress pupils were making in developing their digital skills and where teachers needed to challenge them further. However, since September, leaders have not planned strategies to monitor the work of the school carefully enough and their evaluations have not focused well enough on pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure that they work closely with the local authority and regional improvement services to help improve this area of the school's work.

A minority of governors are beginning to be more involved in helping to scrutinise practices in school and in speaking to pupils to understand their experiences. This is beginning to help them have a better first-hand knowledge of how the school's improvement journey is progressing.

R5. Ensure that planned learning experiences build on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding systematically

Leaders have developed a clear structure to help support the progressive and continuous development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh language skills over time. Teachers plan and work together beneficially using whole-school themes to further ensure coherence in pupils' learning journey. As a result, pupils' reading, writing, digital and Welsh skills generally develop well across the school. However, planning for the development of skills across other areas of learning, such as humanities and science and technology, remain at an early stage of development. On a few occasions, teachers still plan activities that are not appropriate for the age and stage of development of pupils.

In lessons, teachers build purposefully upon pupils' knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy, and digital skills through clearly defined success criteria with differing levels of challenge. Pupils are an integral part of the learning process and choose their challenges appropriately. Teachers evaluate their lessons thoughtfully and this is beginning to help develop pupils' learning more systematically.

In a majority of classes, teachers plan suitable opportunities for pupils to build on their literacy, numeracy and digital skills during independent activities in the younger classes and during 'mission tasks' for older pupils. However, in a few cases, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to develop these skills independently, both within and outside of the classroom.

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