



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

A report on
Nant Celyn Primary School

**Henllys Way
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 DJ**

Date of inspection: April 2024

by

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

This inspection was undertaken as part of trying out our new inspection arrangements. As a result, this report may be slightly different in format to other published reports for providers in the sector.

About Nant Celyn Primary School

Name of provider	Nant Celyn Primary School
Local authority	Torfaen County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Religious character	N/A
Number of pupils on roll	467
Pupils of statutory school age	357
Number in nursery classes	51
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 23.7%)	32.9%
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 13.2%)	22.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (categories A-C)	1.4%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/09/2012
Start date of inspection	22/04/2024

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.

Summary

Leaders and staff at Nant Celyn are developing a vision for the school focused on pupil well-being and raising standards. There is a growing sense of teamwork and a shared purpose to improve the school's work. The school promotes inclusivity and is working to integrate this ethos more strongly into the curriculum.

Pupil well-being is a strength of the school, with a nurturing environment that supports pupils' personal development well. Staff have high expectations for behaviour, which is generally very good. A few pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour, but the school addresses this effectively.

Most pupils enter the school with expected language, numeracy, and social skills. The quality of teaching ensures that most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those at risk of underachievement because of the impact of socio-economic disadvantage, make good progress. However, overall, the curriculum is not broad enough, does not support the development of pupils' digital, physical, and creative skills, and does not provide enough opportunities for outdoor learning.

The school has recently refined its maths teaching, providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge. Staff act as positive language role models, helping pupils to develop strong oracy skills. Most pupils become effective writers and develop a love of reading.

Provision for pupils with ALN is well co-ordinated. Staff identify those requiring additional support and intervene swiftly to address any gaps in learning.

Staff have positive relationships with many parents. Leaders are working to enhance the home-school relationship and improve communication. Governors are supportive and well informed but recognise the need to gather more first-hand evidence to hold leaders to account.

Recommendations

We have made one recommendation to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Broaden the curriculum to build upon its existing strengths and ensure the progressive development of pupils' digital, creative and physical skills

What happens next

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

Main findings

Following a period of turbulence in staffing and governance, the recently appointed headteacher is working well with leaders and staff to develop a vision for the school based around supporting pupil well-being and raising standards. There is an increasing sense of teamwork within the school and a shared sense of purpose to improve the quality and impact of its work. There is a strong culture of inclusivity that is shared and supported by staff across the school. Leaders ensure the close integration of pupils that attend the special needs resource bases (SNRBs) into the life and work of the school. They are working well to strengthen this ethos further by raising pupils' awareness of the importance of celebrating diversity and the inclusion of people from different backgrounds and ethnicities, as well as people with differing spiritual beliefs and personal relationships. They recognise a need to integrate this more strongly into the school's curriculum.

Provision for pupils' well-being is a strength of the school. Its nurturing environment supports pupils' personal development greatly and helps them to thrive. Staff know pupils well and develop strong working relationships with them. They have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and model this through their interactions with each other and pupils. Across the school, staff treat pupils respectfully and fairly and provide them with valuable opportunities to consider moral and social issues. This is reciprocated by pupils who show respect for staff, each other, and visitors. Overall, the behaviour of nearly all pupils is very good. Occasionally, a very few pupils demonstrate challenging and disruptive behaviour.

Supporting pupils to regulate their emotions

The school addresses the challenging behaviour of a very few pupils positively and comprehensively, providing them with opportunities to identify their emotions and a vocabulary to describe and manage their feelings. This positive approach, combined with a curriculum targeted towards their specific needs, has been effective in reducing the number of instances of poor behaviour.

A majority of pupils enter the school with language, numeracy and social skills that are at the level expected for their age. The strength of teaching in the school helps to ensure that, over time, most pupils make good progress in their learning and well-being. This includes pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), those in the SNRBs and those at risk of underachieving because of the effects of socio-economic disadvantage. Staff use effective questioning and provide clear feedback to pupils that supports good progress. Teachers deliver a curriculum that enables the successful development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Whilst there are real strengths in the school's curriculum overall and pockets of very effective practice, there is not sufficient breadth to what pupils learn. In particular, pupils do not develop their digital, physical and creative skills to the extent of which they are capable, and they do not have enough opportunities to develop and apply their skills in the school's extensive outdoor areas.

The recent focus on refining the teaching of maths has provided pupils with more opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the full range of the mathematics curriculum. Teachers ensure regular opportunities for pupils to apply

their numeracy skills in their learning. For instance, pupils in Year 6 investigate the differences in poverty levels in Cwmbran and Newport and represent their findings through line graphs.

Staff act as positive language role models, which helps pupils to develop strong oracy skills over time. This is a particularly strong feature in the SNRBs. As a result of the school's recent refocus on the teaching of writing, most pupils across the school become effective authors writing for a wide range of purposes by the time they leave the school. They read well and develop a love of reading and books. This starts from an early age with pupils in Reception enjoying choosing and sharing engaging story books. Younger pupils make quick progress with their Welsh skills and are generally enthusiastic when using simple words and phrases in class. This progress slows as they reach the oldest classes and too few pupils develop a sufficiently broad Welsh language vocabulary by the time they leave the school.

Provision for pupils with ALN is well co-ordinated and meets the needs of most pupils who need extra support to learn. Staff identify pupils requiring additional support and provide effective intervention swiftly to prevent any gaps in learning. This effective approach begins in Nursery, carries on throughout the school and results in the good progress that most pupils with ALN make.

Staff have positive working relationships with many parents. Leaders are working strategically to enhance the relationship between home and school, break down barriers and improve the frequency and quality of the opportunities that parents have to engage with the school. Leaders have begun work on this, for example, by arranging for parents of pupils with ALN to take part in a coffee afternoon with staff and pupils. Communication with parents in the SNRBs is good. In these classes, staff use a range of strategies to communicate effectively with parents, such as home school books, phone calls and a class page on the school website. Parents of pupils in the SNRBs know they can contact the school for advice or help. Overall, leaders recognise the need to improve the consistency and quality of the way that the school responds to issues raised by parents.

Governors are supportive of the work of the school and kept well informed by the headteacher. They have a good understanding of the issues facing the school, such as the challenging financial situation and the influx of pupils with complex ALN. However, they recognise that their gathering of first-hand evidence about the quality of teaching, learning and pupil well-being is not sufficiently regular or strategic enough to help them hold leaders to account.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including use of the pupil development grant.

A site safety and security letter was issued to the local authority in relation to health and safety concerns.

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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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:

Publications Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Publication date: 26/06/2024