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

A report on

Pen-Y-Bryn Primary School
Dunster Road
Llanrumney
Cardiff
CF3 5TP

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by

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

About Pen-Y-Bryn Primary School

Pen-Y-Bryn Primary School is in the Llanrumney area of Cardiff. The school has 260 pupils aged between 3 and 11. There are eight classes, including the nursery.

The school's three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 36%. This is well above the average for Wales. The school identifies that around 24% of its pupils have additional learning needs. This is just above the average for Wales.

Most pupils are of white British ethnicity. Around 12% come from ethnic minority backgrounds and about 8% are learning English as an additional language. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. Thirteen pupils are in the care of the local authority.

The headteacher was appointed in July 2017. The school was last inspected in 2011.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en

Summary

Nearly all pupils are polite and happy, and enjoy coming to school. There is a very caring and inclusive ethos, which emphasises the wellbeing of pupils. Pupils show a high level of respect and tolerance towards others. Pupils are very well behaved and display positive attitudes towards learning. They contribute confidently to activities and class discussions. Nearly all pupils make good progress from their starting points. Most develop strong literacy and numeracy skills and appropriate information and communication technology (ICT) skills as they move through the school.

The quality of teaching across the school is good. There is a broad, balanced curriculum that engages nearly all pupils well. The school has purposeful arrangements that support pupils with additional, emotional and social needs effectively. The partnership between school and parents is a strength of the school.

The recently appointed headteacher has had a positive impact on many aspects of the life and work of the school. The school's self-evaluation processes identify the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. Staff and governors work well together in developing a strong vision for the school's future development.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	**Good**
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	**Good**
Teaching and learning experiences	**Good**
Care, support and guidance	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**

Recommendations

R1 Improve standards of handwriting and presentation

R2 Provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to communicate frequently in Welsh throughout the day

R3 Increase opportunities for pupils to contribute to the life and work of the school

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils begin school with skills and understanding below the level expected for their age. However, as they move through the school, nearly all pupils make good progress from their starting points. Pupils eligible for free school meals often make good progress and pupils with additional learning needs make strong progress by the end of key stage 2.

Pupils' oral skills develop well at an early stage. In the foundation phase, most use an increasing range of vocabulary successfully in various situations. They listen well and talk and discuss their work enthusiastically with adults and other pupils. Many respond appropriately to questioning, contribute usefully to class discussions and follow instructions accurately. Throughout key stage 2, oracy continues to develop well as pupils get older. For example, Year 6 pupils discuss the use of alliteration and personification when writing a suspense story and they debate the rights and wrongs of the use of drugs in sport articulately. Most contribute well to discussions, and express their opinions clearly and maturely.

Most pupils' reading skills in the foundation phase develop well. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds and are beginning to build words confidently. By the end of the phase, most develop as confident readers and read with accuracy and fluency. They show an interest in their books, enjoy listening to stories and discuss their content maturely, for example when holding a discussion about the life of fictitious dragons. In key stage 2, most read intelligently and with increasing fluency in various contexts, for example when reading and expressing an opinion about the contents of complaint letters. Most pupils read with understanding and talk about their favourite authors and stories with confidence. Older pupils use higher-order reading skills to research and locate information quickly in books and on the internet. However, a few pupils do not have enough reading strategies to help them progress further when stuck on more complex words.

In the foundation phase, many pupils choose voluntarily to take part in writing activities in areas of continuous and enhanced provision. Younger pupils recognise and use the features of a letter, for example when writing to a friend or visitor. In Year 2, pupils discuss and write instructions about how to look after a dragon. They write short pieces independently and make sensible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. As they move through the school, the majority of pupils produce writing of good quality across a range of genres. For example, in Year 3, they make good use of adjectives to describe a pirate. Most pupils in key stage 2 write across a suitable variety of genres. For example, they create amazing potions and stories, and write factual accounts from history. Older pupils choose adventurous vocabulary and nearly all write at length, using a good standard of spelling and punctuation. Most pupils use different techniques well to make their writing interesting. By the end of key stage 2, more able pupils express themselves maturely, using an extensive vocabulary. For example, they use metaphors, personification and interesting adjectives to create atmosphere in stories and poems. Most pupils generally write at the same level in other areas of learning as they do in their literacy lessons. Across the school, standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation are not as good as they could be.

Most pupils develop their mathematical skills well and are very enthusiastic during lessons. Most reception pupils have a secure understanding of one-to-one correspondence and create number sentences to five competently. In Year 2, many pupils develop a good knowledge of number bonds to at least 10 and for the more able to 100. They add and subtract well, and apply their knowledge to simple problems, for example when working out the cost of items in a shop. They use standard units appropriately to measure how far a car rolled down a slope and are able to read temperatures from a thermometer correctly. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils apply suitable calculation strategies to solve problems. They have a good understanding of shape and area and most use different units correctly for measuring and weighing. Many are able to work well with problems in algebra and can relate this to working out perimeters of irregular shapes. Pupils of all ages transfer their numeracy skills effectively to other areas of the curriculum, particularly when handling data and solving real-life problems, such as building a budget when designing a theme park in Year 6.

As pupils move through the school, most develop appropriate ICT skills. Younger pupils use digital cameras confidently. They use ICT packages well to present their work in different ways, including text, picture, and simple graphs. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils' ICT skills are good. For example, they take pictures of other pupils involved in PE and use the pictures and videos to coach each other to improve. Many interrogate and create simple databases and spreadsheets. Most pupils throughout key stage 2 can use ICT creatively, for example to capture whole school events, such as sports day and concerts. Older pupils create presentations during enterprise week, for example on how to make Welsh cakes, and they share these with other children and parents to entice them into buying their produce and increasing profits. Most older pupils have a good understanding of keeping safe on the internet.

The majority of pupils make good progress in developing basic skills in Welsh lessons. Foundation phase pupils learn vocabulary and simple sentence patterns linked to their topics, for example through songs and games. In designated Welsh lessons, key stage 2 pupils ask and answer questions with increased complexity related to their topics and a few are beginning to extend their sentences. Across the school, more able pupils read familiar Welsh books accurately, with good pronunciation and understanding. However, most pupils do not use their Welsh skills enough outside of their Welsh lessons throughout the school day.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know where to get help and support if they need it. Pupils understand the need to be careful when using the internet and know what to do if they have any concerns. Nearly all pupils use information from their learning well to help them to make sensible decisions about leading a healthy lifestyle. For example, pupils in Year 6 discuss maturely the use of drugs in sport, and many pupils across the school have taken part in a healthy cookery club. Many pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities that promote their physical wellbeing, such as cricket, rugby and zumba.

Nearly all pupils show care and consideration for each other and behave well in classes and around the school. Nearly all are courteous and welcoming to adults and visitors. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of the importance of

developing positive relationships with others. Nearly all pupils are developing well as tolerant, ethical and informed citizens.

Many pupils take an active part in the life of the school by taking on leadership roles, for example through the school and eco councils. They carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. For example, the eco committee has identified litter in the school grounds as a problem and this has led to the installation of new bins.

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes towards learning, and talk confidently and enthusiastically about school life, particularly in key stage 2. They concentrate well and tackle new work, using a range of useful self-help strategies, before asking an adult for support. Nearly all pupils collaborate well. For example, pupils in Year 5 worked effectively as a team to devise cost-effective shopping lists. Most pupils are considerate when listening to the views of others and share their own thoughts and ideas confidently. They show resilience when faced with problems and challenges. Most pupils develop their independent learning skills well. Pupils who act as digital leaders have made presentations to the whole school to boost pupils' understanding of how to stay safe online, and the school council was responsible for developing the school rules. Nearly all pupils have developed a sense of equality and fairness through planned activities and assemblies. For example, Cardiff City Football Club work with pupils on equality in sport.

Pupils' attendance has improved over the last five years, particularly last year, and it is good overall. Most pupils arrive in school on time; but several pupils arrived late during the period of the inspection and missed part, or all, of the morning assembly. The attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen significantly over the last two years.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Teachers across the school plan effectively to provide purposeful and relevant learning experiences for pupils within a broad and balanced curriculum. Most teachers plan successfully for the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and give pupils useful opportunities to apply these skills in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils create databases using information on the World Cup. The school implements the foundation phase principles well. For example, teachers plan interesting and stimulating learning activities in the school's extensive outdoor areas.

Most teachers ensure that pupils take part in devising their own learning, for example through 'Choose Your Own Learning' (COOL) days. Many pupils are beginning to help teachers to plan exciting learning experiences regularly, based on what they already know and what they want to learn. This is a developing feature of the school. Staff supplement the curriculum well with a wide range of visits and visitors that link closely to current topics and enhance pupils' experiences effectively. The school is in the early stages of its strategic planning towards developing a curriculum that is in line with national developments.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide clear learning objectives and purposeful opportunities to practice and embed their literacy and numeracy skills across a range of topics and real-life scenarios. For example, Year 5 pupils use a price comparison website to purchase the cheapest ingredients for a recipe. Nearly

all staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, classrooms are calm and respectful learning environments. Generally, learning proceeds at a good pace. The school identifies pupils who need extra support well, particularly in mathematics, and provides effective support and catch-up sessions. However, a few teachers do not always adapt tasks well enough to challenge the more able pupils.

Teachers across the school have strong working relationships with pupils, and they encourage and promote a purposeful classroom environment and positive learning among pupils. For example, nearly all pupils talk confidently about using 'learning muscles' and 'skills stars' and understand how these help them to learn. Nearly all staff manage pupils' behaviour very well. Teachers in the foundation phase have developed areas and challenges that allow pupils to have some input into how they learn and to develop their independent learning skills. Staff have recently developed the outdoor areas to allow pupils to develop their skills further, for example as 'Outdoor Adventurers'.

Teachers' written feedback to pupils outlines strengths and areas for development in their work. For example, teachers identify what pupils have done well and make suitable suggestions for improvement. However, not all teachers give pupils appropriate time to respond to the feedback and make improvements to their work. Nearly all teachers and learning support assistants use questioning well to encourage pupils to think about and to extend their learning. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for groups of pupils and individuals across the ability range. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately and make effective use of the assessments to set purposeful targets.

The school has recently raised the profile of Welsh culture and heritage in the curriculum, for example, through learning about Welsh artists, 'Proud to be Welsh' assemblies, and its first Eisteddfod. As a result, nearly all pupils have a greater awareness of their Welsh identity. Most staff use the Welsh language appropriately, even though some pronunciation is incorrect. However, in general, teachers do not ensure that pupils use the language naturally within the school day and they do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills independently outside of Welsh lessons.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy, caring community and its ethos is effective in helping pupils to develop their social and moral understanding. Staff know the pupils well and respond positively to their social and emotional needs. Staff have consistent expectations of pupils and use effective behaviour management strategies to ensure good standards of politeness, mutual respect and pupil conduct.

The school's procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and wellbeing are very thorough and effective. They enable teachers to identify the needs of individuals and groups of pupils at a very early stage and to put appropriate support in place, if required. This includes purposeful support within the classroom as well as more targeted support for individual pupils who have additional learning needs. Overall, the school's approach helps pupils to make good progress in their learning and personal development. In particular, the additional support improves pupils' attitudes to learning successfully, enabling them to improve their self-esteem and helping them to approach their work more confidently.

The provision for pupils identified as having additional learning needs is very effective. The pupils' individual education plans have clear and measurable targets that support them to make good progress. The school works well with a range of specialist services, such as the team around the family, the behavioural referral team and the educational psychology service, to secure additional, timely resources to support pupils with a range of needs. These arrangements ensure that targeted pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities. This is a strength of the school.

The school provides beneficial programmes to support vulnerable pupils with social and emotional needs, including programmes to develop their skills in managing their emotions. This provision raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence significantly and helps the targeted pupils to engage effectively in school life.

The school works well with parents. Parental engagement events have increased and provide good opportunities for parents to learn how to support their child's wellbeing and learning. Improved communication through newsletters, social media and the school's website has gained parents' support for the school, for example in its efforts to promote the benefits of regular attendance on pupils' progress.

The school celebrates good attendance through rewards for individual pupils and for classes. Procedures for tracking attendance across the school are clear and purposeful, and there is a consistent approach to improvement in all classes. Consequently, the most recent whole-year attendance shows significant improvement on previous years.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. The school follows a structured values approach, which it combines with the spiritual development of pupils, including daily acts of collective worship where pupils reflect on fundamental values such as love, trust and kindness. Staff ensure that pupils develop their social skills and cultural knowledge effectively, for example through visits to Cardiff Castle, Caerleon Roman Museum, Big Pit and on residential visits to Llancaiach Fawr.

There are frequent opportunities for pupils to interact with their local community and local churches. For example, many pupils gain experience of the world of work through carefully planned visits to local businesses, such as the vet and local fruit suppliers. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to undertake entrepreneurial projects, making items to sell to parents, for example bangles and Welsh cakes. The school holds worthwhile events to support charities, including the local food bank, which promote pupils' understanding of the needs of others.

Pupils are given a number of opportunities to accept responsibilities as members of different councils or groups. This broadens their understanding of the importance of active citizenship. For example, the school council organised an anti-bullying week and, with the help of other pupils, changed the school rules as a result. However, teachers do not always provide enough suitable opportunities for individual pupils to contribute to school's work, for example through setting their own targets for improvement.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. For example, there are regular healthy cooking clubs. This helps pupils to make sensible lifestyle choices so that they are more aware of the need to provide healthy snacks in the school.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The recently-appointed headteacher provides effective leadership and management. Together with the senior leadership team, he has established a clear vision and coherent direction for the school. Improved leadership has had a positive impact on school improvement over the past year.

The roles of senior leaders are clear and effective in supporting the school's aims. For example, each leader is responsible for an area of improvement and focuses on achieving high standards and effective provision. Regular staff meetings and half-termly review meetings consider important issues, such as the analysis and discussion of pupil performance. As a result, leaders track the progress of all pupils rigorously and work well with staff to ensure that pupils make good progress.

Leaders recognise and respond to local and national priorities well. For example, leaders have a clear focus on improving attendance, in raising standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and in improving the outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals.

The governing body undertakes its responsibilities well. It has a good working knowledge of the school's performance relative to other schools. It has a strong grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and offers an appropriate level of challenge to senior leaders. It acts as a well-informed and critical friend to the school's leadership team and contributes effectively to the self-evaluation process and to setting strategic priorities for improvement.

There are appropriate systems to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders use a wide range of evidence to inform the self-evaluation process, including the purposeful analysis of performance information, and the outcomes from lesson monitoring and scrutiny of pupils' books. The school also gathers the views of staff, governors, parents and pupils, for example through the parent forum, and leaders use the information from these processes to highlight areas for development.

Leaders ensure all staff receive valuable professional learning opportunities to enhance their skills, for example through the provision of coaching and mentoring opportunities, and arranging visits to cluster schools to view best practice. Performance management procedures are rigorous and staff objectives link directly to priorities in the school development plan. In-house training for teaching assistants on a variety of useful intervention strategies has had a positive impact on raising pupils' wellbeing.

Leaders manage resources successfully to support pupils and to ensure improvement in the quality of provision. It has enough teachers and support staff to respond to the requirements of the curriculum, and the school uses their expertise well. Teamwork is strong throughout the school. The school is a welcoming and safe environment with spacious and well-decorated classrooms and communal areas. Nearly all pupils have access to plenty of relevant resources. The outdoor learning environment is spacious, with direct access to outdoor learning for foundation phase pupils.

Governors and leaders manage the school finances efficiently and prioritise spending carefully. They monitor spending regularly to ensure that the school use its finances appropriately. The school uses the pupil development grant purposefully to provide valuable individual and group support for vulnerable learners, which develops their skills and wellbeing effectively. Spending plans are clear and the tracking systems for measuring the impact of initiatives are robust.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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