



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

A report on

**Clase Primary School
Rheidol Avenue
Clase
SA6 7JX**

Date of inspection: March 2019

by

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

About Clase Primary School

Clase Primary School is a community primary school situated one mile from the town of Morryston, and three miles north of the city of Swansea. There are currently 311 pupils on roll, including 36 part-time pupils in the nursery. The school has 12 classes and four specialist teaching facilities for children with autism and moderate learning difficulties.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 55%. This is well above the average for Wales of 18%. The school identifies 50% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is well above the national average of 21%. Currently, 11% have a statement of special educational need. Many of these pupils are in the four specialist teaching facilities, with only a few in mainstream classes. Very few pupils come from a minority ethnic background. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2010. The school's last inspection was March 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

The school is an extremely caring and inclusive community that supports pupils exceptionally well. Pupils' behaviour in classes, in and around the school is exemplary. Nearly all pupils speak with exceptional pride about their leadership roles and the difference they make in the school community. Nearly all pupils feel they have a very strong voice and have a say in decision making. This has a very strong impact on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the pupils. During their time at the school, many pupils make strong progress from low starting points and develop effective literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

The school benefits from extremely strong leadership. The headteacher sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school to its full potential. She works with the senior leadership team to set very high expectations for the school's work. Arrangements to share these expectations with the school community are successful in supporting pupils to thrive at school. Arrangements to develop staff professionally have a very positive impact on pupils' progress and wellbeing.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' standards of Welsh, especially in speaking and listening
- R2 Improve provision to develop pupils' writing skills in key stage 2, particularly for more able pupils

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the professional learning opportunities for all staff and the highly effective nurture provision for all pupils, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, nearly all pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well below the level expected for their age. During their time at the school, many make good progress in developing these skills and achieve good standards by the end of key stage 2. Pupils who have additional learning needs, including those in the specialist teaching facilities, make strong progress towards their individual targets.

Across the school, most pupils express their ideas clearly and enjoy talking about their work and the life of the school to visitors. In both key stages, pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other. Many of the younger pupils speak confidently when explaining how to make a picnic area for 'Tedi Twt' and how to clean the lion's drinking water. By the end of Year 2, pupils talk with enthusiasm about their work using a varied vocabulary. Across key stage 2, most pupils offer opinions and discuss activities and investigations with each other and visitors, for example when comparing and contrasting temperatures around the world.

Many pupils' reading skills in the foundation phase are developing well. Most enjoy reading and use a range of phonic strategies to read unfamiliar words. By the end of the foundation phase, a few more able pupils express opinions about the content of texts. Across key stage 2, most pupils develop their reading skills proficiently, enjoy discussing books and make sensible predictions about what might happen next in stories. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils are confident, independent readers. They use their reading skills purposefully to gather information from different sources, by using books, fact sheets and electronic devices.

Many pupils across the school develop their writing skills successfully. By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils write in sentences using correct punctuation. They spell common words correctly. Many pupils write independently for different purposes, including reports about their favourite animal and a persuasive letter to the zookeeper to share their point of view. Across key stage 2, pupils build on their skills from the foundation phase effectively. They have good understanding of different genres and apply these skills well across the curriculum. For example, younger pupils write a travel brochure advertisement for Paradise Island Resort while many older pupils have a secure understanding of the features of different genres of writing. A few older pupils use mature language to engage the reader effectively, for example writing diaries based on 'The Blitz' when studying the Second World War and a balanced argument on whether children be evacuated into the countryside during the war. However, pupils' extended pieces of writing do not always reflect the ability of the more able.

All pupils in the Specialist Teaching Facilities make good progress in their literacy skills. They learn to share books together and join in discussions about stories appropriately, for instance when answering questions about 'Jasper's Beanstalk' and 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. Pupils learn to form their letters and begin to write in sentences with increasing accuracy and independence.

Across the school, most pupils develop their mathematical skills successfully. Most pupils make strong progress in developing their number skills as they move through the school. They compare values of money, estimate and measure length accurately, know the properties of different shapes and use a range of graphs and charts to represent data. From Year 2 onwards, most pupils use their mathematics skills effectively to solve problems. For example, they use their knowledge of grid referencing to position animals correctly on a grid. Throughout key stage 2, most pupils use their numeracy skills well in other subject areas, for example in science, where they record data from investigations and use it skilfully to draw conclusions about their work.

As they move through the school, most pupils develop their ICT skills successfully. They use these skills confidently to support their work across the curriculum. For example, in the foundation phase, pupils create a Welsh language poster to describe Tedi Twt shopping trip. Most pupils in key stage 2 apply their skills well, choosing the best methods to present their work. For example, they create posters for advertising hotels for a holiday brochure and use databases purposefully to create line graphs to compare chromatography rates. Most use secure passwords to access and complete their work on learning websites, both in the classroom and at home.

Most pupils understand the benefits of speaking Welsh and enjoy learning the language. Nearly all pupils, including pupils in the Specialist Teaching Facilities, use simple words, phrases and greetings appropriately. Many older pupils read familiar Welsh texts suitably and pronounce many words correctly. They are beginning to write for a suitable variety of purposes, for example to describe a cartoon character in Year 4. However, pupils do not make consistently good progress in developing their Welsh speaking and listening skills as they move through the school.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Nearly all pupils feel very safe and secure in school and display exceptionally high levels of wellbeing. Working relationships between pupils and staff are extremely nurturing and trusting. Pupils talk warmly about their school and describe it as very caring. In particular, pupils speak positively about the 'Cwtsh' area. They understand the contribution that this makes to their independence, resilience and confidence.

The Pupil Leadership Team, incorporating a range of pupil led groups, such as Digital Leaders and Criw Cymraeg, has a very strong voice in influencing many areas of school life. Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs, take on leadership roles confidently; they produce high quality action plans, lead meetings, carry out audits and report back to pupils in assemblies.

Nearly all pupils speak with exceptional pride about their leadership roles and the difference they make in the school community; they show that they are developing very effectively as ethical, informed citizens. Pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate a very high degree of ambition and capability in the way they carry out the extensive range of leadership roles.

The Healthy Eating Squad has helped to promote healthy living through carrying out actions, such as designing and distributing a leaflet on how to pack a healthy

lunchbox. This has had a positive impact on the contents of pupils' packed lunches. Pupils have a mature understanding of the importance of healthy eating and know what they need to do to stay fit and healthy. In embracing the new curriculum, pupils have designed the mascot of Hazel the Hen to promote the school's work on developing healthy, confident individuals. For example, they encourage younger pupils how to take care of themselves and become more independent in their learning.

Sports Ambassadors have enhanced the range of physical opportunities on offer for foundation phase pupils. They take on the leadership of organising the 'Daily Mile' for younger pupils and 'Playground Pals' support positive behaviour during active playtimes. This has a very strong impact on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the pupils.

Digital leaders promote internet safety very effectively through the school and, as a result, pupils can explain how to stay safe on line. The Eco Squad grow produce using the school's poly-tunnel and make chutneys for the annual Garden Party and to sell at the Christmas fete. The Rhodri Rangers created the concept of Rhodri the Rights Respecting Rat. This has enhanced pupils' understanding of children's rights, such as their right to have clean water and their right to have a voice in matters that affect them, for example to raise standards in teaching and learning when participating during learning walks.

The strength of the working relationships between pupils and staff is an exceptional feature of the school's work, and contributes extensively to its effective learning environment. As a result, pupils across the school show an increasing ability to express an opinion about what they learn. In lessons, nearly all pupils sustain concentration and remain very purposeful when they face difficulties. Nearly all pupils are very engaged and show enjoyment in their learning. Specialist Teaching Facilities pupils share this highly positive attitude to learning and integrate regularly and purposefully with their mainstream peers.

Nearly all pupils work highly effectively in pairs, groups and independently. In Year 2, pupils display very high levels of independence, for instance when they conduct surveys in Welsh, to find out their classmates' favourite zoo animals. Year 6 pupils collaborate highly effectively in pairs, making meaningful inferences from a text about a refugee's experiences; nearly all pupils demonstrate considerable respect for the contributions of others.

Pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school is exemplary. They are polite and courteous to others and they enter lessons and assembly in a calm and orderly manner. All pupils demonstrate exceptional consideration for others, particularly those with additional learning needs. This is an excellent feature of the school. Most pupils participate enthusiastically in the wide variety of extra-curricular clubs on offer, such as forest crafts and the choir, at lunchtime and after school.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The successful working relationships that exist between staff and pupils are a significant feature of the school. Staff know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their needs. Their interactions reflect the high-value they place on nurturing pupils'

wellbeing. This approach develops most pupils' confidence successfully within an inclusive, calm, caring environment. The mutual respect between all staff and pupils results in skilful and constructive behaviour management. Attractive and stimulating displays celebrate pupils' work alongside supporting their learning. For example, the working walls in lower key stage 2 assist pupils with their mathematics work.

Across the foundation phase, teachers provide exciting, creative lessons that enable pupils to develop their problem solving and independent skills extremely well. In upper key stage 2, the calm, assured, patient approach that teachers use throughout the lessons results in all pupils being able to make progress at their own pace and level.

In all classes, teachers provide purposeful and relevant learning experiences for their pupils within a creative, broad and balanced curriculum. They set clear learning objectives and use a range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interests. In the best examples, they provide pupils with real-life experiences both inside the classroom and beyond. For example, in Year 3 and Year 4, pupils grow vegetables, sell them on Market Day in the city centre and make a profit.

The whole school has begun to plan appropriately in line with the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales. Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to use a broad range of skills during their learning experiences. They combine their creative and entrepreneurial skills imaginatively. For example Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, during the 'Don't dance alone project', planned, organised and held a tea party for senior members of the community. They used their skills successfully to gain donations, funding and sponsorship from local businesses.

All staff in the Specialist Teaching Facilities are successful in ensuring that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. They personalise pupils' learning experiences effectively to meet the needs and interest of all learners. All staff provide excellent support for pupils with additional learning needs.

All staff ensure that learning experiences build on pupils' learning successfully. The school provides effective opportunities for all pupils to develop skills in the outside areas, which greatly enrich their learning. For example, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils use their problem solving skills to find ways of making muddy water clearer by using bark chips as a filter. Many key stage 2 pupils receive a good range of opportunities for creative writing. For instance, during a visit to Swansea Waterfront museum, teachers use the 'Eye of the Storm' by Dylan Thomas as stimulus for writing. However, in key stage 2, teachers do not always challenge more able pupils to write to the standard of which they are capable.

Staff embed the principles of the foundation phase successfully into their planning, teaching and learning environment. As a result, pupils receive a good balance of adult directed and pupil led activities. All staff ensure that pupils receive extensive and exciting opportunities to learn outdoors. This is a particularly strong feature across the whole school, including the Specialist Teaching Facilities. For example, foundation phase pupils go on a bear hunt to the forest school area. As a result, this stimulates the pupils to embrace opportunities of engaging in new experiences. Lower key stage 2 teachers build upon the principles of the foundation phase successfully, for example by establishing areas of learning within their classrooms that provide pupils with opportunities for independent learning.

In many classes, teachers give pupils helpful verbal feedback on their work and use questioning skilfully to encourage them to enhance their responses. This helps pupils to understand new ideas clearly, and enables staff to judge pupils' understanding of new concepts well. Teachers provide pupils with useful written feedback on how to improve their work. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to respond to it in a timely, meaningful way to improve their learning.

Staff use ongoing assessments well to inform their planning and ensure that all pupils make productive contributions to what they learn. For example, pupils plan what their independent missions will be for the following week.

Teachers ensure that pupils learn about the culture and heritage of Wales meaningfully, for example through the school eisteddfod and visits to Castell Henllys. Using local Welsh artists such as Martyn Evans and Gayle Rodgers for inspiration, key stage 2 pupils produce good quality artwork. In both key stages, teachers provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to read and write in Welsh using a wide range of resources. However, they do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to speak and use Welsh.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school provides pupils with outstanding levels of support and guidance within an inclusive and caring community. The school has developed a comprehensive suite of nurture provision to meet the needs of pupils as part of its 'Cwtsh' programme. This is well-embedded in the life of the school. 'Cwtsh' corners, forests, breakfasts and cuppas provide the emotional and wellbeing provision for pupils to create and sustain healthy relationships with those who are important to them, while 'check-ins' ensure all are ready to learn at the beginning of lessons.

The school promotes pupils' personal and social development very well through the rich experiences it provides while tailored interventions meet the requirements of individuals. All staff provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their school, for example in helping the school achieve the Bronze Siarter Iaith award.

All staff promote the importance of good behaviour, courtesy, respect and commitment very successfully. This is an excellent feature of the school's life and contributes significantly to the very effective learning environment where nearly all pupils show curiosity, imagination and demonstrate enjoyment and pride in their learning.

The school has extremely effective procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress, which have a significant impact on their standards and wellbeing. Teachers use the information to plan improvement steps for pupils. The highly effective Specialist Teaching Facilities provision enables pupils to make good progress. Arrangements to include these pupils within the school family and to experience all aspects of school life are outstanding. Teachers make good use of the innovative outside workspaces, such as the poly tunnel and 'Coed Clase' for 'Cwtsh Forest', to support pupils' wellbeing and to develop their understanding of entrepreneurialism.

Clear and effective provision for pupils with additional learning needs enables pupils to make consistent progress against their personal targets. Highly skilled staff deliver

a range of intervention programmes to improve pupils' literacy, numeracy and wellbeing effectively. Personalised learning programmes that contain clear, specific and measurable targets are a strength of the school. They lead directly to improvements in self-esteem, wellbeing, progress and attendance of individual pupils. There are highly effective relationships with external agencies. Parents are regularly provided with information about their children's progress, while pupils with additional needs have their progress reviewed in depth at regular points during the school year.

The school has forged strong relationships with parents and engages with them productively, for example during 'croissants and curriculum' sessions to discover what their children are learning in school. They find these sessions very valuable. Families engage through the 'families on board' project and have opportunities to see their children perform during musical productions. Parents also benefit from working with their children on cooking projects to promote healthy lifestyles. The school listens to parents' views and responds supportively to their ideas. They have helped to raise money to purchase resources, such as to develop the extensive outdoor area. This has led to valuable opportunities for pupils to study the environment as part of their class work.

The school has effective arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. For example, pupils run their own fruit shop to encourage pupils to make these healthy choices. A range of lunchtime and after-school clubs promotes physical wellbeing, such as the 'Get Active' club, as well as forest fun and science clubs.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully by providing regular collective worship and curriculum activities. Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their values of tolerance and respect through the curriculum. They regularly engage in programmes with police officers and work with members of the local faith community. Staff encourage pupils to be responsible citizens as they collect for the community foodbank to support those less fortunate at harvest time, and the school's 'signing choir' have regular opportunities to perform in the local area to a wide audience.

The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their expressive and creative skills. As a lead creative school, pupils benefit from rich art and craft opportunities to improve their skills and wellbeing, by working with a range of creative professionals. A highly effective example is how pupils created stained glass landscapes as part of the 'Eye of the Storm' project. These were on display in the Tate Gallery in London before returning to the school's reflection area for all to enjoy.

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

Leadership and management: Excellent

The headteacher provides highly effective leadership, which supports pupils to achieve excellent standards of wellbeing during their time at school. She has worked with the school community to bring to life her vision for inclusive and nurturing provision for pupils.

Arrangements to distribute leadership roles to senior staff are highly effective. These staff support continuous improvement at the school very well. For instance, they take forward key whole-school priorities such as the implementation of the new curriculum for Wales successfully.

All leaders work effectively within a culture of collaboration and teamwork to realise the school's high expectations for pupils. They ensure that staff at all levels understand their roles well and undertake them successfully. This results in consistent and effective approaches to teaching and supporting pupils. Teachers contribute positively to school improvement. For example, teachers in Years 3 and Year 4 work together to plan and review the effectiveness of the new curriculum.

There are robust performance management arrangements, and successful professional learning opportunities for all staff. These processes support school improvement and career progression effectively. This support has contributed to the qualification of a few teaching assistants as teachers within the school. This is a strong feature of the school.

A culture of continuous self-evaluation ensures that all staff understand the school's strengths and priorities for improvement very well. Self-evaluation work is robust and thorough. It includes a careful analysis of pupil performance information, scrutinising pupils' books and regular lesson observations. During these activities, leaders maintain a clear focus on reviewing pupil progress and identifying opportunities and strategies to secure improvements. As a result, leaders and staff know their school very well and address improvements such as developing pupils' reading and independent learning skills successfully. The school takes good account of parents' suggestions for improvement, for example to provide opportunities for them to be informed about the school's approaches of teaching.

Members of the governing body have a thorough knowledge of the school's performance and play a prominent part in its monitoring, self-evaluation and strategic planning processes. By visiting the school to discuss aspects such as ICT, or creative art work, they have a sound awareness of the impact of teaching and support on pupils' standards and wellbeing. This enables them to hold the school to account and helps set a clear strategic direction to develop the school as an effective learning community.

Leaders allocate funding effectively to support ongoing improvements. They use additional funding, such as the pupils development grant, well to support vulnerable pupils. The school is extremely proactive in obtaining extra funding from businesses and the local community to enrich pupils' experiences and improve the learning environment. Leaders and staff make very good use of all available space inside and out to support pupils' learning and wellbeing and have created a stimulating learning environment where teachers want to teach and pupils want to learn. For example, the school received grant funding to develop the foundation phase outdoor areas. As a result, pupils' standards, wellbeing and creative development have improved greatly.

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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