



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: Special Measures**

**St Peter's R.C. Primary School
Southey Street
Roath
CF24 3SP**

Date of visit: June 2021

by

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

Outcome of visit

St. Peter's R.C. Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

As a result, Her 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. Address the shortcomings in safeguarding and health and safety identified during the inspection

The school has addressed all shortcomings in safeguarding and health and safety following the core inspection. The school has a suitable health and safety policy which has been reviewed by the governing body. All senior leaders have revised job descriptions which now clearly set out their roles and responsibilities. The headteacher, supported by the local authority health and safety officer, regularly review and update all risk assessments to improve the management of safety issues.

A governor's resource committee provides support and challenge to leaders when considering all aspects of health and safety. Senior leaders and those with responsibility for health and safety meet regularly and ensure that they identify and address any risk swiftly. For example, a safety screen recently added to the hall balcony allows pupils to access this area safely.

There are appropriate arrangements for vetting governors and ensuring that they receive suitable safeguarding training. Information for visitors and staff regarding safeguarding procedures are clear.

Pupils move sensibly around the school, which is a safe and welcoming environment. The school has installed magnetic locks on exterior doors, replaced any damaged glazing and is currently upgrading the toilet facilities. Arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils in the school car park are effective and are further improved with the installation of fencing to ensure separation of pupils and traffic.

Leaders have improved the interior of the building, supported by significant funding from parent groups and the local authority. As a result, most classrooms and communal areas are thoughtfully resourced to enhance learning and improve pupil and staff wellbeing.

R2. Establish stable and effective leadership and improve communication with all stakeholders

The appointment of a substantive headteacher since April 2020 has helped to stabilise the leadership team. The leadership team has benefitted greatly from the headteacher's experience and his modelling of leadership behaviours. The headteachers' willingness to listen to other members of the senior leadership team, take on board their views and work through them to secure the necessary improvements has engendered trust across the team.

The headteacher has distributed leadership responsibilities appropriately. He has provided or sourced the professional advice and coaching necessary for leaders to fulfil their responsibilities with growing confidence. Leaders now discuss regularly the importance of teaching, curriculum and leadership in team meetings and reflect more openly on their own strengths and areas for improvement. They are much better informed about effective practices and pedagogies and are beginning to discern from research and experience what may work best for their pupils, given the school's own context.

Communication between staff, governors and senior leaders has improved. Staff are involved more directly with governors and feel much more confident to approach senior staff with ideas and questions.

The parent council encourages parents to share their views and the recently established parent teacher association (PTA) should cement further the relationships between staff, parents and the community. Nearly all parents appreciate the school's improved levels of communication through the new website and updated weekly newsletter. The school regularly sends questionnaires to parents, seeking their views on many aspects of school life. In the most recent survey, nearly all of those who responded were positive about how the school communicated and shared information.

Pupils have an increasingly strong voice across the school. They talk enthusiastically about their Senedd groups and how they have influenced the wider work of the school. For example, the eco group has helped reduce the school's use of plastic and the curriculum Cymraeg group has conducted audits of Welsh displays in all classrooms and helped to promote the use of Welsh through the school.

R3. Improve governors' ability to evaluate the school's work accurately and hold leaders to account

Following the school's core inspection, the local authority used its powers to appoint additional governors. The chair of governors is an experienced local authority appointed governor and has taken on this role since January 2020. The governing body has had a notable turnover of membership since the inspection. Currently,

there are three foundation governor vacancies. As a result, the workload currently undertaken by a core group of members, who take on multiple roles and responsibilities, is likely to be unsustainable over time.

Governors now have responsibilities which align well with their professional and personal skill sets. This has supported the school's progress towards its inspection recommendations.

Communication between members of the school's leadership team, staff and governors is effective and based on a relationship of professionalism, trust and respect. School leaders provide governors with timely and relevant reports and first-hand evidence. Through their committee structure and the full governing body meetings, governors scrutinise reports and challenge evidence in order to have informed discussion when making decisions.

Governors have continued to carry out school business throughout the period of the pandemic and a few governors have visited the school to take part in activities such as site surveys and link visits. Many governors have made use of technology to join virtual discussions and professional development activities, covering topics such as pupil wellbeing, additional learning needs provision and assessment. Many governors have also joined virtual training events, including induction sessions for new governors and safeguarding awareness.

Leaders and governors understand that many governors are new to their role. As a result, they recognise that not all committee structures are embedded fully and that it will take time and further commitment for the governing body to ensure responsibilities are more evenly distributed across a wider range of members.

R4. Improve strategic planning and self-evaluation processes to enable the school to make and sustain necessary improvements

The school has a well-defined long-term vision and strategy that is focussed upon its current status and future priorities. The senior leadership, led by the headteacher, have a clear plan to build on the recent improvements in teaching, pedagogy and curriculum. The improvement plan is well structured and provides clear milestones to ensure that improvements are secured consistently

Self-evaluation processes link well to the school's priorities and help leaders and teachers to be better informed about standards and outcomes. All staff have the opportunity to contribute to self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. Governors contribute through their scrutiny of evidence and oversight of key documents. The school seeks pupil and parent views regularly and their opinions feed appropriately into evaluation activities and action planning.

High-quality professional development has supported the school's wider leadership team to acquire a better understanding and knowledge about how children learn and effective pedagogy. This new knowledge and shared understanding have improved the capacity of the leadership team to bring about consistent whole-school improvement. The leadership team have a realistic understanding of current progress and recognise that new ways of working take time to embed. They identify the importance of evaluating and reflecting on each step of planned improvements and their impact on teaching and learning.

All staff are involved in reflecting on their own classroom practice and working informally with colleagues to peer review their progress. These practices, alongside the formal monitoring arrangements of the senior leadership team, help leaders to know when to move to the next stage of development or to revisit aspects of practice that need to be further consolidated. For example, the school is systematically developing a mastery approach to curriculum development, securing these practices in individual year groups before moving on.

Most leaders now use data more effectively to determine the strengths and areas for improvement in individual, group, cohort and whole-school learning. Professional learning events and opportunities for teachers to discuss with their line managers pupil and class progress, has helped move learning forward and identify gaps in whole-school practice. For example, analysis of reading data after the last national lockdown led to increasing adult support for pupils in a particular year group.

R5. Improve the quality of teaching and assessment across the school

There is a clear vision for teaching in the school and a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration. Staff benefit from a wide range of professional learning opportunities to develop their understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn. They regularly consider the impact of their teaching on standards, and work with rigour to ensure all pupils make progress.

The headteacher has successfully developed leadership teams for teaching and learning who mentor staff effectively. As a result, a shared vision for teaching is well articulated across the school and strategies that improve classroom practice are used consistently. For example, teachers in all classes use common signals that ensure pupils maintain concentration during their learning. In the majority of classes pupils are also beginning to use a range of useful 'hands-on' learning resources to support their learning and develop independence.

Teachers are aware of the need to provide pupils with a suitable level of challenge. They often plan activities with high expectations and think carefully about how pupils can be supported towards these learning goals. Most teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas with their friends and share their thought processes with the class.

However, in a very few instances, opportunities are missed to build upon pupils' thinking or to address misconceptions.

Most teachers provide opportunities that allow pupils to make decisions about how and what they learn. For example, pupils are introduced to class topics through immersion days which provide a range of learning experiences that stimulate discussion and suggestions for future learning.

In the foundation phase, teachers plan suitably for focused tasks which are well supported by enhanced and continuous provision. Staff have developed effective classroom routines that allow pupils to make choices about their learning and develop their independence. However, staff do not always give pupils sufficient support to extend their thinking or allow enough time for pupils to immerse themselves within these well-planned activities.

Throughout the school, classroom environments have been significantly improved and staff think carefully about how they can best use resources to support teaching and learning. For example, in the foundation phase, areas of learning have been thoughtfully placed within the classroom to enable quieter zones for focus group teaching to minimise distraction. Leaders and staff recognise the importance of the outdoor learning environment and are continuing to develop further resources and opportunities for pupils to engage in the natural world.

Teachers have introduced efficient strategies to improve the effectiveness of their feedback and pupils' self-assessment. Staff ensure pupils have timely opportunities to reflect on their learning and decide upon their next steps for improvement. As a result, almost all pupils understand the systems in place and can clearly demonstrate how they improve or extend their work. For example, pupils explain confidently how they use purple pens to improve the quality of their writing or to exemplify their understanding of scientific concepts.

R6. Raise standards of pupils' Welsh and ICT

There is a strong focus on improving Welsh language provision and raising pupils' standards. Teachers have benefited from intensive support from the local authority Welsh Education Officer and further professional development opportunities. They use the Central South Consortium's scheme of work to support planning for the Welsh curriculum.

Teachers track pupils' progress in required language patterns across the school and use this information effectively to inform teaching and improve standards. Daily 'Helpwr Heddiw' sessions are an established feature of the school's routine and have increased pupils' confidence and understanding of regularly used phrases.

Many pupils develop their vocabulary appropriately in lessons and older pupils confidently extend sentences when talking about themselves and expressing opinions. Most pupils can read and write at an appropriate level in Welsh.

The school is using the local authority's scheme of work alongside the digital competency framework to ensure teachers include the full range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills over time. Staff plan carefully and regularly so that pupils gain a wide range of digital skills that build progressively through each school year group. For example, pupils in reception make simple films and animations to support their role play and pupils at upper key stage 2 create more sophisticated videos incorporating film, images and soundtracks.

Staff and pupils use the digital skills developed during the lockdown period to enhance learning in the classroom. For example, they use digital platforms to encourage collaboration and peer review when designing and creating a website based upon a class topic.

Leaders are effective in developing thoughtful and appropriate approaches for using ICT across the school. As a result, pupils demonstrate confidence and flexibility in their use of digital tools across the curriculum.

R7. Improve teachers' planning to ensure pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills systematically and apply them in their work across the curriculum

Senior leaders have embedded effective approaches to monitor and support teachers' planning for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They have introduced new curricula for mathematical development and language, literacy and communication. These schemes clearly set out the progression of skills in each area and have helped support teachers in planning more effectively across the curriculum. Leaders meet regularly with staff to share and discuss the impact of their planning and teaching on the quality of pupils' literacy and numeracy work. There is a very strong culture of reflection, support and professional learning throughout the school.

Teachers now plan systematically and thoughtfully to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They work together to identify those skills pupils need to develop over time and ensure that there is a clear understanding of appropriate progression within and across year groups. Teachers' planning identifies clear opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that match with the age and ability of their pupils and provide a suitable level of challenge.

Staff ensure that planning for literacy and numeracy integrate effectively into class topics. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and apply their skills within a range of domain specific contexts. Pupils feel they now

have increased opportunities to apply their skills in many different aspects of their learning and can describe how they have used them in different contexts. For example, they explain how they use their numeracy skills in science lessons to draw accurate line graphs or apply their report writing skills within their geology topic.

Staff use a range of formative techniques including 'lesson evaluation and improvement plans' alongside timely assessments. These are used to reflect on pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy and to inform teaching. As a result, teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' standards and how to develop their future learning. This focussed approach has helped secure significant improvements in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

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