



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

A report on

Trellech C.P. School

**Trellech
Monmouth
Monmouthshire
NP25 4PA**

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

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

About Trellech C.P. School

Name of provider	Trellech C.P. School
Local authority	Monmouthshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	178
Pupils of statutory school age	153
Number in nursery classes	No nursery class
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 23.0%)	9.7%
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 16.1%)	9.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2022
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	06/04/2015
Start date of inspection	23/10/2023

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.

Overview

Trellech Primary School is a friendly and caring school that supports its pupils and families to feel welcome and valued. Because of this, most pupils enjoy their time in the school and show a sense of pride in the contribution they make within school and in the wider community. Nearly all staff and pupils relate well to one another and demonstrate a strong commitment to learning. Most pupils behave well and show good focus in lessons, often persevering when faced with a challenge. As a result, most pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well.

Teachers make beneficial use of pupils' own experience and prior learning to create a rewarding variety of learning experiences. These match the needs and interests of nearly all pupils and sustain their motivation well. Teachers plan particularly well for the development of pupils' literacy skills. As a consequence, most pupils enjoy reading and express themselves clearly in speech and in writing, using a good variety of vocabulary thoughtfully and with precision. Pupils' confidence in using their spoken Welsh is less well developed.

Most staff share high expectations for pupils' learning. They provide a clear focus in lessons and organise the learning environment effectively to enable pupils to work with independence. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to apply their mathematical and digital skills with increasing sophistication as they move through the school.

Leaders and staff place a high priority on securing pupils' well-being and progress. They work well together as a team to drive forward strategic priorities. For instance, they collaborate effectively to strengthen the school's curriculum and to improve the quality of pupils' writing. However, leaders do not always focus improvement activity sharply enough on the key aspects of the school's work most in need of development.

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen self-evaluation and improvement processes to focus sharply on the most important areas for development
- R2 Improve pupils' confidence to use their spoken Welsh, particularly in everyday situations around the school
- R3 Provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical and digital skills with increasing sophistication in their work across the curriculum

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils start school with skills at or above those expected for their age. During their time in the school, most pupils, including those from low-income households, make good progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding across the areas of learning and achieve well.

Most pupils make strong progress in developing their literacy skills. Across the school, most pupils listen carefully to adults and to one another. Many younger pupils speak confidently and begin to acquire a broadening range of vocabulary that develops in depth and sophistication as pupils move through the school. This supports pupils to express their thoughts clearly in their speech and in their writing. Most pupils participate enthusiastically in discussions with their partners. Many ask sensible questions of their peers and of adults to develop their understanding further.

Most pupils develop and use their reading skills well. Younger pupils make rapid progress in building their knowledge of letter sounds and begin to use this to support their independent writing effectively. Pupils deepen this knowledge as they move through the school and draw on it purposefully to sustain the fluency of their reading and their writing. Many pupils offer their ideas and opinions about what they hear and read confidently. They respond thoughtfully to what others say and to prompts from adults to elaborate on their thinking. By Year 6, many pupils use empathy skilfully to make thoughtful inferences and to predict the probable outcome of events. For example, they highlight the likelihood of conflict between characters because one is jealous of another's popularity.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards writing and acquire a strong set of skills that they apply skilfully to their written work across the breadth of the curriculum. Most younger pupils form letters correctly and quickly begin suiting their writing to its purpose. For example, they use a good range of sentence starters and bossy verbs to sequence instructions making soup. As they move through the school, most pupils use a variety of helpful strategies to prepare for writing at greater length. This enables them to structure their writing well and to make use of effective authorial techniques. Many pupils look forward to writing imaginatively, often developing themes and characters they explore in books the read together as a class.

Most pupils across the school use Welsh greetings enthusiastically. Most younger pupils ask and respond to simple questions appropriately. As they move through the school, many pupils learn an increasing variety of sentence patterns and vocabulary. They use these in dialogues they rehearse with their peers and to share personal information such as their likes and dislikes. However, many pupils do not develop the confidence to speak Welsh in everyday situations outside their lessons.

Most pupils develop their numeracy skills effectively. Most of the youngest pupils recognise numerals and count forwards and backwards confidently. They use mathematical language correctly, for instance to compare pumpkins and order them from smallest to largest following a visit to a local farm. As they move through the school, most pupils develop and use a broad range of mathematical skills correctly,

for instance to estimate sensibly and to measure accurately. Older pupils make beneficial use of practical resources to support their thinking. They apply what they already know to help sequence more complex problems into logical steps. Most older pupils use a variety of formal and informal strategies to calculate successfully. However, pupils do not always apply their mathematical knowledge fully in other aspects of the curriculum. For example, pupils do not refine their data handling skills sufficiently as move up through the school.

Across the school, most pupils make imaginative use of their digital skills to collaborate and to reinforce other aspects of their learning. For example, Reception pupils use an animation app and voice recordings to bring to life characters from their class story and older pupils create a digital collage from images of their peers to reflect their different individual physical skills. Older pupils research and create engaging digital content linked to other aspects of their study in class. However, pupils' ability to use their computational thinking purposefully in their wider learning is less well developed. For instance, pupils do not use their digital skills to organise and manipulate data as well as they could.

Nearly all pupils make strong progress in developing their creativity. During their time in school, they learn and practise a variety of artistic techniques using different media and draw inspiration from the work of a wide range of artists. For example, they use watercolour and acrylics to create vibrant images, produce clay figures influenced by the sculptor Giacometti and compose black and white photographs of local landmarks that reflect their sense of cynefin. Many pupils value the opportunity to be creative and enjoy presenting their learning in ways they choose when using their learning journals. Most pupils develop their physical skills well. They show control and agility appropriate to their stage of development and enjoy being active in and out of lessons.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They know whom to talk to if they have any worries or difficulties and are confident that adults will listen to and act on their concerns appropriately. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe and relaxed during their time in school. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at break and lunch times. They are polite and welcoming and treat everyone with respect and courtesy. Because of this, working relationships between staff and pupils are good.

Most pupils know what they need to do to be healthy. They understand that what they eat and drink and their level of activity can influence their health and how they feel, such as how well they are able to concentrate in class. Nearly all pupils enjoy opportunities to be active at playtime, during lessons and through participating in regular physical activities such as the daily mile and in after-school clubs. Nearly all pupils show an appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe online, for instance by keeping their personal details private and talking to a trusted adult about any concerns they have.

Most pupils display a good understanding of inclusion and diversity. For example, older pupils recognise the challenges that people sometimes face because of individual differences and understand that their own attitudes and actions can exert a positive influence. Most pupils have a suitable understanding of universal rights,

including the rights they have as children, for instance to be safe and to benefit from an education.

All pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who are eligible for free school meals, take on worthwhile leadership roles and responsibilities. They work with dedication and enthusiasm and show pride in the impact they have. For example, members of the school's eco committee organise regular litter picks to improve the local environment and the pupil-led charity committee organise a variety of beneficial enterprising initiatives, such as the recent coffee morning to support a cancer charity.

Most pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to learn. They engage actively in tasks and collaborate well with their peers, asking questions and offering helpful support to each other. Most pupils respond positively to learning experiences that test their skill or stretch their understanding. They work with suitable independence, sustain their concentration well and frequently persevere when they find things difficult. For example, older pupils realise their error when plotting points on a graph and go back over their work to correct mistakes, keeping going until they complete their task successfully.

Most pupils reflect on their learning effectively. They know when they have made good progress and are honest about what they find difficult. Many pupils ask sensible questions to check their thinking or to improve their understanding when they are unsure. This bolsters their confidence and helps them to sustain their independent progress beneficially. Most pupils share the result of their activity readily with others. As a result, they often learn by seeing and listening to what others have done well and from examples provided by adults. Older pupils value the feedback their peers provide as it helps them to focus on what to improve in their work in the future.

Overall, pupils' punctuality and attendance are a strength. Following the pandemic, pupils' attendance continues to improve and is above the national averages.

Teaching and learning experiences

Teachers provide a vibrant range of engaging learning experiences that stimulate the interest and imagination of nearly all pupils successfully. They make good use of topical issues and links to pupils' prior knowledge to ensure that areas of learning have direct relevance for pupils. For instance, they use a whole-school theme to explore different aspects of identity in ways that resonate meaningfully with pupils' own experience and understanding. As a result, older pupils in particular have a keen sense that their learning equips them well to make informed decisions about issues that matter to them.

Teachers ensure that their plans reflect the diverse experiences of different groups and the varied positive contributions they make in shaping Welsh society and in the wider world. These opportunities strengthen pupils' ability to empathise and to question stereotypical views and assumptions critically. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about the history of their locality and the origin of cultural traditions visible today, such as the significance of symbols carved into love spoons and the messages they convey. Overall, teachers planning for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills focuses too heavily on the written

aspect of Welsh. Whilst this supports pupils to build their knowledge of the language systematically, teachers do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to build their confidence to speak Welsh, particularly in everyday situations outside of lessons.

Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills particularly well. They teach specific skills through language rich experiences that support pupils to build their knowledge and understanding holistically. Adults model spoken and written English extensively and are ambitious for the pupils' precise use of language. Teachers read frequently and engage pupils in thoughtful discussions purposefully. As a result, most pupils express their thoughts and ideas very clearly and use their communication skills to good effect across all aspects of their learning. Teachers plan to develop pupils' discrete numeracy and digital skills appropriately. However, they do enable pupils to apply their skills with increasing sophistication across the breadth of their learning as they move through the school.

Teachers organise a variety of worthwhile visits that deepen and enrich pupils' learning beneficially. They ensure that, over time, these provide good opportunities for nearly all pupils to benefit from a variety of learning experiences that reflect and inspire their interests successfully.

Most adults manage pupils' behaviour well. They model courtesy and show respect for, and interest in, pupils' thoughts and views. This considerate behaviour contributes positively to the relaxed and purposeful atmosphere in classes and around the school. In a very few instances, teachers do not set clear expectations for pupils' conduct or intervene swiftly enough when pupils' behaviour begins to hinder their learning.

Most teachers plan and resource lessons well. They use engaging stimuli to motivate pupils and provide clear instructions to pupils about what they need to do to be successful. Adults organise learning resources efficiently to support pupils to work with independence and provide frequent, focused opportunities for pupils to discuss and to share their ideas. Because of this most pupils work busily during lessons and make good progress. In a few instances, group activities in class and in outdoor spaces lack a clear purpose and do not move pupils' learning forward.

Learning support assistants provide high quality support for pupils across the school. They work alongside pupils in classes to reinforce and extend their learning and to monitor and enhance their progress. As a result, pupils participate actively in lessons and feel confident to contribute their ideas and share their progress with their peers.

Adults make worthwhile use of questioning to check pupils' understanding and to encourage them to explain their thinking further. Teachers home in on pupils' misconceptions helpfully. For example, they provide clarification when needed and model strategies well to support pupils to move their learning forward. Teachers provide useful verbal feedback to pupils during lessons and enable pupils to review their own progress and that of their peers. This supports pupils to know how to enhance their work and to recognise strengths and areas for improvement they can address in the future.

Care, support and guidance

Trellech Primary is a friendly and caring school that supports pupils' academic and social development effectively. Staff create a warm, family atmosphere that helps pupils and families to feel welcome and nurtured. As a result, all members of the school's community show high levels of respect for one another and work well together as a team.

Parents value the school's openness and appreciate the purposeful links it has forged with the community in developing its new curriculum. This helps pupils to develop an awareness of their responsibility to the wider community and to feel a sense of belonging. The school provides parents with useful updates about their child's progress, including regular opportunities for parents to sit with their child and look together at the work they complete in school before meeting with their class teacher.

The school promotes pupils' social and emotional development successfully. For example, daily 'check-ins' enable teachers to monitor pupils' well-being sensitively and to provide appropriate support quickly when needed. All classrooms have positive, calming areas for pupils to reflect quietly or to calm themselves if they feel upset. Staff make effective use of the school's extensive grounds and its resources to develop pupils' health and well-being. For example, they provide regular opportunities for pupils to tend the school chickens and to learn the importance of looking after others.

The school's provision for pupils with ALN is effective. The ALN co-ordinator works proactively with staff to identify when support is needed and to implement a range of beneficial interventions. For example, highly trained teaching assistants deliver worthwhile literacy, numeracy and well-being programmes that address pupils' individual needs effectively. These have a positive impact on pupils' well-being and on their ability to learn. The school works closely with a variety of external agencies who provide specialist advice and support for pupils where appropriate. Staff involve parents in constructive discussions to review the progress of pupils with additional needs thoroughly and to adjust their support appropriately.

The school provides a range of purposeful opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and to lead change. There are valuable systems in place that enable pupil leadership groups to gather the opinions and suggestions of others. This ensures that their actions support the wider interests and wishes of the school community. For example, the eco committee offer useful advice to inform others about how to make the planet healthier, including through their campaign to reduce pumpkin carving in order to limit food waste and to avoid harming hedgehogs.

Teachers promote pupils' spiritual and moral development effectively through the study of topics in class and through regular acts of collective worship. They provide worthwhile opportunities for the school's pupil ambassadors to organise assemblies that develop pupils' awareness of a range of topical issues and promote the school's inclusive values. For example, older pupils lead an engaging whole-school assembly that demonstrates the importance of being positive and working together to achieve results.

Staff use a range of stimulating learning experiences, including visits, to enrich pupils' understanding of their Welsh identity. For example, Year 4 pupils learn about their local heritage by working with experts to dig for buried pottery at a nearby archaeological site. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to perform and to participate in creative and sporting activities. For example, the school makes worthwhile use of visiting tutors and instructors to develop pupils' musical skills and to enhance their enjoyment of sport.

The school actively promotes the importance of pupils attending school regularly. Leaders monitor attendance closely and set high expectations that they communicate with pupils and parents consistently. They use reward systems to reinforce good attendance and encourage a positive attitude towards being in school and on time. Staff place a high priority on ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. The school's arrangements for safeguarding are appropriate and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management

In a relatively short period of time, the acting headteacher has established positive working relationships with the whole school community. She provides beneficial support to staff and pupils and works well alongside the governing body to build a strong team ethos. Parents value the effective communication with the school and the varied opportunities to be involved in their child's learning.

Leaders place a high priority on developing pupils' well-being across the school. They ensure that staff receive relevant training to support pupils and provide an appropriate range of resources to help those in need. For example, throughout the school there are numerous safe places where pupils can reflect, share their feelings and receive support from adults when needed. The acting headteacher promotes positive staff well-being through a variety of initiatives. For example, the recent re-development of staff areas in the school provides adults with calm, well-organised environments to work in.

The governing body provides beneficial care and support to the school. Governors work with the acting headteacher to manage her new role during a significant period of change appropriately. For example, the recent appointment of an acting deputy headteacher has strengthened the school's leadership capacity.

Governors work well alongside senior leaders to promote a positive culture of safeguarding and to manage the school's finances efficiently. They are reflective and use their own professional skills and knowledge to contribute purposefully to school improvement. For example, they have recently aligned their individual strengths to provide focused support for specific strategic priorities. Whilst this work is at an early stage, these arrangements have increased governors' capacity to provide constructive support and challenge to the school's leaders. Governors ensure that the school promotes healthy eating and drinking appropriately and that school meals comply with legislation.

The acting headteacher works positively with senior leaders to gain a suitable understanding of the overall quality of teaching and learning. She uses performance management processes appropriately and robustly holds teachers to account for any

underperformance in their teaching. These high expectations are fairly balanced by leaders' care and attention to staff well-being.

Leaders ensure that the school community has a voice in school improvement. They involve pupils, parents, staff and governors actively through a variety of first-hand activities. This provides leaders with useful information to inform school improvement. However, the school's self-evaluation activities do not always prioritise stringently enough the specific aspects most in need of improvement. Because of this, the school often tries to improve too many things at the same time and this hinders the ability of staff to focus on a small number of key objectives and worthwhile actions to bring about the greatest improvement.

Senior leaders and governors take good account of the impact of poverty. They show a keen understanding of the financial pressures on families and support the school's strategies to mitigate these. For example, the school runs a uniform swap shop, and ensures that costs associated with school trips are minimised. In addition, the school uses the pupil development grant to meet the needs of pupils from low-income households effectively.

Leaders ensure that school improvement activities focus suitably on both local and national priorities. For example, the school continues to develop its curriculum to ensure that it complies with Curriculum for Wales. Although leaders ensure that provision for pupils with ALN is effective, their understanding of how to align this work with the expectations of recent reform is at an earlier stage of development.

Overall, leaders provide an appropriate range of opportunities to develop staff knowledge and skills. They ensure that professional learning supports school improvement priorities beneficially. For instance, training to improve the teaching of writing has impacted positively on the standards pupils achieve. Leaders provide worthwhile support to teachers who are new to the profession and the school partners with local universities to assist with the training needs of future teachers. The acting headteacher promotes a culture of collaborative working successfully. For example, staff work well with other professionals and visit other schools to improve their understanding of effective learning environments. This has resulted in teachers and learning support assistants working together purposefully to improve the quality of indoor and outdoor learning areas across the school. Whilst leaders encourage staff to reflect on their teaching and to share their own learning with other members of the team regularly, opportunities for staff to observe practice across the school are more limited.

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

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:

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