



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

A report on

Tredegar Park Primary School

**Partridge Way
Duffryn
Newport
NP10 8WP**

Date of inspection: October 2022

by

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

About Tredegar Park Primary School

Name of provider	Tredegar Park Primary School
Local authority	Newport City Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	469
Pupils of statutory school age	334
Number in nursery classes	75
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%)	29.3%
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%)	19.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	7.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	10/10/2022
This is the school's first inspection since its creation in September 2017, following the closure and amalgamation of Duffryn Infants' School and Duffryn Junior School.	

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

Tredegar Park Primary is a caring school with support for pupil well-being at its heart. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has solid support from senior leaders. Since the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, leaders have worked tirelessly on the creation of a whole school vision that focuses well on the school's context and the community it serves. The school places a strong emphasis on supporting the well-being of pupils and providing them with the vital skills they need for their futures.

Many pupils join the school with skills that are considerably lower than those normally expected for their age. Staff work hard at supporting pupils to develop their skills in important areas as they move through the school. Many classes provide a rich and interesting curriculum, pupils learn to apply their skills well to a variety of contexts, some of which they have had a voice in creating. However, in the younger classes there is too much emphasis on highly structured lessons and this inhibits pupils' curiosity and their ability to develop independence in learning. Additionally, and in particular in the older classes, a minority of teachers do not challenge pupils well enough, for example in their independent learning tasks.

The school's curriculum encourages aspiration for pupils. Teachers aim to open their pupils' eyes to the world beyond their locality and use visitors to the school to encourage them to think about what they want to become when they are older. Staff support pupils to develop their personal and social skills, and pupils benefit from lessons about developing and maintaining relationships, as well as keeping themselves safe online. The school's Y Cartref helps pupils to learn important life skills. In addition, they learn about having a voice in politics and have many opportunities to join the various pupil leadership roles that contribute to school life. Pupils with additional needs have good support and staff encourage them to play a full part in work of the school. As a result, many pupils, including those with additional needs, make sound progress from their starting points.

The school's governing body plays an active role in the school. Governors support and challenge leaders about important areas, such as teaching, learning and the school's finances, which they monitor carefully. As a result, they ensure the school provides good value for the parents who send their children to the school.

Recommendations

- R1 Offer pupils appropriately challenging learning activities that develop their independent learning skills'
- R2 Ensure that monitoring activities focus sharply on improving teaching and pupil progress
- R3 Strengthen pupils' independent reading skills
- R4 Improve pupils' use of spoken Welsh

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 its Y Cartref provision and the development of pupils' skills for life, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

Many pupils join the school's nursery with skills that are considerably lower than those normally expected for their age. During their time at school, pupils generally make very good overall progress in their development as learners and confident young people. They often make worthwhile progress in learning important skills that help them to understand how to look after themselves and stay safe, for example in the school's Y Cartref provision. Pupils with additional learning needs make sound progress from their starting points.

When they begin school, many pupils' communication skills are under-developed for their age. However, they settle into school life quickly and begin to listen well to adults to follow instructions during activities. They express their feelings and opinions with growing confidence. During physical education lessons, nearly all reception pupils listen carefully to instructions and follow them diligently, ensuring their actions and movements are safe and successful. Most older pupils continue to develop their confidence and ability as speakers as they move through the school and use these well, for example in digital presentations about their interests or famous poems. In a few year groups, pupils have started to broaden their communication skills, for example by learning basic British Sign Language.

Many younger pupils enjoy listening to stories. By Year 2, pupils use their phonic skills appropriately to decode words and read with sound understanding. By Year 6, many pupils read with confidence, fluency and expression. They identify characters and recount the main details of stories successfully, talking enthusiastically about how the author has created suspense at the end of a chapter. They have positive attitudes to reading. However, across the school, a minority of pupils do not have a broad enough range of strategies to help them to read new or tricky words. As a result, they often guess or simply skip these words which reduces their understanding and enjoyment.

From low starting points, many pupils make good progress as writers by Year 2. They use their knowledge of phonics to help them to spell words independently and begin to organise their writing into sentences, for example when writing instructions for recipes. A majority of older pupils develop neat, cursive writing and show considerable pride in presenting their work. Many pupils sustain interest in writing to produce extended pieces of work that generally includes accurate spelling and punctuation. They develop a suitable understanding of the features of different types of writing, including recounts, diaries and letters. They learn how to write a balanced argument, for example they identify the pros and cons of extending the school day. However, older pupils particularly do not write creatively very often. Across the school and the ability ranges, pupils tend to rely quite heavily on scaffolds to support their writing.

Many younger pupils respond appropriately to very basic questions in Welsh. By Year 2, many express how they feel, identify different colours and name some parts of the body. Older pupils use a suitable range of vocabulary and sentence patterns. However, they lack confidence when speaking Welsh at a basic level.

Many pupils develop their mathematical skills from very low starting points successfully as they move through the school. In practical activities, a majority of younger pupils successfully identify combinations of numbers that make 10 and combine coins to make totals within £1. Older pupils work well with number. They use suitable strategies to solve complex problems and explain their methods and thinking well. However, in a few instances, the mathematics work provided does not offer enough challenge for pupils, for instance during some independent tasks, involving money. This limits their progress. Across the school, many pupils apply their numeracy skills appropriately in other areas of learning and experience. Occasionally, they work extremely well. For example, many reception pupils take great care when measuring ingredients and make sensible estimates for how much to add or remove to get the recipe to make a gingerbread man just right. They use weighing scales independently, read the weight correctly and know that the measurement they are using is grams.

Most pupils make appropriate use of digital technology to support and present their learning. Younger pupils make suitable use of tablet devices, for example to play numeracy games to support their learning when working with money. Older pupils access saved files appropriately, they work well with a range of apps and search engines to find and present information and write codes successfully. However, their data handling skills are less well-developed.

Most pupils participate enthusiastically in creative activities. For example, all Year 4 pupils learn to play a brass instrument. They have the opportunity to develop these skills further as they move through school and make good progress, often performing confidently. Pupils generally develop their physical skills appropriately. For example, younger pupils engage in active play in the outdoor area to transport bricks from one location to another. Older pupils take on some of the physical challenges in the training programme for astronauts as part of their space topic. Older pupils work well independently at times, for instance to design their own computer games. However, across the school, pupils' independent learning skills, such as the capacity to direct their own learning or improve their work, are at an early stage of development. This is largely due to the provision on offer, which tends to be either directed or highly supported by adults.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Across the school, pupils demonstrate a strong sense of mutual respect for each other and for adults, to whom they respond well. Nearly all pupils feel safe and happy in school. They know who they can talk to if they have a concern and are confident that adults will listen and take appropriate action if needed.

The behaviour of pupils in all classes is good and this is a strength of the school. A very few pupils present challenging behaviour but over time, they learn to regulate their conduct. Nearly all pupils have good relationships with their peers and with staff. Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning, work at their tasks and are keen to complete them well.

There are high levels of pupil engagement, particularly when they find their learning interesting and stimulating. Most pupils are keen to try new things and respond well when they face a difficulty. Through their learning experiences, pupils are developing

important attributes, such as persistence and resilience, particularly when they feel confident to take appropriate risks with their learning.

Many pupils enjoy attending a range of different extra-curricular clubs, which include book club, sports club, cookery and a range of others, which appeal to the diverse range of pupil interests. Nearly all pupils feel the school teaches them how to live a healthy lifestyle through what they eat, drink and through participation in regular physical activity. Older pupils explain in detail the importance of eating a balanced diet, including fruits and vegetables.

Most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe online and how to use devices sensibly. Older pupils understand the importance of not sharing personal information with others and to keep their passwords safe. Nearly all pupils develop their entrepreneurial and life skills purposefully and are enthusiastic about Tredegar Treats and exploring the school's Y Cartref provision.

Pupils value the opportunities they have to take on leadership roles through a wide range of pupil groups. Nearly all pupils speak positively about their influence, such as the opportunities to work with organisations, including Keep Wales Tidy. Pupils with leadership roles and responsibilities enjoy supporting others and taking part in helpful activities. For example, the Pupil Leadership Group were involved in identifying an international language for the school to introduce as an element of Curriculum for Wales. Older pupils take responsibility for supporting their younger peers during break times.

Overall, pupils feel they are treated equally and explain they have fair access to all learning experiences. Over time, they develop a good understanding of issues relating to equality and diversity. Many pupils engage in activities that develop their awareness and understanding of important topical and current affairs by discussing daily news events. During these discussions, pupils reflect and show empathy and genuine concern for others.

Many pupils develop well as ethical, informed citizens, especially through their work on current affairs. They recognise a range of their rights in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). For example, they discuss their right to an education.

Many pupils understand the importance of regular attendance. Overall, many pupils are now attending school more regularly and on time this year compared to last, when the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact nationally on school attendance.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school has developed a local curriculum that meets the needs and interests of its pupils and the community it serves. It also matches the principles and ethos of the Curriculum for Wales. The school provides varied and engaging learning experiences within a suitable range of topics, such as 'Farm to Fork'. The curriculum is effective in encouraging pupils' aspirations and supporting continual development of their personal, social and life skills. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils' have a say in what they learn. Visits to places of interest and visitors enhance the curriculum

well. Specialist provision supports pupils to make good progress in learning and broadens their interests and skills. For example, music tuition provides all pupils with the opportunity to learn to play an instrument during their time at school.

Teachers collaborate in year group teams to ensure consistency in the learning offer across classes. They plan progressively for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding across the areas of learning and experience and identify valuable opportunities for pupils to use their cross-curricular skills. As a result, many pupils, especially the older ones, use their literacy, numeracy and digital skills successfully to support their learning. The school promotes the importance of reading and the enjoyment of books, for example by using story books and class novels as a stimulus for learning. However, teaching does not always ensure that pupils read texts that provide the right level of challenge or that pupils know what to do when they get stuck or have difficulty in understanding the meaning of a text. Provision to develop pupils' digital skills is successful overall but there are limited opportunities for pupils to work with databases.

Teachers ensure that pupils have regular Welsh language lessons. However, provision does not focus well enough on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils are able to use their Welsh in planned presentations. However, generally, pupils do not have a good recall of sentence patterns and basic vocabulary and therefore they lack confidence to use the language independently.

In all classes, adults establish positive, nurturing working relationships with pupils. These are powerful in supporting pupils' development and readiness to learn. Adults manage behaviour sensitively and instances of disruptive behaviour are rare.

The use staff make of the school's outdoor environment to support learning is variable. The forest school area provides valuable experiences for pupils to experience a wild, natural environment. They enjoy their time there connecting with nature and learn valuable skills and knowledge. In a few instances, staff use the outdoor area well with younger pupils to support active play and independent learning, but this practice is not widespread, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Class-based provision for younger pupils does not always match well with the national philosophy for education for this age group. Generally, and especially in Year 1 and Year 2, teaching is overly formal, with pupils regularly working at desks on predefined tasks and not having enough opportunities to learn through play or experience.

The school has adopted an approach to teaching that offers a mixture of focussed teaching and independent missions. Staff generally have clear expectations for teaching in the main teaching activity, for instance to guide pupils to complete a piece of writing. However, the aims for independent tasks are often less clear and these activities do not always hold pupils' attention well enough or provide sufficient challenge. As a result, pupils are unclear how to be successful and do not engage fully in learning.

Teachers generally have appropriate subject knowledge. Many question pupils skilfully, for example to support them to make links in their mathematical knowledge or to help to address misconceptions. Teachers use assessment for learning with mixed effectiveness. Many teachers use strategies well to identify pupils' strengths and inform next steps for learning. They match the level of challenge to pupils' needs

and abilities well and involve pupils in this process so that they understand how to move forward and how to transfer skills they have learnt to their other work. However, in a minority of instances, teachers do not match the level of challenge or expectation well enough to pupils' different abilities, for example in reading and independent numeracy activities, and this means that the work is often too easy or too hard.

On many occasions, teachers take appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning skills. For example, they encourage pupils to respond to marking and feedback and to choose how to set out their work or complete tasks, such as digital presentations. However, across the school this practice is inconsistent. Generally, teachers provide too much support and scaffolding for learning and do not always challenge pupils to go as far as they could in their work, for example in their writing.

Across the school, where learning is less effective, the pace of teaching is too slow as a minority of teachers do not always maximise the use of time available. For example, they often spend too long introducing activities or keeping pupils waiting passively to learn. There is also a tendency to spend too much time exploring which of the four purposes pupils are working at as opposed to getting on with developing the desired attributes through doing things that interest and engage them.

Care, support and guidance

A main strength of the school is the staff's devotion to the care and support they provide to meet the health, social and emotional needs of its pupils. Staff implement a wide-range range of strategies skilfully to support pupils, particularly those who struggle to regulate their own behaviour. They ensure that most pupils behave well and engage positively with each other. The school is highly responsive to the needs of its community, and this is evident through its carefully considered and inclusive curriculum.

Leaders and staff ensure that the school is a highly inclusive for all pupils, including those with a range of needs. The school's provision for pupils with additional needs (ALN) is comprehensive. Staff take time to understand each pupil's need so that they can provide suitable support in a timely manner and teaching assistants deliver an extensive range of individualised support programmes. Consequently, most pupils with ALN make good progress towards their individual learning targets. The school's work to address the requirements of ALN reform is comprehensive, with sensible plans in place to ensure that further implementation is successful.

Support for the development of pupils' physical and mental health and wellbeing is strong. For example, circus skills workshops help pupils to develop their confidence, resilience and social skills. Staff work with pupils to make sure they know how to keep safe online and this means that nearly all pupils know to keep their passwords safe and know who to turn to if they feel something is wrong. The school's pupil digital groups play an active role and take on leadership roles during online safety weeks. As a result, most pupils are aware of the school's online SMART code.

Overall, the school's links with its community are strong. For example, it works well with local artists, which has resulted in a local graffiti artist and sculptor enhancing

the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Visitors help pupils to understand that people have different faiths and beliefs through stimulating presentations and workshops. The school makes good use of external providers to support its emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of their rights. For example, workshops with Show Racism the Red Card and Keep Wales Tidy enable pupils to consider their attitudes and choices well.

The approach to the curriculum reflects the school's values clearly. Pupils have opportunities to gain an understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship through interesting topics such as 'Farm to Fork'. Staff plan opportunities for pupils to learn about the challenges faced by others. For example, Year 6, pupils write diary entries from the point of view of children in war-torn countries. In response to the text *Pig Heart Boy*, they consider ethics, opinions and values when discussing the use of animal organs in human transplant operations. Through a wide range of first-hand experiences, the whole school 'People Power' project supports pupils' understanding of politics, democracy and national and global history well. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to take part in acts of worship. These give pupils the chance to reflect on a range of personal, local and global issues.

Staff ensure that pupils have suitable opportunities to engage in the creative arts. For example, specialist teachers provide drama sessions that enable pupils to express themselves. In addition, relevant visitors and termly visits, such as to the Sherman Theatre, support each class's curriculum. The school has developed an innovative provision called 'Y Cartref'. This is a homely setting in which pupils develop a valuable range of life skills, such as cooking, cleaning and self-care.

The school works with families to identify underlying issues with lateness and absenteeism and support them to improve pupils' attendance. There are a number of initiatives for persistent and late attenders, for example, the work of the Community Champion for Families, and Family and Community Engagement Officers at the school door.

The school has a robust approach to the safeguarding of pupils and a small team address any concerns as a matter of priority. They work with multiple agencies to support the wellbeing of pupils and their families. All staff understand the school's protocols for safeguarding. Leaders ensure the school site and its extensive grounds, which it shares with a community facility and Flying Start nursery, are a safe place for pupils.

Leadership and management

Leaders have a very clear and ambitious vision for the school. There is a clear focus on raising the aspirations of pupils and this underpins the work of the whole school. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors understand the context of their school and the community it serves. The headteacher provides robust leadership and senior leaders support her well to form a strong team. These leaders have a sound understanding of the strengths of the school's provision and identify the areas for improvement appropriately. As a result, they have a track record of managing change successfully over time to secure improvement. For example, they have brought a team of staff together through a very challenging period of time and established and implemented a vision for pupils' development as people and learners.

Leaders and staff work well together to create a purposeful curriculum for their pupils and their wide-ranging needs. There is a strong focus on well-being and the development of important life skills, particularly for the oldest pupils who learn these skills in Y Cartref. To support improvements to its provision for the benefit of pupils, staff work with other schools in the local secondary school cluster to develop digital skills in readiness for pupils' transition into Year 7. Senior and middle leaders work with schools further afield when researching the development of the school's 'mind space' time. As a result of this, pupils now engage in interesting and calming activities at the very start of the day to ensure they are ready to learn. This strategy has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning.

Leaders work with staff to monitor the school's performance and pupil outcomes. They use first-hand information to build a picture of its strengths and areas for improvement and use this information to draw up the school's development plan. Currently, there are too many actions to ensure their effectiveness in improving provision and monitoring activities lack the rigour to inform strategic improvements precisely enough. In addition, when evaluating teaching, leaders do not always focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on learning and progress.

Leaders encourage staff to engage with professional learning to improve their skills and effectiveness in supporting pupils. Staff use their performance management appropriately to identify suitable activities to support their personal development as well as school improvement activity. Teachers benefit from working in pairs to develop new ideas and appreciate the professional feedback they receive from their colleague. However, too often, there is a lack of a strategic link between school improvement activities and professional learning. This hampers improvements to provision and pupil outcomes in a few areas of the school's work.

Generally, leaders manage the school's budget and pupil development grant well, linking spending appropriately to needs and improvement activities. However, the school is carrying a very large surplus that has been accumulating over time. Leaders have drawn up plans for how they intend to spend this money on a range of capital works and outdoor provision, and the local authority has given its approval for these plans. Leaders ensure that there is good support for pupils' needs and they are keen to work with families through the various strategies on offer. However, there are a few shortcomings in the school's communication systems with parents.

Governors know the school and its context well. They understand the school's current priorities well and the reasons that lie behind them. They monitor the school's work appropriately. They have a good awareness of specific elements of classroom practice and provision, such as the 'three before me' to encourage pupils to become more independent, and the strategy to grow healthy food at the school. Governors keep suitable oversight of healthy eating and drinking and have a secure understanding of their role in safeguarding. They provide the school with appropriate support and challenge, for example, by monitoring value for money, specifically how much money the school has spent on addressing anti-social behaviour and questioning the difference this has made.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers 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 going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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