



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

A report on

Godre'rgraig Primary School

**Parc Ynysderw
Ffordd Parc Ynysderw
Pontardawe
Neath Port Talbot
SA8 4EG**

Date of inspection: September 2024

by

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

About Godre'rgraig Primary School

Name of provider	Godre'rgraig Primary School
Local authority	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	114
Pupils of statutory school age	97
Number in nursery classes	8
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 22.9%)	28.8%
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 11.1%)	7.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	6.2%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2024
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/06/2017
Start date of inspection	23/09/2024

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.

Summary

Godre'rgraig Primary School is friendly and welcoming and has a strong community feel. Staff know the pupils well and strive to meet their individual needs. They work hard to ensure that all pupils are included in all aspects of school life. During a period of uncertainty for the school, governors have worked with leaders to provide reassurance and to prioritise the well-being of pupils and staff.

Leaders make best use of the school's temporary site to ensure that pupils have a broad and interesting curriculum. The focus on improving teaching and learning supports most pupils to make suitable progress in their literacy and digital skills. Occasionally, teachers provide too much, or not enough, challenge for pupils' learning. On these occasions, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in mathematics and the application of their numeracy skills. The new leadership team has introduced useful systems to monitor and evaluate the school's work. Overall, these work effectively, but they are not always robust enough to identify all areas that the school still needs to work on.

Staff and pupils treat each other with mutual respect and have strong working relationships that build pupils' confidence effectively. Pupils are eager to talk to adults and develop their speaking skills successfully, particularly in informal situations. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is a strength of the school and supports these pupils to make good progress towards their individual targets. Most pupils' progress in learning Welsh is at an early stage of development.

Pupils play an active part in school life and take their leadership roles seriously. Older pupils are beginning to evaluate the quality of their work and look for ways in which it can improve. The feedback they receive from teachers often supports them to do this, but it is not always specific enough to drive rapid improvement.

The headteacher provides effective and sensitive leadership. He has worked with all members of the school community to establish a clear vision and to build a strong ethos of teamwork. Staff are eager to make the most of professional learning opportunities, and their focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning is beginning to improve outcomes for pupils.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation to ensure that processes identify areas for improvement robustly, including ensuring that teaching provides suitable challenge in all areas of the curriculum
- R2 Improve the quality of feedback to pupils to help them to make the progress of which they are capable over time

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Godre'rgraig Primary School is a welcoming school where staff place pupils' well-being at the heart of everything they do. The school has a strong sense of community, and staff create warm and effective working relationships with pupils. The headteacher has worked with governors, and the school community, to establish a clear vision for an inclusive, happy school where pupils develop the range of skills they need for the future through stimulating learning experiences. As a result, most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, make suitable progress in developing their knowledge and skills.

A strength of the school is its provision to support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Staff understand the needs of individual pupils and work collaboratively with partner agencies to meet these needs. Suitably trained support staff deliver programmes that support individual pupils well. They tailor activities to the pupils and deliver them in a supportive and friendly manner. This helps pupils to make good progress against their targets and to feel relaxed and empowered to have a go at new things.

The school has a holistic approach to developing pupils' understanding of values and relationships and their spiritual awareness. This work proceeds very well across the school. Teachers have a secure knowledge of a Curriculum for Wales. They plan with clear learning intentions and take good account of pupils' views and interests when developing new topics. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a variety of motivating learning experiences including in music, art and drama. Although the outdoor space is currently limited, teachers make suitable use of what is available to enhance learning. Many pupils engage well with their learning and cooperate and collaborate successfully with others. At times, when teachers do not match the level of challenge well enough to pupils' ability, they do not sustain interest in their learning or make the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders have identified the need to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening and the work associated with this has been extremely successful in developing pupils' oral skills to a high standard, particularly in informal situations. Overall, staff model language well, and nearly all pupils listen attentively. The youngest pupils develop effective reading skills quickly and this rapid progress continues as they move through the school. Teachers use purposeful contexts to develop pupils' writing skills for a range of audiences. By Year 6, most pupils use specific vocabulary and accurate punctuation when writing engaging stories and persuasive campaigns. Leaders have identified Welsh as an area for development and have provided

training for staff and pupils. Pupils enjoy speaking Welsh and younger pupils are eager to try out their Welsh language skills with visitors, but this work is at an early stage of development.

Overall, teachers plan appropriately to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge. However, they do not always adapt mathematical activities carefully enough to match pupils' skill levels and this impedes their progress. Opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum are generally limited. There are purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills and most pupils are confident to use these skills in work across the curriculum. Most pupils know how to stay safe online.

Older pupils are beginning to use success criteria to identify strengths in their work and areas they need to improve. Teachers generally make good use of pauses in lessons to consolidate learning or to address any misconceptions. However, when providing feedback, they do not always focus carefully enough on pupils' individual next steps in learning. As a result, pupils are not always clear about how to improve their learning over time.

Spotlight: Raising pupils' awareness of safeguarding

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Pupils feel safe and know that their concerns will be listened to and acted upon. The work of the school council in developing a safeguarding charter has ensured that pupils understand what safeguarding means and have the confidence to raise issues of concern with school staff. When considering the most important feature of a new school, pupils in Years 4 and 5 give safeguarding the highest priority.

The school has robust systems to monitor pupils' attendance and works closely with external partners to support families in need of additional help and advice. Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of attending school regularly. Pupils' attendance is improving slowly, but the gap between those pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers increased during the last academic year.

Most pupils behave well and are courteous and polite. They move around the school in an orderly manner and show respect for others. When pupils' behaviour does not meet expectations, staff deal with issues sensitively and support pupils to regulate their behaviour. Pupils have good opportunities to take on leadership roles and have a strong voice in the school. For example, they have considered how to improve the outdoor environment and make better use of the available outdoor space.

There is a strong team ethos amongst staff. Leaders have created a culture where staff collaborate purposefully with a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. They often create purposeful professional learning opportunities for themselves by sharing the expertise that already exists in the school. They work well with other local schools to develop aspects of the curriculum, such as relationships and sexuality education.

Leaders are developing suitable systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the school's work. Through this work, the school is beginning to identify appropriate priorities, but monitoring activities are not always rigorous or robust enough to identify specific areas requiring attention, such as the need to improve the quality of feedback to pupils.

Governors provide good support to leaders and understand the school's priorities. Along with the headteacher and local authority, they plan to address the school's deficit budget. They are beginning to play an active role in monitoring and evaluation processes. They ensure that the school has suitable resources to carry out its work. During challenging times for the school, where it has relocated out of its community, they offer sensitive reassurance, prioritising the well-being of pupils, parents and staff. Due to the current temporary nature of the school and its location, leaders and governors work hard to maintain links with the community through regular coffee mornings and parental workshops. For example, they have explained to parents how teachers ensure that the curriculum builds on pupils' prior skills and knowledge. In addition, they use a venue in Godre'rgraig to hold school events.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for site security do not give any cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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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