

Castle Park Primary School  
Church Road  
Caldicot  
NP26 4HN

07/10/24

Dear Mrs Claire Orford

**Interim visit: September 2024**

A team of inspectors recently visited Castle Park Primary School to consider how the school has made progress in addressing the two recommendations from its core inspection in December 2022. Below is a summary of progress against those recommendations.

During the visit the team had the opportunity to:

- Observe the learning in all classes.
- Discuss pupils' learning with them.
- Meet with teachers and leaders.
- Look at pupils' work.
- Scrutinise relevant documentation.

**Focus of visit**

**Further develop assessment for learning to better support pupils to understand the purpose of their learning and the progress they make**

- Since the last inspection, leaders and staff have carried out a purposeful range of well-intentioned work to address this recommendation. All staff have engaged in a suitable range of professional learning which is beginning to influence the school's approach to assessment for learning appropriately.
- Leaders carry out a valuable selection of self-evaluation activities that help them reflect on this aspect of the school's work accurately. Their evaluations accurately identify that further work is required to ensure that high quality assessment for learning is embedded in classroom practice across the school.
- Across the school, teachers communicate learning objectives clearly during lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In these lessons, pupils remain focussed on what they are trying to achieve.

- In most cases, teachers plan lessons that are purposeful and interesting. In general, this helps pupils to become confident in explaining their learning and understanding of what they do well. However, on occasions, teaching is over-directed and effective assessment for learning strategies are not applied consistently. In these instances, too many pupils become disengaged and do not have opportunities to share their understanding with their teacher. In these lessons, teaching is not always adapted to meet the needs of pupils.
- In nearly all classes, pupils have useful opportunities to evaluate their own work and progress through success criteria, helpful prompts and carefully chosen questions. For instance, younger pupils use traffic lights appropriately to show how well they have completed their independent challenges. Older pupils record their level of understanding thoughtfully after each mathematics activity. This is beginning to help pupils to understand what they do well and what they might need to do next in their learning.
- Throughout the school, teachers use positive language and praise consistently to support pupils. In many cases this approach is successful in ensuring that pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and gives them a good understanding of what they are doing well.
- Across the school, teachers are beginning to provide pupils with feedback that enables them to take the next steps in their learning. For example, Year 2 pupils begin to use their understanding of multiplication of single digit numbers to calculate multiples of two- and three-digit numbers.
- Teachers make good use of the classroom environment to support older pupils' learning and to promote their independence. In general, older pupils make constructive use of word walls to develop their ideas and enrich their writing and refer to displays to remind them of mathematical processes.
- The school has established a consistent approach to ensuring that pupils have valuable opportunities to influence the curriculum. This is effective in ensuring that most pupils recognise the purpose and relevance of their learning. As they move through the school, pupils have increasing opportunities to make choices about how to set out their learning, and many do so confidently.

### **Improve pupils' Welsh language skills across the school**

- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's progress towards meeting the requirements of this recommendation. They recognise the progress made in pupils' oracy skills since the core inspection and sensibly identify the key areas for improvement.
- Leaders link the professional learning needs of staff and their performance management objectives with school priorities successfully.
- Teachers plan frequent, purposeful and progressive activities to support the development of pupils' oracy skills. Nearly all use incidental Welsh throughout the school day. As a result, most pupils make strong progress in developing their use of spoken Welsh and show enjoyment in learning the language. Across the school, many pupils listen attentively and respect the contributions of others consistently.

- Teachers use a range of effective strategies to support the development of pupils' oracy skills, for example through effective questioning, actions to support understanding of key words and links to prior learning.
- Welsh displays in nearly all classes encourage pupils to use Welsh throughout the school day. The majority of these displays reinforce the key words used in the classroom.
- Younger pupils often use Welsh in their daily routines, and quickly become familiar with a good range of words and sentence patterns, for instance to describe the colour of leaves. As they move through the school, most pupils speak confidently and begin using their growing knowledge in conversations.
- Most older pupils respond well to questions and contribute purposefully to class discussions, for example when discussing aspects about their lives.
- Many of the older pupils infer meaning from text to support the development of their Welsh oracy and their understanding of the language.
- The 'Criw Cymraeg' actively support the development of pupils' oracy skills across the school, through creating informative videos. However, they are guided in their actions and do not have enough opportunities to develop and implement their own ideas.
- Teachers are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to immerse themselves in the Welsh language through songs and rhymes, but this work is at an early stage of development.

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

Leaders and staff at the school have worked well to address these recommendations. They recognise that there are aspects that could improve further.

The school's latest core inspection report and further information on the process and purpose of interim visits can be found on our website:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6792322>

Yours sincerely



**Liz Miles**  
Assistant Director