



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

A report on

**Mount Pleasant Primary
Ruskin Avenue
Rogerstone
Newport
NP10 0AB**

Date of inspection: February 2018

by

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

About Mount Pleasant Primary

Mount Pleasant Primary School is in Rogerstone, near Newport. There are 272 pupils on roll between the ages of three and eleven, including 31 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 2% which is well below the national average (19%). Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and come from homes where English is the main language. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school identifies that 10% of its pupils have additional learning needs. This is below the national average (21%). A very few pupils have statements of special educational need.

The last inspection of the school was in March 2013. The headteacher took up her post in January 2016.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The headteacher has a strong vision for the school that focuses well on nurturing pupils so that they enjoy and succeed at learning. She has high expectations of staff and pupils and has created a strong team ethos among senior leaders, governors and staff. As a result, there is a purposeful atmosphere throughout the school where staff focus effectively on improving teaching and learning.

The school provides a wide range of learning experiences that interest and motivate pupils well. Staff have incorporated the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales into their planning. They have adapted the topics and themes that they deliver to ensure that they provide pupils with purposeful opportunities to learn in real-life contexts. As a result, most pupils concentrate well on their learning and focus effectively on tasks and activities. Older pupils in particular have a mature attitude towards learning. The quality of teaching is good and nearly all pupils make strong progress from their starting points. The school places a strong emphasis on improving pupils' wellbeing and, as a result, nearly all pupils attend school regularly and most feel safe and happy in the school environment.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Adapt tasks and activities consistently to meet the needs of all learners and ensure that all pupils remain focused on their learning
- R2 Ensure that all learning experiences in the foundation phase reflect the ethos and principles of this stage of learning
- R3 Strengthen opportunities for teachers to share their expertise across the school

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 preparing for the new curriculum for Wales. The school is not part of the pioneer school programme, but staff have worked successfully to develop exciting learning experiences. This is a strength of the school, in particular the involvement of pupils in this work.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils begin school with skills and understanding at or above the level expected for their age. As they move through the school, nearly all pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

In the foundation phase, most pupils listen well to adults and to each other. Nearly all pupils' speaking skills are good. Many pupils in the reception class give clear explanations about how characters are feeling when retelling the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. In key stage 2, most pupils listen effectively and speak articulately. For example, pupils in Year 6 explain the reasons behind the recent earthquake in Swansea using a well-developed and mature vocabulary.

Most pupils in the foundation phase make strong progress in reading. By Year 2, most read aloud well and show a good understanding of texts. In key stage 2, many use their reading skills effectively to help them to research information, for example using internet search engines to find out about Greek gods. Many older pupils read widely for pleasure and enjoy books by a range of authors, including Philip Pullman and Terry Pratchett.

Younger pupils in the foundation phase use their phonic knowledge to write simple texts successfully, for example when they make wanted posters for the big bad wolf. In Year 1, many pupils write effectively for a range of purposes in their literacy lessons and across the curriculum. For example, they write applications for jobs in the fire service and letters to thank the local police liaison officer for visiting the school. They use basic sentence punctuation well, such as full stops and capital letters. Throughout key stage 2, most pupils write to a good standard in a wide range of genres. They structure their writing effectively according to purpose and audience. For example Year 4 pupils write persuasively to encourage visitors to come to Wales and Year 6 pupils write interesting reports on life in Ancient Egypt. Across key stage 2, pupils' spelling and handwriting skills are good. By Year 6, pupils use a wide range of punctuation to help structure their written work. For example, they use brackets effectively to add additional details within a text and they use commas accurately to separate items in a list within their sentences. Pupils across the school write to the same good standard in their science and topic work as they do in their English work.

Throughout the school, pupils' Welsh skills are strong. In the foundation phase, most pupils understand and can use simple phrases and Welsh words. For example, they can describe the weather and say where they live. Many pupils build effectively on these skills as they move through key stage 2. Pupils in Year 5 read Welsh texts aloud well and with confidence, pronouncing words and phrases correctly. By Year 6 many pupils speak well. For example, they say what they like about school, extending their answers by adding additional information or using a connective to explain their preferences.

Most pupils in the foundation phase develop strong number skills. Pupils in Year 2 use these skills well across the curriculum. For example, they interpret data from

pictograms and they measure and compare strides and hand spans in their topic work. Pupils' numeracy skills develop well in their mathematics lessons as they move through key stage 2. For example, pupils in Year 3 find fractions of numbers and add and subtract amounts of money accurately to find the change needed when working out the cost of food on menus. Older pupils apply their numeracy skills well in a wide range of real life contexts. For example, Year 6 pupils calculate the costs of a holiday trip to Australia, including flights, car hire and hotel charges and convert currency from Australian dollars to sterling accurately.

Nearly all pupils have effective information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In the foundation phase many use computers well, for example following instructions successfully to build a vehicle on screen. Pupils in key stage 2 use their skills purposefully and with independence to support their work across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 use electronic maps to locate local food suppliers and pupils in Year 6 produce spreadsheets with details of different football grounds.

Nearly all pupils with additional learning needs make very good progress and most reach the levels expected for their age by the time they leave the school.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Most pupils feel safe and happy in school. They know where to turn if they need support and are confident that staff listen and deal appropriately with any worries and concerns that they have.

Most pupils concentrate well on their learning and focus effectively on tasks and activities. Older pupils in particular have a mature attitude towards learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 work well together to solve a numerical reasoning problem about the perimeter of a rugby field. They sustain their interest in the problem-solving task and pose relevant questions about the activity to members of their group. They show a genuine delight in learning. However, on occasions, a few pupils in the foundation phase and key stage 2 do not maintain sufficient focus on tasks and do not make as much progress in their learning as they should.

Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to have a say in what and how they learn. For example, pupils set their own learning targets for literacy and numeracy. Year 3 pupils are very clear about the purpose of these targets and understand how they help them to improve their work. Pupils in Year 6 take an active part in planning their curriculum. For example, they have planned activities for their Welcome to Wales topic that match the areas of learning and experience in the new curriculum for Wales. The activities chosen by pupils are thoughtful and relevant and show a mature understanding of the requirements of each learning area.

Most pupils have a strong understanding of the importance of exercise and healthy eating. Nearly all enjoy regular physical education and games sessions and many attend extra-curricular physical activities, such as Welsh folk dancing and football. They eat healthy snacks at break time and drink water regularly during the day. Most pupils are aware of a suitable range of strategies to help them to stay safe online. For example, they know that they should not disclose personal information or join in online games with people that they do not know.

Nearly all pupils behave well during break times. Most are polite and show respect for each other and adults. Most enjoy school life and attend school regularly. Attendance levels are very good. The school has been in the top 25% or higher 50% when compared with similar schools over recent years.

Many pupils take on responsibilities that have a positive impact on the life and work of the school. For example, pupils appointed as peer mediators support pupils at play times by encouraging them to join in with games and activities. Members of the criw Cymraeg promote the use of Welsh well, for example by sharing words and phrases of the week and planning events and activities for a Welsh week in readiness for the school Eisteddfod.

Most pupils have a good understanding of their rights. The school's super ambassadors promote the school's values well, for example by sharing the value of the week in whole-school assemblies. Pupils show through their discussions that they understand how values such as determination can help them in activities at school and at home. Many pupils have a suitable understanding of how people live in other countries and cultures. For example, pupils in Year 4 correspond regularly with children from a school in Uganda. They understand the need to help those who are less fortunate than themselves, for example by raising funds to help the school in Uganda to buy new windows.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Teachers provide a wide range of learning experiences that interest and motivate pupils well. Curriculum planning is a strength of the school. Staff have incorporated the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales into their planning carefully. They have adapted the topics and themes that they deliver to ensure that they provide pupils with purposeful opportunities to learn in real-life contexts. Teachers take a flexible approach to curriculum planning, for example adapting plans to take account of events that are relevant to the pupils, such as the recent earthquake in the Swansea area. Most teachers begin topics with exciting activities that they design to engage and enthuse pupils. For example, teachers started a recent topic by simulating what happens when people travel through an airport and during an aeroplane flight. Teachers have begun to involve pupils in the planning of topics appropriately. For example, Year 6 pupils have planned a range of activities for their Welcome to Wales topic.

There is an effective team spirit in the school and staff collaborate well to share their knowledge and understanding for the benefit of the pupils. For example, the school cook provided a video recording of herself talking about the benefits of using local produce in the school kitchen as a stimulus for a humanities lesson. As a result of creative provision, most pupils throughout the school have high levels of motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers plan worthwhile opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills effectively in their topic and science work. The school's provision for pupils to learn the Welsh language and about life in Wales is good.

Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers use a suitable range of teaching strategies, including opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class and in small groups and pairs. In many instances, teachers adapt work

well to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities and they link new learning well to what pupils already know, particularly in mathematics. However, this is not consistent across all areas of learning and there are a few occasions where teachers plan inappropriately for all pupils to complete the same activities. Where this happens, pupils who are more able or who finish tasks quickly do not receive enough challenge, lose their focus and concentration and do not achieve as well as they could.

Nearly all teaching assistants work effectively with groups and individual pupils and have a positive impact on the progress pupils make. For example, they work with groups of pupils who need additional support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers and teaching assistants question pupils well to challenge and extend their thinking. For example, in guided reading sessions, staff use questions effectively to develop pupils' comprehension skills.

Many teachers provide purposeful feedback to pupils to help them to understand what they do well and what they need to do to improve their work. They provide clear objectives for pupils' learning and helpful success criteria against which older pupils assess their own and other pupils' learning

Most teachers in the foundation phase have developed areas in their classrooms and outdoor areas that provide an appropriate range of learning experiences for pupils. For example, the outdoor nursery area and the Year 2 café provide good opportunities for pupils to learn how to grow plants and to use money in purposeful contexts. However, this practice is not consistent across the whole of the foundation phase. For example, at times, pupils work for too long in large groups or as a whole class and, where this happens, pupils do not make as much progress in learning as they could.

The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in school visits that support the curriculum effectively. These include a residential trip for pupils in Year 6 and a visit to the aquarium in Weston-super-Mare for pupils in Year 1.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school tracks and monitors pupils' progress in learning and wellbeing very well. Senior leaders and teachers monitor the progress of all groups of learners, including pupils who are more able and those with additional learning needs. Teachers use the school's tracking system well to set aspirational targets for all pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. Staff review these targets termly and where progress is below that expected, teachers identify pupils who might benefit from further intervention. The school plans and delivers valuable support for pupils who need additional help, for example, through phonics and numeracy catch-up programmes. As a result, nearly all pupils who receive additional support make good progress.

The headteacher places a strong emphasis on improving pupils' wellbeing and implements a range of effective strategies to support this. For example, teachers use a pupil survey tool to help monitor pupils' social and emotional skills and to identify pupils who need additional support to develop these skills. The school provides strong support for these pupils, for example through the daily lunchtime squad sessions where teaching assistants help pupils to participate in a variety of structured

play activities, such as construction activities and block play. This has a very positive impact on the pupils who attend. For example, their behaviour has improved as pupils learn to manage their emotions more effectively. All staff make purposeful use of an online programme to reward pupils who show positive attitudes to learning.

The school has a beneficial relationship with parents and gives them valuable support. For example, staff deliver workshops that help parents to understand the school's approach to teaching reading and numeracy. Teachers throughout the school set targets for pupils in English, mathematics and social development. They share and agree these with parents to help them to know the next steps in their children's learning.

The school gives pupils many purposeful opportunities to take on responsibility, for example through participating in leadership roles that have a positive impact on school life. Members of the eco committee play an active part in making sure that the school recycles its waste appropriately. Staff support the pupil groups well, for example by helping members of the school council to prepare a presentation during a whole-school assembly. Recently, staff have improved opportunities for pupils to take part in their own learning, for example through setting their own targets for improvement and planning the content of their topics. This is having a positive impact on pupils' engagement in their learning.

Teachers promote positive attitudes of tolerance and respect by involving pupils in initiatives such as anti-bullying week and Black History Month. These initiatives support pupils' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity well. Pupils have purposeful opportunities to develop their understanding further through the curriculum, for example Year 5 pupils study the life and work of Martin Luther King.

The school supports pupils' spiritual and moral development well, for example through regular whole-school assemblies. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, the police liaison officer visits school regularly to discuss issues, such as using the internet safely.

The school gives pupils worthwhile opportunities to develop healthy lifestyles through regular physical activities and through participating in events such as healthy eating week. There are worthwhile opportunities for pupils to perform, for example in the school Christmas concert and the Eisteddfod. There are effective opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills. For example, all pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 learn to play the violin. The school offers an extensive range of interesting extra-curricular clubs, including folk dancing, rugby and block play. These support pupils' learning and social skills well.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The recently appointed headteacher has a strong, developing vision for the school that focuses effectively on nurturing pupils so that they enjoy and succeed at learning. She has high expectations of staff and pupils and has created a strong team ethos among senior leaders, governors and staff. As a result, there is a purposeful atmosphere throughout the school that focuses well on delivering teaching and learning of good or better quality.

The new senior leadership team has concentrated successfully on developing an innovative curriculum while maintaining high standards in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher has shared roles and responsibilities with staff successfully. This leadership is effective in addressing school and national priorities. For example, learning teams and staff training focus appropriately on planning for the new curriculum for Wales. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning experiences.

School leaders implement effective performance management arrangements. They address underperformance robustly through tailored support, feedback and challenge. They give staff appropriate opportunities to reflect on their own practice and to develop their leadership skills. Staff are keen to learn and are willing to take on new ideas and ways of working. As a result, there is shared sense of direction and pupils' learning experiences remain fresh and stimulating.

Leaders have developed their use of electronic systems well to ensure the efficient day-to-day running of the school. For example, the use of shared online documents allows all staff to collaborate on new policies and procedures, such as those that track pupils' progress.

Leaders monitor standards and the quality of provision well. They make effective use of a wide range of first-hand evidence, including regular reviews of pupils' work, lesson observations and the views of pupils and parents. As a result, senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas of development. Pupils contribute successfully to improving school life. For example, the school council has introduced a newspaper club and pupils who attend this are developing their understanding of media skills, including how to carry out effective interviews.

Leaders have developed effective links between self-evaluation procedures and planning for improvement. The introduction of more systematic way to gather and analyse information on pupils' progress has reduced the workload for teachers and sharpened the support for targeted pupils, for example through guided reading sessions. Most of the targets in the school improvement plan are clear with appropriate timescales, success criteria and resources. However, the priority to develop foundation phase provision does not focus well enough on improving specific aspects of practice.

The school has strong links with the local high school at teacher and governor levels. This ensures purposeful and well-organised transition arrangements. Teachers have contributed effectively to publishing resources to support a shared understanding of literacy teaching across schools. Teaching assistants benefit well from training linked to the school's priorities, such as improving pupils' social and emotional wellbeing. However, opportunities for staff to share good practice are underdeveloped, for instance in relation to key stage 2 numeracy and foundation phase principles.

Governors are very supportive of the school and well informed about its performance in comparison to similar schools. Most governors visit school regularly and carry out a purposeful range of activities, for example, they attend meetings of the school council and talk to learners, parents and staff. As a result, governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this information effectively to challenge the school about its performance and members draw on their expertise to provide additional support, for example in the provision for science.

Leaders make efficient use of the school's resources. Teachers have started to use the outdoor learning environment more extensively in line with the school's priorities. The school's senior leaders manage the school budget well and staffing levels are appropriate. Staff use the funds raised by parents effectively to buy equipment and resources for pupils, for example the recent purchase of additional laptop computers and violins.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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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Publication date: 02/05/2018