



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

A report on

Llangynidr C.P. School

**Llangynidr
Crickhowell
Powys
NP8 1LU**

Date of inspection: March 2024

by

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

About Llangynidr C.P. School

Name of provider	Llangynidr C.P. School
Local authority	Powys County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	102
Pupils of statutory school age	97
Number in nursery classes	0
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 23.7%)	5.7%
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 13.2%)	4.9%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.9%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.9%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/11/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/09/2015
Start date of inspection	11/03/2024

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.

Overview

Llangynidr Primary School is at the heart of its community. Leaders and staff provide a warm and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe, happy and cared for. Pupils are proud to belong to the school, and value opportunities to contribute to its life and work. Most pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN), make at least suitable progress in a range of skills by the end of their time in school.

The school is beginning to develop a broad and stimulating curriculum that is designed to provide its pupils with a balanced range of learning experiences. Teachers plan a range of authentic and purposeful learning experiences that reflect the community and environment in which they live.

The school has prioritised Welsh language development appropriately. Staff have benefitted from professional learning to improve their own Welsh language skills, and as a result, pupils are making good progress. Many pupils enjoy singing and playing games in Welsh and hold simple conversations with staff and with each other.

The school carries out a suitable range of activities to evaluate the impact of their work. However, leaders do not always identify important areas for improvement such as opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. They do not address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching to ensure all pupils make the progress they should in their learning.

The governing body supports the school extremely well in its improvement and evaluation work. Governors take part in learning walks and listen to learners regularly. Although governors gather first-hand information from their school visits, they do not monitor the impact of teaching on pupil outcomes effectively enough.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that leaders focus school improvement processes closely on the quality of teaching and the impact on pupils' learning and progress
- R2 Improve teaching to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should in their learning across the curriculum
- R3 Improve opportunities for pupils to write purposefully for a range of audiences and to improve the quality of their written work

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will work with the local authority to review the school's progress.

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils make suitable progress during their time in school, and pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress from their individual starting points. Overall, most pupils develop their knowledge and understanding appropriately across the areas of learning and experience (AoLE's).

The youngest pupils listen well and follow instructions appropriately. Most speak confidently and develop good communication skills. By Year 3 most pupils express their ideas with confidence in a range of situations. For example, when presenting on 'Fantastically Great Women' they interact with their audience to answer their questions about the topic. Many pupils ask meaningful and interesting questions, and most older pupils use subject specific vocabulary confidently, for example when discussing qualitative and quantitative data. They discuss their work maturely and express their feelings and emotions effectively in daily check-ins.

Overall, most pupils make strong progress in their reading. Most younger pupils recognise sounds and use phonic strategies to read simple words. By Year 2, many pupils read independently using suitable strategies to read unfamiliar words, and sustain interest in their reading. Most older pupils talk enthusiastically about favourite authors and read longer novels confidently and with expression. Most pupils use their comprehension skills effectively to skim and scan texts for information. They infer meaning and gather information from more complex texts.

Many younger pupils form letters appropriately, for instance when experimenting with writing the names of farm animals. By Year 2, many pupils make suitable progress in developing their writing skills. They spell common words correctly and use their knowledge of letter sounds and patterns to help them. Many pupils develop fluent, neat handwriting and take pride in their presentation. By Year 6, most pupils develop good grammar and punctuation. When given the opportunity, many demonstrate effective expressive language skills, and develop an extensive vocabulary. They use this effectively to add imagery to their work, for example Year 4 pupils develop effective poems on the growth of a plant using similes, metaphors and personification. However, across the school, pupils write in a limited range of genres. Pupils do not write purposefully for a wide enough range audiences or to explore and extend their ideas.

Many pupils make good progress in developing their Welsh language skills, for example through leading assemblies in Welsh and singing Welsh songs. Older pupils are beginning to regain confidence in speaking Welsh following the impact of the pandemic, and generally communicate personal information appropriately when answering a range of questions. They recognise the value of being multilingual and respond positively to learning the Welsh language.

Most pupils make suitable progress in developing their mathematical skills as they move through the school. By Year 2, they develop a sound knowledge of the four rules of number. Most pupils use a range of strategies to recall and use mathematical language to explain their reasoning effectively. Many pupils apply their numeracy

skills across the curriculum suitably. For example, older pupils use their multiplication skills to calculate the cost of the flooring of a restaurant they are designing.

Most pupils make suitable progress in developing their digital skills. By Year 4 many pupils use coding skills with confidence to identify the different parts of a flower. By Year 6, pupils use a range of platforms to store and retrieve their work confidently and safely. Many present data in various forms, such as pie and bar graphs, independently and effectively.

Most pupils enjoy developing their creative, artistic and musical skills, and are proud of their achievements. For example, younger pupils experiment with colour and texture of a range of fruit when creating a collage flag as part of their 'Farm to Fork' theme. Older pupils experiment with different materials when creating a collage of flowers. Many pupils develop the skills of musical tone and pitch well, for example through playing instruments, and older pupils develop these skills as they work collaboratively to discuss the dynamics, sounds and differences in a variety of music genres.

Most pupils develop their physical skills well. Younger pupils develop their hand-eye co-ordination and strength successfully through play-based and dance activities. Older pupils develop good balance, co-ordination and ball skills well during team building tasks and in sports activities such as football, cross-country and rugby.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils show high levels of well-being and are happy at school. Nearly all pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy school life. They benefit from positive working relationships with staff and know who to go to if they are worried or upset. Nearly all pupils interact with adults in a mature, courteous and articulate manner. Most pupils feel that their views are listened to, and that staff respond well to their ideas and suggestions. Nearly all pupils and their families value the importance of being in school. As a result, the school secures high rates of attendance.

Most pupils have a solid understanding of the school's 'ready, respect and safe' behaviour values, and apply them consistently. Nearly all pupils behave well during lessons, at break times and when moving around the school. This contributes to the calm atmosphere of the school.

Nearly all pupils focus well during lessons and engage with their work with enthusiasm and positivity. Most pupils collaborate well during group activities. For example, many older pupils demonstrate effective communication skills such making suggestions and listening to the views of others when designing plans to open a new restaurant in the village. Nearly all pupils show respect and consideration for the opinions of others and are confident in their ability to complete tasks. However, many pupils do not develop resilience to challenging or unfamiliar learning experiences well enough. Most pupils respond appropriately to feedback to improve their work.

Most pupils engage enthusiastically in outdoor activities. For example, pupils in reception and Year 1 work effectively to build a stage out of pallets to perform on, and they develop their physical skills when using outdoor climbing equipment. Older pupils collaborate well when playing games and sports. They engage younger pupils

in play activities and act as positive behaviour role models. Many pupils take part in clubs, activities and team sports that support their physical and emotional health and well-being. For example, in gardening club pupils learn the value of contributing to the community when growing vegetables to use in a curry for Refugee Day.

Most pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of online safety and know what to do if they see something that worries or concerns them. For example, the Digital Leaders create their own website to provide information to other pupils to help them stay safe online. Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of using passwords to help keep their information safe.

Many pupils contribute enthusiastically to the school's pupil leadership groups. They confidently discuss the ways in which they collaborate to improve school life. For example, the school council works with the local community to develop the school grounds and to raise money for playground markings. Nearly all pupils take great pride in their school and its community and enjoy taking responsibility to look after and improve it. Despite the school's efforts to promote positive lifestyle choices, a few pupils bring unhealthy snacks into school.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school has developed a vision for its curriculum to align with the principles of Curriculum for Wales. The school's current whole school thematic approach has been developed with pupils and governors. The school's developing curriculum places the community at the heart of its vision and ensures that members of the community are fully involved in pupils' learning experiences. Although the school's curriculum is often stimulating and inspiring, generally the provision for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills across the curriculum is at an early stage.

Teachers consider pupils' ideas about what they would like to learn and use these ideas well to plan activities that are authentic and purposeful. They provide valuable opportunities for all pupils to learn about their locality. For example, during careers week pupils learn about the world of work, and this stimulates their interest in a wide variety of careers. During the 'Farm to Fork' theme, farmers visit the school with their animals to provide pupils with first-hand exciting experiences. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding of important current themes such as sustainability, culture and citizenship.

Teachers plan learning experiences that generally engage pupils well. However, teachers often over-direct the learning and this limits opportunities for pupils to develop suitably as independent learners. Teachers do not always plan effectively to meet the needs of all pupils and as a result, opportunities to develop pupils' independence are missed, and too many more able pupils are not challenged.

The school uses a range of appropriate and useful assessment information to help teachers understand how well pupils are progressing. Most teachers provide feedback to pupils that helps them to improve their work. On occasion, teachers do not ensure that pupils understand their next steps in learning clearly enough.

The school's provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills is developing well, and staff are positive role models for the Welsh language. Teachers frequently use Welsh during their lessons and plan lessons that develop and build on pupils' fluency in language patterns. Where appropriate, they plan writing activities to help pupils to recall new phrases and sentences. Staff plan valuable learning experiences to support pupils' understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales, such as annual residential visits to Cardiff and Llangrannog that help pupils gain experiences of wider Wales and its diversity.

Staff plan well to develop the youngest pupils' reading skills. Staff read aloud to pupils and act as positive role models. They encourage pupils to read for enjoyment and introduce them to new authors, and there is a strong culture of reading in the school. Teachers ensure that pupils build on their spelling and grammar skills appropriately, although they do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write in a range of genres across the curriculum.

Pupils benefit from learning in the school's outdoor environment. The outdoor learning experiences enable pupils to develop their problem-solving and physical skills effectively and support their well-being.

Care, support and guidance

The school is at the heart of its rural village community. It develops close links with families and ensures that an open-door policy is used effectively to share information and support pupils. Staff are caring and considerate in their approach and show a good understanding of pupils' emotional needs. For example, staff use morning check-ins consistently to allow pupils to share how they are feeling before starting the school day. This allows staff to respond sensitively in a timely and appropriate manner.

Most pupils demonstrate strong moral values and are considerate of others. Staff plan informative assemblies to encourage pupils' understanding of diversity. For example, staff support pupils to raise their awareness of inclusion for them to better understand how to support their peers. This approach supports pupils in developing their empathy.

The school's effective partnership with local community groups provides a range of valuable experiences and opportunities for pupils to develop morally and spiritually. For example, members of the church visit the school for regular assemblies, which encourages pupils to consider ethical and moral scenarios.

The school provides specialist sports provision to improve pupils' physical and sporting skills. Most pupils enjoy these sessions and approach them enthusiastically. The school makes positive efforts to encourage healthy eating and drinking and to ensure pupils understand the reasons for doing so. For example, older pupils design menus that consider a balanced diet using their knowledge of different food groups.

The school is making good progress in responding to national ALN reform. The ALN Co-ordinator (ALNCo) ensures early identification of pupils' additional needs through observations, assessments and discussions with staff. This ensures pupils requiring additional support are identified in a timely manner and receive the support they

need. The ALNCo engages in useful professional development that allows them to support staff to understand how to support the more complex needs of pupils. They work effectively in partnership with external agencies. Staff regularly monitor and discuss pupils' progress and adapt interventions accordingly to ensure that pupils with ALN make at least expected progress towards their individual targets.

The school ensures that pupils learn how to stay safe online, and pupils know what to do if something worries or upsets them. The school's procedures for safeguarding are appropriate and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management

Following a time of uncertainty in staffing, leaders have worked with pupils and families to create a purposeful community vision to take the school forward. The school has begun to develop a clear and shared sense of purpose that guides its work to address national priorities and to develop its curriculum appropriately to focus on developing pupils' skills. The headteacher is beginning to develop leadership across the school. However, this work is at an early stage.

Leaders have planned a suitable programme of monitoring activities to evaluate the work of the school. This includes gathering an appropriate range of evidence from learning walks, pupils' work and talking to pupils about their learning. This helps the school to understand how well pupils engage in their learning. However, leaders do not evaluate the effectiveness of teaching well enough and, as a result, staff do not have high enough expectations of all pupils. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress they should, for example to improve the quality of their writing.

Leaders address national ALN reform suitably and have put appropriate support in place for pupils where needed. The ALNCo is well-informed and ensures pupils receive appropriate interventions to develop their emotional, literacy and numeracy skills.

The headteacher has recently developed performance management processes to ensure staff development links appropriately to school improvement priorities. This is having a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning and community engagement.

Leaders have developed an effective culture of professional learning, and nearly all staff participate in appropriate training linked to school improvement priorities. For example, the school's focus on developing the Welsh language has improved teachers' and pupils' skills. The school works with local schools effectively, for example to develop an understanding of progression and assessment and to address pupils' emotional needs. Opportunities for staff to share practice more widely are less well-developed.

Governors work well with leaders and staff to improve aspects of the school's work such as developing a curriculum to align with the principles of Curriculum for Wales. They draw on a range of first-hand evidence to evaluate school improvement and are developing their role as critical friend well. Governors understand their role in promoting healthy eating and drinking and in safeguarding pupils. They manage the

school's finances efficiently, including planning suitably to support vulnerable pupils through 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

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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