



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

A report on

Golftyn C.P. School

**York Road
Connah's Quay
Deeside
Flintshire
CH5 4XA**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

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

About Golftyn C.P. School

Name of provider	Golftyn C.P. School
Local authority	Flintshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	408
Pupils of statutory school age	320
Number in nursery classes	33
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%)	21.3%
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 13.2%)	9.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	3.1%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	11.6%
Date of headteacher appointment	03/09/2012
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	
Start date of inspection	10/06/2024

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

Leaders, staff and governors at Golftyn Primary School provide a safe and stimulating environment for pupils. They place pupils' and staff's well-being, happiness and learning at the heart of the school's work. They pay careful attention to the development of staff to ensure that all embrace the school's vision and contribute to the strong team ethos. Subsequently, staff and pupils are happy and feel valued.

Pupils feel a firm sense of pride and belonging to their school and their locality. Generally, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Parents are highly appreciative for the strong, supportive care their children receive. Leaders and staff nurture pupils' personal, social and communication skills well. Pupils' interactions with adults are courteous and respectful.

Most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and those with English as an additional language (EAL), make good progress in many aspects of their learning and in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils identified as having additional learning needs (ALN) and those in receipt of additional support make effective progress towards their learning goals. However, provision does not always ensure that pupils make the progress they could in a few important areas. For example, the teaching of mathematics is not always effective enough and this limits pupils' progress.

The school's curriculum is broad and engages pupils effectively. As a result, pupils focus on their learning well. Teachers across the school provide pupils with suitable opportunities to make decisions about their learning. However, too often teachers over-direct learning and do not sufficiently challenge pupils, and the pace of teaching is too slow. Teachers in the younger pupils' classes provide pupils with opportunities to make choices about their activities, but these activities do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to learn and practise skills that are appropriate to their development.

Leaders accurately identify a few aspects of the school's areas in need of improvement and have created robust systems and processes to evaluate the work of the school. Nevertheless, the subsequent development and monitoring activities do not always focus sufficiently on improvements that will have the greatest impact on pupils' learning.

Leaders have developed an effective system for the assessment of all pupils as they move through the school; they use this to track the progress of every pupil. Generally, teachers provide pupils with effective verbal feedback. However, written feedback is mainly celebratory and does not provide pupils with enough guidance to know what to do to improve their work.

Leaders have comprehensive processes to monitor pupils' attendance. However, the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals is too low and too many pupils are persistently absent.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that self-evaluation and school improvement actions focus on pupils' learning and progress
- R2 Improve the aspects of teaching identified in the report as needing improvement
- R3 Improve staff's understanding of how to teach mathematics to ensure that pupils make better progress
- R4 Improve the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals and reduce rates of persistent absence

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

During their time at school, most pupils make good progress in many aspects of their learning and in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding. However, provision does not always ensure that pupils make the progress they could in a few important areas.

Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress in relation to their individual learning goals. They use strategies learnt during intervention sessions successfully to support their learning in class. Pupils who are new to the English language often make rapid progress. They develop their speaking and literacy skills particularly well. This enables them to access the full range of learning experiences at school. There is no notable difference in the progress of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and their peers.

Younger pupils begin to develop their early writing skills appropriately, for instance by writing letters and drawing pictures to send to friends. By the end of their time at school most pupils write appropriately for a good range of purposes. They develop a suitable understanding of the features of different text types, for example to create newspaper articles and formal letters. They make suitable vocabulary choices that match the context of the work. They organise writing into paragraphs successfully. However, in a few instances pupils do not use punctuation accurately and make frequent mistakes with capital letters for place names. Generally, pupils apply their writing skills appropriately in their work across the curriculum.

Nursery pupils handle books with interest. They use the left to right orientation when looking at the pictures and turn pages to move through the book. As they move through the school, most pupils acquire a few useful strategies that enable them to read fluently with understanding. For example, older pupils self-correct when they realise they have made a mistake. Generally, pupils use their reading skills well to support their work in other areas of learning.

Most pupils speak with confidence and clarity to express their views or to talk about their work, for instance to explain why animals adapt to different environments. Many pupils make appropriate progress in speaking Welsh in lessons. Younger pupils learn prepositions and use these correctly in simple questions and statements. A few pupils engage in conversation as part of active learning experiences, such as role play in a shop to ask to buy and sell groceries. Over time, pupils broaden their understanding of sentence patterns in the present and past tenses to share information about themselves and to discuss places they have been. However, pupils rarely use Welsh as part of their general learning.

Many pupils make suitable progress in a few areas of mathematics and apply their knowledge appropriately in their work across the curriculum, for example to make calculations. However, in general, too many pupils have misconceptions about basic mathematical concepts such as place value and their understanding of the properties of shape, space and measure is variable. This is largely due to teachers' lack of subject knowledge and the over reliance on a published scheme to teach mathematical concepts and skills. Within cross curricular work, teachers do not always support pupils to address misconceptions well enough.

Most pupils develop a good range of digital skills confidently and with independence to support their learning. They select and use a variety of programmes successfully to complete challenges presented by teachers.

In a few instances, pupils use a range of skills well in combination. For example, their work on entrepreneurial projects enables them to show how well they can make links between their creativity, use of language, numeracy and digital skills. The work in these projects is of a good standard and reflects the progress and confidence that pupils develop over time as learners.

Many older pupils show creativity in relation to problem solving and entrepreneurial activities, for instance when creating towers using straws and marshmallows when designing fidget spinners. Reception pupils use natural resources to create portraits of their friends during a forest school session. Many pupils use line, tone and colour effectively to create artwork inspired by local landmarks, events and people. Pupils enjoy learning about the elements of music including pitch and rhythm. They use their bodies to march and clap in beat.

Across the school pupils participate enthusiastically in outdoor lessons and physical activity. They are eager to represent the school, for example in local triathlon and running events. Pupils use large play equipment and trails around the school well to support their development. Younger pupils explore their environment and take suitable risks, for example through balancing on beams or using the small climbing wall.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous, polite and welcoming to adults and visitors. Generally, pupils are proud of their school and feel a strong sense of belonging. They show care and consideration for each other and collaborate effectively, showing respect for the contributions of other pupils. They have a firm sense of right and wrong and develop their understanding of children's rights appropriately. For example, pupils have created a video for the Children's Commissioner for Wales on how the school interprets the pupils' rights in school.

Across the school many pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They settle well to their tasks, sustain interest appropriately and generally persevere to complete their work, for instance when younger pupils build dens in the outdoor area. Most pupils listen attentively to teachers' instructions. They collaborate successfully in groups and in pairs, and many make positive contributions to class discussions.

Most older pupils are beginning to use skills they have learnt previously with increasing confidence and independence, for instance when they engage with a range of challenges presented by teachers. When given the opportunity, younger pupils learn well through play and select resources independently. However, as a result of over-direction by adults, they spend most of their time completing teacher directed tasks.

Generally, pupils respond positively and promptly to teachers' verbal feedback. However, they do not routinely use written feedback to bring about improvements to their work. This is because the written feedback they receive from teachers does not provide clear guidance on how they might improve their work and teachers do not ensure sufficient appropriate opportunities for them to respond.

Most pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and understand the concept and potential consequences of their digital footprint. Pupils become increasingly aware of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations through valuable educational visits. Pupils take on leadership roles, and the pupil voice groups are beginning to influence the life and work of the school successfully. For example, the Eco Committee, are enthusiastic about their roles, encouraging pupils to walk to school and to recycle materials correctly.

Nearly all pupils enjoy using the extensive outdoor areas to support their learning and well-being. Most pupils have a secure understanding of eating healthily and the importance of staying hydrated and taking regular exercise. During playtimes and lunchtimes, nearly all pupils are active and enjoy using the facilities on offer. For example, pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities such as football, netball and golf.

Rates of pupils' attendance at school are appropriate overall. However, the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is notably lower than that of their peers and rates of persistent absence are too high.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff across the school develop strong professional relationships with pupils, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for learning. They show care and understanding and manage pupils' behaviour effectively.

The school's curriculum is broad and teachers present pupils with a wide variety of relevant opportunities and experiences. The school provides useful opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their community and local area successfully. This aligns well with the principles of Curriculum for Wales and enriches pupils' learning. For example, the features of the local environment provide a valuable stimulus and context when creating and presenting art work.

Teachers create stimulating, attractive and calm environments which are conducive to learning. They organise learning around whole school topics that provide pupils with a variety of stimulating activities. They provide suitable opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas to planning and use this information appropriately. However, teachers focus too much on the content of the activity and not sufficiently on the learning required for pupils to make progress.

Teachers and teaching assistants develop strong relationships with pupils, based on care and trust. Teachers prepare appropriate lessons which are often interesting and nearly all pupils remain engaged throughout. However, too frequently teachers over direct learning, the level of challenge is not high enough and the pace of the lessons is too slow. This hinders pupils' progress, creativity and their development as resilient, independent learners. Learning in the younger years is often too formal and does not always align with pupils' developmental needs. Consequently, the opportunities for pupils to develop their curiosity and imagination and to practise skills important to their development is limited.

The school uses the extensive outdoor areas to provide a range of learning experiences. This provides effective opportunities for pupils to take part in physical and well-being activities. In the best instances, outdoor lessons provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their skills in the natural environment.

Staff's knowledge and understanding of the teaching in English and literacy is strong. However, their practice in mathematics and numeracy is not always good enough and consequently limits pupils' progress. At times teachers reinforce pupils' misconceptions or do not address them swiftly or effectively enough. There is an overreliance on a published scheme to guide and develop mathematics across the school. Consequently, this has an adverse effect on the learning and progress made by some pupils. The school promotes the heritage of the Welsh language successfully and there are appropriate arrangements to develop Welsh language skills. Teachers' use of multimedia and digital devices to introduce, record and support learning is effective across the school. The teaching of digital skills is purposeful, and this provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to use and extend their learning in a range of contexts across the curriculum. Teachers are beginning to plan for learners to develop their independent thinking and problem-solving skills.

The school has created a comprehensive approach to tracking pupils' performance in assessments and tests. Staff use this well to identify and monitor the learning of

pupils in need of additional support. The majority of teachers provide effective verbal feedback that allows pupils to make progress and extend their learning. However, while written feedback is often positive, it does not provide pupils with enough clarity about what they are doing well in their work, what they need to do next to improve and how to do it. The provision for pupils to develop their skills in evaluating and improving their own and their peers' learning is at an early stage of development.

Care, support and guidance

Golftyn Primary school is a happy, caring and nurturing community where staff and pupils demonstrate a high level of care and respect for each other. This is a notable feature of the school and ensures that all pupils have equitable access to all aspects of school life. Staff know their pupils and community well and procedures for managing behaviour are effective. The readiness of staff to listen to pupils contributes significantly to the positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils and the calm, happy ethos that permeates throughout the school.

The well-being team provides a wide variety of effective provision to further pupils' development. They deliver an extensive range of high-quality intervention programmes that are bespoke to the individual needs and support progress effectively.

The school has an inclusive ethos and provides effective care, support and guidance for pupils. Provision to support pupils with ALN and those who speak English as an additional language are particularly effective. Arrangements for identifying and responding to the needs of identified pupils are rigorous and robust. Staff involve pupils, parents and external agencies in the writing and evaluating of pupils' individual development plans. This ensures that most pupils with ALN receive well-planned personal support that successfully meets their needs. The ALN co-ordinator provides teaching assistants with beneficial training opportunities to specialise in, and lead, a wide range of intervention programmes to support pupils with ALN. For example, specific sessions for identified pupils have had a positive impact on improving reading ability. Most pupils who follow intervention programmes make good progress including those pupils with EAL.

Acts of collective worship and curriculum activities provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of moral issues and religious awareness. Staff place an emphasis on the rights of the child and promote these through weekly assemblies, displays and pupil voice groups.

Pupils are proud of their Welsh heritage and culture and community links are strong. Pupils are beginning to identify closely with their town and its surrounding area. For example, Year 4 pupils research how buildings in their locality, such as Connah's Quay Power Station, have changed over time. The school provides pupils with plentiful opportunities to study a range of artistic styles. Teachers make effective use of Welsh artists to inspire pupils' work and invites artists to create collaborative works of art with the pupils.

Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning, they listen attentively to teachers' instructions and demonstrate high levels of concentration. Pupils collaborate successfully in groups and in pairs, and many make positive

contributions towards class discussions. The majority of teachers give pupils helpful verbal feedback in 'pitstops' about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, too often pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of the written feedback in their books and teachers do not always follow up on this to ensure pupils make improvements to their work.

Most pupils have a secure understanding of healthy eating, staying hydrated and taking regular exercise. The 'Golftyn Government' conduct snack checks with the link governor for healthy eating. This provides pupils with meaningful opportunities to influence the promotion of key messages within the school. The school offers a range of extra-curricular clubs including football, netball, golf and choir, in which pupils eagerly participate. These opportunities encourage pupils to play fulfilling roles in the life of the school and develops their sense of belonging and citizenship. Staff track pupils' attendance at these clubs to ensure that they are fully inclusive and there are no attendance barriers for any pupils. The school uses visitors and visits to ensure that pupils co-operate with others and enjoy experiences outside of school. For example, older pupils attend sporting competitions including triathlons and outdoor residential trips that develop their teambuilding and leadership skills.

The school has appropriate procedures in place for monitoring and tracking attendance. The parental engagement officer and senior management team know their pupils well and have implemented a number of initiatives to improve attendance. However, attendance rates are below national targets and the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers has increased this year. Leaders ensure that the school has rigorous processes for safeguarding resulting a robust safeguarding culture within the school.

Leadership and management

Leaders in Golftyn Primary School maintain an effective learning environment that places high importance on creating a sense of community within the school. They foster an inclusive ethos where all pupils are welcomed and valued. The headteacher has successfully established a vision for the school based on its motto, 'Happy and respectful, we aim high'. This is shared and understood well by pupils, parents, staff and governors. Communication and relationships with parents are strong and they appreciate the nurturing, caring ethos the school promotes.

The headteacher places a strong emphasis on the well-being of pupils and staff. Her successful leadership of this aspect of the school's work has a positive impact on supporting the well-being of pupils throughout the school.

Leaders show strong commitment to addressing national educational priorities. For example, they have instigated a valuable focus on professional development in Welsh. They accurately identify a few aspects of the school's areas in need of development and have created robust systems and processes to evaluate the work of the school. However, leaders' expectations of aspects of teaching and learning are not always high enough. Additionally, the subsequent development and monitoring activities do not always focus sufficiently on improvements that will have the greatest impact on pupils' learning. For example, while the school has correctly identified the need to improve the teaching of mathematics, improvement actions have not centred

on the necessary development of staff's professional practice to improve pupils' learning.

Leaders have developed effective partnerships with a range of educational partners including the local authority and higher education establishments. Teachers work beneficially with the cluster schools and are beginning to plan collaboratively for key aspects of curriculum design and to develop a shared understanding of progression. These partnerships benefit the school's professional learning offer. The school's work with external partners, including 'The Well Fed Bus', supports its community-focused vision effectively.

Governors know the school, pupils, parents and the community well. They are proud and supportive of the school and have a good understanding of the challenges the school faces. Members of the governing body discharge their duties successfully through a range of link roles and committees, often bringing useful expertise to these duties. Governors have a sound knowledge of their responsibilities and take a diligent approach to promoting healthy eating and drinking. They support the school's leaders in prioritising pupils' well-being and promoting positive behaviour. Governors use their skills to effectively support leaders to manage finances and develop a strong safeguarding culture within the school.

Senior leaders co-ordinate processes for the performance management of all teachers and teaching assistants suitably. They link objectives efficiently to school priorities. Generally, school leaders have successfully created a beneficial culture of professional learning and development. The recent focus on developing staff's skills in improving pupils' well-being has been successful and resulted in effective provision for most pupils.

Leaders have a good understanding of pupils' life experiences and how the school can make a positive difference to pupils' lives. Comprehensive financial planning is sound, the school is well resourced and staff use these resources effectively. The pupil development grant (PDG) is used successfully through the deployment of skilled teaching assistants. The support provided by teaching assistants contributes to improving identified pupils' standards of learning, well-being, and social skills effectively, through the use of school-based interventions.

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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