



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

A report on

Kitchener Primary School

**Kitchener Road
Canton
CF11 6HT**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Kitchener Primary School

Name of provider	Kitchener Primary School
Local authority	Cardiff Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	451
Pupils of statutory school age	330
Number in nursery classes	75
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%)	35.6%
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%)	7.6%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	79.7%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	08/02/2016
Start date of inspection	25/06/2024

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

The school's highly inclusive ethos encourages all pupils to become respectful, responsible and empathetic members of its welcoming community. Pupils, staff and parents value one another and share positive relationships based on strong mutual trust. Because of this, pupils feel safe and show courtesy and consideration towards others throughout the school day. Nearly all pupils are motivated to learn and show enthusiasm in lessons. Most older pupils collaborate well and are eager to work with and support their peers. Across the school, most pupils apply themselves to independent tasks well. They generally have a good understanding of the purpose of their learning and are self-reliant, persevering to make good progress. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils are developing as effective independent learners.

Teachers provide a stimulating variety of worthwhile learning experiences that capture the interest of most pupils successfully. They ensure that learning has relevance for pupils and design activities that reflect and broaden their experience beneficially. Teachers and learning support assistants enable most pupils to make strong progress in developing their speaking, listening, reading and digital skills. They monitor pupils' progress carefully and provide effective additional support when needed. However, the school's provision to develop pupils' numeracy and mathematical skills is less systematic and expectations for pupils' written work in English vary too much. Most pupils make suitable progress in speaking Welsh in lessons.

Staff provide a rich range of opportunities for pupils to learn about and celebrate the diverse nature of the school's community. They support older pupils to consider thoughtfully global events that have strong resonance for them. This enables pupils to develop a mature response to complex issues and to appreciate how they can influence positive change.

Leaders ensure that the school's values are evident in its daily life. They build effective partnerships with parents that help them to feel well informed and to play a productive role in supporting their child's progress. Leaders know the school's strengths and aspects for development well. They make effective use of professional learning to drive improvement, for instance to strengthen the school's capacity to support pupils' well-being and to improve pupils' reading. Governors provide valuable support for the school. They understand the school's context well and work constructively with school leaders and families to bring about improvements successfully.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve provision for the systematic development of pupils' numeracy and mathematical skills
- R2 Ensure that all teachers share consistently high expectations for pupils' written work

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

During their time in the school, most pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals, develop a good range of skills and understanding across the areas of learning and experience and become effective learners. By Year 6, most pupils who have English as an additional language make strong progress in developing their communication skills in English and achieve well. Most pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress from their individual starting points.

Most pupils across the school listen well. They are attentive to staff and show interest in the thoughts and views of their peers. For example, younger pupils respond sensibly to questions about a book they share and help one another to suggest a better ending. Many older pupils become confident speakers who talk eloquently about their learning. By Year 6, most pupils speak expressively in more formal situations, conveying their views persuasively. For example, they speak passionately about the need to address the climate emergency, using rhetorical questions and emotive language to engage their audience effectively.

Many pupils make appropriate progress in speaking Welsh. Younger pupils confidently sing their goodbye song in Welsh before going home and use simple greetings enthusiastically. Over time, pupils broaden their understanding of sentence patterns, for instance to perform simple scripts in Welsh that they have written for an animated film. By Year 6, many pupils use the present and past tenses correctly to share information about themselves. A minority of pupils use connectives to extend their speech by linking familiar words and phrases. However, across the school, pupils rarely use Welsh in their everyday activity.

Most pupils make strong progress in reading. The youngest pupils begin to develop their knowledge of letter sounds through sharing familiar songs and rhymes. Most younger pupils quickly build on this knowledge to recognise written sounds and to read an increasing range of words successfully. By Year 3, many pupils use their reading to support their independent learning effectively. Across the school, most pupils show enjoyment in reading and develop a good understanding of what they read. Most older pupils read a wide variety of suitably challenging texts fluently. Many use more advanced reading skills confidently, for example to summarise what they read and to reflect on how the writer evokes an atmosphere or implies a character's feelings.

Many younger pupils develop their early writing skills appropriately. Pupils in the reception classes understand that writing has a purpose. Many use marks and known letters to write a postcard independently before posting it in their letter box in class.

By Year 2, many pupils use writing modelled by teachers to write at greater length. Older pupils begin to extend their writing with increased independence, using relevant features of a variety of genres appropriately. However, they do not always write frequently enough and the quality of their literacy work and their writing across the curriculum is too variable. The oldest pupils' writing develops at pace so that, by the end of Year 6, many pupils write to a good standard. They apply their understanding of authorial techniques to write creatively and to communicate information successfully. Most older pupils make effective use of teachers' helpful comments to improve the quality of their writing.

Many pupils across the school develop their mathematical and numeracy skills appropriately. Younger pupils use practical resources to begin ordering and comparing numbers and quantities effectively. As they progress through the school, most pupils develop their fluency in using numbers successfully. Many pupils apply this knowledge to carry out calculations effectively. For example, they draw on their understanding of number bonds and times tables to solve simple number problems efficiently. Many older pupils use a suitable range of mental and written methods to calculate. However, a minority of pupils are not secure in their understanding of key concepts, such as place value. This limits their ability to apply these methods accurately. In addition, they do not always question the plausibility of their findings. By Year 5, most pupils develop and use a broad variety of mathematical skills in their wider learning. For example, they construct line graphs to analyse local census data. Overall, however, pupils do not develop their knowledge and understanding systematically enough across all aspects of the mathematics and numeracy area of learning and experience.

Most pupils develop a strong set of digital skills that complement their learning beneficially. As they move through the school, pupils revisit and extend their skills, developing the confidence to integrate them purposefully into their wider learning. For example, younger pupils begin sequencing instructions to control programmable toys. Older pupils build on these skills to experiment with writing simple codes and to test and resolve errors. By Year 6, most pupils apply their knowledge to program microcomputers to carry out useful operations, such as to create digital badges that display welcome greetings in the different languages spoken in the school.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their physical skills. Nearly all younger pupils manipulate a wide variety of tools and resources to develop their fine motor control successfully. They use larger equipment such as bikes and climbing frames and this supports them to take risks safely and to develop their strength and balance well. Older pupils participate enthusiastically in games and enjoy the wide range of sporting opportunities the school provides. Most pupils develop their creative skills effectively. They experiment with a range of media and techniques to produce visual art and use instruments and digital resources to compose. Many pupils are developing their confidence as presenters and performers who play an active role in performances for parents and in regular assemblies.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Pupils at Kitchener Primary School are welcoming, friendly, and proud of their school. Most pupils feel listened to and respected and are confident to approach staff for help when needed. This supports them to feel happy, safe and secure during their time in

school. Most pupils have an appropriate understanding of how to stay safe online. For example, they know the importance of protecting their personal details and the need to question the credibility of information they access online.

The pupil leadership representatives fulfil their responsibilities enthusiastically and make a valuable contribution to the work of the school. For example, the school council collaborated with staff to improve lunchtime etiquette after pupils provided feedback about the noise level in the dining hall. The school's 'Young Interpreters' help those new to school to settle and feel welcomed by using their own language.

Most pupils have a strong understanding of how to make healthy choices and of the benefit of physical activity. Many pupils engage positively with the opportunities the school provides to develop their creative and physical skills, for example by participating in the wide range of after-school clubs on offer and by learning useful artistic and life skills during their regular 'Kitchener University' sessions. Pupils appreciate how these opportunities enable them to follow their interests and to play and learn alongside their peers.

The behaviour of nearly all pupils is good in lessons and around the school. They are sympathetic to others' needs and show consideration for their friends and peers. Nearly all pupils are unfailingly polite, kind and respectful and play harmoniously with each other at break times. Most pupils listen attentively during assemblies. They respond thoughtfully to what they hear, for instance when considering what it takes to be successful as a professional athlete. Many pupils show compassion when reflecting on the impact of conflict on the lives of people within the school community and on those further afield.

Nearly all pupils consistently demonstrate the values the school promotes, such as fairness and equality. Most have a sound understanding of the rights of the child and demonstrate empathy through their work. For example, older pupils discuss the impact of racism in a mature and thoughtful manner. Nearly all pupils take turns to speak and to listen carefully to the views of others. They show a strong awareness of how information can be presented to reinforce or to challenge an individual's perception.

Nearly all pupils settle quickly to their learning and transition between tasks sensibly. Most pupils engage actively in lessons and sustain their concentration well. Where expectations are high, most pupils demonstrate resilience to complete their tasks successfully and take care to produce their best work.

When working and playing together, most older pupils collaborate well. They provide useful verbal support to one another that encourages and values the contribution of each member of the group. Across the school, most pupils are generally curious and eager to learn. When given the opportunity, they respond to feedback constructively to improve their work. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils develop their capacity to be effective, independent learners successfully.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff collaborate to provide a coherent sequence of purposeful inquiries that meet the needs of pupils at different stages in their learning effectively. This process supports

pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding progressively as they move through the school. For example, teachers plan activities for the youngest pupils that link well to their familiar experience and provide valuable opportunities for older pupils to learn how their actions shape the school community and wider society. This approach ensures that the school's curriculum provides a stimulating range of authentic learning experiences that resonate powerfully with nearly all pupils' interests.

Teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils of all ages to influence what and how they learn and to see themselves represented in the learning they undertake. For example, they enable pupils to explore what Welshness means to them and to develop their sense of Cynefin within the context of the varied cultural traditions of the local community. As a result, by the time they reach Year 6, many pupils show a mature understanding of the purpose of their learning and demonstrate conviction in the value of their work.

Provision for the development of pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills is highly effective. Staff across the school model language consistently well and show ambition for pupils' development as confident communicators and readers. They use a range of beneficial strategies effectively, for instance to support pupils to use vocabulary with increasing sophistication and precision.

Teachers read to pupils with enthusiasm and use skilful questioning to encourage them to respond to what they hear. This often prompts lively discussion that deepens pupils' understanding and enhances their enjoyment of reading successfully. This impacts positively on most pupils' ability to read critically and for pleasure. Where teachers develop pupils' writing skills well, they write to a high standard. However, in a few classes, teachers' expectation of the quantity and quality of pupils' written work are not high enough and pupils do not make as much progress in their writing as they could.

Staff develop pupils' understanding of their Welsh identity appropriately. They strike a suitable balance between developing pupils' knowledge of Welsh history and heritage and the cultural and linguistic diversity of modern Wales. Teachers provide regular, focused sessions that develop pupils' skill and confidence to use their spoken Welsh in lessons appropriately.

Teachers provide rich opportunities for pupils to use their digital skills, in particular to communicate effectively as part of their inquiry learning. However, teachers do not plan systematically enough for the development of pupils' numeracy skills and their mathematical understanding. Because of this, pupils are not always secure in their knowledge and a minority struggle to apply their skills independently.

All staff establish positive, nurturing relationships with pupils. They create a stimulating learning environment and establish effective routines that ensure a calm and productive atmosphere in classes and outdoors. They make beneficial use of collaborative displays in classrooms to capture pupils' ongoing learning. These provide a shared record of how the knowledge and skills pupils develop contribute purposefully to answering the big questions they explore together. This helps pupils to make useful connections between different aspects of their learning that strengthen their understanding effectively.

Staff use the outdoor learning environment well to enable the youngest pupils to follow their curiosity and to investigate through play. For example, they provide suitable resources for pupils to explore how sand and water behave. Teachers and learning support assistants work alongside younger pupils to observe and extend their learning effectively. In the best examples, they adapt activities responsively to pursue pupils' interest and invite pupils to challenge themselves or to try out new experiences. In a few instances, staff manage younger pupils' learning too closely and this limits opportunities for pupils to make their own decisions and to test out their thinking freely.

Teachers provide clear guidance to pupils about what they should achieve in lessons and what they need to do to be successful in their independent learning. This supports pupils to focus their efforts appropriately and to collaborate successfully with their peers. Most staff use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding and to prompt them to extend their thinking further. They provide useful verbal feedback to pupils during lessons, such as to address misconceptions and to highlight next steps for pupils to develop their work. Pupils respond positively to the opportunities teachers provide for them to learn from their peers and to reflect thoughtfully on their progress over time. As a result of this practice, many of the oldest pupils are perceptive about their own strengths, show a determination to succeed and take responsibility for improving the aspects of their learning that need to be developed.

Care, support and guidance

The school is an inclusive and welcoming community. Staff ensure that classroom environments are stimulating and inviting spaces for learning, where pupils feel safe and cared for. Relationships between staff, pupils and parents are particularly strong. Across the school, staff know pupils and their families well and are approachable and empathetic. Nearly all parents value and appreciate the support and encouragement their child receives at school.

Staff model respectful behaviours consistently well. They interact thoughtfully with pupils and parents, demonstrating positive attitudes in their everyday exchanges. Staff set clear expectations for pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school and promote these effectively. These arrangements contribute beneficially to the high regard and trusting attitudes pupils, parents and staff have for one another.

The school's provision for pupils with ALN, and for other pupils at risk of adverse outcomes, is strong. The ALN co-ordinator provides purposeful leadership. She has a clear strategic vision for the school's ALN provision and, alongside a team of highly skilled learning support assistants, has established good links with parents and professional agencies. The school deploys learning support staff effectively. They complete relevant training that enables them to support pupils' identified needs successfully. For example, staff run focused interventions that support pupils to make progress in developing their speech and their reading skills.

The school has established valuable working relationships with a helpful range of external partners who provide additional support and guidance for pupils and families. The school's 'community coach' has forged strong links with parents and the wider community that foster their sense of belonging. This relationship supports

parents to feel listened to and able to approach the school for help and advice. This impacts positively on pupils' rates of attendance, including those pupils eligible for free school meals. Staff use a variety of different approaches to communicate with families effectively and to seek their views on proposed changes. This ensures that parents have access to relevant, timely information and contribute to the development of school policies and strategies. As a result, many parents show strong support for the school's vision and values.

Staff promote pupils' emotional, health and social needs well. They develop pupils' understanding of factors that influence their health effectively and provide a wide range of clubs and activities that actively enhance their physical and mental well-being. Staff enable pupils to have a voice through the various leadership groups they participate in. These groups provide equal opportunities for all pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, to develop their leadership skills and to take responsibility for improving the school. For example, members of the Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity group empower pupils to discuss their identity and to ensure that the diversity of the school's community is reflected its decision-making.

Teachers provide worthwhile opportunities for all pupils to learn about and celebrate a broad range of cultures, histories, and faiths. This helps pupils to understand their own and others' identity and to feel pride in the rich diversity of the school's community. Staff lead frequent discussions and interactive assemblies that develop pupils' understanding of shared values such as respect, empathy, courage, and compassion. They promote tolerance and challenge discrimination effectively, for instance by providing anti-bullying workshops for parents and pupils to strengthen their understanding of homophobia. Teachers support older pupils to consider topical issues critically, for example by supporting pupils to develop a balanced argument about the government's Rwanda Bill.

Staff helpfully integrate opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of rights into their inquiry activity. For example, they enable pupils to explore the rights to safety and freedom in the context of their work on 'conflict' and 'sanctuary'. Teachers make effective use of links with the local community to develop pupils' spiritual and ethical understanding. For example, they support pupils to create a film about religious diversity in their community and to produce a podcast about pupils' experience as a refugee.

Teachers make purposeful use of visits and visitors to broaden pupils' experience and to teach specific knowledge and skills. For example, following a visit to a nearby country park, pupils responded imaginatively to create their own 'safe spaces' using a variety of materials in the school grounds. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about the heritage of their local area and to participate in performances and Eisteddfodau to celebrate their Welsh culture.

The school has a robust safeguarding culture. Staff understand their responsibilities well and ensure that appropriate measures are followed consistently to maintain the safety and security of all. Leaders promote pupils' daily attendance at school effectively.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has successfully established a strategic direction for the school that reflects its vision, 'We all have a voice, and we are all valued'. This aspiration is shared and understood well by pupils, parents, staff and governors. The headteacher fosters a highly positive ethos that ensures that all pupils and parents are welcomed. She communicates effectively with parents and enables them to share their views and ideas informally and through consultations. Because of this, relationships between parents and the school are strong and parents appreciate the consistent care and commitment shown by staff.

Governors know the school, pupils, parents and the community well. They are proud and supportive and have a sound knowledge of the school's context. Leaders have a good understanding of pupils' diverse experiences and take these carefully into account when planning how best the school can impact positively on pupils' development and progress. Governors and the headteacher place a strong emphasis on the well-being of pupils and staff and on creating an inclusive environment for learning. The headteacher's leadership of this aspect of the school's work is highly successful.

Leaders have established robust processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work. They accurately identify aspects in need of development and implement improvements that impact positively on pupils' learning. For example, the recent focus on developing provision for the teaching of reading has resulted in most pupils making good progress overall. Leaders provide purposeful opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and to collaborate on improvements. For instance, teachers meet regularly to review aspects of their teaching and to adjust the plans and approaches they use. These arrangements support the school to drive its improvement effectively. Leaders align the school's development objectives to local and national priorities appropriately.

Governors and leaders plan and monitor the school's budget rigorously. They ensure that the school is well resourced and that funding benefits pupils appropriately. Leaders make effective use of the pupil development grant (PDG) to deploy skilled learning support assistants. The support they provide enables identified pupils to make sound progress in their learning, well-being, and in the development of their social skills. Governors take a diligent approach to promoting healthy eating and drinking. For example, the school provides fruit to all pupils, ensuring that financial constraint is not a barrier to pupils consuming a nutritious snack at break time.

The school's work with external partners, including The Cardiff Partnership and The Riverside Community Centre, supports the school's community-focused vision effectively. Leaders have developed worthwhile partnerships with a range of educational partners, including the local authority and local schools. For example, teachers collaborate beneficially with cluster schools on key aspects of curriculum design and to develop a shared understanding of progression. These arrangements strengthen the professional knowledge of staff and enable them to reflect on and develop their thinking in a mutually supportive environment. The headteacher has successfully created a positive culture of professional learning and development that yields benefit for pupils. For example, the sustained focus on developing capacity to improve pupils' well-being has resulted in high levels of pupil motivation and positive

attitudes to learning. Senior leaders co-ordinate processes for the performance management of all teachers and learning support assistants efficiently. They link objectives to school priorities sensibly.

Members of the governing body discharge their duties successfully through a range of committees and individual responsibilities, often bringing useful expertise to their roles. They support the school's leaders in prioritising pupils' well-being and in promoting positive behaviour. Governors use their skills to support leaders to manage finances effectively and to develop a strong safeguarding culture within the school

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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