



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

A report on
Park Community Primary School

**School Road
Llay
Wrexham
LL12 0TR**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

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

This inspection was undertaken as part of trying out our new inspection arrangements. As a result, this report may be slightly different in format to other published reports for providers in the sector.

About Park Community Primary School

Name of provider	Park Community Primary School
Local authority	Wrexham County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Religious character	None
Number of pupils on roll	331
Pupils of statutory school age	255
Number in nursery classes	29
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%)	22.3%
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%)	18.0%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (categories A-C)	
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2020
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	12/10/2015
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

Summary

The school provides an inclusive, nurturing environment where all staff model kind and respectful relationships and develop a strong rapport with pupils. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe in school and behave well. Teachers support pupils to take responsibility and to develop their independence in learning. Most pupils respond positively to these opportunities and develop a mature attitude towards learning during their time in the school. They engage well in lessons and collaborate sensibly with their peers. Many pupils enjoy the frequent opportunities teachers provide for them to make choices about what and how they learn. These support them to develop their creativity and initiative successfully.

Teachers make effective use of the school's extensive outdoor environment to support pupils' learning and plan engaging tasks for pupils to complete. However, whilst these activities often motivate pupils well, they do not always build on pupils' previous learning systematically or support them to extend their learning purposefully. Teachers provide regular, focused opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. However, in around half of classes their expectations for what pupils should achieve are not ambitious enough. This means that pupils complete tasks that do not challenge them sufficiently and they make less progress in developing their writing and numeracy skills than they could.

Where teaching is more effective, staff question pupils effectively to extend their thinking and set clear goals that challenge pupils to make good progress. Overall, teachers do not teach or model the use of spoken Welsh consistently. As a result, most pupils lack the skills and confidence to speak Welsh readily. The school makes strong provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), including those pupils in the resource provision classes, which supports them to make good progress.

Leaders promote the well-being of all members of the school's community robustly. They secure good attendance and build trusting relationships with families that support pupils to feel valued. Leaders evaluate the school's work diligently. They deploy resources and use professional learning to achieve focused improvements, such as to strengthen the progress younger pupils make in reading. However, they do not monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress closely enough. Because of this, important inconsistencies in the school's provision and the outcomes pupils achieve have not been addressed effectively.

Recommendations

We have made three recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Ensure that leaders robustly and accurately evaluate the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in developing their skills

- R2 Ensure that the curriculum supports all pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and Welsh language skills effectively
- R3 Ensure that all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can do and challenge them appropriately

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress about 12 months after the publication of this report.

Main findings

The school is a vibrant and welcoming community that supports pupils to feel safe and valued. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to develop a strong team ethos that generates a high level of trust between staff, pupils and families. This inclusive culture is evident in the consistent respect staff show for pupils' views and feelings and in the clear expectations they set for pupils' engagement in lessons. Nearly all pupils respond positively to the care shown by staff and behave extremely well.

The school is developing its curriculum to provide greater opportunity for pupils to become more independent learners. Staff support pupils of all ages to take responsibility for their learning and provide frequent opportunities for them to make choices about how and what they learn. This impacts positively on pupils' enjoyment and motivation in lessons.

Staff in the foundation learning classes make effective use of the outdoor environment to engage pupils in a variety of learning experiences that develop their physical and creative skills successfully. In the youngest classes, teachers provide a purposeful balance of adult-led and independent activities that help pupils to develop their learning through play and exploration successfully. This supports them to develop their social, communication and problem-solving skills well.

Where teachers have developed their practice successfully, they enable pupils to apply what they have learned in previous lessons in new contexts that reinforce and deepen their understanding beneficially. They provide useful opportunities for pupils to learn from their peers and to reflect on their own strengths and what they need to improve. However, in too many instances independent tasks do not build effectively enough on what pupils already know and are not sufficiently purposeful to extend their skills or knowledge successfully.

Leaders are beginning to evaluate the impact of the changes teachers have made to promote pupils' independence. They use professional learning to support staff to

collaborate on these developments helpfully. For example, they have enabled teachers in the foundation learning classes to work together on a professional inquiry to enhance their use of the learning environment. However, leaders have not developed a shared understanding of the skills and knowledge pupils should acquire, or how these build on previous learning as pupils move through the school.

The school has recently introduced a systematic approach to developing pupils' early reading skills. This impacts positively on the progress younger pupils make in developing their knowledge of letter sounds. Because of this, most younger pupils show enjoyment in reading and develop the fluency and confidence to read suitably challenging texts successfully. As they move through the school, many pupils use their reading skills to support their wider learning effectively. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunity for older pupils to discuss and reflect on their reading. This limits their ability to respond critically to what they read and to express informed opinions.

A majority of pupils make suitable progress in developing their writing skills. Older pupils structure their writing appropriately and use relevant features, such as descriptive language when writing imaginatively. Many combine their digital and writing skills to communicate their ideas and research creatively as part of their topic work. For example, they produce graphic leaflets that inform and capture the interest of the reader successfully. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils write at length for a broad range of purposes frequently enough or use a consistent approach that supports pupils to plan, draft and improve their writing effectively.

Younger pupils develop and use their number skills purposefully in practical contexts, often as part of their learning in the outdoors. They begin to develop their understanding of place value and calculation appropriately. By Year 6, a minority of pupils use and apply their skills in real life situations well, such as to find the perimeter and area of spaces on the school yard. However, across the school around half of pupils do not make sufficiently strong progress in developing their numeracy skills.

Where teaching is most effective, teachers match tasks to pupils' needs successfully. They use skilful questioning to explore pupils' reasoning and to help them make links between different aspects of their learning. This helps pupils to understand concepts well and to try out ideas confidently. However, in around half of classes, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do. For example, they plan tasks at too low a level and do not challenge pupils to be ambitious in their learning. This means that pupils do not always make the progress they should in areas such as writing and mathematics.

Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about Welsh culture and heritage, such as to find out about the history of the local area. A few teachers speak Welsh with pupils, for instance to give simple commands in class. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to develop their knowledge of Welsh systematically in lessons. Because of this, most pupils' Welsh language skills develop slowly, and they are not confident to use an appropriate range of spoken Welsh readily.

Leaders gather a range of relevant evidence to evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development diligently. They use this information to bring about beneficial improvements to the school's provision, such as to enhance the well-being of pupils and staff and to strengthen the school's partnership with parents and carers. However, leaders do not monitor the effectiveness of teaching and the school's curriculum closely enough. As a result, they have not identified important aspects in need of improvement, such as the inconsistency in the quality of teaching and the need to develop pupils' skills more systematically.

Governors are very committed to the school. They use their professional expertise beneficially, for instance to manage the school's finances effectively. Leaders use grant funding to provide helpful targeted support and to ensure equitable access for all pupils.

The school makes strong provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), including those pupils in the resource provision classes. The school's ALN co-ordinator works closely with all staff to identify pupils' individual needs carefully and to tailor their learning appropriately. They draw purposefully on expertise from specialist agencies to secure useful advice that staff implement effectively. This ensures that most pupils with ALN make good progress from their individual starting points.

Pupils respond positively to the regular support teachers provide for their well-being in lessons and through beneficial interventions. They enjoy their time in school and are proud of the worthwhile contribution they make in specific leadership roles. For example, they play an active role in incentivising good attendance and thanking staff by awarding a well-being gift in the weekly celebration assembly. These activities contribute purposefully to the school's inclusive atmosphere. As a result of the school's clear focus and consistent procedures, rates of pupils' attendance have improved over the last two years.

Additional information

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

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including use of the pupil development grant.

The school's arrangements for site security do not give any cause for concern.

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

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. '*most pupils...*' or '*very few pupils...*'. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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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