



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

A report on

Rhos Primary School

**Neath Road
Rhos
SA8 3EB**

Date of inspection: May 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 Rhos Primary School

Name of provider	Rhos Primary School
Local authority	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	147
Pupils of statutory school age	99
Number in nursery classes	26
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%)	12.5%
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%)	15.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (categories A-C)	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2009
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	15/12/2017
Start date of inspection	20/05/2024

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

Rhos Primary School is an inclusive school, where leaders and staff offer extensive care and support to pupils. The headteacher and governors provide strong strategic leadership, prioritising raising standards and nurturing resilient learners. Staff develop positive relationships with pupils. They manage behaviour effectively, leading to exemplary behaviour both in class and around the school. Important values, including respect and tolerance, are taught in lessons and whole-school assemblies.

Recent professional learning for staff has helped to ensure that they build pupils' skills systematically and progressively during lessons and over time. Staff use effective questioning to assess and extend learning. Most pupils make good progress, including those facing socio-economic challenges and those with additional learning needs, with some making exceptional progress. Most pupils develop their oracy and writing skills well, although teachers plan too few opportunities for imaginative writing. Nearly all pupils enjoy reading and many older pupils read fluently. Many pupils progress quickly with their Welsh language skills.

Teachers plan frequent opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills practically. Older pupils tackle complex problems confidently, such as calculating percentage increases. Teachers develop pupils' digital skills progressively, through a wide range of activities, such as research and the creation of animations. The curriculum emphasises Welsh history and culture and celebrates diversity.

Teachers plan engaging learning experiences, and they adapt the pace of learning to pupils' needs suitably. Staff in the younger classes use outdoor spaces effectively. However, there are too few opportunities for older pupils to learn outdoors. Most teachers provide pupils with useful verbal feedback on their learning to help them understand how they can improve their work. Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning, collaborate well and demonstrate resilience. Staff provide effective support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and develop suitable links with families.

Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge. They gain first-hand information about how well the school is performing and they have a strong understanding of the school and the community that it serves.

Recommendations

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

- R1 Provide more frequent opportunities for pupils to use their imagination to develop their creativity through writing
- R2 Further develop outdoor learning experiences for older pupils

What happens next

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

Main findings

Rhos Primary School is an inclusive community, where leaders and staff provide high levels of care and support for pupils. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe and happy in school. The headteacher and governors provide the school with strong and effective strategic leadership. Leaders have worked effectively with stakeholders to develop a vision focused on raising standards for all pupils and developing them as resilient learners. Members of staff have very positive relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour well. As a result, nearly all pupils behave impeccably both in class and when moving around the school. Staff teach pupils about important values, such as respect and tolerance. For example, teachers support older pupils to explain the characteristics of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) during a whole-school assembly. Staff appreciate leaders' support and care, and the steps they take to make them feel empowered and valued. Leaders promote a successful professional learning culture, and this has a positive influence on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Spotlight 1

Recent professional learning for staff has helped to ensure that they build pupils' skills systematically and progressively during lessons and over time. Teachers and support staff use a wide range of well targeted questions to help gauge how well pupils understand their work and to extend pupils' learning further. For younger pupils, this promotes learning through play and exploration very well. Older pupils work independently exceptionally well and use new skills in different contexts competently.

The majority of pupils start the school with skills at least at the expected level for their age. During their time in school, most pupils, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantage, make good progress from their starting points. Most teachers plan exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy skills. For example, younger pupils develop their vocabulary well through role-play and most older pupils discuss the advantages and disadvantages of space travel maturely. As a result, most pupils have well-developed oracy skills, and speak confidently when talking to their peers and adults. As they move through the school, most pupils improve their writing skills quickly. By Year 1, many pupils construct short sentences confidently. Older pupils write maturely for a range of purposes and different audiences. However, staff give pupils too few opportunities to use their imagination and develop their creativity through writing. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading and most make strong progress. Most younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics to help them decode words and to read simple texts. Many older pupils read

with fluency and understanding. They talk knowledgeably about different books that they enjoy.

Spotlight 2

Nearly all members of staff promote the Welsh language regularly through daily sessions. Classroom environments also help support school's Welsh ethos. As a result, most pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning Welsh and improve their Welsh oracy skills quickly as they move through the school.

Leaders have recently worked with staff to improve the teaching of numeracy. This has been successful in ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to consolidate their numeracy skills and to apply them to solve a range of problems. For instance, older pupils explain and use a wide range of methods to work out complex problems, for example when calculating the percentage increase in prices in the shop in the Urdd centre in Llangrannog. Staff generally teach digital skills progressively. For example, younger pupils create simple animations and older pupils search the internet to find interesting and relevant facts to form part of their presentations. Throughout the school, staff provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to experience creative activities. As a result, many pupils develop a wide range of artistic skills proficiently.

The school's curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to develop skills progressively in a broad range of contexts. There is a strong emphasis on promoting the history and culture of Wales and there are beneficial opportunities for pupils to learn about different identities, cultures and religions. Through this work, pupils gain a strong awareness of diversity. Nearly all teachers plan interesting authentic learning experiences for pupils both within the classroom and through the use of regular trips and visitors. They ensure that their teaching is at an appropriate pace to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers in the youngest classes plan engaging outdoor experiences in the school's extensive grounds. However, teachers in the older classes do not always make use of the outdoor areas well enough to support pupils' learning. Most teachers provide pupils with useful verbal feedback on their learning and ensure regular opportunities for pupils to choose what and how they learn. This helps to develop pupils as confident, independent learners.

Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and engage enthusiastically with learning experiences. They co-operate well with others when working with a partner or in small groups. When working independently, they complete tasks competently. Most pupils persevere well when faced with difficulties in their learning and use a range of strategies to assist them to solve problems. They show high levels of resilience. The school provides effective opportunities for pupils to grow in confidence and develop leadership skills. Staff support them to undertake different roles within the pupil led groups and pupils show pride as they develop their skills and confidence through this work.

The support for pupils with ALN is strong. There are clear systems in place to identify pupils in need of support and a skilled team of support staff provide a varied programme of interventions for pupils. Staff work closely together to ensure that

these interventions meet pupils' needs well and, as a result, most pupils who access these programmes make strong progress. The additional needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) shares effective strategies with all staff to support learning in class. The school has developed trusting links with families, and they plan beneficial opportunities to share teaching strategies and learning with parents, for example a workshop on developing early writing. As a result, most pupils with ALN make good progress, and a few pupils make very good progress relative to their starting points.

Governors are highly committed to Rhos Primary School and fulfil their role as critical friends well. They provide a good balance of support and challenge to leaders. Through their regular visits to the school and their participation in self-evaluation activities, governors gain first-hand information about how well the school is performing. They have a strong understanding of the school and the community which it serves.

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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