



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

A report on

Cosheston V.C.P. School

**Cosheston
Pembroke Dock
Pembrokeshire
SA72 4UN**

Date of inspection: June 2024

by

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

About Cosheston V.C.P. School

Name of provider	Cosheston V.C.P. School
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled
Number of pupils on roll	61
Pupils of statutory school age	56
Number in nursery classes	6
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%)	20.36%
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%)	50.8%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/07/2015
Start date of inspection	17/06/2024

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

Cosheston V.C. Primary School is at the heart of its small rural community. The headteacher has a strong moral vision for the school, and staff provide an extremely 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. Many pupils make at least suitable progress in a range of skills by the end of their time in school. Most pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress from their starting points.

The school provides a broad and engaging curriculum that is designed to provide its pupils with a balanced range of learning experiences. Teachers plan a range of authentic and purposeful opportunities that reflect the local community and environment. The school has prioritised Welsh language development appropriately and, as a result, many pupils are developing their confidence in speaking the language.

Staff have benefited from professional learning to improve their understanding of the emotional needs of their pupils. This means the staff respond to pupils' needs in a caring and proactive manner to help them become ready to learn. The school provides a high level of support to its families, which is valued by parents and carers. The school supports pupils with ALN well.

The school carries out a suitable range of activities to evaluate the impact of its work. As a result, leaders have identified some important areas for improvement, such as strengthening opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. The school has identified the need to develop its systems to ensure consistent progression in literacy, numeracy and digital skills across the wide range of abilities. However, this has not been a priority and, as a result, many older pupils have not made the progress they are capable of.

The governing body is knowledgeable, and supports the headteacher very well in evaluation and improvement work. It plays a valuable role in the life of the school.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that leaders focus on the planning for the progression and challenge of skills in and across the curriculum, particularly for older children
- R2 Address the safeguarding issue identified during the inspection

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

Most pupils begin school with language and social skills at or above expected levels. By the time they leave school in Year 6, many pupils, including those with ALN and those eligible for free school meals, make at least suitable progress from their individual starting points.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their oracy skills. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils create effective film narrations on the book 'The Lorax', and listen respectfully to the contributions of others when discussing the impact of deforestation. As pupils move through the school, they continue to develop their speaking and listening skills well. Older pupils use effective questioning when they interview characters in the roles of mine owner, mine worker and Judge as part of their studies on the Loveston mining disaster.

Across the school, most pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. Younger pupils use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. In Year 2 most pupils improve their accuracy and fluency when reading aloud, and enjoy reading for pleasure as well as for information. As they progress, many older pupils read a range of complex texts competently. They skim and scan for information, for example when researching ways of improving the environment as part of their theme 'Guardians of the Natural World'.

Many pupils make suitable progress in developing their writing skills. Younger pupils begin to record their ideas through mark making and form legible letters when writing simple words independently. Many older pupils write in a range of genres. For example, older pupils write empathetically about the impact of bereavement on mining families. However, a few pupils use a limited range of strategies when spelling unfamiliar words and, as a result, do not always make the progress in writing that they are capable of.

Many pupils develop their Welsh language skills appropriately. The youngest pupils are beginning to develop their spoken Welsh, for example pupils greet one another and sing familiar songs. As pupils progress through the school, they begin to extend their knowledge and use of Welsh by asking and answering questions about themselves and their families. Many older pupils take part in simple conversations using different tenses, for example when discussing the weather.

Many pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical and numeracy skills. Younger pupils measure using non-standard units, for example when measuring the length of the caterpillars they have made from breakfast cereal. As pupils progress through the school, many develop their mathematical language well, for example when describing the volume of flavoured drinks made in the Milk Shake Shack using herbs grown in the school garden. Many older pupils add and subtract 3-digit numbers confidently. A few pupils explain how they solve calculations, describing the strategies they use. Many pupils order large numbers accurately to create timelines of historical events such as the history of coal mining in Pembrokeshire.

Most pupils use digital equipment confidently and develop basic digital skills as they move through the school. By Year 2 most pupils use digital games to support their learning. Many older pupils develop editing techniques when creating presentations and use digital devices successfully to create news reports about events in their community. Many older pupils are beginning to use coding skills when controlling digital construction kits. However, the breadth and progression of older pupils' digital skills are not as developed as those of younger pupils.

Most pupils develop their creative skills suitably. For example, pupils in Year 3 create dances and songs on the theme of 'Save the Environment'. Pupils in Year 4 use recycled materials to make vehicles following a visit from a local transport company. Older pupils compose simple music using P-buzz instruments and perform their music in a concert with other local schools.

Most pupils develop appropriate physical skills. Younger pupils develop simple throwing and catching skills and develop their balancing skills when using bikes. Older pupils build on these skills, and many take part enthusiastically in team sports such as cricket, football and rugby.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils are confident and happy, and feel safe at school. They know who to go to if they are worried or upset. Most pupils are proud of their school and feel that they make contributions to their learning, for example making suggestions about topics. Pupils enjoy coming to school and secure good rates of attendance.

Many pupils work with suitable levels of independence on their tasks, and make appropriate choices about how they present their work. Many pupils listen carefully to each other, and value the contributions of others. Most pupils engage well in lessons and form highly effective working relationships with staff.

Many pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They are enthusiastic and excited by the opportunities they have in school. Many younger pupils demonstrate a love of learning and are curious about their environment. Older pupils show a close interest in their work on coal mining in Pembrokeshire. Many pupils demonstrate resilience and sustained concentration in their learning, particularly when a topic interests them.

Many pupils behave well in classes and around the school. A few pupils benefit from bespoke support strategies that help them make positive choices about their behaviour. They enjoy the praise they receive from the staff supporting them.

Many pupils enjoy making contributions to the life of the school through their leadership roles. The leadership groups they belong to have a positive impact on school life and pupils enjoy taking on responsibility. For example, pupils in the Caffi Cosh group sell healthy snacks at break time using sign language to communicate. The Criw Cymraeg leads a weekly Welsh service, which promotes the Welsh language across the school.

Most pupils have a suitable awareness of global issues and demonstrate the capacity to care for others and the world around them. For example, they participate in

enterprise days where pupils design and create items that they then sell to fundraise for children in Uganda and Kenya.

Nearly all pupils show a good understanding of the importance of being healthy. They understand that exercise is good for them and attend events, such as cricket and cross-country competitions. Nearly all pupils make healthy choices for snacks and drinks. Most pupils understand the importance of online safety and know what to do to keep themselves safe online.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school is developing its curriculum with the locality at its heart. Staff have ensured that members of the community contribute to creating pupils' learning experiences. The whole-school thematic approach has been developed with staff, pupils and governors, and provides pupils with a broad and balanced range of experiences. The curriculum provides stimulating and inspiring opportunities that engage all pupils. For example, during the Cynefin topic, pupils bring in objects from home that represent their own cynefin, and consider the influence of well-known Welsh people.

Staff plan appropriately to develop pupils' language skills and are positive language role models. The school's provision for Welsh language skills is developing well. Teachers frequently use Welsh during their lessons and plan activities that develop and build on pupils' fluency in language patterns across the school. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write in a range of genres. However, they do not always focus well enough on ensuring that pupils spell and use punctuation accurately.

Many teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy and digital skills. In the early years, they provide opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving skills, for example when investigating whether all daisies have the same number of petals. Although teachers provide a few opportunities for older pupils to apply their skills appropriately across the curriculum, there is often a lack of challenge and progression in these skills for these pupils to make the progress they are capable of.

Teachers consider pupils' ideas about what they would like to learn and use these ideas well to plan learning that is meaningful. For example, pupils interview visitors, including a Member of the Senedd, to discuss his commitment to the new recycling laws as part of their topic 'Guardians of the Natural World'. This approach provides pupils with first-hand, purposeful experiences, which deepen their understanding of important current themes such as sustainability and citizenship.

Teachers know pupils well and they foster positive working relationships. They have high expectations of pupils. Teachers provide opportunities for younger pupils to develop their independent skills successfully, such as when writing lists, menus and questions for visitors. In a few lessons, teachers share clear learning objectives that enable pupils to know what they need to do to be successful. However, teachers do not always match work well enough to pupils' next steps in learning and, as a result, pupils do not always make the progress they could.

In many lessons, teachers provide suitable verbal feedback that supports younger pupils to make good progress. They provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to assess their own and peers' work. This is inconsistent across the school, and older pupils do not always have a clear enough understanding of what they have done well, and what they need to do to improve.

Staff plan valuable learning experiences to support pupils' understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales, such as annual residential visits to Cardiff, Llangrannog and Stackpole. These opportunities allow pupils to experience contrasting localities in Wales and learn about its diversity.

Care, support and guidance

Staff build strong working relationships with pupils, parents and carers and are committed to providing quality care and ensuring well-being for all pupils across the school. The school's inclusive ethos enables pupils to settle well into school. Staff create a highly inclusive and safe learning environment where pupils feel they are valued. This is a strength of the school.

Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and respond promptly and sensitively to their emotional and social needs. They provide a wide range of well-being strategies that underpin the caring and nurturing culture of the school successfully. Families appreciate the support and guidance offered by the school. For example, the Family and Community Engagement Project allows the school and families to work in partnership to support family learning, healthy eating, and budgeting.

The school has effective processes for monitoring pupils' progress and well-being. Staff identify pupils' specific needs at an early stage and provide them with a high level of support to ensure that all pupils, including those with ALN and those from low-income households, can access the full curriculum.

Teachers set targets for pupils who require additional support and use these to plan their learning appropriately. Staff support individuals and groups well. They provide useful access to specific literacy, numeracy and well-being programmes. As a result, pupils with ALN make good progress during their time in school.

Leaders understand their role in securing support for pupils with ALN. They work closely with parents, pupils and external agencies to develop effective support strategies and programmes.

The school provides rich opportunities for pupils to celebrate and develop their understanding of their identity, heritage and culture. The school is the focal point of its community and takes full advantage of opportunities to hold activities in the local area, for example by working with the local church to create prayers for parishioners, selling products they make in the summer fete or serving food at the annual Cosh Nosh community meal. The school's inclusive culture supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

The school provides a range of opportunities for all pupils to join leadership groups, such as the Cosh Criw, Criw Cymraeg, and sports ambassadors. This provision

supports pupils to take on responsibilities and contribute effectively to the life of the school. For example, the Caffi Cosh is organised and run by pupils, and provides healthy snacks to encourage pupils to make positive food choices.

The school promotes and monitors pupils' attendance carefully. Staff provide opportunities for pupils and families to engage in worthwhile community sessions to help and support families to attend, and this has had a positive impact on pupils with low attendance rates. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding.

Leadership and management

Leaders provide clear and strong leadership and direction. They work closely with pupils and families to create a purposeful community vision to take the school forward. The school has a clear and shared sense of purpose that guides its work to address national priorities, and to develop its high level of care to focus on developing pupils' readiness to learn. Across the school, staff are developing their leadership roles well, and ably support senior leaders to carry out their roles.

Leaders plan and carry out a suitable programme of activities to monitor and 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 the impact of their work in many valuable areas. However, although the school has identified the need to develop its systems to ensure consistent progression in skills across the wide range of abilities, this work has not yet had an impact on the challenge and progression of skills in and across the curriculum, particularly for older pupils.

Leaders have developed an effective culture of professional learning, and nearly all staff participate in a range of suitable training. For example, the school's recent focus on developing pupils' literacy skills has started to impact positively on pupils' writing across the curriculum. However, the professional learning opportunities the school provides do not always align well with the school's improvement priorities. As a result, the progress made against the school improvement priorities is not always swift and focused.

The school's collaboration with other schools is highly effective. For example, when developing a small school approach to developing the curriculum, leaders make effective use of staff's skills to impact across schools. Leaders create useful opportunities for staff to share and observe effective practice across these schools. This work supports staff to engage purposefully with other practitioners to broaden their knowledge. The school has invested successfully in developing staff's Welsh language skills to ensure that pupils develop their own language skills appropriately.

Leaders address national ALN reform well and provide effective support for pupils where needed. The ALNCo is well-informed and ensures that pupils receive appropriate intervention to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The school supports pupils' emotional needs particularly well and has a well-established culture of safeguarding.

Governors work well with leaders and staff to develop and 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 carry out their role as critical friends well. Governors understand their role in promoting healthy eating and drinking and are proactive in doing so. They manage the school's finances efficiently, including effective planning 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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