



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

A report on

**Pembrey C.P. School
Ashburnham Road
Pembrey
Carmarthenshire
SA16 0TP**

Date of inspection: January 2018

by

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

About Pembrey C.P. School

Pembrey Primary School is in the village of Pembrey, about five miles from Llanelli.

There are currently 232 pupils on roll between the ages of three and eleven. There are nine classes in the school, including one mixed-age class, and a nursery class with 18 full-time and eight part-time pupils. The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is 25%, which is above the national average of 19%.

The school identifies around 33% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is above the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very few come from homes where Welsh is the first language.

The headteacher took up her post in 2010. The school was last inspected in June 2012.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

All of the school's life and work is based on ensuring that pupils make strong progress, improving pupils' wellbeing, creating an environment for child-initiated learning and equipping all pupils with skills for life. These principles permeate all activities. Pupils have a strong say in the school's work. This is a notable feature and encourages pupils to develop exemplary attitudes towards learning. The quality of teaching and learning experiences is high and ensures that most pupils achieve well. A confident headteacher leads the school effectively and she has developed a very supportive and hardworking team of staff. Overall, the school provides an excellent quality of education with notable strengths and ensures that every pupil has an opportunity to succeed.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Excellent
Teaching and learning experiences	Excellent
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Leadership and management	Excellent

Recommendations

R1 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills around the school

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to developing pupils' independent learning skills for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, around half of the pupils' basic skills are lower than expected for their age. During their time at the school, most pupils make strong progress and achieve well by Year 6. A few more able pupils make exceptional progress. Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards their targets, from their starting points.

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils listen well to adults and to other pupils, and they follow instructions carefully. Many foundation phase pupils talk purposefully to one another during practical activities. For example, nursery pupils describe how ice cubes feel in their hands and Year 2 pupils talk purposefully to one another whilst performing in the 'studio' role play area. Most pupils in key stage 2 show respect for one another's ideas during discussions about helping each other. Most Year 6 pupils use a lively and mature vocabulary when considering whether pupils should be allowed to bring a mobile phone to school.

Most pupils in the foundation phase develop sound phonic skills to decode unfamiliar words confidently. By the end of Year 2, many read with fluency and expression. Many key stage 2 pupils use their reading skills well in other areas of the curriculum. By Year 6, most extract relevant information by skimming and scanning, for instance, when using online search engines to research about deadly snakes. The majority of pupils across the school show an enthusiasm for reading.

Across the school, most pupils develop their writing skills well and write confidently for a wide range of purposes. The quality of their extended writing is good. Nearly all younger pupils make effective progress in developing their early writing skills. By Year 2, many pupils form letters correctly, present their work neatly with legible handwriting and use basic punctuation accurately when writing independently. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils give clear explanations and use mature vocabulary in their writing. Most use paragraphs and punctuation accurately. They show a clear understanding of different writing styles and audiences, for example when writing a imaginative diary of a Victorian child or presenting scientific facts about the properties of materials in a newspaper article. Nearly all pupils apply their literacy skills well across all areas the curriculum.

Most pupils use their numeracy skills flexibly in a range of meaningful activities in other areas of learning and subjects. Nursery pupils apply their number skills well to solve real-life problems, for example when arranging nuts and acorns from the outdoor area in size order. In Year 2, most pupils construct a graph to demonstrate when pupils celebrate their birthdays in their class. Many key stage 2 pupils select appropriate calculation methods when analysing timetables to plan a journey to a theme park, for example. Most use formal calculation strategies accurately. Older pupils use data handling skilfully to construct and analyse sets of data arising from science experiments. They apply these skills confidently across the curriculum.

Nearly all pupils across the school develop effective ICT skills, using desktop and mobile technologies confidently. For example, many pupils in Year 1 add

backgrounds to their news bulletins independently. Nearly all Year 2 pupils create instructions to make a rocket move around in space. In key stage 2, most pupils use coding confidently to move objects around the screen. They develop their multimedia and word processing skills progressively to a high standard to present and produce work across the curriculum. Most Year 6 pupils use spreadsheets confidently to calculate the cost of selling fruit as part of an entrepreneurial project. They have created an animation to highlight the dangers of the internet. All pupils show a very clear understanding of how to stay safe online.

Many pupils in the foundation phase make sound progress from their starting points in developing their basic skills in Welsh. They read simple texts aloud and use suitable vocabulary, for instance when discussing the weather. In key stage 2, many pupils ask and answer simple questions appropriately and develop basic reading and writing skills. However, most pupils use only a limited range of words and phrases and lack confidence to engage in Welsh conversation outside formal sessions.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Standards of wellbeing and pupils' attitudes towards learning are exemplary. Nearly all pupils take advantage of the many opportunities to express their opinion about important aspects of the school's work. An excellent example of this is their contribution to the development of the forest school area. Most pupils contribute to their own wellbeing and that of their peers very effectively. For example, the playground buddies spend valuable time with the younger pupils to develop sound friendships. This has a very positive effect on the foundation phase pupils' happiness and safety during these times. From an early age, most pupils understand one of the school's golden rules for behaviour – 'to be kind and helpful to people'. They care for each other exceptionally well.

Most pupils show exemplary maturity when taking on additional responsibilities, such as becoming members of the school council, taking the role of house captains and contributing to the fair-trade committee. Representatives on the Pupils Assessing Learning in School (PALS) group show a strong commitment and enthusiasm towards evaluating particular aspects of the school. They promote the school values successfully through a self-made I-movie and identify the resources they need in the science club.

Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work and they persevere very well with their tasks. They are enthusiastic and work diligently for extended periods of time when completing tasks. Most pupils work effectively with their peers and respect the views of others. They all show exemplary resilience when facing challenges in their work and most overcome obstacles successfully. Nearly all pupils work skilfully as independent learners and make important decisions about their learning during the pupil voice 'Everyone Planning in Class (EPIC)' sessions. All pupils contribute regularly to creating a variety of skill-based challenges, which equips them with high levels of independence. Very good examples of these challenges include designing a computer game with a moving predator and creating safety posters for a fast ride at a pleasure park. This high level of independence is an excellent feature of the school.

Nearly all pupils have a very good understanding of the need to eat healthily and to partake in regular physical exercise. All pupils partake in the 'daily mile' initiative around the school grounds. Many pupils attend the good range of high quality extra-curricular activities regularly. For example, the young ambassadors run a successful 'clwb hwyl a sbri', a fitness club for younger pupils, which contributes very successfully to the development of their fitness and social skills.

Nearly all pupils feel safe and valued. They are exceptionally polite, behave particularly well, and treat one another, staff and visitors with high levels of respect and tolerance. They take responsibility for their actions and follow the agreed class charters and values of the school consistently. Pupils' attendance rates place the school consistently above the average when compared with similar schools. Most pupils are punctual in the morning.

Most pupils have a strong understanding of their rights and responsibilities as global citizens. Through a number of fund-raising activities, they develop an exceptional understanding of the needs of others and have raised money to install toilets and purchase classroom equipment for a school in Lesotho, South Africa.

Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent

One of the strong features of the school is the natural way in which staff provide a highly creative, balanced and rich curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. It is based on interesting themes and learning experiences that engage pupils' interest very effectively and develop their skills and curiosity successfully. This strengthens their commitment to their work and fosters the development of real-life skills. Notable examples of this are very stimulating outdoor projects, such as measuring the thermal properties of different materials, or baking home-made bread on an open fire. Pupils develop independent skills through practical, creative and team-building activities.

In the foundation phase, staff foster pupils' independence and develop their skills effectively by providing them with stimulating and exciting experiences. A good example of this is the recent stimulus of a space ship landing in the outdoor area. This has captured the younger pupils' imagination and developed their expressive oracy skills well. Foundation phase staff have an extensive understanding of the principles of this phase of learning, and they motivate pupils to discover and learn independently from the beginning.

The school has recently adapted the curriculum successfully to ensure continuity in developing independent learners across the school. Developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is core to the new arrangements. The school arranges opportunities for pupils to visit local places of interest that stimulate their interest, such as to the local ski centre to reinforce pupils' understanding of forces. The school is planning well for integrating the digital competency framework into the curriculum, and most teachers develop pupils' skills successfully in ICT in a digitally rich environment.

Provision for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in designated lessons is effective. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their Welsh in informal situations around the school, but only a very few are confident enough to use their Welsh outside formal sessions. Staff provide numerous opportunities to enrich pupils' knowledge about the culture and heritage of Wales.

The quality of teaching is excellent across the school. Teachers make effective use of a variety of teaching methods and interesting learning experiences to engage nearly all pupils' interest successfully.

The best features of teaching, which are evident in most classes, are the positive working relationships between pupils and all staff. Teachers plan rich and creative learning experiences indoors and outdoors. For example, older pupils apply their skills well when responding to questions such as 'why do penguins huddle?', and pupils in the foundation phase create and record a weather bulletin in their BBC newsroom. Teachers' presentations are lively and encourage all pupils to achieve as well as they can. Most teachers question skilfully to extend pupils' understanding and knowledge successfully. Nearly all teachers are good language role models and take advantage of valuable opportunities to improve pupils' oral skills. All teachers share clear objectives with pupils. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to consider their own and others' performance. As a result, pupils have a sound understanding of how to improve their work.

Teachers use assessment procedures skilfully to support pupils. They offer useful oral and valuable written feedback that focuses well on developing pupils' skills. Through regular opportunities during 'make your mark Monday' pupils are beginning to improve their own work confidently. Teachers assess pupils' progress and achievements accurately and analyse outcomes effectively to guide their plans for the future.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school has exemplary systems in place to track and monitor pupils' progress and wellbeing. All staff use the systems very effectively to identify the needs of individuals and specific groups of pupils. Teachers identify pupils' educational, emotional and social needs at an early stage and provide them with effective intervention programmes. Teachers make excellent use of assessment outcomes across all areas of learning, in order to plan the next steps in their learning.

Learning support assistants work diligently in partnership with the teachers and the additional learning needs co-ordinator to implement a wide range of relevant intervention programmes of a very high standard. The school uses interventions in an imaginative way, particularly the partnership with a local learning dog scheme. The weekly visits by 'Cariad', the dog, have improved the standards of literacy, attendance and the wellbeing of vulnerable pupils considerably. All pupils with additional learning needs have a person-centred plan that is very detailed and sets out clear achievable targets for improvement. A particular strength of the school's work is the high quality and bespoke support that each pupil receives to develop their basic skills and emotional wellbeing. Comprehensive systems are in place to monitor their personal plans, in consultation with the pupils and their parents.

The school has specific strategies that are successful in supporting emotional and social needs very effectively, for example through the use of construction materials and talk projects. Many pupils benefit greatly from the school's use of a daily emotional tracker and the class pupil voice box. The school intervenes quickly when necessary, and provides pupils with effective emotional support. Partnerships with parents have a positive impact on most pupils' learning and wellbeing through the

'Monthly Advice, Support and Help' (MASH) sessions held by the additional needs co-ordinator.

The school has comprehensive plans to develop its pupils' personal and social education, which foster aspects such as care and equality and promote the school's aims very effectively. Teachers plan exciting educational visits, including a visit to London, and invite a interesting visitors to the school. These experiences contribute successfully to developing pupils' understanding of the world, and wide and varied social attitudes.

The school encourages all pupils to eat and drink healthily and stay fit by providing them with a wide variety of physical activities. For example, all pupils learn about the benefits of being outdoors by gardening in the polytunnel and through the forest school activities. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities for all ages is a notable feature of the school, which helps pupils to find their talents in, for example, rugby, netball, cricket and cross-country running.

The school provides rich opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding. Staff arrange plenty of opportunities for them to reflect in collective worship sessions, which are often based on stories from the Bible or themes such as fairness and forgiveness. Pupils have a sound understanding of religious and moral issues, and events that are happening in the wider world. The school offers very effective opportunities to promote pupils' social and moral skills by using various strategies, including the pupils' fair trade group and the Pupils Assessing Learning in School (PALS) committee. These have a very positive effect on pupils' ability to work together and respect each other's views in an inclusive and caring environment.

The school offers many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and become active citizens by becoming involved in influential groups, such as the digital leaders. A noteworthy feature is the school council's work, which develops pupils' leadership skills effectively and influences decisions about school life, such as changes to the school bullying policy. Other pupils have worthwhile opportunities to influence what and how they learn by contributing to teachers' curriculum planning and creating their own challenges related to their topics.

Provision to develop pupils' creative skills through the Lead Creative Cchools Project and developing their entrepreneurial skills by growing and selling vegetables are strong features of the school. There are extensive opportunities for pupils to perform at school, in the local community and beyond, and to work alongside artists and musicians and compete in Urdd competitions. These experiences develop pupils' self-confidence, pride in themselves and their ability to work with others.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet the requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Excellent

The headteacher leads the school confidently and promotes a clear vision of a friendly, inclusive community where pupils aspire to do their best and achieve highly. The deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team support her successfully. They provide clear direction, set out high expectations for all areas of

teaching and learning, and secure staff's commitment to maintaining and raising standards. Across the school, there is a shared sense of purpose and commitment to these values and ambitions.

Focused staff meetings provide all staff with good opportunities to evaluate progress towards achieving agreed improvement priorities. Actions in the current improvement plan are improving identified areas quickly and effectively, such as the quality of extended writing in the foundation phase. All members of staff are responsible for a specific aspect of the school's work, and they contribute effectively towards improving pupils' attainment and progress. Highly effective support staff are an integral part of the team and contribute well to improving pupils' standards, wellbeing and social skills.

The highly effective leadership of the headteacher sets a clear strategic direction for developing the school. She has a sustained ethic of identifying individual teachers' competence and strengths and, as a result, allocates responsibilities very effectively. All staff benefit from taking part in a broad range of professional development activities that reflect school priorities and personal aspirations. A very good example of this practice is the contribution made by staff who lead on developing the foundation phase principles in key stage 2 and the person-centred planning. The senior leadership team has created a robust learning community based on strong and sustained teamwork. Teachers benefit considerably from effective triad observations and using colleagues' expertise to improve individual skills and the standards of pupils' work. They adapt their practices regularly. The school has highly effective performance management procedures that benefit the staff's professional development successfully and have a positive effect on pupil progress.

There are comprehensive arrangements to evaluate the work of the school. Leaders share responsibilities effectively and base their findings on robust monitoring procedures. The self-evaluation report highlights the good features and areas for improvement precisely and accurately. As a result of careful evaluations and negotiations with the local authority, the school has recently established a Flying Start provision to help the youngest children settle quickly and to provide support at an early stage.

Priorities in the improvement plan are based directly on the outcomes of the self-evaluation process, which is based on pupils' progress and focuses firmly on maintaining and raising standards. A good example of this is the target to challenge the more able pupils across the school. Leaders monitor progress carefully and present rigorous and regular reports in relation to the priorities to the staff. This ensures that the school continues to improve every year.

Governors have a comprehensive knowledge and thorough understanding of the school's performance and current work. They update their knowledge regularly by attending relevant training, and receive valuable presentations from members of staff. They are very supportive of the school's work and co-operate closely and effectively with leaders to ensure a clear strategic direction. Thorough curriculum discussions, and regular visits to the school, allow them to challenge leaders successfully to raise standards and ensure high quality provision.

The school allocates resources extensively to enrich the curriculum and to meet pupils' needs. For example, leaders use the pupil development grant carefully to raise the standards of the pupils who are eligible to receive it through innovative activities. Leaders manage and monitor expenditure and funds prudently to ensure the best use of them and to maintain and improve standards.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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