



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

A report on

**Roath Park Primary School
Penywain Road
Roath Park
CF24 4BB**

Date of inspection: September 2017

by

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

About Roath Park Primary School

Roath Park Primary School is in the Cardiff local authority. There are 470 pupils on roll, including 50 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis.

The rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 12%. This is below the national average of 19%. The school identifies 18% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This figure is just under the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

Just under half of pupils are of white British ethnicity. Around 45% of pupils speak English as an additional language. No pupil speaks Welsh as a first language.

The headteacher took up his post in April 2004. The school's last inspection was in February 2011.

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

Many pupils make adequate progress as they move through the foundation phase. By the end of key stage 2, most achieve well. Nearly all pupils have a very positive attitude towards school and show care and consideration for those in the school community.

The school provides interesting learning experiences that engage most pupils well. There are strong pockets of teaching at the school, but, overall, the quality of teaching varies too much from class to class. In the latter part of the foundation phase, pupils do not have enough opportunities to make choices about what and how they learn or to develop their independent learning skills. Pupils receive care, support and guidance of high quality and the school supports many families to help their children effectively.

The headteacher leads a committed team who work hard to nurture and care for pupils effectively. They celebrate the diversity of pupils' backgrounds well. However, the work of senior leaders does not focus well enough on identifying and improving important elements of the school's work, such as ensuring the full delivery of the foundation phase and the effective development of pupils' Welsh language skills.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards of reading, writing and mathematical development in the foundation phase
- R2 Improve pupils' Welsh skills
- R3 Ensure that teaching challenges pupils to achieve as well as they can in all classes
- R4 Ensure that all senior leaders fulfil their roles and drive forward improvements consistently
- R5 Ensure that self-evaluation and development planning identify and address areas for improvement robustly

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Many pupils begin school with skills and understanding that are around the level expected for their age. As they move through the school, pupils make varying degrees of progress in different classes. After an effective start in nursery and reception, many pupils make slow progress through the foundation phase, but most achieve at or above the level expected for their age by the end of key stage 2. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve similar outcomes to other pupils and most pupils with additional learning needs make effective progress towards their individual targets.

In the foundation phase, many pupils develop appropriate communication skills. Most listen to adults and each other. With encouragement, they talk about their likes and dislikes and contribute sensibly to class conversations. Many pupils develop an effective understanding of the link between letters and sounds and use this to make sensible attempts at sounding out unfamiliar words. However, they do not have a strong understanding of other strategies to help them read unknown words. At this early stage in the school year, older pupils read reasonably well, although hesitantly at times. By the end of the phase, many pupils develop competent writing skills. For example, they write a series of linked sentences for a simple recount or write imaginatively, for example when describing a magic plant. However, too many pupils do not spell well enough or use simple punctuation accurately, such as capital letters and full stops. Most use their literacy skills satisfactorily across the wider curriculum.

In key stage 2, many pupils talk to others and to adults well and discuss their ideas readily. Most older pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to express their points of view and give their opinions. For example, older pupils discuss what makes a hero, justifying their thoughts and opinions maturely. Many pupils' reading skills develop well as they move through the key stage. Older pupils read fluently, appreciate private reading time and are familiar with a broad range of authors. They have a useful understanding of how writers choose different words to create effect. By the end of the key stage, many pupils demonstrate effective writing skills across a suitable range of genres. They develop and organise their ideas carefully and use interesting vocabulary to help make their writing engaging, for example when writing about major events of the 1960s. Many pupils in key stage 2 apply their writing skills well in their work across the curriculum.

In the foundation phase, most pupils understand and use a few simple phrases and Welsh words, for example for colours. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils use only a few basic Welsh sentences patterns appropriately, such as saying how they feel and what the weather is like today. A very few pupils read Welsh texts fluently. With support, many older pupils write suitably, for example about the games and sports they like. However, throughout the school, the standard of pupils' Welsh skills is weak.

In the foundation phase, many pupils have a suitable understanding of basic number facts. A majority of pupils order numbers up to 100 accurately and many are beginning to count in 2s and 5s appropriately. With adult support, many measure

accurately using standard units, for example when measuring objects in the schoolyard. They use pictograms well to record real-life information. In key stage 2, many pupils calculate percentage amounts correctly. They use mental and written methods to multiply and divide well. Many draw, identify and measure angles accurately. They understand the concept of negative numbers, for example when comparing temperatures. Many pupils apply their numeracy skills to other areas of the curriculum well, but in limited circumstances.

Throughout the school, most pupils develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately. For example, in the foundation phase, pupils use tablet computers suitably to record their findings. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils use word-processing packages confidently to present their work and send and receive electronic mail confidently. Many pupils construct simple spreadsheets and input information well, for example when recording amounts of money. However, their understanding of spreadsheets and databases is limited overall.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe, well cared for and highly valued. They display a supportive and very caring attitude towards each other and adults within the school. Nearly all are extremely polite and well mannered, often greeting people cheerfully and holding doors open for others. They treat visitors with respect and maturity. All pupils know they can approach staff for help when they have concerns. Nearly all pupils' behaviour in lessons, on the playground and while moving around the school is consistently good.

Nearly all pupils know how to keep healthy through taking regular exercise and eating a balanced diet. For example, pupils organise and run a fruit tuckshop every day, and talk knowledgeably about the importance of eating properly. Most pupils take part in regular physical activities and enjoy the clubs that are on offer, such as dance, karate, choir, netball and football. Nearly all pupils have a strong understanding of the importance of equality, demonstrated through their work in whole school theme weeks, such as 'Friendship' week. Most pupils in key stage 2 know how to stay safe on the internet.

Many pupils concentrate well on their learning and avoid distractions. They stay on task for appropriate lengths of time and generally try to finish their work. However, too many pupils, particularly older pupils in the foundation phase, do not develop their independent learning skills well enough.

Pupils throughout the school take on an extensive range of leadership roles readily. They are proud of the impact that these have on the whole school. For example, the school council has taken a role in the planning and design of the new learning pods, and the eco-council encourages all members of the school community to act sustainably. Digital leaders provide support to staff and pupils with ICT and learning ambassadors provide support to younger pupils in reading well. These opportunities develop pupils' social and life skills well and are a strong feature of the school.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Nearly all teachers have strong working relationships with pupils. A majority of teachers plan interesting learning activities that engage most pupils successfully. They ensure that learning activities are purposeful and build effectively on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. Many teachers and support staff support the development of pupils' language skills well. However, the quality of teaching varies too much between classes and, in too many, teaching and learning do not engage or challenge pupils well enough. Overall, the quality of teaching is adequate and needs improvement.

In general, teachers give effective and timely oral and written feedback to pupils on the quality of their work and how to improve it. For example, teachers give useful feedback to pupils on how to improve the way they convey their viewpoints and structure their talk. Where this occurs, pupils make recognisable improvement. However, teachers do not implement these practices consistently or well enough in all classes. As a result, many pupils do not have a clear understanding of what they need to improve. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately in most cases, but the assessment of pupils at the highest level at the end of key stage 2 is not always accurate enough.

In the foundation phase, a majority of teachers plan learning experiences that engage many pupils well, particularly in the nursery and reception classes. In key stage 2, teachers use their thematic planning to develop interesting learning ideas. Pupils contribute to this process regularly and, as a result, they are enthusiastic about their learning. However, processes to ensure that planned learning activities and themes build pupils' knowledge and understanding progressively from year to year are underdeveloped.

In the early part of the foundation phase, teachers plan effective learning opportunities that reflects the philosophy of the foundation phase well. However, towards the end of the phase, pupils have too few opportunities to learn outdoors or through active play. As a result, pupils develop limited independent learning skills.

Teachers consider the national literacy and numeracy frameworks appropriately when planning pupils' learning. They identify useful opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across all curriculum areas. For example, pupils in Year 6 develop their descriptive writing skills successfully through their history topic on the Blitz. Opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills are more limited.

The school provides a wide range of learning experiences and themed weeks that develop pupils' skills in a variety of areas effectively. For example, the school organises an annual 'Arts Week' where visiting artists and creative professionals help pupils to develop a useful range of skills. It culminates in a variety of musical and creative performances given to the wider school and community. The recently developed learning plaza is enhancing the provision for pupils' creative development considerably. Pupils use this effectively, for example to develop a range of interesting presentation about 'the human body'.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has an inclusive, caring and supportive ethos that permeates its daily life and work. As a result, adults and pupils show a high level of kindness and respect for each another. Posters and displays around the school, such as those focusing on anti-racism and the United Nations convention on the rights of the child, reinforce these messages effectively.

Staff know the circumstances and needs of individual pupils well. For example, the school identifies pupils with additional learning needs soon after they enter the nursery or reception class. It provides effective support in class and in withdrawal groups as identified pupils move through the school. As a result, most make good progress towards their individual targets. Parents can access their child's individual education plans online, and many take the opportunity to engage electronically in dialogue with relevant staff about their child's progress. This helps parents to understand their child's targets and the ways they can support their progress towards their individual goals.

There are suitable systems in place for tracking the progress of all pupils. The school uses this system well to monitor groups of pupils, such as those learning English as an additional language and those with additional needs.

The family engagement programme makes a notable contribution to the school's pastoral support for pupils and their families. A wide range of enjoyable activities, such as workshops and tea and coffee afternoons in 'The Corner Shop', boosts parents' confidence in knowing how best to support their children's education. Parents whose first language is not English benefit from sessions in school that help them to develop their command of the language.

Pupils have a strong voice in a range of issues and their school council represents their views well in meetings with staff and governors. For example, representatives asked pupils what they would like to see in the new 'learning pods'. As a result, there are 'chill-out' and cookery rooms where pupils can relax and extend their learning successfully.

The school's behaviour policy is clear and staff implement procedures well so that pupils are confident that teachers will resolve any issues quickly. Prefects help ensure good behaviour and pupils' safety in communal areas, such as staircases. In general, the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. However, on a few occasions, adults' oversight of pupils in key stage 2 is not strong enough.

The school has effective arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking. The canteen and tuck shop provide healthy food, and pupils in Year 6 run the food co-operative that provides fresh fruit, vegetables and eggs for the school and local community. Regular physical education sessions and opportunities to participate in extra-curricular sports, such as netball, rugby, multi-skills and dance-fit, provide further worthwhile opportunities for pupils to enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Assemblies, circle time and acts of collective worship make strong contribution to pupils', moral and social development and promote the school as a community well.

For example, an assembly led by a Year 6 class on the theme of 'random acts of kindness' promoted effectively the importance of kindness to others and treating people as we would hope to be treated ourselves.

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body share a vision for leading a highly inclusive school that celebrates the diversity of pupils' backgrounds well. The leadership team is at a time of transition with some members in acting roles. There is a strong level of teamwork in managing the school. This reflects the headteacher's encouragement and support for team working and the effective culture of collaboration within the school, for instance between staff who teach classes across the same age range. Staff value the expertise and abilities of others and leaders empower staff to take forward lead roles across the school. However, the focus of a majority of leaders on improving learning and challenging ineffective practice is relatively weak.

The governing body is supportive of the school and has a keen interest in its day-to-day activities. The headteacher keeps governors well informed about the school's work and its response to national developments, such as how it is preparing to develop new areas of learning and experience within the school curriculum. The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strategic priorities and recent developments that have resulted from improvement plans. However, their active engagement in self-evaluation processes and the level of challenge they provide to the school leadership are limited.

The headteacher builds collaborative and supportive professional relationships with other schools and provides staff with valuable opportunities to engage in professional learning. For instance, leaders visit a wide range of international schools to look at how they design their curriculum and learning environments. These engage teachers well and help them to develop a broader understanding of education and to bring back useful ideas, for example in the way they organise the school environment after a visit to Finland. However, the school does not always consider the benefit of these activities strategically enough or make the most of these to improve its own provision.

Performance management procedures are appropriate and all teachers and support staff have relevant targets linked to the school's priorities. However, leaders are often too generous in their evaluations of staff performance. This means that they do not always identify key aspects of teaching that need to improve.

The school has a clear timetable of monitoring activities and uses a suitable range of evidence to evaluate its work. Leaders take careful account of the views of pupils, staff and parents, for example when coming to decisions about purchasing reading books to improve classroom libraries. Monitoring activities identify strengths and provide positive and supportive comments on the school's practices. Leaders and staff meet regularly to discuss school improvement issues and staff have an appropriate understanding of the actions in its annual plan. This identifies timescales and resources, and allocates responsibilities to members of staff appropriately. However, where required, leaders do not identify weaknesses in provision and learning robustly enough through self-evaluation, and this weakens the final self-evaluation report as a basis for focused improvement in important areas.

Overall, leaders plan and monitor finances effectively and spending decisions relate suitably to priorities in the school improvement plan. For instance, the school has developed the learning environment effectively by creating an indoor learning plaza and outdoor learning pods that teachers use successfully to develop pupils' learning. The school uses its pupil development grant appropriately to support vulnerable pupils. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of the grant on improving the outcomes of eligible pupils well enough, particularly more able pupils.

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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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