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

A report on

Sealand C.P. School
Farm Road
Sealand
Deeside
Flintshire
CH5 2HH

Date of inspection: October 2019

by

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

About Sealand C.P. School

Sealand Primary School is in Deeside in the county of Flintshire. There are 212 pupils on roll, including 22 part-time nursery pupils. The school organises its pupils into eight single age classes including the nursery.

Around 35% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is well above the Wales average of 18%. The school states that around 19% of pupils have special educational needs, this is below the Wales average of 21%. A few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

Most pupils are of white British ethnicity. Around a quarter of pupils have English as a second language. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2010. Estyn last inspected the school in May 2016.

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

Most pupils at Sealand Primary make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with additional learning needs make strong progress from their individual starting points. Pupils eligible for free school meals and those who have English as a second language achieve well.

Nearly all pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around school. They are kind and caring toward each other and show strong levels of cooperation. They treat adults and visitors with respect and courtesy and are very willing to discuss their work and successes with visitors confidently.

Working relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Teachers create a purposeful learning environment in which pupils feel confident to ask questions and share ideas. Teachers have high expectations and most pupils respond well to the challenges that teachers set.

The school is a caring community that has robust arrangements to support pupils' wellbeing, supported effectively by a wide range of interventions for those in need of additional help.

The headteacher provides strong effective leadership that ensures a clear strategic direction for the school. This fosters a culture that promotes the happiness, wellbeing and achievement of pupils very well.

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

Recommendations

R1 Improve attendance and reduce exclusions

R2 Focus monitoring activities more sharply on outcomes for pupils

R3 Strengthen the governing body's role as a critical friend in challenging the school to improve

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with additional learning needs make strong progress from their individual starting points. Pupils eligible for free school meals and those who have English as a second language achieve well.

The oral and listening skills of most pupils in the foundation phase are good. The rate of improvement that most pupils make in developing their speaking skills is notable. By the end of the phase, they discuss their work clearly and confidently, using an increasing range of language patterns and suitable vocabulary. Many pupils enjoy reading and make good progress each year. They use a wide range of phonic strategies confidently to decode unfamiliar words. Most pupils in the foundation phase discuss the content of their books enthusiastically and refer to specific characters and events appropriately. Many pupils develop sound writing skills and begin to expand upon their ideas effectively. For example, in Year 2, pupils use their imagination well to retell the story of how the world was made, 'On the third day of the week the piper began to bang his silver cymbals like storm waves clashing and the forests appeared flowing like water over the land.'

Most pupils in key stage 2 communicate articulately and confidently and join in with discussions enthusiastically. Most older pupils discuss their work with maturity, using an increasingly wide vocabulary. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read confidently. They discuss a range of texts by their favourite authors well and apply research skills accurately, for example to produce non-chronological reports on rainforests. Pupils generally present their work neatly and many write effectively in a range of genres. Many pupils share their emotions well when writing creatively. They use interesting vocabulary and organise their ideas successfully. For example, in Year 5 a pupil writes a powerful diary entry about the death of a child, 'Knowing that she slipped from this world on a concrete-like sofa, along with a flickering T.V. and crumpled tissues, brings a tear to peoples' eyes.' Many pupils edit their work skilfully to improve the quality of their descriptive writing. They use literacy skills learnt in language lessons successfully in other areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils develop good mathematical knowledge and skills as they move through the school. In the foundation phase, most pupils have a good understanding of basic number bonds and can order numbers up to 50 accurately. They think through simple word problems well. By the end of Year 2, their understanding of basic place value is sound and many pupils can add and subtract three digit numbers using formal written methods. They measure accurately using standard units, for example when measuring objects around the school. They use pie charts effectively to record real life information, for example when collating data for a recycling project.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge improve successfully. They use mental and written methods to multiply and divide well. Many identify and measure angles accurately and use their knowledge of shape to make three-dimensional mathematical models. They use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals well. In general,

nearly all pupils transfer their numeracy skills well to other curriculum areas. For example, older key stage 2 pupils make effective use of their knowledge of mathematics to plan a journey using timetables for different forms of transport.

Through the school, most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning Welsh. In the foundation phase, many pupils use Welsh informally during counting activities. When visiting the forest schools on an adventure with 'Flic a Flac', Welsh story book characters, pupils sing Welsh songs with enthusiasm and successfully compare different fruits they like using basic Welsh phrases. In key stage 2, pupils' oracy skills build nicely on the skills learned previously. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about themselves and their family. They extend their answers to include negative responses. Pupils writing is developing in line with expectation. Across the school, most pupils develop suitable reading skills, reading simple texts with a level of understanding that is appropriate for their age and ability.

Nearly all pupils develop effective information and communication technology (ICT) skills that support their wider learning well. For example, pupils in the reception class enhance their knowledge of number bonds by successfully answering and recording responses using an interactive board. Across the school, most use tablet computers confidently across a wide range of applications. By Year 5 and Year 6 nearly all pupils make interesting interactive presentations, which use a wide range of different applications. For example, they use green screen technology together with different applications to produce informative travel blogs about places to visit in Wales.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know whom to approach if they have any concerns. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Most pupils understand the importance of making healthy choices in life and give sensible examples of these, such as the importance of healthy eating and keeping active. For instance, pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate a good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle when they produce an information booklet on the important of exercise and its effect on the heart. Many pupils eat healthy snacks, such as fruit or vegetables, at break times. They enjoy participating in physical activities in school and during extra-curricular activities, such as sports clubs.

Nearly all pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around the school. They are kind and caring towards each other and show strong levels of co-operation. They are considerate when listening to the views of others and share their thoughts and ideas readily. They treat adults and visitors with respect and courtesy and discuss their work and successes with visitors confidently. A very few pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour, but in nearly all cases they respond well to staff and quickly conform to the school's expectations. In the previous academic year the school excluded a very few pupils as a result of their behaviour.

Most pupils participate confidently in whole-class discussions. Throughout the school, most pupils engage enthusiastically in their learning and generally settle well to their tasks. They sustain concentration well in class and assemblies and remain focused when working individually or with others.

Pupils, including those with additional learning needs, take on a range of responsibilities within the school community. For example, a few pupils belong to several pupil voice groups, such as the school council, eco committee, criw Cymraeg and E cadets. Pupils take these roles seriously and enjoy their work. Recent successful initiatives from these groups include giving sound advice to their peers on the importance of not sharing personal data or passwords.

Pupils are aware of the need to attend school regularly and punctually. Attendance has improved over the last 18 months. However, the overall improvement is from a relatively low base.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

Working relationships between staff and pupils are positive and highly constructive. Teachers create a purposeful learning environment in which pupils feel confident to ask questions and share ideas. Their presentations are usually lively and they encourage pupils to achieve as well as they can. Most teachers give clear instructions, set a brisk pace of learning and share learning objectives well with pupils.

Staff know the pupils very well. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour and interactions effectively in lessons and around the school. As a result, nearly all pupils are very respectful and attentive, and they support each other well in their learning.

The school's curriculum meets all statutory requirements and provides a valuable framework for pupils' learning. Teachers plan engaging topics that capture pupils' imaginations and make learning exciting. Learning experiences in the foundation phase are of good quality and meet the needs of the younger pupils well. Teachers make good use of the outdoors and the school's forest area, which they use well to deliver purposeful outdoor learning sessions. These activities make a worthwhile contribution to pupils' engagement and wellbeing.

Teachers have high expectations and most pupils respond well to the challenges that teachers set. Teachers explain new ideas in a purposeful and relevant way, and extend pupils' learning through hands-on experiences. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. A particular strength of the school, especially in the foundation phase, is the quality of staff questioning to develop pupils' thinking skills. For example, they encourage younger pupils to speak about what they feel may happen next in a story and ensure all children have an opportunity to answer. All staff are good language role models in both English and Welsh.

Teachers provide a broad range of interesting activities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Planning is thorough and responds successfully to pupils' needs. As a result, most pupils apply these skills well through interesting and well planned activities. For instance, teachers plan well for pupils in the foundation phase to develop their writing and number skills when acting as expert bakers to help Samuel Pepys create the best tasting bread.

Staff provide effective oral feedback to pupils on the quality of their work during lessons. They give pupils time regularly to reflect on their own and others' work.

Most of the older pupils know how well they are doing. Most teachers make effective use of assessment outcomes to identify individuals and groups of pupils who require support, for example through intervention strategies and groups.

There are many activities that successfully develop pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the heritage and culture of Wales. The 'super Welsh day', held once a term, has increased pupils' knowledge of the castles and major towns of Wales and where they are situated. Literacy activities further develop this understanding and their sense of what it is to be Welsh. For example, when writing creatively about watching Wales play international rugby, a pupil writes, 'Through a window to Wales I can feel the bone shaking sensation of the fans chanting for their team in the Principality stadium. ' Opportunities for pupils to make visits to local places of interest, such as Flint castle and taking part in the school's Eisteddfod, support the school's curriculum well and enrich pupils' learning experiences successfully.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has effective and well organised systems for tracking pupils' progress. Teachers use this information successfully to identify pupils who need additional support in literacy and numeracy. The school makes good use of assessment outcomes in core subjects and areas of learning to plan the next learning steps for pupils. They arrange relevant intervention support for individuals or groups of learners using well-trained and highly effective teaching assistants.

Nearly all pupils, many of whom have specific learning needs, make good progress in relation to their individual educational plans. A particularly strong feature of the school's work is its commitment to ensuring that pupils make quick progress as the result of interventions and do not need to receive these for extended periods of time. The school's partnerships with many outside agencies enhance pupils' experiences successfully and support effective teaching and learning well. The school is successful in informing parents of new initiatives. It arranges informative parent evenings to enhance parents' understanding of how they can support their children's learning.

The school is a caring community that has robust arrangements to support pupils' wellbeing. This includes a range of effective interventions, such as play therapy, emotional literacy support programmes and counselling sessions. Consistently high expectations and effective behaviour management by staff ensure high standards of politeness, mutual respect and conduct among pupils.

There are appropriate strategies for promoting attendance. These include weekly and termly awards and celebrations for high attendance. Half termly update letters to parents and careful tracking of persistent absence ensure that attendance remains an ongoing focus. However, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these measures and rates of attendance remain too low.

The school offers pupils a supportive environment where nearly all pupils feel happy and secure. It has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Pupils have worthwhile opportunities within the curriculum to discuss the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. The school provides a fruit tuckshop which pupils take full advantage of at break times. A range of after-school sports clubs promotes pupils' fitness well, such as multi-sports clubs, football, fitness fun and yoga. As a result, most pupils know the importance of keeping fit.

The school listens well to the views of its pupils by providing many opportunities for them to take an active part in decision-making. At a recent governors' meeting, the school council successfully shared its views on suitable candidates for vacant staff posts.

There are effective opportunities for pupils to develop secure values of Christianity and an awareness of world faiths. Teachers provide pupils with valuable lessons and activities to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has an appropriate personal and social education programme that teaches pupils about the core values of tolerance, respect and the importance of equality and diversity. Collective worship provides pupils with worthwhile opportunities to reflect on their actions and how they affect others

The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop empathy and charity. For example, raising money for local and national charities gives pupils a sense of pride and achievement. Residential visits to Glanllyn develop older pupils' confidence and social skills successfully. The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides strong effective leadership that ensures a clear strategic direction for the school. This fosters a culture that promotes the happiness, wellbeing and achievement of pupils very well. The senior management team support her effectively. They succeed in fostering high expectations among the staff, governors, parents and pupils. The strong caring and inclusive ethos within the school underpins their work. Staff work effectively with the headteacher and senior management team to form a strong team.

The school has robust performance management procedures for all members of staff. These promote the professional development of staff successfully and have a positive effect on individuals' and class work. For example, all members of staff show a strong commitment to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. There is a purposeful focus on encouraging learners to attain good standards.

Leaders ensure that staff receive worthwhile opportunities for professional development. The school has established beneficial links with a wide range of external partners that develop pupils' wellbeing and standards effectively. It is developing as a strong learning community by working effectively with other schools from different clusters on a range of projects. These include improving the quality of feedback to pupils, developing pupils' mathematical skills and enhancing learning experiences. This work has a very positive impact on pupils' writing and numeracy skills in the school and their ability to apply these skills successfully across the curriculum.

There is a good range of processes to evaluate the work of the school. These include analysis of relevant data, scrutiny of pupils' work, half-termly pupil progress reviews and formal lesson observations. Overall, monitoring work provides leaders and teachers with a useful overview of the school's strengths and areas for development. It gives leaders a clear picture of those areas of provision in need of improvement. For example, it identifies the need to improve feedback to pupils.

However, it is less successful in identifying what pupils do well and what they do less well. For example, lesson monitoring tends to focus too much on provision and insufficiently on the impact that work has on pupils' progress or outcomes.

Members of the governing body are supportive of the school's life and work and fulfil their duties enthusiastically. The headteacher keeps governors well informed about the school's work and the impact of new initiatives, increasing their understanding of the impact of improvement actions and the effect they have on pupils. As a result, governors have an appropriate awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, they do not gather sufficient first-hand evidence on the work of the school to be able to ask challenging questions of senior leaders.

The school environment is stimulating and displays celebrate pupils' achievements successfully. There is an appropriate level of staff and resources of high quality that meet the needs of the curriculum well. Good use is made of individuals' expertise to enrich teaching and learning. For example, skilled teaching assistants are used effectively to meet the needs of various individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers use their shared planning, preparation and assessment time successfully to plan interesting activities.

The headteacher and governors monitor expenditure carefully to ensure that they use financial resources wisely to support priorities for improvement. The school makes good use of the pupil development grant to support vulnerable pupils and those who are eligible for free school meals. This enables them to make good progress against their starting points. It allows financial support to fund peripatetic violin and singing lessons, residential visits to places such as Pentrellyncymer, and for the employment of teaching assistants who provide good quality learning and emotional support. This has a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and outcomes and widens their experiences and skills.

The school responds successfully to national and local priorities. For example, it has introduced effective strategies to develop the Digital Competence Framework and the Welsh Language Charter. This has a positive effect on pupils' ICT skills and their oracy, reading and writing skills in Welsh.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent 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 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' wellbeing, 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)

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:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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