



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

A report on

Cefn Glas Infant School

**St Winifred's Road
Cefn Glas
CF31 4PL**

Date of inspection: February 2024

by

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

About Cefn Glas Infant School

Name of provider	Cefn Glas Infant School
Local authority	Bridgend County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Infant
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	224
Pupils of statutory school age	106
Number in nursery classes	68
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%)	28.2%
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%)	29.2%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	3.3%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/07/2021
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	05/10/2015
Start date of inspection	26/02/2024
Cefn Glas is an infant school and therefore, admits pupils from nursery to Year 2 only.	

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

Cefn Glas Infant School is a welcoming, inclusive school that places a high priority on the well-being of its pupils. The headteacher has created a strong family ethos where those involved in the school feel highly valued and cared for. Most pupils feel happy and safe in school and behave well in class. They show pride in their work and enjoy having a voice in what and how they learn.

Staff have high expectations of pupils and meet their individual needs well. During their time in school, most pupils including those with additional learning needs (ALN) make effective progress across the curriculum. Pupils develop their skills well in mathematics, literacy, and Welsh language. They enhance their communication skills through learning British Sign Language with enthusiasm. However, higher up the school, pupils do not develop a range of digital skills well enough.

The school provides comprehensive opportunities for pupils to join leadership groups. The well-established Eco Warriors group has a strong impact on the work of the school. For example, it strengthens the school's commitment to sustainability through producing posters reminding everyone to turn off lights when not in use.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to benefit from outdoor learning, including a 'forest' area. They recognise the importance of providing pupils with plenty of opportunities to engage in child-led play. As a result, pupils have ample opportunities to make decisions about their learning. However, the effectiveness of these opportunities is too varied and does not always support pupils to apply and develop their skills successfully.

Leaders establish highly effective relationships with families and the wider school community. For example, the school provides worthwhile opportunities for parents to learn more about their child's education and increase their capacity to support their child's learning. A thriving Parent and Friends Association contributes significantly to the community ethos fostered by the school.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that provision for independent learning enables pupils to apply and develop skills effectively
- R2 Ensure that older pupils develop their digital skills effectively

What happens next

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

Main evaluation

Learning

Many pupils start school with skills and understanding that are around those expected for their stage of development. During their time in school, most pupils including those eligible for free school meals make good progress across the curriculum. Those pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) progress well from their individual starting points.

Most pupils make strong progress in their literacy skills and develop oracy skills particularly successfully. Most pupils have the confidence to talk to visitors, explain their activities and describe what they are doing. They listen well to staff and each other. From nursery to Year 2, pupils enhance their communication skills effectively through learning British Sign Language. They are enthusiastic about this initiative and regularly sign as they speak.

The standard of reading across the school is strong. Most pupils in the reception classes learn to recognise letters and their sounds rapidly. As they move through the school most pupils gain effective phonic skills, enabling them to decode unfamiliar words confidently. By Year 2, most pupils are developing fluency well, and many read with appropriate expression.

Most pupils make good progress in writing. Younger pupils enjoy mark making activities and exploring letter formation. As they move through the school, they develop confidence in writing independently. For example, they apply phonic knowledge well and use wall displays to support their spelling of common 'tricky' words. Older pupils write for a range of purposes, such as when they write instructions for handwashing. Throughout the school, many pupils apply their literacy skills across the curriculum well. For example, when learning about 'belonging' they write a diary from the perspective of a child refugee.

Pupils make good progress in developing their Welsh language skills. Younger pupils sing songs enthusiastically and understand and respond to teachers' instructions confidently. By Year 2, many pupils use Welsh language spontaneously such as asking, 'what colour?' when using food colouring. Most are beginning to use their growing Welsh vocabulary well, for instance when they speak about rooms in their homes.

Most pupils make good progress in mathematics and apply their knowledge to new situations well. Throughout the school, pupils develop their understanding of mathematical concepts, such as measures, effectively. Pupils in the nursery class use balance scales successfully to explore the weight of natural materials in the outdoor area. Older pupils in Year 1 establish a strong understanding of the need for accuracy as they measure dragon footprints using cubes and apply their knowledge of data well when recording their findings. Across the school, pupils gain a firm understanding of number. By Year 2, pupils use known number facts confidently to help them solve problems of addition and subtraction involving numbers to 100 independently.

In the nursery and reception classes, many pupils develop their digital skills suitably to help enhance their learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they use tablet computers independently to practice letter formation. However, higher up the school, pupils do not develop a range of digital skills well enough, and progress is limited.

Throughout the school most pupils develop their physical and creative skills well. For example, younger pupils enjoy exploring rhythm and improving coordination as they play large drums, to accompany a piece of music. Pupils in the reception classes explore texture and pattern through paint, such as when they print using a variety of vegetables. Pupils are developing problem solving and thinking skills appropriately. For example, younger pupils explore ways to transport toy cars down a length of guttering and older pupils work out how to create the highest score during a throwing game.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Pupils' well-being and attitudes to learning are a clear strength of the school. There are warm and purposeful working relationships between staff and pupils and, as a result, pupils feel safe and settle quickly. They show pride in their school and enjoy having a voice in how and what they learn.

Pupils across the school behave well, both in lessons and around the school. They play co-operatively, take turns, and support each other successfully, for instance when playing games and socialising at break times. Older pupils have a clear understanding of the school's values and rewards systems. For instance, they recognise that the school's 'value of the month' is kindness and know why it is good to be kind. Pupils are developing their empathy effectively, such as when they learn about what it means to be a child refugee.

Nearly all pupils show enjoyment in their learning and persevere at tasks well. From a young age, most are ready to learn at the start of lessons and move independently between one activity and another. They employ strategies to support their independence confidently, such as asking a friend for help before asking their teacher. Pupils respond well to verbal feedback and prompts from staff. Many older pupils understand the feedback strategies used by their teachers and know what they need to do to improve their work.

Many pupils make good use of opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a range of roles and pupil voice committees. They respond well to their responsibilities and take pride in supporting their peers. For example, digital leaders produce a helpful video that promotes the importance of online safety. This enables pupils to gain an effective understanding of how to keep themselves safe online, such as the importance of not sharing their password with others. Pupils engage well in extra-curricular clubs such as the choir and Eco Club.

Nearly all pupils engage with new, unfamiliar experiences enthusiastically. They develop the confidence to communicate with others and speak excitedly about experiences in school. For example, pupils collaborate to complete Christmas enterprise projects where they work in groups to decide on a product to make and sell for a profit.

Most pupils develop their understanding of how to make healthy choices relating to diet and exercise effectively. They participate enthusiastically in cookery lessons, where they learn to make a range of healthy food. For example, pupils in the nursery class make healthy flapjacks. Pupils take advantage of opportunities to enhance their physical skills through a range of activities during lessons and playtimes. For example, younger pupils develop their balance and coordination well as they ride a range of balance bikes and trikes.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff have highly effective working relationships with pupils. They manage pupils' behaviour well and create a warm and caring ethos throughout the school. Teachers and other practitioners identify clear objectives for pupils' learning. They give clear instructions and explanations to ensure that pupils complete planned tasks with impressive levels of independence. Staff have high expectations of pupils and meet their individual needs successfully. They model language including subject specific vocabulary well, which enables pupils to develop their language skills effectively.

Staff use a range of engaging approaches, such as teaching phonics through a dressing up game or problem-solving skills through role play. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning, maintain interest, and make good progress. In many lessons staff use interesting resources effectively to support pupils' understanding. For example, pupils learn about pitch as they explore the sounds made when tapping a range of jars filled with different amounts of water.

Staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' strengths and areas for development. Overall, they identify any gaps in learning effectively and use day-to-day assessment strategies systematically to improve learning outcomes for pupils. Staff use verbal feedback during lessons and activities well to help pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. This encourages pupils to persevere and succeed in their tasks.

Most staff use questioning techniques successfully to extend pupils' thinking and assess their understanding. For example, staff ask pupils to think about why a jar with the least water makes the highest sound when tapped. Staff plan many activities that challenge pupils purposefully. They provide valuable opportunities for pupils to learn through planned practical activities and first-hand experiences.

Teachers recognise the importance of providing pupils with plenty of opportunities to engage in child-led play. As a result, pupils regularly make decisions about their learning. However, the effectiveness of these opportunities is too varied and often does not support pupils to apply and extend their skills successfully. A few areas of the environment are uninviting, and pupils often choose to play simple games on tablet computers that do not provide sufficient challenge.

Leaders involve a range of stakeholders effectively in creating a strong vision for the school's curriculum. Well-being is at the heart of the school's work and leaders ensure this permeates throughout the curriculum. They have developed a holistic approach that is broad and balanced.

The school places a strong emphasis on providing a rich and varied range of visits and visitors that widen and enrich pupils' experiences well. These support pupils' understanding of the curriculum and help to engage pupils in their learning. For example, pupils visit local landmarks to learn more about the history of the local area and enjoy a visit from the fire service when learning about fire safety.

Provision for the development of pupils' skills is successful in literacy, Welsh language, and numeracy. However, provision to develop pupils' digital skills is not challenging or broad enough and does not enable older pupils to make effective progress in this area.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to the school's curriculum when appropriate. They share beneficial information about their culture, professions, and talents. For example, they explain their work as a photographer or a sports coach. This has inspired pupils and raised aspirations around future career choices, leading to pupils being able to identify long term aspirations.

The school uses outdoor areas well to develop pupils' physical and mental well-being. Pupils from the nursery class to Year 2 use raised beds to grow vegetables which they harvest and cook. For example, they make a harvest stew from the vegetables they grow.

Care, support and guidance

Leaders and staff work with dedication to create a welcoming school community that provides highly effective care and support to all pupils. There is a vibrant atmosphere around the school with pupils and staff demonstrating an ethos of respect towards each other. All staff place a high emphasis on encouraging pupils to care for each other by promoting empathy, kindness, and courtesy. Most staff use a range of approaches to ensure that pupils feel safe and cared for. For example, a helpful daily 'check in' encourages pupils to communicate how they are feeling, and the resulting support helps them settle and feel secure.

A dedicated team of support staff provide a programme of interventions for pupils to improve their well-being and learning when required. Staff work closely together to ensure that these interventions meet pupils' needs well. As a result, most pupils accessing these programmes make good progress.

The ALN Co-ordinator (ALNCo), supported by a motivated team of staff, provides strong provision for pupils with ALN across the school. As a result, most pupils with ALN make good progress. Parents appreciate opportunities to discuss any concerns with the class teacher and ALNCo at regular intervals. The ALNCo has developed strong links with outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive any specialist support they need. For example, the school hosts a helpful nurture programme for parents which aims to help them understand and meet the individual needs of their child.

The school provides comprehensive opportunities for pupils to join leadership groups. These include the Rights Respecting Ambassadors, and Criw Cymraeg. Staff ensure that these groups are worthwhile and involve pupils in improving aspects of school life. The well-established Eco Warriors group has a strong impact on the work of the school. For instance, pupils improved the outdoor environment by planting an

apple orchard. They strengthened the school's commitment to sustainability through producing posters reminding everyone to turn off lights when not in use.

Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to reflect and take part in collective worship. The school promotes pupil rights effectively. Staff deepen pupils' knowledge of the United Nations Rights of the Child through assemblies and classroom activities. Pupils speak about their rights with confidence and name specific rights as their favourite, such as the right to be safe.

Staff provide a few worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular provision, such as the Little Rockers choir who perform at the School Eisteddfod with Bridgend male voice choir. This rich experience develops pupils' confidence in performing to an audience successfully.

Teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of their heritage. For example, older pupils study Welsh artists such as Jenny Lambert to gain a greater understanding of the culture and landscapes of Wales. Staff plan a few opportunities for pupils to share their individual cultures and celebrations, such as when staff invite a parent into class to share their beliefs and traditions relating to Chinese New Year.

The school monitors pupils' attendance robustly and this has had a positive impact on improving attendance rates for pupils. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that there are effective policies and procedures in place, which all staff follow to ensure the safety of learners and staff.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has secured a clear vision for the school that has the well-being of pupils and staff at its heart and places the school at the centre of the community. She has created a welcoming family ethos where those involved in the school feel highly valued and cared for. Leaders monitor pupil progress and well-being effectively and ensure that most pupils make good progress as they move through the school.

The headteacher has secured a dedicated, engaged team of teachers and support staff who are highly committed to the school and collaborate successfully. She deploys staff well at all levels to enhance teaching and learning well. Leaders model and promote professional values and behaviours that contribute positively to all staff having high expectations of themselves and each other. They have established an ethos where staff readily share knowledge and expertise. For example, the ALNCo provides regular clinics for staff to discuss beneficial approaches to meet the individual needs of pupils within their class.

Staff have ample worthwhile opportunities to enhance their skills, both as part of whole-school initiatives and as part of their individual professional development. For example, they have received training in the teaching of phonics that has contributed significantly to ensuring that pupils make good progress in reading. Leaders invest well in support staff through facilitating their involvement in staff training and staff meetings. Because of this, these staff make a strong contribution to the work of the school.

Leaders establish highly effective relationships with families and the wider school community. The school provides worthwhile opportunities for parents to learn more about their child's education and increase their capacity to support their child's learning. For example, staff run an enjoyable 'family active zone' workshop for parents to get them further involved in supporting their children's physical and mental well-being. The school has a thriving Parent and Friends Association that contributes significantly to the community ethos fostered by the school. Funds raised through fundraising events contribute helpfully to learning resources, such as the new reading books purchased for younger pupils.

Leaders establish helpful lines of communication with families so that they can raise any issues that may affect their child. This is kept under review and the school responds well to parent's views. For example, the school has introduced a new communication app after parents suggested that communication could be streamlined.

Governors show strong support for the school and its aims. They contribute purposefully to financial aspects of the school's planning. Governors provide useful oversight to the way the Pupil Development Grant is used to enable vulnerable pupils to improve their reading and emotional and social well-being. They know the focus of the school's current improvement activity well. They are beginning to gain first-hand knowledge of the work of the school through links with curriculum focus groups. However, this work is at an early stage. Governors ensure that the school takes appropriate steps to promote the importance of healthy eating and drinking among pupils. They work purposefully with school leaders to promote a robust safeguarding culture.

Leaders address national priorities well. For example, recent improvement work has focused on developing literacy and numeracy skills and Curriculum for Wales. The headteacher involves staff and parents in self-evaluation and improvement processes purposefully. Leaders gather useful first-hand evidence about learning and provision. The school uses the findings from their self-evaluation well to devise relevant priorities and actions for improvement. For example, monitoring activity showed that pupils needed to improve their reasoning in mathematics. Consequently, this is one of the school's current priorities for improvement.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding effectively and have created a strong safeguarding culture.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers 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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