



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

Report following monitoring

Level of follow-up: Special measures

Caerau Primary School

**Library Road
Caerau
Maesteg
CF34 0PA**

Date of visit: December 2024

by

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

Outcome of visit

Caerau Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.

As a result, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Establish a stable and effective leadership and teaching team

Senior leaders provide robust leadership across the school. They are committed to securing high quality teaching and learning for all pupils. They have continued to build leadership capacity across the school by creating teams, led by middle leaders, with responsibility for key improvement areas linked to the school's action plan, such as curriculum design and aspects of literacy and numeracy. Roles and responsibilities are well defined and as a result, staff have a good understanding of what is expected of them and what they can expect from leaders. This has helped to improve staff confidence and morale, build collaboration across the school and raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. Overall, there is stable leadership that serves the school well.

Across the school, leaders develop a culture where improving teaching and learning is everyone's priority. Along with staff, they create useful guidance that sets out clear teaching expectations. This provides staff with greater clarity around the expectations of leaders and is beginning to improve the consistency of teaching across the school. All staff receive professional learning and support to improve the quality of their classroom practice, such as how to develop useful success criteria and how to give valuable feedback to pupils. In addition, teachers are increasingly reflective in relation to their own practice and more receptive to feedback from leaders.

The chair of governors continues to lead the governing body enthusiastically. She engages with senior leaders regularly and takes good advantage of opportunities to liaise with parents to gather their views about the school's work. Through support and training, all governors have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities, they attend meetings regularly and have reviewed and updated school policies methodically. Governors receive regular, useful reports from the headteacher about the school's progress towards the inspection recommendations. They challenge leaders appropriately and ask relevant questions about the work of the school, for example, when requesting information about pupils' progress in reading and pupils' attendance. Governors' involvement in gathering first-hand evidence, such as, joining school leaders on learning walks, is developing suitably.

R2. Improve pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills

Across the school, leaders have developed a consistent approach to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, most pupils now make good and, at times, strong progress in these important areas.

Teachers provide well planned opportunities for younger pupils to develop their early reading skills. Older pupils relish focused reading lessons that improve their vocabulary and comprehension. Most older pupils read aloud confidently and fluently and have mature comprehension skills, for instance they give accurate accounts of books they have previously read and describe the motivation of characters. Many use their reading skills well, for example, to decode unfamiliar words and to scan a text for pertinent information. Leaders track and analyse pupils' reading progress diligently using a range of data and through worthwhile monitoring activities. Recent analysis shows that most pupils make good or better progress in developing their reading skills. A strong culture of reading pervades the school and reading for pleasure is actively encouraged.

Across the school all teachers successfully follow the Caerau writing process. As a result, most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. Through well considered and creative provision, younger pupils quickly learn to form letters, write simple words and apply their phonic knowledge effectively to spell unfamiliar words. By Year 3, most pupils are keen to write for a range of purposes and extend their ideas well. Older pupils benefit from regular opportunities to use new vocabulary and write extended pieces of text. Overall, pupils develop good stamina for writing and a strong understanding of the characteristics of different text types. A particular strength is the way most pupils respond to feedback and correct or refine aspects of their writing to bring about improvements. Whilst teachers have raised expectations for the quality of pupils handwriting and presentation, overall, this is still an area in need of improvement.

Staff continue to ensure that pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. In the youngest classes teachers provide engaging play experiences where pupils apply and develop their understanding in practical contexts. By Year 2 they develop a sound understanding of place value and number facts and apply this knowledge well when solving simple number problems. Teachers provide concrete resources to support pupils' understanding and pupils readily select maths equipment to help them complete their work. Older pupils develop a good understanding of number and relationships, they link multiplication with division and demonstrate mental recall when solving tricky mathematical problems. A few achieve a high level of understanding of mathematical concepts, such as when investigating rotational symmetry and translating one shape to another position.

R3. Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality

School leaders set aspirational whole school attendance targets and have established a culture where the importance of good attendance is actively promoted. Although pupil attendance remains below the school's target, overall attendance and punctuality has improved steadily.

Soon after the core inspection, leaders changed the school timetable so that the school no longer operated an asymmetric school week. Since this change, pupil attendance on Fridays has increased rapidly.

School leaders have implemented robust systems to monitor the attendance of all pupils. They track attendance data well and have good knowledge of individuals and groups whose attendance and punctuality requires improvement.

The school collaborates well with the educational welfare officer (EWO) to improve the persistent absence of a few pupils. They develop bespoke support plans with families, including regular contact and home visits. Leaders have issued fixed penalty notices to a minority of families where the school's support did not result in improvements in attendance.

Staff actively promote the importance of good attendance. They praise individuals or classes with good or improved attendance and communicate this effectively to parents or carers. Pupils and their families now have an increased understanding of the importance of good attendance.

School leaders and the EWO have identified a minority of families whose children do not regularly arrive at school on time. Through increased contact and support, the punctuality of these pupils has improved steadily.

R4. Ensure that curriculum and assessment arrangements develop pupils' knowledge and skills systematically and progressively

School leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum that includes a range of interesting and authentic experiences that build on pupils' skills progressively. For example, the whole school theme, 'Belonging' gives younger pupils the opportunity to understand how they belong to the community of Caerau and why it is special. Staff provide effective support for pupils in the youngest classes to develop their independence in a range of authentic experiences and make good use of the outdoor areas. As pupils move through the school, opportunities to further progress their independent learning skills are developing suitably.

Teachers use learning objectives and success criteria consistently. When they use these in literacy lessons, they enable many pupils to understand the purpose of their learning and assist them to self-assess their written work successfully. When

teachers use success criteria effectively in maths sessions, they support pupils to evaluate progress and identify the next steps in their learning.

Generally, staff make their expectations of pupils' learning clear and provide effective feedback to help pupils improve their work. In a few classes, teachers model peer feedback effectively and pupils are beginning to use these valuable comments from their peers to help them improve their work successfully, for example, when redrafting their writing. Overall, pupils across the school are developing the ability to self-assess their work appropriately.

Leaders and staff facilitate worthwhile progress meetings to discuss pupils across the school. During these meetings, they discuss pupils' attitudes to learning, their social, emotional and communication skills, and make evaluations about how well they develop their literacy and mathematical skills.

The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about diversity, for example staff discuss the life of Martin Luther King Jr. in collective worship and pupils across the school explore religious festivals, such as Diwali and Ramadan.