13 March 2019

Dear

As requested, please find attached report for Llantilio Pertholey C.V. Primary School for your information.

Yours sincerely

Robert Gairey
Swyddog Arweiniol Cyhoeddiadau / Lead Officer: Publications

Estyn
Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru Her Majesty's Inspectorate For Education and Training in Wales

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Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: Estyn Review

Llantilio Pertholey C.V. Primary School
Hillgrove Avenue
Mardy Abergavenny
Monmouthshire
NP7 6LZ

Date of visit: March 2018

by

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

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

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from any further follow-up activity.

Progress since the last inspection

R1. Raise standards in mathematics and pupils' writing in key stage 2

The standards that pupils achieve in mathematics lessons, and in writing during English lessons, have improved recently. Work in key stage 2 pupils' books shows that most pupils achieve at least the expected levels for their age and a good proportion achieve standards higher than those expected. This is because of the intensive support that teachers have received, particularly since September 2017. As a result, the quality of provision for mathematics and English is now consistent across the school. In addition, teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve.

In English lessons, pupils now write regularly and at length. All pupils experience a suitable range of writing genres. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to embed the features of a genre, for example by producing two different pieces of work before moving on to the next genre. Pupils plan their writing carefully and improve their drafts, with support from their teacher and peers, before moving on to the final version. Many pupils usually use a neat, joined handwriting script. More able pupils spell accurately, use a wide and rich vocabulary, and use sophisticated punctuation to enliven their writing. However, not all pupils take enough pride in the presentation of their work, and a minority have not yet mastered basic spelling patterns appropriate to their age.

In mathematics, teachers now plan tasks that match the abilities of many pupils and, as a result, most pupils make steady progress. There are many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn and practise their calculation skills and to develop their skills in measuring and managing data. For example, in Year 6, pupils construct line graphs to show the very cold temperatures they have experienced recently. Increasingly, teachers plan open-ended challenges and problems, especially for the more able pupils. These challenges are beginning to help pupils to develop their thinking and reasoning skills appropriately.

Although most pupils now achieve good standards in mathematics and writing, they do not apply their skills to the same standard in other subjects. This is because the opportunities for pupils to use their skills regularly are not consistently good in all classes. In addition, leaders' monitoring does not take sufficient account of the standards of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, in science, too often pupils in key stage 2 use only simple block graphs and charts, which they do not always construct accurately. Pupils rarely write at length in their topic work, and when they do, their handwriting and presentation lacks care. Writing in topic work is of a lower standard than writing completed in English lessons.

Leaders rightly recognise the need to ensure that pupils use their skills to the same high standards in all of their schoolwork.

R2. Improve pupils' oracy skills in Welsh

The school has raised the profile of Welsh considerably since the core inspection as a result of improved subject leadership in the school and useful support from the regional consortium. The Welsh language is now more prominent in the day-to-day life of the school and in displays, lessons and informal situations. The oracy skills of pupils and staff have improved. They often greet each other in Welsh, and use simple, relevant Welsh phrases as they move around the school. The school has introduced a range of strategies to encourage the use of Welsh among staff and pupils. This includes the use of 'helpwr heddiw' in classes and the development of the Criw Cymraeg, a group of pupils who reward staff and pupils for using Welsh, and play Welsh games with younger pupils at playtimes.

Most pupils are developing confidence in using the Welsh language with their peers and with adults. They are proud of their improved ability to speak the language and enjoy the opportunity to speak to visitors. Pupils ask and answer questions about familiar topics, such as their family, clothes, pets, and favourite books and authors. They use a suitable range of sentence patterns to describe themselves and other people. They listen to others carefully, pick up new vocabulary and phrases quickly, and incorporate them into their own responses readily. Their pronunciation is generally accurate.

Key stage 2 pupils understand the benefits of learning Welsh. For example, they know that learning an additional language helps you when learning other languages and appreciate that speaking Welsh is often an advantage when applying for jobs in Wales.

R3. Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a full range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills, particularly in the use of databases and spreadsheet modelling

Leaders have taken appropriate action to audit staff skills in ICT, and provide support, which they match to teachers' starting points. There is now a suitable, progressive scheme of work to support teachers to cover the requirements of the ICT curriculum. The regional consortium has provided training sessions to ensure that teachers have the skills to teach many aspects of ICT, for example databases and spreadsheets.

In the foundation phase, pupils have good opportunities to add their contributions to a class database, which they interrogate individually, and older pupils compile a simple database of roller coasters around the world. By the end of key stage 2, pupils have suitable opportunities for spreadsheet modelling. For example, pupils in Year 5 modelled the likely profits from their craft enterprises, sold at the Christmas fair. The school's digital leaders speak enthusiastically about interactive quizzes that they devise for their classmates, and coding programmes that they use to create their own games. The use of the Hwb platform has enabled pupils to access a good range of appropriate software to support their learning.

Progress in implementing the ICT scheme is at an early stage, so it is not yet possible to see the full impact on pupils' ICT skills overall. Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunity to use their ICT skills fully across their learning. Teachers do not always identify where IT tools would help to make pupils' tasks more realistic and engaging. For example, they do not provide enough opportunities to allow pupils to think at a higher level by using IT to visualise, be imaginative and complete repetitive tasks more rapidly.

R4. Use teachers' ongoing assessments of what pupils can already do to inform their planning and meet the needs of all pupils fully

Since the core inspection, the school has refined its processes for tracking pupil progress. Teachers and school leaders collect and use a wide range of assessment information, including the outcomes of national tests. They use this to identify pupils who are underachieving, particularly in mathematics and reading. This informs the school's target setting process and provides some evidence for teachers to support in-class differentiation and provision of interventions for individuals and groups of pupils.

Regular meetings to review pupil performance enable teachers and senior leaders to discuss the progress of pupils throughout the year and refine planning to accommodate identified needs. Discussions focus mainly on those who are underachieving and receiving intervention or support. While this is beneficial in monitoring the progress of, and provision for, pupils with particular difficulties, it does not always pay enough attention to the progress of average and more able pupils. As a result, although teachers plan differentiated activities or set different expectations in mathematics and English lessons, these are not always challenging enough to meet the needs of all pupils. In other areas of the curriculum, teachers rarely give enough consideration to planning work that meets the needs of pupils of all abilities.

R5. Ensure that teacher feedback is of good quality across the school and gives pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve

The school has focused its efforts on improving the quality of feedback for pupils in English writing lessons and, more recently, in mathematics. Verbal feedback to pupils is generally useful and helps pupils to make appropriate progress as they carry out their learning activities.

In English, all teachers use marking grids that outline intended learning outcomes and success criteria at different levels. Teachers ensure that they use these grids at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of the pupils. For example, foundation phase pupils spend specific time with their teachers discussing and recording what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Older key stage 2 pupils have time set aside to reflect independently on their work and their teachers' feedback. During this time, they respond with increasing confidence to questions posed to them and suggestions on how to improve their writing.

Since September 2017, the school has improved its approach to providing pupils with feedback in mathematics, as a result of effective support from another school. Teachers use a common code to mark work, and often pose questions or challenge pupils to think more deeply about their answers. Very recently, teachers have started to offer 'Going for Gold' challenges to provide further challenge and to move pupils' learning forward. These challenges are gradually becoming more open-ended so that they enable pupils to extend their understanding further. However, these improvements are relatively new and it is too early to evaluate fully their effectiveness on pupil standards overall.

These common strategies have brought about more consistency in teachers' approach to providing feedback. As a result, pupils have a clearer understanding of their achievements in writing and mathematics. However, feedback to pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics is less effective and remains too varied across the school.

R6. Refine school improvement procedures to involve all leaders in raising standards and ensuring provision of good quality across all classes

Leaders have devised a suitable and regular monitoring plan, which covers many aspects of the school's provision in English and mathematics. Working with support from the regional consortium and challenge advisor, leaders have identified where there are inconsistencies in provision. Regular monitoring enables leaders to identify these shortcomings at an early stage, and to link this information to their analysis of the school's data. Leaders provide well-personalised, individual feedback to their colleagues to help them to improve their classroom practice. They follow through actions identified in subsequent monitoring activities. Leaders now hold teachers to account appropriately for the progress of pupils in their classes, for example through robust termly pupil progress reviews. As a result, pupils' standards in English and mathematics have improved. However, the monitoring of pupils' standards in other aspects of the curriculum, for example in Welsh and ICT, is less well developed.

Overall, until recently, school improvement procedures have lacked the urgency to secure consistent, high quality provision. As a result, the recent improvements to pupils' outcomes in mathematics and English are not yet embedded. Leaders rightly recognise that there is still much to be done in order to secure consistent provision and good standards across the school's work.

In order to address these matters more effectively, leaders have redistributed the roles of curriculum co-ordinators appropriately between the staff and clarified staff's responsibilities in relation to the school's priorities. This provides worthwhile opportunities for all teachers to develop their leadership skills. For example, most curriculum co-ordinators now provide relevant updates and support to their colleagues, for instance through sharing information and leading professional dialogues at staff meetings.