



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**

**Milford Haven Community Primary  
Priory Road  
Milford Haven  
Pembrokeshire  
SA73 2EE**

**Date of visit: January 2024**

**by**

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

## Outcome of visit

Milford Haven Community Primary School is judged to have made insufficient 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 maintaining the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn will re-visit the school in around four to six months' time to monitor progress against a sample of the recommendations.

Under the provisions of Section 39 (9) of the Education Act 2005, every annual report to parents prepared by the governing body under Section 30 of the Education Act 2002 must include a statement on the progress made in implementing the action plan.

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) Regulations 2015 state that an induction period may **not** be served in a school requiring special measures i.e. as described in grounds 6 or 8 in section 2 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (1). The presumption is that schools requiring special measures are not suitable for providing induction for newly qualified teachers, other than in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, schools requiring special measures should not normally appoint a newly qualified teacher (NQT) to their staff.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **R1. Establish an effective leadership and governance structure**

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit

### **R2. Improve the quality of teaching and assessment to challenge all pupils consistently**

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit

### **R3. Improve pupils' reading and writing skills**

Since the core inspection, the school has implemented effective improvements to the provision for the teaching of reading. In the youngest classes, leaders have established and embedded a progressive and cumulative programme for the teaching of phonics. This continues through the school so that all pupils who have gaps in their phonetical knowledge catch up through intervention programmes. Teachers in the youngest classes provide a wide range of stimulating activities for

pupils to learn new sounds, and opportunities to apply them. They sing songs to reinforce sound patterns and link the teaching of phonics to their class texts to make them interactive and fun. For example, reception pupils practice the digraphs 'ee' and 'ai' by 'baking' new words in a gingerbread man recipe.

In the older classes, leaders have put regular planned sessions in place to develop pupils' reading and comprehension skills. Staff plan to develop pupils' higher order reading and comprehension skills suitably and reinforce them during independent activities. Support staff are deployed effectively to provide a balance of independence and challenge for pupils. A majority of pupils read a variety of texts with expression and understanding. They give opinions on what they read and answer questions about the text. A few talk animatedly about their favourite authors and the books that they are reading at home. Many pupils make predictions and can extract information by skimming and scanning the text. A few more able pupils use inference when discussing more complex texts, and explain how they read further on to 'derive further meaning' when faced with new vocabulary.

The school has developed well-resourced class reading areas and a main library for the older classes. Staff also provide reading books for the pupils to take home. Nearly all pupils talk enthusiastically about their new library and reading books. A few pupils enjoy attending an after school book club where they read for pleasure.

Overall, many pupils are making good progress in developing their reading skills. However, the progress made in reading varies across the school. The reading ages of a minority of pupils remains considerably below their chronological ages in all of the older classes, particularly in Years 3 and 4. In these classes less than half of the pupils currently have a reading age equivalent to, or above, their chronological age.

Since the core inspection, the school has developed a comprehensive plan for the teaching of writing. All teachers plan for the development of pupils writing skills progressively and understand what elements of writing to introduce, and when. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of writing, with teachers working closely together to plan discrete skills based lessons and opportunities to consolidate those skills in wider, cross curricular activities. Teachers of the younger age groups are developing a firm understanding of the developmental stages of writing and provide valuable opportunities for pupils to practise those skills regularly. All teachers receive valuable and regular professional learning experiences for the teaching of writing. This means that they are developing a stronger understanding of how to develop pupils' skills progressively. They provide rich opportunities for pupils to develop their early writing skills across all learning areas, through interesting independent tasks and purposeful, staff led activities.

In general, across the school, many pupils are developing their writing skills well. Nursery pupils practice their early writing skills in a variety of interesting activities across the setting. Reception class pupils write labels phonetically for a map of Milford Haven to help the Gingerbread Man get home, while pupils in Year 2 create their own tourist leaflets independently to celebrate their local area. Around half of Year 2 pupils write complete sentences independently and spell most basic words correctly.

Older pupils have regular, valuable opportunities to write in a range of genres and for specific purposes. They often write at length to convey information and to communicate their ideas imaginatively. In Years 3 to 5 around half of pupils construct paragraphs effectively and consider the reader with an expanding choice of vocabulary. For example, Year 4 pupils use rhetorical questions and humour effectively to persuade pupils to use the school library. By Year 6, a majority write interesting stories, using effective story openings and vivid descriptions.

#### **R4. Improve pupils' numeracy and ICT skills**

The school has developed a well-structured plan for the teaching of mathematical skills. Across the school, teachers and support staff engage energetically with pupils. They monitor progress effectively and are responsive to individual pupils' needs, for example by providing additional feedback and guidance when necessary. Most staff model mathematical language well. They set clear objectives for learning and provide relevant success criteria for pupils to assess their own progress.

Where teaching is most effective, teachers plan activities that have a relevance for pupils and a clear purpose. They ensure that activities are well-matched to pupils' understanding, and as a result, pupils make valuable progress.

Younger pupils have many opportunities to develop and apply their skills practically indoors and outdoors. For example, pupils in the reception classes order sticks found in the school grounds by their length. Pupils in Year 1 sort shells found on a visit to the beach in order of size, while Year 2 pupils develop their understanding of money by buying and selling tickets for a Six Nations rugby match.

Older pupils have worthwhile opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in their wider work, often as part of 'amser sgiliau' during their topic work. This work builds successfully on the skills they develop in their maths lessons and often involves using and manipulating information. For example, Year 3 pupils select appropriate equipment and suitable units to measure the sports field. They use their understanding of mental arithmetic to work out the distance between the 5m and 22m lines. Pupils in Year 6 enter data into a spreadsheet to produce and analyse graphs to calculate the mean number of sightings of different bird species observed during the big garden birdwatch.

A minority of pupils use their mental maths skills to support their calculation confidently, for example using mental addition to total a set of 1 and 2-digit numbers, or counting on in 7s. They support their calculation with informal written methods effectively, such as breaking down steps in addition when calculating a perimeter.

Where provision is less effective, pupils are unsure about the purpose of their learning and teachers do not model strategies well enough to support them to complete tasks effectively. For instance, they do not work through examples to address a common lack of understanding or misconception. This means that most pupils do not have a secure conceptual foundation for their learning.

The school has ensured that the planning for developing pupils' ITC skills is clear and builds progressively on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. This means that all teachers know the expectations for pupils in their year groups and understand how to introduce the skills in discrete sessions. In a few classes, pupils successfully develop these skills effectively when completing cross-curricular tasks. However, developing a consistent approach to the teaching of ICT skills across the school is still at an early stage of development.

The youngest pupils are developing their ICT skills satisfactorily. Many access online programs confidently to record simple text or input data to create simple bar charts, for example about their favourite areas of Wales. They take photographs and videos of each other working in their learning zones and upload these images successfully. They use programmable robotic toys successfully, enabling them to navigate around an obstacle course with increasing confidence. When given the opportunity, a very few pupils create increasingly detailed presentations, for example, providing instructions on how to wash hands properly, utilising text, images and voice recordings.

Progress among older pupils is varied. Many use the internet effectively to search for information, such as facts about the wildlife of Wales. They are adept at recording themselves and uploading video clips successfully. Many use different software programs to display information effectively, for example by creating posters and infographics. A majority of the oldest pupils are beginning to understand the purpose of databases. They input data carefully, interrogate the information sensibly and discuss their findings with understanding, for example when discussing diseases found in soldiers during World War 1. However, in general, the teaching and progress of ICT skills across the school lacks consistency.

#### **R5. Establish effective self-evaluation, school improvement and professional learning processes**

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit

#### **R6. Develop a curriculum that engages pupils and develops their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically and progressively**

Since the core inspection, leaders have developed a clear vision for the school's curriculum. This is understood and shared by nearly all staff who are committed to delivering the vision in practice. The curriculum is structured around overarching topics that provide consistency in pupils' experiences. Teachers within each year group tailor every topic to ensure that they provide suitable scope and interest to develop pupils' knowledge and skills appropriately.

Leaders have provided useful and comprehensive direction to support teachers' planning for the development of pupils' skills. For example, they set clear expectations about the skills pupils require to write for different purposes and the sequence in which these are to be developed. This helps teachers plan a range of

learning experiences that build pupils' knowledge and communication skills systematically over time.

Staff have benefitted from appropriate professional learning opportunities to strengthen their understanding of effective teaching methods and strategies to develop pupils' skills. This is beginning to improve consistency in the quality of teaching. For example, improvement in the provision for developing pupils' phonic skills is beginning to accelerate pupils' progress.

Teachers plan suitable opportunities for pupils to revisit and apply their learning through their topic work and in focused activities as part of the regular 'amser sgiliau'. They take account of pupils' prior knowledge and enable them to contribute to what and how they learn when planning their topic work.

Leaders have very recently introduced more systematic arrangements to plan and monitor provision across the full range of areas of learning and experience. This is helping them to ensure that the curriculum offer is suitably broad and balanced to meet the needs of all pupils. This work is at an early stage of development.

The school's curriculum gives a clear and consistent focus to developing pupils' emotional, mental and physical well-being. This impacts positively on most pupils' engagement, behaviour and readiness to learn.

Overall, the structure and guidance provided by leaders and the professional learning undertaken by staff have developed a curriculum that is starting to deliver stronger outcomes for pupils. This is most notable in the development of pupils' literacy skills. The quality of provision for the development of pupils' numeracy skills is currently less consistent and opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills are improving more gradually.

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