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

A report on

Sketty Primary School

Llwyn Mawr Road
Sketty
SA2 9HJ

Date of inspection: July 2023

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education

and Training in Wales

About Sketty Primary School

Name of provider	Sketty Primary School
Local authority	City and County of Swansea
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	475
Pupils of statutory school age	353
Number in nursery classes	61
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 23.0%)	7.0%
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 16.1%)	36.3%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	4.8%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	02/02/2015
Start date of inspection	03/07/2023
The deputy head teacher was appointed in September 2022.	

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

Sketty Primary School is a caring, inclusive school that aims to support pupils to reach their full potential and 'be the best that they can be.' Most pupils including those with additional learning needs (ALN) make strong progress from their individual starting points and nearly all pupils develop their creative skills particularly well.

The school's curriculum promotes a strong sense of belonging, equity and diversity. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' ideas and suggestions and this ensures that the curriculum is authentic and meaningful to pupils. As a result, nearly all pupils engage enthusiastically with their learning and they begin to develop appropriate aspirations for the future. Provision to develop pupils' creative skills is a strength.

Nearly all pupils behave well and participate enthusiastically in the school's various pupil voice committees and school council. Pupils' rights as children are embedded in the school's curriculum and this helps pupils to form their own opinions on a range of local and World issues. Teachers and support staff are skilful and support pupils to develop a broad range of skills well across the curriculum. However, provision to develop pupils' speaking skills in Welsh is less well-developed.

The school places strong emphasis on supporting the well-being of all. Leaders and staff adopt a beneficial community focused approach providing a range of support for individual pupils and their families. Provision for pupils with ALN is a strength and leaders ensure that provision is suitably adapted to meet pupil needs. There is a strong culture of safeguarding and leaders robustly monitor pupil attendance.

The school is well-led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and team of senior leaders who work purposefully alongside the governing body to secure improvements for the school. Together, they understand school strengths and areas for development and plan appropriate strategic actions to secure improvement. However, leaders' work to monitor the impact of improvement work on improving pupils' learning and progress is at an early stage of development.

Recommendations

R1 Refine self-evaluation processes to ensure that leaders consistently identify the impact of improvement strategies on pupils' learning and progress

R2 Improve pupils' Welsh speaking skills

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to its work on how the school develops pupils' creative skills through a worthwhile programme of professional learning and highly effective curriculum provision, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main evaluation

Learning

During their time in the school, most pupils, including those eligible for free school meals, make strong progress and use their knowledge and skills in their work across the curriculum highly effectively. Nearly all pupils identified as having an additional learning need (ALN) make strong progress towards their individual targets.

Across the school, pupils' oracy skills are very strong. Nearly all pupils are articulate. They express themselves clearly from an early age, and talk enthusiastically about their work. By Year 6, most pupils are mature speakers and moderate their tone, expression and language depending on the audience. Nearly all pupils listen well and pay close attention to what others have to say. They think logically, organise their thoughts and present them coherently. They ask thoughtful questions and make effective contributions that develop conversations.

Younger pupils develop a good understanding of letter sounds and use this well to help them to read. For example, most younger pupils can read their own names, start to blend sounds well and can read high frequency words. Nearly all pupils develop effective reading skills and, by the end of Year 2, they read a range of suitable texts, accurately and fluently. Most older pupils develop into confident readers using a range of reading skills, such as skimming and scanning texts, to extract information. Across the school most pupils have a love of reading and express their reading preferences with enthusiasm.

Across the school, most pupils write exceptionally well in a variety of genres. Most of the youngest pupils develop their early pre-writing skills effectively such as when mark making using a variety of resources. Younger pupils write frequently and with increasing independence. As they get older, most pupils develop appropriate sentence structures with accurate use of basic punctuation. By Year 6 most pupils' writing is fluid, extended and expressive. Pupils apply their writing skills across the curriculum highly effectively. For example, when pupils write 'Blitz poems' about environmental issues they use inventive vocabulary at the ending and beginning of new lines.

Most pupils' Welsh language skills are beginning to develop suitably. A minority of younger pupils respond appropriately to simple Welsh phrases and vocabulary. Many pupils sing Welsh songs enthusiastically and use the phrase of the week well. However, as pupils move through the school, they do not make enough progress in learning how to speak Welsh.

Across the school, pupils develop a strong understanding of number and apply their skills across the curriculum successfully. Most pupils understand how to use money

through their enterprise projects and their calculations of costs and profits. By Year 1, pupils begin to use a range of strategies to solve addition problems and have an advanced understanding of time. In Years 3 and 4, most pupils consolidate their skills effectively developing their understanding of measurement, fractions, and aspects of geometry. Older pupils apply their mathematics skills well and their understanding of abstract concepts, for example algebra, develops appropriately.

Across the school most pupils develop their digital skills successfully. The youngest pupils use a range of digital programs well such as when using tablets to match pictures and words. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils create and use spreadsheets successfully, including formulae, for example to help them calculate the total number of points each house in a Harry Potter book earned. Many older pupils use coding effectively and, in a few cases, they use this to create sophisticated games.

Most pupils' physical skills develop well. The youngest pupils develop their skills rapidly through a range of purposeful activities including balance bikes and agility courses. Older pupils build on these skills suitably during carousels of physical education activities such as rounders and collaborative team games.

Across the school, pupils demonstrate exceptional creative skills across a broad range of genres, including art, poetry, and music. Nearly all pupils produce high quality pieces of art. They display a range of skills and use a variety of media highly effectively. For example, as they move through the school pupils progressively develop their pottery skills well.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Nearly all pupils happily attend school. They show pride in their school, have positive relationships with staff and feel safe within its inclusive and caring ethos. Nearly all pupils feel that their views are valued and they know what to do if they have a problem. They feel well supported by staff at the school. Most pupils use a range of strategies effectively to support their well-being. For example, they speak purposefully about using classroom worry boxes, regulation stations, and the school well-being shed to manage their emotions.

Across the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Nearly all pupils readily support and care for one another. This supports the strong nurturing ethos of the school. Nearly all pupils collaborate well, listen carefully and respect the contributions of others such as when discussing ideas for lessons. Most pupils play co-operatively, take turns and support each other well, for instance when playing games and socialising at break times. They understand rewards and show increasing maturity when talking through any disagreements with their peers.

Nearly all pupils show positive attitudes to learning and life. They develop well as independent learners, show a strong interest in their work and talk enthusiastically about school life. Most pupils are quick to settle in lessons, listen attentively to teachers' instructions and concentrate well on their work. Most pupils relish the opportunity to improve their work. They purposefully act on feedback to improve the quality of their work such as when Year 6 pupils edit their eco pledges to ensure they provide strong messages.

Most pupils influence a range of aspects of school life positively. They show enthusiasm for taking on additional responsibilities within pupil voice groups. For example, the Eco Committee work purposefully when exploring the potential of installing solar panels to reduce energy costs. Most pupils fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously and are proud of their valuable contributions and achievements. This includes leading whole-school assemblies, promoting an anti-bullying approach, and taking part in local litter picks such as on Swansea beach. As a result, most pupils develop their leadership skills well. Older pupils develop a caring and nurturing approach such as when buddying up with younger pupils to support them throughout the year.

As they move through the school, most pupils display a strong understanding of inclusion and diversity. For example, older pupils explain that it is okay to be different and understand the impact of kindness and equity. Most pupils understand their rights as children. For example, when pupils discuss the United Nations rights of the child with their peers, they show understanding of the implications these rights have for their lives and for children around the world. The 'Rights Respecting' school ambassadors and the school committees ensure that pupils are increasingly aware of local and worldwide issues. Through this they begin to understand the importance of giving aid to those in need. For example, older pupils run their own enterprising activities, to raise money for local charities.

Most pupils begin to develop their aspirations for the future and gain an understanding of the world of work. They value the extensive range of visits and visitors to the school that help to enrich their learning. As a result, nearly all pupils build confidence and ambition as they move through the school. For example, older pupils confidently perform on stage in front of large audiences with cluster schools.

Most pupils understand the importance of keeping healthy and they enjoy participating in the many physical activities that the school provides such as the daily mile. They know the importance of eating a balanced diet and most pupils choose to eat a healthy snack during break. Many pupils participate in a range of extra-curricular activities that promote their physical well-being and social development effectively, such as after-school art, coding and sports clubs. Most pupils understand the importance of digital safety and know how to keep safe online.

Following the pandemic, pupil attendance continues to improve and is above national averages.

Teaching and learning experiences

The school has a clear vision for the curriculum that stems from a strong culture of cynefin, creativity and pupil voice. Staff ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and builds systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills in most areas of learning and experience. They provide many authentic learning experiences through a range of beneficial themes that engage pupils well. For example, pupils in Year 5 speak with enthusiasm about a 'Blue Planet' theme and the opportunities it gives them to deepen their understanding of pollution.

An outstanding aspect of the curriculum is the highly effective approach to developing pupils' creative skills. Staff provide an extensive range of opportunities to

work with local artists, which supports pupils to learn new techniques such as splatter painting and screen printing successfully. The school has developed particularly strong provision for teaching ceramics, which builds on pupils' skills progressively as they move through the school. As a result, pupils create interesting and detailed work of a very high standard. For example, younger pupils create bold models of sea creatures with clear features such as tentacles. Older pupils develop technical skills well such as when they use a coil technique to build a detailed model of a rock pool.

Across the school regular projects enable pupils to develop and apply specific skills across the curriculum with purpose. For instance, during an enterprise project older pupils work with a graffiti artist to produce work that portrays powerful words relating to positive thinking, which they sell as products to generate profit. As a result, pupils deepen their understanding across a range of areas including personal and social, artistic and financial skills successfully.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their community and the history and culture of Wales. For instance, older pupils research the impact of significant events such as the Swansea blitz and Pembrokeshire oil spill with interest. Younger pupils learn about the local environment successfully, such as when they explore rockpools at a nearby beach. Most teachers use Welsh suitably in class daily. However, provision to develop pupils' skills in Welsh as a second language tends to focus on written skills. As a result, pupils' speaking skills in Welsh are less well-developed.

Nearly all staff develop strong caring relationships with pupils. This creates a warm and caring ethos throughout the school, which supports learning effectively. Staff share a calm and consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour and, as a result, most pupils focus purposefully on their work. Knowledgeable support staff work skilfully with pupils including those with ALN and this has a positive impact on pupils' progress across the school.

Nearly all staff share clear learning intentions and give precise explanations and instructions that lead to effective learning. They model language and vocabulary well, enabling pupils to develop their oracy skills to a high standard. Teachers systematically involve pupils in what and how they learn, and this ensures that learning is relevant to pupils. Independent activities are varied and most support pupils to practice and apply skills well. However, in a few cases, these activities do not provide pupils with enough challenge.

Provision for younger pupils includes beneficial opportunities to learn through play and exploration. For instance, pupils develop their thinking skills and personal and social skills successfully as they try out different ways to transport toy ducks down a length of guttering. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to benefit from learning outdoors. Younger pupils access a useful range of resources including balance bikes and water play that support their learning effectively. Older pupils enjoy regular opportunities to learn outdoors, such as when they learn how to calculate the area of outdoor spaces or grow a range of plants from seed.

In most cases, staff know pupils' strengths and areas for improvement well. They encourage pupils and praise them for their achievements. Most staff routinely use effective questioning to extend pupils' thinking and check for understanding. In the

best examples, teachers regularly support pupils to reflect on their work and identify how they can make improvements. However, in a few cases feedback does not consistently help pupils to understand the next steps in their learning.

Care, support and guidance

The quality of care, support and guidance for pupils and their families is a strength of the school. Leaders use a community school approach that results in excellent support for families and pupils. This includes coffee mornings, educational workshops and bespoke support helping to remove any barriers to learning. The school communicates highly effectively with parents to ensure that they know what their child is learning and how they can support their learning at home.

Staff form strong relationships with pupils and their families and gain a detailed understanding of each pupils' personal qualities, needs and circumstances. As a result, staff tailor support appropriately and ensure that the well-being needs of all pupils are met well. The school prioritises pupil well-being and provides a wide range of highly effective support where needed. For example, regulation areas in each class are accessible to all and a well-being shed provides a safe place for pupils to access targeted interventions to help manage their emotions. In addition, the dedicated well-being officer offers high quality, bespoke support for pupils' well-being across the school.

The school has clear structures and procedures in place to identify pupils with ALN. Leaders adopt a person-centred approach with the needs of each pupil as a priority. They ensure that pupils, parents and staff have a voice that supports the school to identify the best ways to help each pupil with ALN to learn. The highly effective ALN co-ordinator has robust systems in place to monitor the impact of interventions to ensure they make a positive difference for pupils. She collaborates well with external agencies, ensuring that support is tailored appropriately to meet pupils' needs.

The school is fully inclusive and places a strong emphasis on ensuring all pupils and adults experience a sense of belonging. This includes work to celebrate what it is like to live in modern day Wales where pupils and families readily share their language and culture or their work in the local community. The school's curriculum supports this work well with a scheme of activities, which help to develop pupils' understanding of equity and diversity. For example, older pupils learn about celebrating people's differences through their study of a book by a local author.

Teachers ensure that pupils understand their rights as children. They promote this effectively through planned activities during lessons, whole-school assemblies and through the work of the school's 'Rights Respecting' ambassadors. As they move through the school, teachers ensure that pupils have worthwhile opportunities to develop their leadership skills through the school council and a range of worthwhile committees. Many of these groups help to make a difference to whole-school life and the community. For example, the Eco-Committee persuaded school leaders to purchase litter pickers enabling them to keep the school environment free from litter.

The school provides good opportunities to develop pupils' physical fitness and promotes the importance of physical exercise to be healthy appropriately. For example, many pupils attend a variety of extra-curricular clubs such as cricket. Staff

promote healthy eating and drinking effectively through the school curriculum and by ensuring that pupils have a healthy snack at break time.

The school provides a range of high-quality resources and experiences to develop pupil wider skills such as creativity. For example, the school has its own kiln and other high quality resources, enabling pupils to develop expertise in ceramics. In addition, the school uses the local community and its resources well, enabling pupils to experience things such as performance in front of a crowd, for example older pupils' recent participation in performance work with cluster schools at Taliesin Arts Centre.

Staff promote a positive culture of safeguarding ensuring that the welfare of all has the highest priority. Leaders monitor pupil attendance carefully and the school procedures for safeguarding are robust. The school adopts a strong multi-agency approach to provide appropriate help and to support the welfare of pupils and their families beyond the school day. As a result, nearly all pupils feel safe in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides compassionate, highly effective leadership, which promotes the well-being of all successfully. As a result, nearly all pupils have high levels of well-being and all staff feel valued and supported to undertake their individual roles. The headteacher, staff and all stakeholders have a shared vision to support pupils to 'be the best they can be.

The recently appointed deputy headteacher supports the headteacher purposefully. He leads by example, providing effective support to teachers and support staff across the school. For example, the deputy successfully led the development of the school's relationships aspects of the curriculum. As a result of this work, most pupils have a better understanding of diversity and inclusion.

Leaders give due consideration to the national priorities for Wales and ensure that these are key features of whole-school improvement such as the school's notable work to develop its curriculum in line with the Curriculum for Wales. In addition, leaders have due regard for the impact of poverty on attainment and ensure that finance is not a barrier to learning. For example, when necessary, they subsidise school trips and they ensure that uniform costs are kept low through initiatives such as the school's recycled uniform scheme. The school adopts a community-focused approach to supporting its pupils, parents and wider community. This supports the fully inclusive ethos of the school effectively.

Senior leaders monitor and track the progress of all pupils carefully from their individual starting points. They use national test data, teacher assessment and regular progress review meetings effectively to highlight any causes for concern and to adapt or change provision when needed. As a result, most pupils including those identified with ALN make strong progress.

Leaders undertake an appropriate range of self-evaluation activities such as learning walks. This includes useful opportunities to work alongside teachers to monitor progress in teaching and learning through the school's 'Teaching Triad' groups. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders participate in regular

informal learning walks across the school. This provides useful information to leaders and leads to feed back to staff, enabling them to make swift adjustments to improve the learning environment, for instance the recent changes made to outdoor provision. However, leaders' work to monitor the impact of whole-school improvement priorities is at an early stage of development. As a result, leaders do not consistently identify the impact that actions taken have on pupils' learning and progress.

The governing body provides appropriate support to the headteacher and other leaders. Detailed reports ensure that they have a suitable understanding of school's finances and grant spending such as the pupil development grant. Governors support the headteacher effectively to promote a strong culture of safeguarding and to encourage healthy eating and drinking. They visit the school regularly and use their first-hand knowledge suitably to question leaders about school improvement.

The headteacher works with governors effectively to monitor and plan the school budget. Careful financial planning ensures that leaders target spending appropriately to support school improvement such as funding of a full-time dedicated ALN co-ordinator. This supports the ALN co-ordinator with valuable time to embed the school's approach to ALN reform. As a result, provision for ALN is a strength.

The school provides all staff with a worthwhile range of professional learning. This includes useful opportunities for teachers and support staff to collaborate, share best practice and to learn from each other. For example, support staff value 'Feedback Fridays' where they reflect on weekly planning with teachers and suggest potential adjustments to make improvements to provision. School performance management processes are appropriate and support the development of individual staff skills and talents as well as meeting whole-school needs such as work to develop the school's holistic approach to well-being.

The school collaborates well with a range of external partners to provide enhanced opportunities for professional learning. For example, the school's work to provide international learning opportunities for staff enables them to undertake international research comparing practice overseas with their own. In addition, the school works with local universities and colleges to support the development of trainee teachers.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer 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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