



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

**A report on**

**Litchard Primary School  
Garfield Avenue  
Litchard  
CF31 1QB**

**Date of inspection: November 2017**

**by**

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

## About Litchard Primary School

Litchard Primary School is on the outskirts of Bridgend. There are 447 pupils between the ages of three and eleven. There are 15 single age classes, which includes a nursery class where 60 children are full time. There are also 16 key stage 2 pupils in a learning resource base class. Most of these pupils come from a wider geographical area within the local authority. The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is 22%, which is marginally above the national average (19%).

The school identifies that around 29% of pupils have additional learning needs. This is above the national average of 25%. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background or are in the care of the local authority. No pupil comes from a home where Welsh is the first language.

The headteacher took up his post in September 2012. The school's last inspection was in March 2011.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

Most pupils make expected progress from their starting points. Most apply their literacy and numeracy skills well in work across the curriculum. Most pupils across the school develop highly effective skills in information and communication technology (ICT). Nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning.

The quality of teaching is strong. The curriculum is broad and offers a wide range of interesting experiences for all pupils.

Pupils receive good care support and guidance and the school's partnership with most parents is strong. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is supported well by the senior management team. The staff know the school community well and work together as a team effectively to achieve high standards for pupils. The governing body supports the school successfully.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve pupils' Welsh oracy, reading and writing skills in key stage 2
- R2 Improve pupils' decision-making skills so that they can make independent choices about how and what they learn
- R3 Ensure that teachers' feedback tells pupils what they need to do to improve their work
- R4 Develop outdoor learning in the foundation phase

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

During their time at the school most pupils make strong progress and achieve well by Year 6. A very few more able pupils make exceptional progress. Most pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards their targets, from their starting points.

Throughout the school, nearly all pupils listen well to adults and to other pupils, and they follow instructions carefully. Many foundation phase pupils talk purposefully to one another during role-play, for example when discussing their 'symptoms' in the doctor's waiting room. Most pupils in key stage 2 speak fluently and clearly. They share ideas and express opinions confidently, for example when discussing whether it is better to give or receive a present or when talking about the usefulness of a fire-breathing dragon.

Most pupils in the foundation phase develop good phonic skills to decode unfamiliar words confidently. By the end of Year 2, many pupils read with fluency and expression. Most key stage 2 pupils use their reading skills well in other areas of the curriculum. In Year 6, most pupils extract relevant information by skimming and scanning, for instance when using online search engines to research Hindu gods. Nearly all pupils across the school demonstrate an enthusiasm for reading.

Across the school, most pupils develop their writing skills well and confidently for a wide range of purposes. The quality of their extended writing is good. Nearly all younger pupils make effective progress in developing their early writing skills. By Year 2, many pupils form letters correctly, present their work neatly with eligible handwriting and use basic punctuation accurately when writing independently. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils write clearly and imaginatively and the majority use paragraphs and punctuation accurately. They show a clear understanding of different writing styles and audiences, for example when applying their imagination to write historical horror stories and when writing about Welsh legends. A few more able pupils apply their thinking skills to write persuasively to a high standard when considering, for instance whether Henry VIII was a good king. Nearly all pupils apply their literacy skills well across all areas the curriculum.

Most pupils use their numeracy skills flexibly in a range of meaningful activities in other areas of learning and subjects. Younger pupils in the foundation phase apply their number skills appropriately to solve real-life problems, for example when working out how many people go on a bus journey or to use footprints to measure in the woodland area. In Year 2, most pupils survey shoppers successfully on their visit to a local shopping centre and construct a graph to share their information. Many key stage 2 pupils, when exploring timelines in history, select appropriate flexible calculation methods and apply these across the curriculum. They use formal calculation strategies accurately. Older pupils use data handling skilfully to construct and analyse sets of data arising from science experiments.

Nearly all pupils across the school develop highly effective ICT skills, using desktop and mobile technologies confidently. The younger pupils add sound effects to their

photographs of dinosaurs independently. Nearly all Year 2 pupils make effective use of a concept-mapping tool to organise their thoughts and questions about the topic 'Travelling Time Trolley'. In key stage 2, most pupils use coding, multimedia and word processing packages to a very high standard to present and produce work across the curriculum. Older pupils engage with innovative opportunities to work alongside students from a local college to programme robots to speak Welsh, and create webpages independently. They use spreadsheets confidently to explore premier league football teams' performance. All pupils show a very clear understanding of how to stay safe online.

Many pupils in the foundation phase make a sound progress from their starting points in developing their basic skills in Welsh. They read simple texts aloud and use suitable vocabulary, for instance when comparing the weather in Wales and China. However, in key stage 2, few pupils ask and answer simple questions appropriately and develop basic reading and writing skills. Most pupils have limited words and phrases and lack confidence to engage in Welsh conversation.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

All pupils feel safe in the caring and inclusive ethos that is an integral part of the school's life. Most pupils know whom to turn to when they need support and are confident that the school responds well to any friendship or behavioural issues. Most pupils have a beneficial understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. Older pupils speak well about the need to protect their identity online and to take care about whom they contact.

Most pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and well-mannered, and show respect for adults and to one another, listening carefully to what their friends and teachers say. The willingness of most pupils to support each other and to give careful consideration to their friends' 'needs' both inside and outside the classroom is a notable feature of the school. Most pupils interact well in a variety of scenarios. A good example of this is when Year 6 read with the younger pupils and when individual pupils across key stage 2 buddy with others during assembly to ensure that everyone feels included.

Most pupils have a very positive attitude to learning and to school. They are interested in their work and concentrate for long periods when completing tasks. Most pupils work very effectively with their peers and respect the views of others. They show resilience when facing challenges, particularly on projects, for example to build an eco-friendly car. However, many pupils in both the foundation phase and in key stage 2 are only just beginning to make independent decisions about their own learning.

Most pupils are very glad of the opportunities that they receive to develop valuable leadership skills. For example, every pupil in Year 6 has a daily responsibility, which they fulfil with enthusiasm and pride. The well-established pupil groups represent the views of pupils competently and make purposeful decisions about aspects of school life. For example, the learning council has recently reorganised the school library and had an input in to the type of genres that most appeal to them. With the support of the playground peacemakers, there has been a marked improvement in pupils' behaviour during playtimes.

Most pupils understand and have positive attitudes towards living healthy lives. For example, they organise and run a fruit tuck shop each day. They know how fruit and vegetables are an essential part of a healthy diet. Most pupils take part regularly in physical activities during the day and enjoy representing the school at a variety of local sporting events such as the netball and football annual festival. All pupils from Year 3 benefit enormously from weekly swimming lesson in the school swimming pool. Most pupils participate daily in a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as rugby, basketball, cricket and dance. Taking part in the school clubs benefits them physically as well contributing to their general wellbeing.

Many of the older pupils are developing an empathy towards others by supporting local and world-wide charities. They organise mini projects independently, for example making and selling homemade stress balls for an international water charity. This has enabled them to win a local community award in recognition of their efforts. In addition, the school choir raises money annually for the local hospital cancer unit.

Attendance rates over time place the school above the average when compared with similar schools over the last three years. Most pupils are punctual at the start of the school day.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. All teachers plan learning activities that have appropriate objectives and staff communicate these clearly to pupils. Planned activities stimulate and engage most pupils well. They build on pupils' prior learning and proceed at a suitable pace.

All staff manage pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school successfully. Teaching assistants know when to intervene and provide effective support to individuals and groups of pupils. However, the majority of teachers and support assistants tend to lead too many activities. This means that pupils do not always have enough regular opportunities to make decisions and choices about what and how they learn.

Most teachers provide pupils with useful feedback about how well they complete their task and celebrate the good features of a piece of work. They are beginning to give pupils time to reflect on their work. However, comments to help pupils understand how to improve their work are less effective. In many classes, teachers remind pupils of the purpose of the lesson effectively and use 'pit- stops' to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve their objectives.

The curriculum provides a stimulating range of learning experiences for pupils that reinforce and build successfully on prior learning. Schemes of work have a firm focus on enabling pupils to use their skills competently in all areas of the curriculum. A range of interesting topics such as 'War, what is it good for?', ensure that all pupils engage well in their learning. The school plans a number of visits, which broaden all pupils' knowledge of the local community and wider world. For example, pupils in the foundation phase visit local shopping centres and beaches, and pupils in key stage 2 meet visitors from Louisiana, USA. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities for all ages, both after school and at lunchtime, is a notable feature of the school. These include 'Seeds and Weeds', a dance fitness class, and 'Poetry Performance'.

Opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in designated lessons are appropriate. However, the school does not ensure that there are enough opportunities for pupils to practise their Welsh in informal situations around the school. Staff provide a number of interesting activities to enrich pupils' knowledge about the culture and heritage of Wales.

Across the school, teachers have detailed plans to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. There is a highly effective plan for integrating the digital competency framework and most teachers develop skilful expertise in ICT that enriches provision well above expectations. This leads to exceptional standards in pupils' ability to apply ICT across the curriculum.

In the foundation phase there is a purposeful balance of teacher directed activities, group, paired and individual work. Teachers plan activities, which are practical and multisensory in nature and build effectively upon pupil's own first-hand experiences and interests. For example, the youngest pupils learn how to care for the class pets taking responsibility for their wellbeing. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use the outdoor environment for imaginative and creative play or to develop suitable investigative skills.

Long and medium-term planning within key stage 2 is effective and meets the needs of most pupils. Many teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. For example, older key stage 2 pupils design their own history-related video games. The school's provision for enterprise for older pupils is engaging. The annual 'Jellytubbies' project to create and sell healthy jelly develops pupils' knowledge of how to plan a successful business well.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school's arrangements for the emotional and social development of many pupils and their families are very effective. There are strong working relationships with parents and the school offers a comprehensive range of opportunities for them to be involved, such as the weekly 'Learning Activity' and 'Family Fun Club'. This partnership has a positive effect on the pupils' wellbeing. The school's use of its own social media application impacts positively on raising attendance and provides further beneficial advice for parents on other school matters.

Arrangements for identifying and responding to the needs of specific pupils are rigorous. The school measures carefully the effect of support and intervention programmes on the achievement of pupils with specific and complex needs. Staff work closely with a wide range of professional specialists, including an educational psychologist to plan suitable programmes for particular pupils.

There are comprehensive systems for tracking the progress of all pupils. Teachers identify successfully pupils who are underperforming and they track the impact of a variety of interventions well to improve pupil attainment. The school provides successful wellbeing programmes that enable many pupils to improve their confidence and to achieve success in their learning. Through its useful identification system for more able and talented pupils, the school provides many beneficial planned opportunities to improve pupil outcomes. For example, the school supports a few pupils' singing talent and this helps them to become more confident in all areas of their learning.

Staff provide numerous opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe and live a healthy lifestyle. Visits by sport coaches, for example, promote pupils' fitness well.

The school's successful partnership with a number of businesses provides pupils with opportunities to reflect on their future career choices. The most recent project helped pupils in key stage 2 to understand the impact of engineering on the environment through building an electric car and taking part in a race. Such activities develop pupils' social skills and their ability to work as part of a team effectively.

The daily collective worship and visits to the church at important times, such as Christmas, help pupils to learn appropriately about the customs and festivals of Christianity and other religions. However, pupils do not have regular opportunities to cultivate their understanding of spiritual issues.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

The headteacher has a clear vision to give all pupils the best possible opportunity to succeed in a safe and happy environment. He and the senior management team have high expectations and they successfully share these with all stakeholders. Staff work together effectively to ensure an extremely caring ethos, with a clear focus on all pupils' wellbeing.

There are comprehensive arrangements to evaluate the work of the school. Leaders share responsibilities effectively and use information from scrutinising books, lesson observations and thorough data analysis to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result, they set a clear strategic direction for the school. They gather the views of the parents and pupils who, for example, have identified a need to improve, handwriting and presentation.

There is a close link between the self-evaluation report's outcomes and priorities in the development plan. Focused staff meetings provide leaders and teachers with numerous opportunities to evaluate progress towards achieving agreed improvement priorities. Planned actions in the school's previous development plans have resulted, for example, in improved outcomes in ICT and extended writing across the school.

Processes to manage the professional development of staff are successful. There are useful opportunities for all members of staff to attend courses and to work with other schools to view effective practice. This has a positive effect on planning, teaching and maintaining valuable partnerships, for example to develop the digital competency framework.

The governing body are supportive of the school. Governors keep most aspects of the school's work under regular review. The standards and curriculum committee support and challenge the school effectively to improve important aspects of its work. This, for example, has resulted in the school adapting the provision for writing and closing the attainment gap between boys and girls.

The headteacher allocates staff carefully to provide a good balance of experience and skills across the age ranges. Support staff contribute effectively to pupils' standards, wellbeing and social skills. Resources are generally appropriate to meet pupils' needs and the targets in the development plan. Leaders manage the budget and monitor the effect of the expenditure rigorously. Careful planning of the pupil development grant ensures that eligible pupils make good progress towards achieving their targets and improving their wellbeing.

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

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<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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