



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

**A report on**

**Tavernspite Community Primary School  
Tavernspite  
Whitland  
Pembrokeshire  
SA34 0NL**

**Date of inspection: December 2017**

**by**

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

## About Tavernspite Community Primary School

Tavernspite Community Primary School is in the small village of Tavernspite in Pembrokeshire. It serves a very large rural catchment area with most pupils traveling a distance to school. There are 207 pupils on roll, including 6 part-time nursery pupils, in eight classes.

A very few pupils (around 3%) are eligible for free school meals. This is well below the Wales average of 19%. The school identifies around 20% of pupils as having additional needs. This is very close to the Wales average of 21%. Most pupils are white British. Very few pupils learn English as an additional language or speak Welsh at home.

In September 2014, the school joined in an informal federation with Templeton Community Primary School. This arrangement was formalised in April 2016 and a single senior management team and governing body oversees both schools.

The headteacher took up his post in January 2008. Tavernspite's last inspection was in January 2012. This is the first inspection of the federated school.

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

Pupils at Tavernspite School achieve excellent standards in speaking, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They respond particularly well to the very broad and rich curriculum that the school provides. By the end of key stage 2 pupils apply their skills extremely effectively across a wide range of different contexts. This is a strength of the school.

Pupils work hard, concentrate and persevere well. They learn to care for one another effectively and to take on useful responsibilities as part of the school community. Pupils benefit greatly from the wide range of interesting visits and clubs that the school offers. These, along with the school's strong outdoor ethos and focus on sustainable living, help pupils develop into resilient, confident and well-informed learners.

The federation's leadership team have a powerful vision, which they share effectively. They establish high expectations with a strong focus on teaching and learning and share skills and expertise highly successfully across the two schools in the federation. In particular, they support newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school extremely well, ensuring that pupils benefit from high quality learning experiences.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Excellent</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' reading skills
- R2 Develop pupils' independent learning skills
- R3 Identify clearly actions to secure improvements within the school improvement plan
- R4 Address the safeguarding issues brought to the school's attention during the inspection

## 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 either 'Developing a joined up skills based curriculum at key stage 2' or 'Using mentoring and coaching to support the development of NQTs' for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Excellent

Most pupils start school with skills at or above those expected for their age and stage of development. In the foundation phase, most pupils develop and apply their basic skills well. In key stage 2, most pupils build on this strong start and make exceptional progress, particularly in developing their speaking, writing, numerical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and in their application of these skills across the curriculum.

Across the school, pupils develop their communication skills well, and by the end of key stage 2, many pupils are highly articulate. They listen carefully, speak fluently using a rich vocabulary and express their thoughts very effectively. For example, they have a strong understanding of the conventions of speaking in front of an audience. Many change their tone of voice, adapt their pace, and use eye contact to convey their messages well. Nearly all older pupils develop as very able readers. They discuss the content of books in a mature manner and apply their advanced reading skills well to gather information from a range of sources independently. Nearly all pupils write successfully for an extensive range of purposes, showing a highly developed awareness of their audience. This is a notable strength in the school. They often make expert use of language including colourful descriptions, which engage the reader very successfully. For example, describing a swan's landing as a 'heartbeat of wings'. They consider how different authors use language and apply this extremely well in their own work. For example, they analyse the language in a poem about a storm in great depth to understand features of writing, such as personification and the use of colons to create effect. They use this knowledge skilfully to craft their own poems about 'Nature's Curse'.

Nearly all pupils use their numeracy skills extremely effectively in a wide range of contexts by the end of key stage 2. Most pupils recall number facts quickly and apply their learning instinctively in new situations. They develop numerical reasoning skills to a very high standard through interesting tasks that combine a wide range of literacy, numeracy, ICT and thinking skills. Most use algebra successfully, for example to understand how to create and solve simple algebraic expressions in the context of a game of darts. More able pupils apply their reasoning skills very effectively to identify the order that the last three darts should be thrown in by the winner. This work is exemplary.

Across the foundation phase, most pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well. Younger pupils listen carefully to instructions and follow these effectively. By Year 2, most pupils talk confidently and enthusiastically about their work. Most pupils make steady progress with their reading skills. They enjoy stories, handle books confidently and apply their emerging skills appropriately in their lessons. However, in general, pupils have too few strategies to help them read fluently and they do not develop their sight vocabulary well enough. Foundation phase pupils develop their writing skills effectively. By the end of Year 2, many present their work using neat cursive script and apply basic punctuation consistently and accurately. They write for a good range of purposes, such as when they express their opinions about their visit to the forest school. Pupils demonstrate pride in their written work and are beginning to write at suitable length, for example to retell traditional tales.

Most foundation phase pupils develop their numeracy skills well. In the early years, they develop an effective understanding of number and begin to perform simple additions suitably. They progress well and by Year 2, they apply their numeracy skills successfully in different contexts. For example, they follow musical patterns skilfully and measure out ingredients accurately.

Most pupils develop their ICT skills well in the foundation phase and use them successfully in many different contexts. For example, pupils in Year 2 make digital films about the planets and input data successfully to make a graph showing their favourite activity in the forest school. By the end of Year 6, pupils have excellent ICT skills across a full range of digital competencies. They use presentation packages very well to produce artwork, for example in the style of William Morris. They devise presentations to support public speaking, and write newspaper articles about local environmental issues. They code and programme effectively and use ICT to support their wider learning, for example, using the track changes facility to evaluate the quality of each other's work effectively. They have a very clear understanding of the conventions of online safety and talk with conviction about how digital skills help them to learn.

Across the school, many pupils develop and use their Welsh language skills naturally and confidently for a wide range of purposes, helping them begin to progress well as bilingual learners. They engage in basic conversations readily such as to talk about the weather or where they are going, both in informal situations and when they practise in their lessons. Pupils across the school often write in Welsh in a wide range of contexts. This consolidates their understanding effectively and develops their vocabulary meaningfully. Most pupils use their reading skills effectively in their lessons, such as to read the emails and letters they write. Older pupils read simple texts reasonably fluently, showing suitable understanding.

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

Nearly all pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and feel valued as part of the school community. The many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities as they move through the school contribute effectively to this. Pupils are proud of their leadership roles, which they carry out diligently and confidently. They speak knowledgeably about their responsibilities and give sensible reasons for their decisions. For example, members of the school council explain their decision not to install water fountains because they felt these were unhygienic and wasted water. Pupils develop caring attitudes and self-worth through the school's many initiatives encouraging pupils to support one another. For example, older pupils help younger pupils develop friendships and play constructively during break times. These activities contribute effectively to pupils' wellbeing and the strong sense of community within the school.

Almost all pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. They benefit from the school's strong outdoor ethos that encourages pupils to enjoy fresh air and exercise in all weathers. Pupils are excited about the many opportunities they have to keep fit in school. For example, early years pupils develop their strength and fitness well using equipment such as ropes on the pirate ship, bikes and scooters. Across the school, pupils develop positive attitudes to regular exercise through the wide range of sporting activities on offer. They are particularly enthusiastic about the school's popular running club, which helps develop their resilience and confidence as well as their fitness.

Nearly all pupils behave well as they move around the school and most pupils engage well in their lessons. They are courteous to one another and to adults. They learn to respect one another's opinions and contributions increasingly well as they move through the school. For example, they listen carefully to individual presentations which pupils prepare as homework, they show appreciation of each others' work and provide constructive comments.

Nearly all pupils engage well with new experiences and ideas. For example, pupils in year 2 talk with excitement about trying to make all the colours in the rainbow in their science experiment. Most pupils work hard, engage well in tasks and develop their ability to persevere and sustain concentration for significant periods, particularly as they move into key stage 2. This is a notable strength of the school. However, in the foundation phase, pupils do not always develop their independent learning skills well enough and tend to rely too much on support from adults to do their work.

Almost all pupils learn that they have rights and responsibilities as children and they benefit well from the school's particularly pro-active approach to sustainability. They understand that it is important to take care of their world, and they develop a strong sense of how they can contribute to this. For example, pupils participate in valuable projects such as an environmental impact day at Amroth beach, where they collect rubbish and learn about the effects of plastics on the environment. Across the school, pupils raise money for local and national causes, including 'Comic Relief' and learn about the impact of fair trade. This helps develop their understanding of their role in the wider community effectively.

Although there have been recent improvements, pupils' overall attendance does not compare well with other similar schools.

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In a few classes, where teaching is excellent, teachers have ambitious expectations for pupils' learning and excellent subject knowledge. They challenge themselves to develop pupils' algebra skills in imaginative ways that capture their interest. They ensure that learning proceeds at a brisk but manageable pace and builds on pupils' prior learning very well. Teachers plan pre-writing activities extremely effectively. For example, they use texts by authors such as Charles Dickens as a stimulus for written work and sequence lessons expertly.

In most classes, teachers match work to pupils' abilities well and plan lessons that build on pupils' prior learning successfully. Staff establish strong working relationships with pupils and manage behaviour effectively. Nearly all teachers are effective language role models. They question pupils effectively to challenge any misconceptions during lessons. However, occasionally, teachers and support staff are too quick to correct mistakes or to provide answers for pupils rather than supporting them to find their own solutions.

In the foundation phase, teachers provide imaginative learning environments and engaging experiences for pupils. For example, pupils enjoy learning the value of different coins and working out the correct change in the class shop. Teachers introduce topics and new skills skilfully and effectively, capturing pupils' attention and sparking their curiosity well. However, too often, learning is led by adults and this does not allow pupils to make the most of the well-planned learning environment to

practise and develop their skills independently, or to develop and follow their own interests.

Across the school, teachers help pupils learn to reflect on and improve their own learning particularly well. This is a strong feature. For example, by the end of key stage 2, pupils use the school's self-editing tool effectively to identify opportunities for improvement naturally as they write.

Teachers help pupils learn how to assess each others work increasingly skilfully as they move through the school, and pupils often make useful observations about what others have done well and how they can improve. Teachers' verbal and written feedback is effective and usually leads to improvements in pupils' work. For example, teachers in upper key stage 2 use weaknesses or concerns that pupils have identified in their own learning as a starting point in the next session.

The school's thematic approach to curriculum planning is innovative and meets all requirements. It includes comprehensive arrangements for developing pupils speaking and listening, writing, numeracy and ICT skills progressively, to a high standard and in real life contexts. The development of different skills in combination is an excellent feature of the school's work in key stage 2. For example, pupils use very well developed data handling skills to produce spreadsheets that calculate the cost of carpeting a Victorian workhouse. However, the school's approach to developing pupils' early reading skills is not effective enough. As a result, pupils are over reliant on sounding out individual letters to read unfamiliar words and have a limited sight vocabulary.

The school promotes the Welsh language and culture effectively and weaves opportunities to use Welsh skilfully into the school day. Teachers plan carefully for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills linked meaningfully and well to other learning experiences. For example, teachers provide valuable opportunities for pupils to use Welsh during ICT lessons, by using email to send a brief Welsh language autobiography to a friend. Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to learn about the Welsh culture, for example during residential visits to Cardiff and when they learn folk songs to sing in assembly.

The school's provision to develop pupils as ethical citizens is strong and often links well to the school's local context. For example, pupils write reasoned arguments for and against wind turbines and present these digitally. They also use number skills to predict amounts of waste on local beaches and use this information to produce leaflets to help others reduce waste. Within topic work, teachers draw well upon local resources such as Carew Airfield to add context to their learning. The school provides extensive and effective opportunities for pupils to learn in the outdoors. For example pupils use 'real' tools, experience cooking on an open fire and develop wider life skills such as communication and problem solving successfully during regular visits to local woodland and forest school sites.

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

The school's ethos and provision prepares pupils effectively to develop healthy lifestyles and to grow into ethical and informed citizens.

There is a strong emphasis on supporting pupils to develop worthwhile personal and social skills, which begin to prepare them well for adult life. For example, there are

valuable opportunities for pupils to join in regular trips such as to a local woodland. These visits provide rich learning experiences for pupils in engaging contexts that develop their physical and social skills particularly effectively. Working together on the woodland site helps pupils build friendships, develop their confidence and learn to co-operate with one another effectively. The purposeful emphasis on developing an appreciation of the outdoors inspires a sense of awe and wonder at the natural environment that underpins education about sustainability meaningfully as well as promoting pupils' wellbeing effectively.

The school helps pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to make healthy lifestyle choices well. For example, teachers encourage pupils of all ages to take part in regular running challenges and the school's outdoor environment provides many opportunities for pupils to be physically active during break times. There are strong arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking, which pupils respond to well. These weave into the curriculum effectively, such as when pupils are encouraged to sell healthy drinks and fruit kebabs as part of a fund raising activity.

The school ensures that there are many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. These build confidence and resilience effectively. For example, pupils learn about influencing others, making decisions and speaking in public as members of the 'Cryw Cymraeg' and the school council. The school teaches pupils about the rights of children appropriately and helps them to consider wider global issues such as fair trade well. Older pupils learn to nurture younger pupils' wellbeing effectively when they support them on the yard during break times, helping to develop a strong sense of community in the school.

The school's broad curriculum gives good attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It provides valuable enrichment activities both within and beyond the school day. For example, staff offer an exciting range of after school clubs, which are popular with pupils. These include the school choir and an art club as well as many sports clubs. These activities support the school's active ethos and develop pupils' wider interests well.

There are consistent and effective procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. Teachers use the information well to identify individual pupils' needs, and to help them plan appropriately for the next steps in their learning. They discuss pupils' progress regularly with school leaders to identify where additional support would improve pupils' basic skills. For example, the school has recently started using a digital program to help pupils improve pupils' reading and spelling skills.

The school is beginning to work with individual families to improve attendance but this initiative is too recent to judge its effectiveness.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is effective overall and there is a strongly inclusive ethos in the school. Individual education plans include useful targets and teachers review pupils' progress frequently. The school shares information with parents regularly. However, occasionally targets are not precise enough and reviews are too general to identify the most appropriate next steps. The school uses advice and support from external agencies well to help meet individual pupils' needs.

Generally, the school has sound procedures for keeping pupils safe. However, arrangements for safeguarding do not meet requirements in all respects..During the inspection, the team brought a concern regarding safety on the school site to the attention of the governing body.

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

The federation's leadership team has a clear vision that they share effectively with staff and the community. They work well together to establish clear policies and consistent practice across the federation. Leaders have a wide range of skills that match well to their areas of responsibility. For example, the assistant headteacher leads on developing a skills based curriculum at key stage 2. This work has been highly effective in developing pupils' ability to apply their skills in a range of work at an impressive standard. Leaders share their skills and expertise usefully across both schools. The headteacher's commitment to keeping teaching and learning as the focus for all of the federation's work and his desire to develop the skills of his staff is a strength. This has developed the practices of all staff from their different starting points and ensured that by the end of key stage 2 in both schools, most pupils achieve highly.

Meetings provide good opportunities for teachers across the federation to share ideas, learn from each other and discuss pupils' standards. This has helped to create a team ethos and a climate of mutual support amongst staff. Senior leaders often use these meetings to model good practice, for example in providing effective feedback to pupils on how to improve their work. Senior leadership meetings focus well on sharing the outcomes from monitoring activities, such as the scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. Leaders use this information successfully to design bespoke coaching programmes for individuals and to inform whole school professional learning events. However, leaders have not always looked closely enough at the effect of teaching on pupil's learning. For example, making the link between the high levels of direction by staff and younger pupils' lack of opportunities to become independent, investigative learners. Newly qualified teachers and other teachers new to the school receive very high levels of support that benefits their practice greatly. This very focussed mentoring has had a significant impact on improving standards in upper key stage 2, in Templeton, in particular.

Nearly all teachers take part in regular monitoring activities to inform their knowledge about the subjects and areas they lead. Many produce evaluative reports that identify suitably strengths and areas for development in the school's provision. However, the plans do not generally contain enough information on what pupils can do or about what needs to improve in relation to standards. This means that the school is not always sure about where to best target its support in terms of raising standards in specific areas.

Leaders use the outcomes from an appropriate range of evaluation activities effectively to inform the federation's targets for further improvement. For example, they identified appropriately the need to improve further pupils' ability to use a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words when reading in English. Overall, the federation has a good track record of bringing about the desired improvements. For example, it has worked successfully to improve the provision for and standards of pupils' Welsh language skills. However, on occasion the planned actions do not contain enough detail to bring about the desired outcomes.

The governing body supported the transition into the federation well. Working with the school's leadership, they helped to ease initial community concerns. For example, they ensured equitable representation between governors who had served at each of the schools in the pre-federation days on the governing body of the federation and within committees. Senior leaders keep governors well informed about the school's progress towards achieving the targets in its improvement plan. The termly headteacher's report to governors is informative and contains much relevant information that enables governors to ask pertinent questions in order to support the school. A few governors take part in monitoring and evaluation activities and this helps leaders to gain an outside perspective.

The headteacher and governors monitor the schools' budgets diligently. They allocate funding appropriately to support improvement, for example to purchase ICT equipment and outdoor resources. The parents and friends association of both schools in the federation make valuable contributions towards the individual budgets and leaders use these monies well to improve resources in each school respectively. The school makes suitable use of the pupil development grant. For example, it has trained a member of support staff to deliver programmes to improve pupils' standards in English and to run workshops for parents.

## 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))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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