



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Garth Community Primary School
Garth
Trevor
Wrexham
LL20 7UY**

Date of inspection: 5 - 6 April 2011

by

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for

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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

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Context

The school is situated in the village of Garth four miles from Llangollen. It is housed in three separate buildings on one site. The majority of pupils are from the neighbouring village of Trevor and with a minority from Garth itself. A few opt to attend the school from further afield. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds that are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. All come from English speaking homes. None speaks Welsh as a first language or comes from an ethnic minority background.

Currently there are 79 pupils on the school roll including 20 part-time nursery children. Approximately nine per cent are entitled to receive free school meals, which is below the local and national averages. Pupils' ability on entry is similar to the local authority (LA) average. There are seven with additional learning needs (ALN), including a small number that have a statement of ALN. Pupils are admitted to the nursery class on a part-time basis at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. They start full-time education at the beginning of the academic year during which they will be five.

There have been no significant changes to the nature of the school since it was last inspected in March 2005.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Garth C.P. School is £3511 which compares with a maximum of £9122 and a minimum of £2734 for primary school in Wrexham. The school has the 21st highest budget per pupil out of the 62 primary school in Wrexham.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The current performance of the school is adequate because:

- although pupils generally make good progress in their learning, their performance overall, especially at the end of key stage 2 (KS2), does not compare well with local and national figures and is consistently below the norm for similar schools;
- although standards in communication, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) skills are good, pupils progress less well in Welsh language development; and
- wellbeing, learning experiences, teaching and care, support and guidance are good, but there are areas for development in improving quality.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- there is a downward trend in attainment, and particularly science, in KS2;
- although self-evaluation is based on a broad range of evidence, information gathered is not analysed in sufficient detail and not enough account is taken of pupil outcomes; and because
- the school recognises the need to work with the LA to address its areas for development.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 improve attainment in all core subjects and particularly science, at the end of KS2;
- R2 improve standards and provision for Welsh language development;
- R3 ensure that self-evaluation is more analytical and outcomes based; and
- R4 clarify the roles and responsibilities of all teachers.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Baseline assessment results in the key skills of language and literacy show that when children start in the reception class they encompass the full ability range. However, nearly all achieve the outcomes expected for their age and ability by the end of KS1.

During the past three years pupils' results at the end of KS1 have shown continuous improvement in English and science whilst mathematics results have fluctuated year on year. During this period there has been an upward trend in all three subjects in the number of children attaining the higher Level 3. The percentages achieving the core subject indicator (CSI), which is the expected level in each of the three core subjects, have been slightly higher than local and national figures during three of the last four years. They have also been higher than other schools facing similar challenges.

In 2010 KS1 performance in English and science was slightly higher than local and national figures and also better than most other schools facing similar challenges. Mathematics results and the percentage who achieved the CSI in this subject were lower than local and national results. When compared with other schools with a similar percentage entitled to receive free school meals, results were in the lowest 50% for English and in the lowest 25% for mathematics and science.

KS2 results have been on a downward trend for the past three years in all subjects, particularly science, and also in the CSI.

In 2010 results for English and mathematics were above local and national figures and were slightly lower than the family average. The percentages of pupils attaining

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Level 5 in either English and/or mathematics were significantly higher than those in schools facing similar challenges, but were much lower in science. When compared with other schools with a similar percentage entitled to receive free school meals, the school was in the lowest 50% for English and mathematics and in the lowest 25% for science.

There was no significant difference in 2010 between the percentage of girls and boys who attained the expected levels in the core subjects at the end of key stages 1 and 2.

Nearly all pupils, including those entitled to free school meals and the less able, make good progress throughout the Foundation Phase and key stages 1 and 2.

In lessons, and over time, most pupils make sound or better progress in their learning. Nearly all pupils apply their communication, numeracy and ICT skills securely in a range of contexts. They develop well the wider skills and application needed to equip them for the next stage of their education.

Although recent initiatives in the Foundation Phase have led to some improvement in Welsh language development, standards across the school are generally adequate with many pupils making insufficient progress in skills and understanding.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils are highly engaged and motivated and display pride and confidence in their work. Most face new experiences and challenges confidently and are keen to inquire and ask questions. Throughout the school, attitudes to learning are very positive with almost every pupil highly engaged in the task at hand and contributing effectively to group and class discussions. Nearly all have the skills needed to improve their own learning, work with others and solve problems

Pupils of all ages are considerate and courteous and relate well to each other and adults demonstrating good behaviour in lessons and around the school. All generally feel safe in school and have positive attitudes to healthy living and eating.

Attendance over the past three years is slightly above the median when compared with similar schools and most pupils are punctual.

As they mature, most pupils very readily undertake responsibilities and, through the school council, the eco-committee and other activities, play an active part in the school and the community.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Teachers and practitioners collaborate very effectively to plan flexible and imaginative activities, which succeed in engaging the interests of the full range of pupils. Stimulating and innovative learning experiences, both within and beyond the school, ensure that pupils are challenged by relevant activities that provide continuity and progression in their learning.

Curriculum development and planning are effective and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop communication, numeracy and ICT skills in a broad range of contexts. Thinking skills are very well planned and help pupils question, consider alternatives and construct solutions for themselves. These programmes have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Provision and planning for Welsh language development is good in the early years of the Foundation Phase and adequate in the other age groups. There is good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the history and culture of Wales.

The very productive links which the school has forged with other countries and cultures enable pupils to become open-minded and more aware of their role as global citizens. The school acts sustainably with pupils actively involved with conserving energy and minimising waste.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The Foundation Phase is well-established and all teachers have wide subject knowledge which they use effectively in their teaching. Teachers and practitioners use a variety of strategies effectively to motivate pupils and to incorporate key skills into lessons. Most pupils are suitably challenged by activities that are well matched to their ability and stage of development. Support staff are actively involved in planning lessons and make a significant contribution to the quality of learning and the standards achieved.

Procedures for assessing, recording and reporting pupil progress are thorough and well-established. There are clear, efficient systems for tracking and maintaining information on pupils' progress. National Curriculum assessments, together with the outcomes of standardised tests and continuous teacher assessments, are closely analysed and used effectively to plan the next steps in learning.

Assessment for learning strategies are successfully implemented throughout the school. Pupils are aware of success criteria in lessons and in KS2 peer and self-assessments are well-established. The practice in KS2 of involving pupils in setting their own targets has led to greater motivation and higher expectations.

Parents are kept well informed about their children's achievements and targets through comprehensive annual reports and regular meetings with staff.

Care, support and guidance: Good

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The school is a caring community which values the contribution of each individual. Effective procedures exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing, as well as to encourage their involvement in their school and the wider community. These arrangements, together with the school's ethos and values, contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff know pupils well and strive to ensure that the needs of each individual are met.

Provision for pupils with ALN is thorough with examples of very good practice by the ALN coordinator (ALNCo). Procedures and systems for identifying those who need additional support are effective and the ALNCO has prepared specific resource packs for each class teacher with strategies and criteria for support. Pupils' individual educational plans (IEP) include clear targets which are regularly evaluated and updated. Parents are informed and involved in all stages of the provision. Professional support from specialist agencies is used very effectively to support pupils and teachers.

The school has appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a caring, friendly and inclusive community. There is a positive ethos where equality of opportunity is strongly promoted and diversity frequently recognised and celebrated. Teaching and learning resources are of good quality, of sufficient quantity and effectively used. Classroom accommodation is sufficient. Externally, most of the grassed area is sloping and is impractical for most organised activities. The parking of vehicles on the hard surface play area restricts the space available for pupils.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
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Adequate

Leadership: Good

The head teacher and senior managers work closely together to create a positive whole school ethos where team working is encouraged and valued. Staff share a common sense of purpose and direction and have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and development needs of the school.

Through the effective use of performance management objectives, the role of co-ordinators has developed appropriately in some areas since the last inspection. However, their curricular responsibilities are imbalanced and not clearly defined. Standards and provision are monitored regularly by the head teacher as part of the school's self-evaluation processes.

Governors are well informed about the performance of the school and the issues that affect it. Data on pupils' attainment is carefully scrutinised and trends in performance identified. Through their involvement in the regular overview of the school improvement plan (SIP), governors are well aware of the priorities for school improvement. They are regarded as critical friends and challenge the head teacher

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and staff to look for further improvements. Concerns and complaints are dealt with promptly.

National and local priorities are incorporated effectively into the school's programmes of work. The Foundation Phase and other aspects such as sustainability and global citizenship, have been established successfully.

Improving quality: Adequate

The head teacher and staff have an appropriate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Performance data is consistently used to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement. Through self-evaluation, a broad range of evidence is collated and scrutinised and subsequently used to identify priorities. The views of parents, pupils, staff and governors are also taken into consideration. However, self-evaluation reports tend to be too descriptive; information gathered is not analysed in sufficient detail and not enough account is taken of pupil outcomes. Planning for improvement is generally effective and the school recognises the need to work with the LA to address its areas for development.

The school has successfully addressed nearly all the recommendations in the previous inspection report.

A well-established professional learning community within the school enables staff to develop and share their professional knowledge very effectively.

Partnership working: Good

There are effective partnerships with parents, governors, social services and local schools and colleges. These make a positive contribution to pupils' wellbeing and educational standards. Through newsletters and the school website, communication with parents is clear and consistent. Admission arrangements are efficient and there are effective induction procedures for children when they start school. There are productive links with the local secondary school and transition arrangements are very effective. Strong links have been established with the community, local businesses and teacher training establishments.

Resource management: Adequate

Staffing is appropriate and the organisation of classes is effective. Staff and resources are managed and used effectively to support and improve learning. Teaching and support staff are deployed well by taking full advantage of their time and expertise in aspects of the curriculum.

The effect of resources on teaching and learning is reviewed regularly and future needs are planned for carefully. There are systematic and accurate budgetary arrangements in place and expenditure decisions are linked well with priorities for learning and pupil wellbeing.

Although nearly all pupils apply their key skills effectively, attainment at the end of KS2 is consistently lower than local and national averages. Consequently, the school offers adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Most of the 48% of questionnaires that were returned express a good level of satisfaction with the school in general. All parents believe that pupils behave well and say that their children have settled in well and like school. Nearly all think that teaching is good and that their child is making good progress and helped to become more mature and to take on responsibility. Many feel they are well informed about their child's progress and that the school is well run. A few say they do not understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

All KS2 pupils completed the pupil questionnaires and members of the inspection team spoke to a number of them during the inspection. Nearly all believe that they are doing well at school and know who to talk to if they feel worried or upset. They know what to do and who to ask if they find the work too difficult and say that homework helps them to understand and improve their work. All feel safe in school and believe that the school deals well with any bullying.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Wil Williams	Reporting Inspector
Hazel Hughes	Team Inspector
Kerry Jones	Lay Inspector
Deborah Rainer	Peer Inspector
Sylvia Clough	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11