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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Trelai Primary School
Bishopston Road
Caerau
Cardiff
CF5 5DY**

Date of inspection: December 2010

by

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



**INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL**

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

Trelai Primary School is located on the western side of Cardiff in an area of considerable disadvantage. It is designated as a Communities First area by the Welsh Assembly Government. The building was purpose-built in 2001 and it shares a large campus with three special schools and the local comprehensive school.

The school provides education for pupils between three and 11 years of age. Most pupils enter the nursery from the age of three if a place is available. The intake of pupils represents the full ability range, but many enter the school with well below average levels of basic skills. Pupils are taught through the medium of English and Welsh is taught as a second language.

There are 341 full-time pupils on roll and a further 51 children attend the nursery part-time. About 80% of pupils are from disadvantaged homes and approximately 50% are entitled to free schools meals. This is more than twice the local authority and all-Wales average of just under 20%.

About 15% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 30 pupils have English as an additional language. All other pupils come from homes where English is the main language. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language.

The school has a specialist resource base for 10 pupils with a range of specific learning difficulties from across Cardiff. This class currently has seven pupils on the register who have been diagnosed as having a range of needs including autistic spectrum disorder or global learning delay and all have statements of special educational needs.

The school has identified approximately a third of pupils with additional learning needs. Seventeen pupils have statements of special educational needs, 10 of whom are in mainstream classes and have a range of needs, including physical, speech and language and autistic spectrum disorder. Four pupils are currently looked-after by the local authority.

The current headteacher has been in post since 2005. The senior leadership team and governing body have been through a very unsettled period for several years.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Trelai Primary School is £3,545, which compares with a maximum of £14,067 and a minimum of £2,787 for primary schools in Cardiff. The school has the 40th highest budget per pupil out of the 102 primary schools in Cardiff.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of Trelai Primary School is adequate. This is because:

- the school is an inclusive community, where relationships are positive, partnerships with the community are good and everyone is valued;
- most pupils like coming to school and taking part in the learning activities on offer;
- staff care about the pupils they work with and ensure that they are safe and secure in school; and
- the learning environment is attractive and helps pupils, staff and parents to feel welcome.

However, there are areas of improvement which the school needs to address:

- a significant minority of pupils do not achieve well enough in relation to their starting points;
- learning experiences are not always challenging enough for all pupils; and
- there is too much inconsistency in teaching across the school.

Prospects for improvement

The school has adequate prospects for improvement. This is because:

- leaders and managers have worked hard to improve the learning experience for pupils and this has had a positive impact on attendance, behaviour and pupil engagement;
- there are appropriate systems in place for monitoring teaching and learning and other elements of the school's work; and
- the governing body is beginning to support and challenge the school more robustly than it has in the past.

However:

- due to an unsettled period for the senior leadership team, many of the systems for improvement have been put into place recently and there is not yet enough evidence that they will be effective; and
- improvements made so far have not had enough impact on improving achievement and standards in the school.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in literacy and numeracy to ensure that all pupils make good progress and can access the curriculum effectively;
- R2 improve teaching, especially by raising staff expectations of pupils to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged
- R3 use assessment data more effectively to identify and address pupils' learning needs;
- R4 improve long term planning for skills development; and
- R5 improve the links between self-evaluation and school improvement planning so that targets are clearly focused on pupil achievement.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Progress in addressing the recommendations will be monitored by Estyn.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Most pupils make adequate progress in relation to their starting points during their time at the school. However, levels of achievement overall are not as good as they should be.

Over the past four years, standards at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in the core subjects of mathematics, English and science have been below national averages. When compared to other schools with similar free school meal percentages, the proportion of pupils achieving the core subject indicator, the expected level in English, mathematics and science, is consistently in the third quarter.

Within its family of schools, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels in the core subjects is about average. However, the achievement of boys is significantly below that of the other schools, especially at key stage 2 and particularly in English. The number of more able pupils attaining level 3 at key stage 1 and level 5 at key stage 2 is also below average in nearly all subjects at both key stages. The achievement of pupils with additional learning needs is adequate in relation to the learning goals set for them. Pupils with English as an additional language and those who receive free school meals make at least adequate progress.

The majority of children in the Foundation Phase make good progress from a low starting point. Many become confident speakers and develop good early reading, writing and numeracy skills which they use when playing. For example, pupils name and describe shapes correctly when making cookies out of play dough in the maths area. Most demonstrate good independent learning skills and solve simple problems confidently.

Many older pupils have adequate literacy and numeracy skills. They read and write competently and apply their skills appropriately in other subject areas. However, a significant minority of pupils do not have good enough reading, writing and numeracy skills to access the whole curriculum well enough by the end of key stage 2. Many pupils speak appropriately to adults and other pupils in class and around the school, but a few do not understand the difference between formal and informal situations. The information and communications technology (ICT) skills of many pupils are good but, in some classes, the progress of a minority of pupils is hindered because they do not have the skills to do what is being asked of them.

Standards in oral Welsh in the Foundation Phase are generally good, but there is insufficient progress as pupils move through key stage 2. In classes and in extra curricular activities where good opportunities to use Welsh exist, standards are at least adequate. However, this is inconsistent and, in key stage 2, very few pupils use Welsh other than in Welsh lessons.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils enjoy being in school and are enthusiastic about their learning. Most are confident to talk to visitors about their activities. They have positive attitudes towards their work and are proud to be part of the school community. Members of the school council feel that staff take their opinions seriously and respond positively to pupils' suggestions. On one of their 'learning walks', for instance, the headteacher agreed to display more Welsh books in the library and brighten up the Caffi Cymraeg area as a direct response to pupils' comments.

Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They have a clear understanding of how the behaviour and anti-bullying policies work and speak positively about the improvements which have been made during the last year. Behaviour in classes and around the school is good.

All pupils understand the importance of eating healthily and taking plenty of exercise and many enjoy the wide range of physical activities available during and after school. Many take advantage of the school's breakfast club and purchase fruit regularly from the healthy tuck shop.

Attendance has improved steadily over the past few years to just over 90%. However, this is still below that of similar schools.

Most pupils show care and concern for others. They act considerately towards their friends in wheelchairs, understanding the need to be sensitive, but to include them fully in activities.

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

The school provides a curriculum which meets statutory requirements and engages most pupils well. However, learning experiences are not always focussed and challenging enough to ensure that all pupils reach the standards of which they are capable.

Teachers and support staff collaborate well to plan a range of activities which are often interesting and stimulating, especially during theme weeks and as part of 'Learn Something New'. These opportunities enhance the curriculum and offer pupils a chance to use their skills across new and different activities. Both innovations have had a positive impact on attendance, behaviour and engagement in learning, but the impact on standards is not yet apparent. The school also provides an unusual range of extra-curricular activities, including belly dancing, which appeal to many pupils.

The school is organised into teams which plan together effectively, but links between the teams are not always clear. Ensuring progress in learning in the Foundation Phase is well established. However, key stage 2 teams have not yet clearly identified coverage of content and ensured continuity and progression across the key stage 2 curriculum.

Lesson plans usually make appropriate reference to opportunities for pupils to develop and use a range of skills across the curriculum. However, the school has not appointed a skills coordinator. There is a lack of effective long term planning for skills and opportunities for progression are inconsistent.

The school offers plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and characteristics of Wales, but provision for the Welsh language is variable. Staff in the Foundation Phase use Welsh well in formal and informal situations and encourage pupils to use the language to respond. In key stage 2, pupils who attend the Caffi Cymraeg have good opportunities to develop their Welsh through playing games, speaking and reading, but the use of Welsh across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

Pupils are very aware of the need to recycle and re-use, and the enthusiastic eco-committee ensures that sustainability has a high profile in the school. Good opportunities exist for pupils to develop their understanding of global issues. For instance, lower key stage 2 pupils learn about the importance of protecting the South American rainforest and the impact its destruction has.

Teaching: Adequate

In the majority of classes, teaching motivates and engages pupils. However, there is too much inconsistency in the standard of teaching across the school. A significant minority of staff do not always have high enough expectations of pupils and, where this is the case, pupils do not make good enough progress.

The majority of staff have comprehensive subject knowledge and they plan effectively to meet the needs of most pupils. Positive relationships and effective behaviour management ensure that lessons have appropriate pace and many pupils make good progress in relation to their ability. The most effective teachers provide good oral and written feedback to pupils and offer plenty of opportunities for them to assess and improve their own work. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not assess their pupils accurately enough and do not fully understand how to meet their needs. Lesson introductions are often too long, pupils are not actively engaged in learning and activities lack challenge.

Most teachers use a limited range of strategies to help move pupils forward in their learning, but this work is at an early stage of development. In many classes teachers and pupils agree personal targets, but they are not always reviewed during learning activities so do not impact significantly on pupils' learning.

The school has recently started to track the progress of pupils more systematically and this is a positive step. However, teachers do not make good enough use of assessment data to identify and plan for pupils' learning. Parents receive detailed written reports and have plenty of opportunities to discuss their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

All staff support pupils effectively and the wellbeing of pupils is a strength of the school. An appropriate range of policies and procedures are in place which ensures

that pupils are safe and that any harassment or bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively.

There are plenty of valuable opportunities to promote healthy living, such as making healthy snacks in the nursery, and many learning experiences promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Joint assemblies with pupils from Riverbank Special School are excellent examples of the way in which the school promotes pupils' moral and social development. These times together are often deeply spiritual occasions, when pupils, staff, parents and visitors from the community share in celebrating one another's success.

The school liaises closely with many specialist agencies to work with pupils and families with a variety of educational and social needs. The school's care committee is attended by a range of professionals from the school and external organisations and this group plays a key role in identifying and tracking the progress of pupils at risk.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Appropriate systems exist for identifying pupils with additional learning needs and monitoring their progress. Staff use a suitable range of assessment tools to identify pupils' learning needs in the Foundation Phase and progress is measured in relation to previous achievement. Support staff work diligently, using an appropriate range of intervention strategies to provide appropriate learning experiences for these pupils. The focus for teachers and support staff, however, tends to be on the wellbeing of these pupils and not enough on academic progress and achievement.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community that ensures equality of opportunity for all. There is a strong emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating success and diversity.

The school buildings are modern and well maintained and the extensive grounds, outdoor learning areas for the Foundation Phase and shared sports facilities allow a wide variety of outdoor activities to take place. Resources are plentiful and appropriate to the needs of pupils, including a well equipped ICT suite. The library is a particularly good resource. It is used regularly by children and adults to support learning in school and to encourage parents to read with their children at home.

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

The senior leadership team and governing body have experienced an unsettled period in recent years and this has limited their ability to drive forward planned improvements. Now, however, the headteacher and senior staff have clearly defined roles and areas of responsibilities. They, along with governors, share a common vision for the future of the school. Their commitment to promoting the wellbeing of pupils is evident and progress in this area has been significant. However, this work

has not been sufficiently focused on improving standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Similarly, leaders are not consistent in making sure that all staff know what is expected of them and in addressing underperformance robustly.

Senior leadership meetings are regular, but they tend to focus too much on day to day matters, curriculum issues and the wellbeing of pupils, rather than on standards. The use of data to monitor performance is improving. However, leaders do not use data well enough to help staff identify and plan for the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

The governing body is now focused on the task of raising standards. It has introduced very good arrangements to monitor the work of the school and provide challenge to the school to improve.

The school is making good progress in meeting national and local priorities. The implementation of the Foundation Phase and school's approach to the revised curriculum at key stage 2 are addressing the needs of many pupils effectively by motivating reluctant learners. Strategies to improve literacy and numeracy skills have also been a focus over the past year, although these strategies have not yet had enough impact on standards.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school uses a wide range of appropriate strategies to monitor and evaluate its work. These include classroom monitoring, effective learning walks for governors and the school council, comprehensive parental surveys and listening to learners. Leaders use the outcomes of monitoring successfully to improve pupils' wellbeing, but they do not inform targets to raise standards well enough. There is not a clear enough link between the outcomes of self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.

Self-evaluation, though extensive, does not draw well enough on performance data. Two members of the leadership team provide teaching cover for staff during their planning, preparation and assessment time and are monitoring the work in the areas for which they are responsible. This makes it possible for them to have a detailed knowledge of the work in classes and the progress of the pupils. This is a recent development and its impact is yet to be assessed.

The school seeks the views of pupils and parents/carers regularly and acts appropriately on their responses. A very good development is the work of the link governors, who carry out 'learning walks' around the school. These are focused and worthwhile, and the leadership team uses their feedback to highlight strengths and weaknesses. Professional learning communities have been set up within the school to develop and improve the curriculum. These are working well to plan stimulating learning experiences, but staff do not yet share best practice or professional knowledge as successfully as they could.

Partnership working: Good

Partnership activities with the special schools and the high school that share the site are strong. The experiences of pupils at Trelai are richer because of these close links.

The school works hard to build and maintain strong links with other partners, including the Flying Start pre-school group, the police, social services and Caerau Integrated Children's Centre. These relationships play a significant role in supporting the school's work to make sure pupils are well cared for. The school communicates effectively with parents. Most are very supportive of its work. Those who take part in activities such as family learning have a good understanding of the role they can play in their children's education.

There are appropriate activities with the comprehensive school which develop continuity in wellbeing and aid the smooth transition of pupils. However, links to improve the moderation and standardisation of assessment are less effective.

Resource management: Adequate

The school monitors its finances well and works closely with the local authority to do so. There is a good range of learning resources which are managed effectively. Teaching and support staff are deployed appropriately in order to make best use of their knowledge and expertise.

However, the lack of a close link between self-evaluation and planning for improvement means that available resources are not always well matched to school improvement priorities. The use of senior leaders to teach during planning, preparation and assessment time enables monitoring of pupil progress, but this is costly and there is not yet enough evidence to prove that this will improve standards.

In view of the adequate progress made by most pupils, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty-two parents or carers completed the questionnaire. Generally, they expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school. All say that the school helped their children to settle when they first started and that their children like attending school. Most think that behaviour is good and that their children are safe at school. All feel that teaching is good and that teachers expect their children to do their best. Most feel that their children are making good progress and that they are kept well informed about their children's achievement. Most parents are happy with the support their children receive for their additional learning needs. All parents think that the school is well run and most find staff approachable if they have any questions or concerns. All say that they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints. Most parents feel that that homework builds well on what their children learn in school. All parents are confident that the school helps their children to become more mature and take on responsibility and that their children are well prepared for the move to the secondary school.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Forty-seven pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know whom to talk to when they are worried or upset. Most feel that bullying is dealt with well. All pupils agree that the school helps pupils to keep healthy and nearly all agree that there are plenty of opportunities for them to exercise. Most feel that they are doing well at school and believe there are enough resources to enable them to learn effectively. Nearly all agree that the teachers and other adults in the school help them progress in their learning and they know what to do and whom to ask if they need help with their work. A minority of pupils think that behaviour at playtime and lunch time is not good enough and a majority feel that pupils' behaviour prevents them from getting their work done as well as they could. This is of particular concern to 71% of girls in key stage 2. Nearly all pupils feel that homework helps them to improve on their work in school.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Sarah Morgan	Reporting Inspector
Sue Halliwell	Team Inspector
Julie Price	Lay Inspector
Kevin McNulty	Peer Inspector
Aimee Field	Additional Inspector
Lesley Leckie (Headteacher)	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