



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

**Pwll C.P. Mixed School
School Road
Pwll
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA15 4AL**

Date of inspection: October 2012

by

**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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Publication date: 04/12/2012

Context

Pwll Primary School is close to the town of Llanelli in Carmarthenshire. It currently has 82 pupils from three to 11 years of age compared with 97 when the school was last inspected. There are six full-time teachers for five classes, including two classes for the nine pupils in the autism teaching facility. Nearly all pupils transfer to Glan y Môr Comprehensive School at the end of primary school.

The school serves a community with a high level of social deprivation. Thirty-six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is significantly higher than the average for the local authority and Wales. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language or have English as an additional language.

The school has identified about 40% of pupils as having additional learning needs; this is considerably higher than the average for Wales. Fourteen pupils have statements of special educational needs. There were no recorded permanent exclusions last year and temporary exclusion is very rare.

The school was last inspected in October 2006. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2010 following a succession of headteachers and one period where the school was managed by an acting headteacher. The school is currently addressing the challenge of a falling roll and its implications on staffing levels.

The individual school budget per pupil for Pwll Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £5,036 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Carmarthenshire is £18,947 and the minimum is £3,114. Pwll Primary School is 17th out of the 110 primary schools in Carmarthenshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is adequate because:

- many pupils by the end of the Foundation Phase make good progress from a low starting point on entry to school;
- the percentage of pupils who gain the higher-than-expected outcome (outcome 6) at the end of the Foundation Phase is higher than the family of schools' average;
- the proportion of pupils transferring to secondary school with a reading age better than six months below their chronological age is relatively good;
- many pupils with additional learning needs make good progress as a result of targeted support;
- all pupils in the autism teaching facility develop very good social, communication, literacy and numeracy skills relative to their starting point; and
- the school integrates pupils from the autism teaching facility into school activities well.

However:

- standards of oracy, reading and writing in Welsh at key stage 2 are unsatisfactory;
- pupils' skills in extended writing are weak;
- more able and talented pupils do not receive enough challenge;
- pupils in key stage 2 lessons make only adequate progress in learning; and
- the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is too wide and boys underachieve significantly compared with girls.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- the headteacher has involved staff, pupils, parents and governors effectively in sharing a clear vision for the school with a strong focus on raising standards;
- leaders and managers have successfully given much needed stability to the school;
- managers have created a strong inclusive ethos, which values all children equally;
- the self-evaluation process identifies most areas that need to be improved; and
- the school has responded well to national priorities.

However:

- the self-evaluation report is not evaluative enough and the school development planning does not focus enough on setting out manageable projects that have quantifiable targets;
- improved processes have not yet had enough time to improve all aspects of standards and the quality of provision in all classes; and
- the role of the governors as critical friends is limited.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure sufficient provision and challenge in Welsh to improve standards;
- R2 improve the opportunities for pupils to undertake extended writing in English and in other subjects;
- R3 improve the quality of teaching in key stage 2;
- R4 make self-evaluation processes more evaluative and improve strategic planning of the school by prioritising work over a period of years and using quantifiable targets; and
- R5 develop the role of the governing body as critical friends.

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

Generally, pupils enter the school with relatively low language, mathematical and social skills. By the time pupils leave the Foundation Phase, their achievement is good when compared with that of pupils in similar schools. In three of the last four years, pupils have performed better than the family of schools average at the end of key stage 2 in gaining the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator). However, achievement by the end of key stage 2 last year was not as good when compared with that in other similar schools, especially in oracy, reading and writing skills

Pupils in the autism teaching facility make good progress overall relative to their age, ability and individual learning needs. These pupils make good progress in developing their social, communication, literacy and numeracy skills, often from a low base.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase make good progress in their learning during lessons. However, the progress of pupils in key stage 2 is only adequate as the majority of pupils lack urgency in completing their work.

Throughout the school, many pupils demonstrate good standards of speaking and listening. Many older pupils are articulate and confident speakers and give sensible and extended answers to questions.

Generally, pupils use appropriate expression when reading aloud and they understand the subject matter well. Most pupils in the Foundation Phase enjoy reading and use a wide range of effective strategies that enable them to read with appropriate fluency and understanding. In key stage 2, many pupils read a wide range of texts with good expression. The more able talk readily about books and authors they like or dislike and have an appropriate understanding of characters and storyline.

Overall, pupils write well for a variety of appropriate purposes. The majority write with increasing confidence as they progress through the school. Many pupils structure their writing well, although the quality of handwriting and presentation varies too much. More able pupils do not apply their writing skills enough across the curriculum, especially in relation to extended writing.

Pupils with additional learning needs generally make good progress against targets in their individual educational plans. Many who receive intervention support make better than expected progress.

The gap between the attainment of boys and girls is large when compared with the average gap for the family of schools. Girls have consistently outperformed boys over four years in gaining the expected level (level 4) in all subjects in key stage 2.

The percentage of pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase who gained the higher outcome (outcome 6) in 2012 was higher than the family of schools average. Generally, however, there has been a downward trend in the percentages gaining the higher levels at the end of key stage 2.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils make good progress in their ability to understand and follow basic instructions in Welsh. They also apply Welsh language skills well in a range of contexts. However, the majority of learners in key stage 2 do not build on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during the Foundation Phase. Pupils are reluctant to use the Welsh language and lack confidence in doing so. Their reading skills in Welsh are at a basic level and their writing skills are limited.

Wellbeing: Good

Many pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They know the importance of a healthy diet and exercising regularly. Pupils feel safe in school and have the confidence to tell an adult about any problems. They know that adults will listen to their concerns and act upon them sensitively.

Attendance rates are now good and compare well with those of similar schools. Nearly all pupils arrive at school punctually. There have been no permanent exclusions since the last inspection, and temporary exclusions are very rare.

Behaviour in classes and around school is generally good and the school is an orderly learning community. Most pupils understand the importance of respect, both for adults and for each other. Pupils in the autism teaching facility behave very well and engage fully in learning. They are generally calm and appear to be happy and settled in school. A few pupils in key stage 2 do not behave well in class and this has a negative impact occasionally on the learning of others.

Members of the school council contribute actively to the process of appointing staff and to decisions regarding improvements to the school environment. Through the school council, pupils feel that they have good opportunities to express opinions, undertake responsibility and make decisions. These develop their social and life skills well.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Adequate

Learning experiences: Adequate

The school provides a good range of learning experiences, which engage many pupils' interests well. There is a varied range of extra-curricular activities and these have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils.

On the whole, pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase, National Curriculum and religious education. The school makes very good provision for pupils in the autism teaching facility. Here, the curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, and very well adapted to meet pupils' individual needs.

Planning in the Foundation Phase is very detailed, thorough and engages the full range of pupils successfully. In key stage 2, teachers often adapt learning experiences well to meet the needs of specific groups, but they do not always challenge the more able pupils sufficiently.

Provision for information and communication technology, numeracy, speaking, listening and reading are well developed. However, older pupils have too few opportunities for extended writing. Provision for pupils with autism to develop their communication, literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is very good.

Current arrangements for the provision of Welsh language are unsatisfactory at key stage 2 as pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their reading, writing or oracy skills. There is also limited provision for Welsh in the autism teaching facility. The school's provision to promote the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural, environmental and historical characteristics of Wales is good. There is good provision to enable pupils to learn about sustainability and global citizenship.

Teaching: Adequate

The majority of teachers establish good working relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have sound subject knowledge, plan individualised learning activities to a high standard, explain clearly and target groups of pupils effectively to extend their learning. These teachers and their support staff provide positive encouragement for pupils in all aspects of their work. However, in the remainder of lessons, where teaching is adequate, shortcomings include slow pace, low expectations from teachers and a lack of planning to provide tasks for the range of abilities in a class. These features have a negative impact on pupils' progress and behaviour.

Teachers use standardised tests appropriately to measure pupils' progress and to identify pupils who need support. The school gathers and uses assessment data well. Although the school has a policy for assessment for learning, its implementation varies too much across key stage 2. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils, but do not break them down enough to enable pupils to understand what they need to do to achieve the desired outcomes.

The school has recently introduced a clear marking policy. Teachers apply this consistently and give pupils appropriate advice about ways to improve their work.

Reports on pupil progress are clear, meet statutory requirements and show that teachers know their pupils well.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school promotes the benefits of a healthy eating lifestyle and the importance of physical exercise effectively. Older pupils receive additional responsibilities to support the daily life of the school and, as a result, develop good social and life skills. The school council makes an active contribution to decision making in the school. Effective links with the community enrich the pupils' learning experiences.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Teachers identify pupils with additional learning needs successfully and those in mainstream classes receive good support. A small number of pupils have behavioural issues, but the effective system for promoting good behaviour has a marked positive impact. The school liaises effectively with specialist services when needs arise.

The school provides pupils in the autism teaching facility with very good care, support and guidance. These pupils benefit from good provision of specialist support, including speech and language therapy and music therapy. The arrangements for meeting their individual learning needs are very good. Pupils have good opportunities for social interaction with mainstream pupils.

Learning environment: Good

The school provides a safe, caring and welcoming environment for all pupils. It is inclusive in its approach to learning. Staff treat all pupils equally and encourage them to access all areas of the curriculum. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to diversity and equality.

The school environment has a range of suitable classrooms and facilities for the number of pupils and their needs. The school uses the site and the grounds around it well. Recent refurbishments are innovative and ensure that all pupils can access all aspects of the curriculum effectively. The school has a variety of resources that enrich teaching and learning, for example the recently-purchased tablet computers and the well-equipped computer suite.

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

The headteacher has successfully involved staff, pupils and parents in creating a clear, shared vision for the school. This has created a strong, inclusive ethos where all pupils are valued equally. Since his appointment in September 2010, the headteacher has given stability to the school and laid secure plans to develop the school further.

However, many of the initiatives and developments, for example the teaching and learning policy, have not yet had time to have a positive impact on standards and the quality of provision. Although standards of attainment in the Foundation Phase compare favourably with those of the family of schools, and provision and standards in the autism teaching facility are very good, leaders have yet to address effectively all aspects of underperformance by pupils in key stage 2.

Governors receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher and they are aware of the areas for improvement. They have focused strongly on ensuring stability in the leadership of the school. They are beginning to visit the school to observe lessons, but their role as critical friends of the school is limited. For example, they have not challenged the school enough to ensure that all the recommendations of the previous inspection have been addressed successfully.

The school is making sound progress in meeting local and national priorities, for example by implementing the Foundation Phase successfully. A whole-school approach to the teaching of literacy is in place and performance data shows that this is having a positive impact on improving reading ages for younger pupils. The school is working collaboratively with other schools in its cluster to create purposeful portfolios for moderation and standardisation of pupils' work. The school has established successful family learning groups that help to tackle social disadvantage well.

Improving quality: Adequate

The self-evaluation process includes a good range of monitoring procedures and the scrutiny of pupils' work, classroom observations and analysis of performance data. As a result, senior leaders have a sound understanding of standards in the school. However, findings from monitoring activity do not lead to improvements often enough.

The self-evaluation report is a generally an accurate document, although it tends to describe rather than evaluate the school's current position. The priorities for development in the school development plan derive appropriately from the processes of self-evaluation in the school. Various plans in the school have realistic and measurable outcomes with achievable timescales. However, priorities in the school development plan that relate to improving standards are too broad, lack clarity and do not set out measurable outcomes. This limits the governing body's ability to hold the school to account in delivering the plan and to act effectively as critical friends.

The school is emerging as a collaborative learning community. The school has shared good practice within the school's specialist provision with other schools effectively. Within the school, staff have worked together well to enhance the quality of provision within the Foundation Phase.

Partnership working: Good

The school has effective partnerships with parents and carers. It communicates well with parents through newsletters, texting facilities and the school website. It offers literacy and numeracy training sessions to parents in conjunction with the local authority. These have a positive impact on parents' abilities to support their children's learning.

Effective links with social services ensure that all staff have up-to-date safeguarding training. The school engages outside agencies effectively to provide targeted support for pupils with additional learning needs.

The school has extended its collaboration with local schools and the secondary school to improve the sharing of ideas and to develop aspects of the curriculum. The transfer of pupils is very effective. There is an efficient process in place to moderate pupils' work in several curriculum areas, which involves staff from the school, cluster primary schools and the local secondary school.

Resource management: Adequate

The school has sufficient qualified teachers and support staff and they are deployed appropriately. Performance management procedures for all teaching staff are in place, but there is no formal appraisal system for support staff. All staff have good access to professional development opportunities and, in many cases, training has a positive impact on provision and outcomes. The arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time comply with statutory requirements.

The school generally identifies and allocates resources in line with the priorities and targets identified in the school improvement plan. There is an appropriate range of learning resources, which staff use well to support pupils' learning.

The school has a deficit budget. However, this is with the agreement of the local authority and there are plans to clear the deficit by the end of March 2014.

In view of the standards achieved and the quality of provision, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The data for the school includes the attainment of pupils in the autism teaching facility.

Overall, pupils enter the school with relatively low social, linguistic and mathematical skills.

When compared with the performance levels of schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, attainment at the end of the Foundation Phase in relation to the Foundation Phase indicator (the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels in all areas) is in the upper 50% of schools. The school is in the upper 50% of similar schools in relation to achieving the expected outcomes in language, literacy and communications skills in English. However, in their mathematical development, the school is in the lower 50% of similar schools and in the lowest 25% for personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

Comparisons with similar schools at the end of key stage 2 place the school in the lower 50% of schools in the core subject indicator (the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels in all areas) and English. Comparisons for mathematics place the school in the highest 25% of similar schools, but in the lowest 25% for science.

Over the last four years, pupils' attainment of the expected level (level 4 or above) at the end of key stage 2 in comparison with that of similar schools in English, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator) has fluctuated between the upper and lower 50%. Often this fluctuation relates to when there are pupils from the autistic teaching facility in the Year 6 group assessed.

The school's performance in 2012, when compared with that of its family of schools, shows that it performs at above the level expected at the end of the Foundation Phase in all areas except for personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. Similar comparisons at the end of key stage 2 are not as positive, with results significantly below expectations in relation to English and science.

The percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 2 who reach the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in combination in 2012 was lower than it has been for four years. When compared with the level of challenge demonstrated in its family of schools, this is significantly below the level expected.

The proportion of mainstream pupils transferring to secondary school with a reading age better than six months below their chronological age is relatively good.

The percentage of pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase who gained the higher than expected outcome (outcome 6) in 2012 was higher than the family average but lower than the Wales average in all areas of learning. The percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 2 who gained the higher levels in all subjects in 2012 was lower than the family and Wales averages. Overall, the percentage gaining the higher than expected levels in mathematics has been higher than the family average, but there is no clear pattern over four years for English and science. Generally, there is a declining trend in the percentage of pupils gaining the higher than expected level.

Girls outperformed boys in all areas of learning in the Foundation Phase. However, the gap in attainment between boys and girls overall is smaller than in the family in all areas except in mathematical development. In relation to the higher than expected outcomes, boys and girls are on par in language, literacy and communications skills, but boys significantly outperform girls in the other two areas.

At the end of key stage 2, girls significantly outperformed boys in all subjects in gaining the higher than expected level. The gap between the attainment of boys and girls is significantly greater than the family average, and girls have consistently outperformed boys over four years in gaining the expected level (level 4) in all subjects.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to the questionnaire for parents

We received 19 responses from parents.

They all state that:

- their child is safe at school and likes the school;
- their child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school;
- teaching is good and the staff expect their child to work hard and to do his or her best;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise; and
- pupils always behave well in school.

Nearly all state that:

- they are satisfied with the school overall;
- their child is making good progress at school and they are kept well informed about their child's progress;
- the homework builds well on what their child learns in school;
- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints; and
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect.

Many state that:

- the school is well run;
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits;
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs; and
- the school helps their child to become more mature and take on responsibility.

A minority do not know or state that:

- they do not feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

In response to the majority of questions, parents' positive responses are at or close to the average for primary schools in Wales. A minority of responses are below average, especially in relation to feeling comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem and the additional support given to individual pupils.

Responses to the questionnaire for pupils

We received 43 responses from pupils.

They all state that:

- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress;
- they are doing well at school;
- they know what to do and whom to ask if they find the work hard;
- they feel safe in the school;
- they know whom to talk with if they are worried or upset;
- the school deals well with any bullying;
- the school teaches them how to keep healthy and there are lots of chances at school to get regular exercise;
- they have enough books, equipment, and computers to do their work; and
- homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school.

Most state that:

- other children behave well and that they can get their work done; and
- nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time.

Pupils' positive responses are above the national benchmark in relation to all questions. This is especially so in relation to other children behaving well.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Maldwyn Pryse	Reporting Inspector
Enir Morgan	Team Inspector
Richard Lloyd	Team Inspector
Susan Willan	Team Inspector
Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Stuart Pritchard	Peer Inspector
Mr P Trotman	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.