



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

**Report following monitoring  
Level of follow-up: significant improvement**

**Adamsdown Primary School  
System Street  
Adamsdown  
Cardiff  
CF24 0JF**

**Date of visit: June 2016**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Barry Norris	Reporting Inspector
Sarah Lewis	Team Inspector

## **Outcome of monitoring**

Adamsdown Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2015.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Improve pupils' spelling, punctuation, handwriting and presentation of their work**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has developed systematic approaches to the teaching of spelling and punctuation since the core inspection. Staff identify high-frequency words clearly for pupils to learn as part of a weekly focus on spelling in classes from Year 1 onwards. They reinforce appropriate strategies for pupils to 'have a go' and to check and correct their own spelling. Spelling is a regular focus of homework set for pupils. Staff track pupils' spelling ages carefully and use single word spelling tests to good effect. The delivery and planning of phonic skills have also improved and teachers monitor the development of pupils' phonic knowledge appropriately. The analysis of performance data on pupils' spelling ages shows that they are making suitable progress overall, but often from low starting-points. Relatively few pupils have spelling ages above their chronological age.

Staff focus appropriately on developing pupils' knowledge and use of an increasing range of punctuation as they move through the school. There is a clear strategy for developing pupils' handwriting skills and for improving how pupils present their written work. Handwriting is a regular focus of classroom work and pupils' books show very clear improvement in the quality of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work over the last 10 months.

### **Recommendation 2: Develop pupils' writing, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Staff have established a clear programme for the development of pupils' writing skills across the curriculum. Staff teach pupils relevant knowledge about a suitably wide range of genres. Pupils use this well to support their work in topic books, for example to describe the outcome of a mini-beast hunt, to record science experiments and to write persuasive letters and accounts of events. Staff have focused well on helping pupils to extend and vary their sentences. The quality of writing is good in most classes, but weaker in others, and this generally reflects the overall quality of outcomes from class to class. There is a broadly successful focus on the development of pupils' writing in non-fiction forms, but there is less focus on developing pupils' creative writing across the curriculum.

The school is planning more carefully to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum. Pupils are practising their numeracy skills more often in many classes, they are developing their understanding of when to apply particular skills, and they are becoming more proficient in number work.

The school now employs a common approach to the teaching of numeracy skills. This has helped teachers to support pupils in a more consistent way. All staff have received training to develop their ability to teach numeracy effectively. This has helped them to include numeracy activities appropriately in their planning. However, in a few instances, pupils do not receive enough support to help them to develop their approaches to solving numeracy problems effectively. Overall, pupils' skills in mathematics are less well developed than their skills in literacy.

The school has improved its planning to develop pupils' ICT skills very well. Pupils across the school are using a greater range of applications and have frequent opportunities to improve their skills. Pupils in a few classes, especially in Year 3, are developing their skills very well. However, this work is at an early stage of development and has not made a strong impact on pupils' standards in all classes across the school.

### **Recommendation 3: Improve pupils' Welsh language skills in reading and writing**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Pupils make good progress in the development of their Welsh language skills as they move through the school. There is a well-organised scheme of work for Welsh and the subject co-ordinator provides effective support and guidance to staff. Teachers use Welsh frequently for instructions and, occasionally, to reinforce learning, in classes across the school. However, the contribution from teaching assistants is less regular and effective.

Pupils are generally enthusiastic about using Welsh orally in class and with visitors. They recognise, read and write a suitable range of simple Welsh words in the Foundation Phase, including in their work across the curriculum. In key stage 2, pupils read and write in Welsh at a level appropriate to their age and ability. Pupils also use Welsh occasionally across the curriculum, for example in setting out bar charts and completing tally sheets. Towards the end of key stage 2, pupils are beginning to use a wider range of connectives and tenses well in their written work. A few pupils in key stage 2 write to a high standard across a suitably wide range of forms, including descriptions, dialogues and recounts. There is a useful portfolio of pupils' written work from across the school to inform teachers' assessments in Welsh. Pupils make good progress in the development of their reading skills in Welsh.

### **Recommendation 4: Ensure that teaching challenges pupils of all abilities, particularly the more able**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has built on the strengths identified at the time of the core inspection and has developed well in those areas where there were areas for improvement. Across classes, there is now a greater degree of consistency in the quality of teachers' longterm and short-term planning. Leaders and managers regularly check pupils' books, teachers' planning and their ongoing assessments to ensure that staff follow agreed guidelines and policies. Teachers set out learning objectives and success criteria clearly. The school makes effective use of an online tracking system to monitor pupils' progress and to try to ensure that teachers take full account of pupils' ability and stage of development when planning future work. Teachers now have a better understanding of the achievement levels expected of their pupils than at the time of the core inspection. They generally adapt work well in classes to meet pupils' needs. A few teachers extend more able pupils very well, and the remainder provide suitable opportunities, but in rather less engaging ways.

### **Recommendation 5: Strengthen assessment procedures and assessment for learning**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Assessment processes are now more systematic and there is greater consistency of practice across the school. Staff implement a clear, planned cycle of assessment. This has helped to give staff a greater awareness of their responsibilities in relation to pupils' learning and has contributed to a more accurate picture of pupils' standards.

Subject and phase leaders track information on pupils' progress at frequent intervals. This enables teachers to identify pupils who are underperforming and to put suitable support in place. The school has developed the use of an electronic assessment programme to monitor pupils' progress. This has helped teachers to develop their planning and to adapt work to meet pupils' needs.

Teachers are beginning to use assessment for learning more effectively and consistently in their lessons. This has helped pupils to make progress in their work. In particular, these approaches have improved pupils' attitudes to their learning and helped pupils to support one another to make progress. In addition, nearly all pupils know their personal targets and have a better idea of their learning goals. They understand how these targets help them to improve their work.

Leaders hold regular meetings with staff to discuss pupils' progress and to adjust pupils' targets, where necessary. These meetings also allow staff to engage the support of external services, where appropriate.

Senior leaders undertake observations of lessons and provide useful feedback to teachers, with suggestions on how to improve their teaching. Notes from these observations identify where teachers are using assessment for learning practices. However, the lesson observations focus too heavily on teaching and compliance with a strict set of criteria, rather than on the quality of pupils' learning and their progress.

Teachers follow a common policy when marking pupils' books. In most cases, teachers' comments identify clearly where pupils have made mistakes and challenge pupils to extend their learning.

## **Recommendation 6: Strengthen leadership at all levels**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Uncertainties around the leadership of the school at the time of the core inspection have been resolved. The acting headteacher at the time of the inspection was appointed to a substantive post by the governing body in May 2016. In partnership with local schools, the local authority and the regional consortium, leadership capacity has increased through the addition of a deputy and an assistant headteacher. The school has secured funding for these posts for a further year.

Leaders have responded positively to the many development opportunities provided by the local authority and regional consortium. This has further enhanced the capacity and quality of leadership across the school.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which all staff share. Leaders at all levels have clear roles and responsibilities that meet the needs of the school well in most respects. A greater number of staff now carry leadership roles, which contributes significantly to a more dynamic and collegiate approach to school improvement. Leaders work very well with one another, and this, together with effective communication across the school, has helped to develop a strong team ethos.

The school has shown a commitment to improving all aspects of the post-inspection action plan. The headteacher allocates resources appropriately towards meeting strategic goals. Senior and middle leaders monitor progress against school priorities regularly and effectively. This careful tracking, together with an improved use of pupils' performance data, is helping leaders to become more strategic in their approaches. Through the various monitoring procedures, leaders hold staff appropriately to account and senior leaders have tackled isolated incidents of underperformance robustly over the last year.

## **Recommendation 7: Establish robust self-evaluation processes and ensure that self-evaluation focuses rigorously on improving standards**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

There is a systematic cycle of monitoring and review in place, which provides leaders and managers with a secure and accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school now has a more widespread culture of continuous improvement than at the time of the core inspection. The analysis of assessment and other performance data is robust and insightful. Teachers use an appropriate range of standardised assessments to gauge pupils' progress in key areas, for example to evaluate their progress in spelling. Leaders analyse the performance data usefully to take account of the high proportion of pupils who join, and leave, the school during the year. However, they tend not to include enough pupils in the analysis who have been at the school for a year or longer.

The school uses the outcomes of the electronic tracking system to good effect to monitor the progress of pupils. It provides effective early intervention to support pupils who are falling behind. Staff provide a large volume of evidence to support their assessments within the electronic tracking system, but this is excessively burdensome at times.

The school gathers a wide range of first-hand evidence to review its progress, including information from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the analysis of teachers' assessments. The school also collects the views of all stakeholders, including staff, parents and pupils, to inform its improvement planning. Staff at all levels contribute effectively to the self-evaluation process. Middle leaders' evaluations of their areas of responsibilities are detailed and purposeful. Leaders and managers have checked staff compliance with agreed systems and processes rigorously.

### **Recommendation 8: Develop the role of governors in school improvement and strategic leadership**

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Governors have improved the level of challenge they provide to the leadership of the school. They have established a set of sub-committees with clear remits that focus well on monitoring the standards and quality of provision. They have reviewed regularly and systematically the school's progress in implementing the post-inspection action plan. Individual members of the governing body link appropriately to specific post-inspection recommendations. They have undertaken a purposeful range of activities to increase their awareness of pupils' work and standards achieved, such as learning walks and reviews of pupils' books. Leaders and managers have made purposeful contributions to the governing body to explain the progress the school has made in designated areas of its work.

Governors have tackled significant staffing issues effectively over the last year for the benefit of the school and its pupils. The governing body receives useful reports from the headteacher on standards and provision and members have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they are less secure in their knowledge of how well the school performs in relation to other similar schools or those within its cluster or its family. There is a good level of shared commitment to the strategic direction of the school across the governing body and the leadership of the school. The governing body has undertaken appropriate training since the core inspection to develop its practices further. It communicates effectively with parents in most respects, but it does not currently meet its statutory obligations in relation to producing an annual governors' report for parents or in calling a formal annual meeting with parents.

### **Recommendations**

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.