



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

**Knelston Primary School
Reynoldston
Gower
SA3 1AR**

Date of inspection: May 2011

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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Context

Knelston Primary School is a co-educational, Swansea local authority maintained primary school for pupils between the ages of three and 11 years old. The school is situated on the Gower Peninsula to the west of Swansea. It has a large catchment area which includes Oxwich, Penrice, Reynoldston, Burry, Scurlage, Port Eynon, Horton, Rhossili and Knelston. The school was built in 1969 and consists of a main hall and six teaching areas.

Currently there are 128 pupils on role with 13 pupils of nursery age. English is the first language for nearly all pupils. Only two pupils speak Welsh at home. The school states that pupils come from varying backgrounds ranging from farming to professional business communities. Two pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and approximately 5% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. Ten pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN) and three pupils have statements of SEN. No pupil has been excluded from the school during the last 12 months.

The current headteacher was in post during the last inspection in 2005.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Knelston Primary School is £3,372, which compares with a maximum of £5,744 and a minimum of £2,550 for primary schools in Swansea. The school has the 34th highest budget per pupil out of 89 primary schools in Swansea.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- pupils achieve well, particularly in key stage 1;
- there are good learning experiences for pupils that make particularly good use of the local environment;
- pupil behaviour and attitudes to learning are very positive;
- staff and pupil relationships enhance the school's learning ethos; and
- effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is good leadership at all levels;
- all staff work well as a team;
- there are good self-evaluation procedures and opportunities for professional development; and
- there is effective planning for improvement.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 raise standards of achievement at key stage 2 to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress as they move up from the Foundation Phase;
- R2 improve the quality of boys' writing skills;
- R3 further adapt the lessons to provide more challenging work for more able pupils;
- R4 give pupils more opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum; and
- R5 focus more on standards when monitoring lessons and pupil work.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Many pupils enter the school with skills that are at or above the expected level. In key stage 1 they make very good progress and attainment data shows that the school is performing well above the national average and also when compared to similar schools based on entitlement to free school meals. Progress in key stage 2 is generally good but is not as strong as the progress made in key stage 1. Most pupils engage well in their learning although, at both key stages, the girls perform much better than boys in the majority of subjects.

In 2010, at key stage 1, the performance of pupils at level 2, the expected level at seven years old, in English, mathematics, and the core subject indicator (expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science in combination), places the school in the top half when compared to similar schools based on the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. All pupils attained level 2 or above in mathematics, which places the school in the top 25% of similar schools. This is also significantly better than the local authority, the national and the family of schools averages. However, attainment in science was not as good as in the previous two years and places the school in the bottom half when compared to similar schools. Pupils' performance above the expected level (level 3) is better than the family, the local authority and the all-Wales averages in English, mathematics and science.

At key stage 2, pupil performance in attaining level 4, the expected level at 11 years old, has improved over the last four years. The core subject indicator shows the school to be performing well above both the national and local authority averages, and slightly above the family average. However, in 2010, when compared to similar schools, the school was in the bottom half for English, mathematics and science. In 2009 it was in the top half for these core subjects. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 is in line with the family but better than the local authority and all Wales averages in English and mathematics. In science, a smaller proportion of pupils gained level 5 than the family, local authority or Wales average.

There is no difference in the relative performance of pupils at key stage 1, based on free school meals entitlement. However, girls perform consistently better than the boys, across all the core subjects. At key stage 2, in 2010, pupils entitled to free school meals performed slightly better than those not entitled to free school meals. As in key stage 1, the girls perform significantly better than the boys across the core subjects. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress. Nearly all achieve the expected levels in the end of key stage assessments.

At both key stages, many pupils have good standards of reading. Pupils in key stage 1 make rapid progress and most can read fluently, with confidence, and have a good awareness of phonics. However, during key stage 2, pupils do not always build on their earlier standards well enough. As a result, a minority of pupils do not make sufficient progress in their reading. Many older pupils have a good interest in reading

and can explain their reading choices.

Pupil progress in writing is similar to that for reading: good progress at key stage 1 but a slowing down at key stage 2. The spelling, punctuation and grammar of a minority of older pupils are relatively weak, especially among boys. They are unable to apply the skills taught in English lessons to their work across the curriculum. Pupils' oral skills are very good. They talk confidently and can explain clearly what they are reading and about their life in school.

Pupils apply their numeracy skills well in specific mathematics work in key stage 1 but less so in key stage 2. Overall, pupils do not always apply their numeracy skills well across the curriculum.

Many pupils are confident in using information and communication technology for a range of purposes at both key stages. This technology is often used to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and design skills. However, data handling skills are not as well developed. Key stage 2 pupils often undertake research on computers through accessing relevant websites.

Pupils are not making expected progress in Welsh second language. In the Foundation Phase most pupils respond appropriately to instructions and use simple phrases correctly and with enthusiasm. The use of incidental Welsh is a common feature of oral communication between teachers and pupils. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils clearly understand the vocabulary they use, speak with confidence, and read and write simple sentences in Welsh. In key stage 2, most pupils can use Welsh words confidently in the classroom. However, the school is performing below the family and Wales averages in terms of the proportion of pupils gaining a level 4 or above in Welsh second language.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils agree that the school teaches them to be healthy. Nearly all say that they feel safe in the school and know whom to talk to if they have any concerns. Their participation in a range of physical activities helps them to develop a mature attitude towards healthy living. The school's promotion of healthy menus and its involvement in the Swansea Healthy Schools' initiative enables pupils thoroughly to understand the importance of eating healthy food.

Pupil attendance in 2009/10 was 93%, which is in line with the national average and slightly higher than that of the local authority. Pupils are punctual. Nearly all pupils are enthusiastic and engage actively in lessons. They can work independently and in groups and show care, respect and concern for their peers.

Pupil behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is excellent. Most pupils are self-confident and show increasingly mature attitudes as they move through the school. Nearly all pupils agree that teachers in the school help them to learn and make progress. This is also confirmed by the parents.

Pupils value the opportunities to become members of the School Council, the Eco committee and sports council as a means of making decisions about the school's

learning activities. The school council has had an input into the school development plan. These groups have also made constructive contributions towards improvements in the use of the school grounds, the school toilets, and reading resources. Through its focus on sustainable development, sporting and cultural activities, the school successfully involves many pupils in the local community.

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

The school provides a wide range of learning experiences which meet the needs of learners and the community. Schemes of work, with a strong focus on topic work, ensure a broad, balanced curriculum which enables pupils to build systematically on what they know and can do. Although teachers' planning clearly sets out the development of subjects and key skills, the work does not always sufficiently challenge more able pupils.

Learning activities are further enhanced through a good range of extra-curricular activities such as Welsh clubs, sporting activities, Bollywood dancing and peripetetic music provision, in which a good number of pupils participate.

Effective use is made of the local area, the countryside and its people to provide pupils with rich learning opportunities. These experiences enable pupils to gain a good understanding of their environment. Residential visits to Kilvrough Manor and Llangranog as well as visits to Cwm Ivy are good examples of this. Provision for Welsh language development is very good. The lunchtime Welsh Club offers beneficial opportunities for key stage 2 pupils to further develop their Welsh oracy and reading skills.

Throughout the school pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop their information and communication technology, reading, speaking and listening skills. They develop their writing skills in different contexts across all areas of learning. The provision for ensuring that pupils acquire numeracy skills is less well developed. At key stage 2 the use of number skills is not generally evident enough in subjects across the curriculum. However, an appropriate amount of opportunity to develop number skills is provided through topic work in the Early Years.

The school's eco-committee ensures that environmental issues are firmly rooted in school life. The school places significant emphasis on environmental issues and pupils are very aware of the need to act sustainably by recycling, litter picking and tree planting. Pupils are actively involved in growing, eating and showing their own produce and have developed a courtyard garden for wildlife. Parents agree that sustainable education experiences have a powerful impact on pupils' knowledge and attitudes.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is generally of a good quality. Teachers have a good knowledge of the areas of learning and the subjects they teach. They use a range of methods to stimulate the interest of most of the pupils. Very good relationships exist between

teachers, support staff and pupils. This is a strength of the school. Where teaching is most effective, resources, such as the interactive whiteboard, are used well to stimulate and support pupils' learning. Lessons progress at a good pace. In a few cases, where teaching is less effective, teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently and their expectations of pupils are too low.

A valuable range of teaching approaches and challenging tasks are provided in the Forest School facility. Sessions contribute well to pupils' development of knowledge and understanding of the outdoor environment. Pupils' social, co-operative and communication skills are effectively developed through these beneficial experiences.

Overall, the quality of assessment is good. Teachers assess and track pupils' performance at an individual pupil level. Pupils are encouraged to set their own targets and assess their own progress and the work of others. This is starting to have an impact on their understanding of the next step in their learning. Teachers are beginning to use assessment for learning strategies effectively.

Pupils benefit from teachers talking sensitively to them about the quality of their work. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is generally less effective as it does not always inform pupils of what they need to do to improve.

Reports to parents are informative and most parents feel well informed about their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing. The recent establishment of a pupil led sports council has given pupils the chance to influence improvements in the playground.

A fully integrated pastoral care system, based on principles of good relationships and respect, is embedded into daily school routine. This system greatly benefits the development of pupils' moral and social skills.

Acts of collective worship are held in an appropriate atmosphere of reverence and respect. There is good provision for pupils to know right from wrong and to be aware of their own culture and the ways of life of others.

The school has effective procedures in place for the early identification of pupils with additional learning needs. The provision of personal support is well targeted to the needs of individual pupils. Individual education plans are regularly evaluated in conjunction with pupils and parents. The school liaises well with a range of specialist services. Recording and reporting arrangements comply with requirements.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding pupils. There is clear guidance for all staff and they are aware of procedures.

Induction arrangements for pupils as they transfer to Bishopston Secondary School are well established. Arrangements are effective in helping pupils to settle happily and quickly in their new environment.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a very inclusive community, based on an ethos of equality of opportunity. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils, who are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school.

The school recognises, respects and celebrates diversity. Pupils take on responsibilities enthusiastically and this helps to establish a friendly and calm school environment.

There are clear and well-ordered procedures to deal with bullying or harassment. Pupils have a good awareness of the high standards of behaviour expected of them.

The school's accommodation provides a very attractive and stimulating environment for pupils. Extensive good quality displays around the school celebrate pupils' work and achievements. Classrooms and shared areas are well ordered and provide interesting play areas for pupils. There is an appropriate range of easily accessible resources. The buildings are very clean and are well maintained. The good zoning of the outside play areas to cater for a range of activities is the result of work carried out by the school council. The school has a forest school area which is regularly used very effectively to support pupils' learning.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that the governing body, the senior management team and all the staff share. Teaching and support staff have clearly defined roles which they carry out well. Regular staff and management team meetings focus well on taking forward the school's priorities as well as dealing with day-to-day issues. Good teamwork and communication among staff ensure that initiatives and developments are applied consistently across the school.

The governing body is very supportive of all aspects of the school's work. It helps the school in setting its strategic direction and evaluates outcomes in relation to school development priorities. The governing body takes an active role in the self-evaluation process and in forward planning. It considers data on school performance carefully and challenges the school where appropriate. A few aspects of the work of the governing body are not undertaken as fully as they could be, for example the regular review of policies, the recording of meetings and the overview of complaints.

The school works hard to address national and local priorities and it has successfully implemented the Foundation Phase up to Year 1. It is appropriately involved in partnership working, especially within the Gower Consortium, and has established a number of professional learning communities, for example in responding to the needs of more able and talented children. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact.

Improving quality: Good

The school has a good range of self-evaluation procedures. Subject co-ordinators regularly review teachers' planning, observe lessons and look at pupils' work in relation to their area of responsibility. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching through classroom observations. These tend to focus more on teaching and learner activity than the quality of learning and the standards that pupils achieve. The monitoring of whole-school developments by other members of the senior management team is more limited. The school does not use the family of schools data enough to challenge itself and to support its own development further.

The self-evaluation report is of good quality overall. It is evaluative, outlines the school's successes and highlights appropriate areas for improvement. On occasions, it is too general and lacks specific school-based examples to bolster its judgements.

The school development plan is detailed and wide-ranging. It breaks down development planning into realistic small steps, sets out suitable timescales and costs, and establishes appropriate success criteria. The school has made good progress in addressing the recommendations within the last inspection report.

Staff take part in networks of professional practice, for example in relation to more able and talented pupils and in developing story-writing strategies. The provision of the forest school is a particular strength of the school and it has shared aspects of this work with other schools within the local authority.

Partnership working: Good

The school generally works well with parents. Nearly all the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that the school keeps them well informed and that they feel comfortable about approaching the school on any matters of concern. Through a questionnaire, the school has sought the views of parents on various aspects of its work and used the outcomes to reconsider aspects of its work, for example in relation to homework. However, the questionnaire does not give parents enough opportunity to offer partial agreement or disagreement about aspects of the school's work.

The school has established valuable links with the local community. It organises a good range of visits to places in the locality and further afield. Members of the community are invited into school to work with pupils on aspects of topic work, for example from local churches, the police and the RNLI. This contributes well to pupils' understanding of community life and to their learning in general.

There are successful transition arrangements with the local secondary school and there are effective links with the local cluster of schools, for example to aid the moderation and standardisation of teachers' assessment of pupils' work.

The school occasionally works in partnership with University of Wales Trinity St David's College and Swansea Metropolitan University in the delivery of initial teacher training and with Gower College Swansea in the training of classroom assistants.

The school pools resources with other schools in the Gower Consortium to buy in training and to develop joint initiatives at consortium level, for example in relation to more able and talented children.

Resource management: Good

The school has a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff to teach the curriculum effectively. Teachers and support staff work well together as a team and they have good opportunities for continuing professional development. The school is well equipped and resourced. The school has sought out grant funding well to develop aspects of its provision, particularly in relation to the school grounds. Teachers and pupils generally use the learning resources appropriately.

The school achieves good outcomes for pupils. It manages its budget well and has a suitable level of reserves. Overall, it provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Pupil questionnaires

Sixty-one pupils completed the questionnaire. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school, and say that the school deals well with bullying and that there is someone who they can talk to if they are worried or upset. All pupils agreed with the statements in the questionnaire that the school teaches them to be healthy and that there are lots of chances to get regular exercise. Nearly all pupils think they are doing well at school and that teachers help them to learn and make progress. Most pupils feel that homework helps them to understand and improve their school work. They also feel that they have enough books and equipment to do their work. Although many pupils (85%) say that other children behave well, a few (15%) disagreed.

Parent questionnaires

Fifty parent questionnaires were completed. Parents expressed positive views about the school. All parents are satisfied with the school, and say that their child likes the school and settled in well with good support from staff. Most parents feel that their child is making good progress and nearly all agree that the quality of teaching is good at the school. All state that teachers expect their child always to work hard and do his or her best. They also feel that staff treat children fairly and with respect. Most parents are of the opinion that their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs. All parents agree that their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise. Many parents say that they are kept well informed about their child's progress and most feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions, or a problem. They are clear about the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Ray Owen	Reporting Inspector
Barry Norris	Team Inspector
Thomas Ivor Petherick	Lay Inspector
Sarah Rees	Peer Inspector
Mr R J Davies (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