



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

**Oystermouth Primary School
Newton Road
Mumbles
Swansea
SA3 4BE**

Date of inspection: December 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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Context

Oystermouth Primary School is in the village of Oystermouth, in Mumbles, about five miles west of Swansea city centre.

The school caters for 236 pupils between the ages of three and eleven, including 42 children who attend the nursery in the morning or afternoon. There are eight single-age classes in the school. The number on roll has remained relatively stable over the last few years.

According to the school, the area it serves is relatively advantaged. Many pupils have above average basic skills on entry. Around 3% are entitled to free school meals, which is well below national and local averages. A very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background or speak English as an additional language. No pupils use Welsh as a first language or are looked after by the local authority. The school has identified about 22% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is around the national average; and a few of these have statements of special educational needs.

The school was last inspected in November 2006; there have been no major changes to staffing or accommodation since that date. The headteacher was appointed in September 1996.

The individual school budget per pupil for Oystermouth Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,053 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Swansea is £9,629 and the minimum is £2,634. Oystermouth Primary School is 67th out of the 87 primary schools in Swansea in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- pupils' performance at seven and 11 years old is good;
- the standard of work in pupils' books and in many lessons is good;
- the school is a caring community that develops and promotes pupils' wellbeing successfully;
- there is a good range of learning experiences; and
- there are robust and effective partnerships between the school and the wider community that have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision that is shared effectively with teachers, parents and governors;
- the school has effective strategies to raise standards of literacy across the curriculum;
- the senior management team and staff focus consistently on raising standards and improving provision;
- there is effective teamwork at all levels; and
- the school gives good value for money.

Recommendations

R1 Raise the standard of pupils' reading and writing skills in Welsh;

R2 improve the outcomes in science at the end of key stage 2;

R3 improve the quality of marking and ensure that teachers consistently provide feedback that helps pupils to improve their work; and

R4 share the excellent practices in teaching at the end of key stage 2 more effectively across the school.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Many pupils start the school with above average skills and most achieve or exceed the expected outcomes for their age by the end of the Foundation Phase.

Most pupils across the school listen attentively to each other and to their teachers. In the Foundation Phase, most pupils' oral skills are good. They answer questions with confidence and engage well in discussion with their peers. In key stage 2, many pupils discuss their work well, they provide good oral feedback when assessing the work of their peers and express their own ideas confidently.

All pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills according to their age and ability. In the Foundation Phase, most display a secure understanding of the letter or sound patterns they are learning. The more able pupils know where common letter combinations occur in words. All pupils develop as keen independent readers. In key stage 2, most pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression. There are very few hesitant readers, but they often have the confidence to correct themselves as they read.

Most pupils across the school make good progress in their writing skills relative to their age and ability. In the Foundation Phase, most make good progress in letter formation and in developing their handwriting. In key stage 2, most write effectively for a range of different purposes and demonstrate good writing skills. Most have a good understanding of the conventions of grammar and punctuation. More able pupils produce creative writing of very good quality.

Most pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing their numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Many pupils work well in pairs or groups and they apply their skills effectively across a range of subjects. Many take responsibility for their own learning.

In the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2, many pupils' knowledge and understanding of Welsh second language are developing well. Many show a growing confidence in the language, and use Welsh effectively outside the formal context of a Welsh lesson. However, their reading and writing skills do not develop as well.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils perform at a level that is above the average for the local authority and Wales and at a level that is just above average for the family of schools. In key stage 2, pupils generally perform at a level that is above the averages for the local authority, Wales and the family of similar schools.

When benchmarked against schools with a similar proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals, the schools' performance in 2012 places it mainly in the upper 50% of similar schools for language, literacy and communication, mathematical

development, and personal and social development at the end of the Foundation Phase and for English, mathematics and the core subject indicator at the end of key stage 2.

Wellbeing: Good

The standard of pupils' wellbeing is a strong feature. Most pupils are happy, co-operative, attentive and enthusiastic learners. They apply themselves well in lessons and adopt a positive approach to learning activities. Almost all behave very well in class and around the school. All pupils say that they feel safe in school and are confident that the staff will give them appropriate support when needed.

All pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and the importance of exercise. Most older ones have a secure understanding of the benefits of eating a healthy diet.

The school council and eco committee play an active part in school life. They help support fund-raising events successfully and play an increasing role in contributing suggestions to improve the school, for example to improve the school grounds.

School attendance at around 95% compares favourably with the averages for Wales and the family of similar schools. The school's overall attendance rate places it consistently in the upper 50% when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. There is very little unauthorised absence. Nearly all children arrive at school punctually.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school plans effective learning experiences for pupils. Schemes of work are comprehensive and respond appropriately to the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Phase. Teachers' planning identifies carefully suitable opportunities for developing pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum. As pupils move through the school, teachers build systematically on their previous knowledge, understanding and skills. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provides good opportunities for pupils to participate in cultural and sporting activities and teamwork, and to represent the school effectively in the community.

The school has a strong Welsh ethos. All pupils have a good sense of Welsh culture and teachers promote the Welsh dimension well in classes through cross-curricular teaching, particularly in history, art, music and geography. A programme to encourage pupils to use their Welsh frequently through the day is helping to develop pupils' spoken language effectively.

The school promotes pupils' awareness of sustainable development well through the work of its eco committee. Provision for promoting global citizenship is good and there are good links with several foreign countries, such as Ghana and Uganda.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching at the end of key stage 2 is excellent. In the excellent lessons, there are high expectations of pupils' achievements; very detailed promotion of skill development; highly successful planning that leads to very interesting and challenging activities for pupils; and expert use of assessment to target pupils' progress. In all lessons, there are strong working relationships with pupils and many positive interactions between staff and pupils, which result in high levels of pupil engagement. Many teachers use resources skilfully and imaginatively, including resources within the local community. Pupils receive effective and well-focused support from skilful teaching assistants. However, in a very few lessons, teachers' planning is less effective and the pace of learning and the level of challenge do not stretch pupils enough.

Assessment of learning is comprehensive and effective. The school has a formal procedure for tracking pupils' progress and this identifies quickly any pupils who require support to meet their needs. In many classes, teachers use assessment for learning strategies appropriately to identify the next stages in pupils' learning. Many teachers undertake detailed marking of pupils' books, respond constructively to their work and help them to understand how to improve their work next time. However, this practice is not always consistently applied across the school. There are good quality reports to parents, which meet statutory requirements.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has effective arrangements to encourage pupils to make healthy choices of food and drink and to participate in physical exercise. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to be physically active and there are many lunchtime extra-curricular clubs, which many pupils attend. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school promotes high standards of behaviour at playtimes and lunchtime through a system of positive behaviour management and peer support, provided by 'Playground Friends'. Staff help many pupils, especially those in upper key stage 2, to develop a firm understanding of their own learning and what to do to improve their work. The school's 'Book Buddies' support pupils in the Foundation Phase with their early reading well.

Teachers identify pupils' additional learning needs early through a series of standardised assessments. Teachers write individual education plans in child-friendly language and discuss them regularly with parents. Teachers also make parents aware of the ways in which they are able to support their children at home. Staff identify more able pupils appropriately and challenge them to achieve well in literacy and numeracy.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school offers a welcoming, colourful and attractive environment within a safe, family ethos. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to all areas of the school's provision.

The displays in the hall and in classrooms are attractive and they support pupils' learning well. There are good resources in the classrooms to meet the requirements of the curriculum. Although the condition of the building and lack of space within it are often an issue for staff and parents, they do not have an adverse impact on standards of learning and teaching. The school provides a good learning environment in which pupils make good progress and there are enough resources that are well matched to pupils' needs

The school takes advantage of various local venues in order to ensure pupils have additional opportunities for physical education and to take part in performances and to experience outdoor activities. The school makes very good use of its allotments to teach Foundation Phase pupils about the environment.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide effective, strategic leadership to the life and work of the school. The senior management team uses the data analysis on pupils' performance well in the self-evaluation process in order to determine priorities in the school development plan.

Under the headteacher's effective leadership, all staff work together well as a team. They show a strong commitment to ensuring further improvements and developing new learning activities and teaching methods.

The roles and responsibilities of members of staff have been defined clearly and are understood by all members. Regular senior leadership team and staff meetings provide good opportunities for all staff to contribute to the strategic direction of the school.

The governing body provides strong support for the school. Governors are aware of the school's priorities and aspects of pupils' performance. They have suitable committees and effective structures in place to oversee financial management, policy reviews and school procedures, which ensure that they meet statutory requirements. They act as appropriate critical friends in challenging the school to improve further.

The school's initiatives to meet local and national priorities are developing successfully. The school has focused effectively on developing its provision for literacy, information and communication technology and the Welsh language.

Improving quality: Good

The school uses a wide range of evidence to identify its strengths and areas for development. It takes good account of the views of pupils, parents and the outcomes

from classroom monitoring by senior managers and teachers. The school analyses data from pupil assessments effectively to indicate how well the school is performing in comparison with similar schools within the family, and against local and national averages.

The school improvement plan is effective in addressing the areas that need developing and it contains appropriate allocations of resources to support these. The school operates well as a learning community. It works well with other schools, for example to share expertise in raising standards in literacy, and to ensure the consistency of teachers' assessments. The school works closely with the local authority to implement an effective range of initiatives to support and improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

Partnership working: Good

The school co-operates well with its partners and plays a prominent role in the community. Parents volunteer to listen to readers and to organise various events. The community makes good use of the school and members of the community are invited to the school to speak to pupils. There are close links with the business community and these have a positive impact on pupils' financial and entrepreneurial skills. The school has a positive link with a school from its family of schools and this focuses on improvements to pupils' writing. There are effective arrangements with other local primary schools for standardising and moderating pupils' work.

Groups of pupils from the school visit old peoples' homes and local churches regularly and the school receives visitors from churches to lead assemblies. This reinforces the school's efforts to promote pupils' spiritual development.

The school has an appropriate relationship with the local authority, the police and school nurse services. An effective transfer scheme exists with the local secondary school and pupils benefit from shared expertise in science and design technology.

Resource management: Good

Leaders use the experience and expertise of teachers and support staff well and they deploy them effectively to meet the needs of pupils. All staff have beneficial opportunities to continue their professional development. The school arranges teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time well and meets the statutory requirements in terms of teachers' workload. Effective arrangements are in place for the performance management of all staff.

The school reviews resources and their impact on teaching and learning regularly and plans future resource needs carefully. For example, the school evaluates the impact of recently-appointed teaching assistants and the planned expenditure on information technology equipment. Spending decisions relate well to priorities for improvement. However, the school holds a relatively high financial surplus.

In view of the good standards achieved by pupils, the quality of provision and leadership, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Foundation Phase

In the Foundation Phase, the attainment of seven-year-old pupils at the expected outcome (outcome 5) in literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development (the Foundation Phase Indicator) was above national and local averages in 2012 and marginally above the family average.

Performance at the higher outcome 6 in literacy was below national, local and family averages and girls clearly outperformed boys. In mathematical development, performance at the higher level 6 was above national and local averages and marginally above the family average; while in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity, performance at the higher outcome 6 was above the three comparative averages.

Overall, girls performed at a higher level than the boys in achieving outcome 5 and outcome 6.

Key stage 2

The results of teachers' assessments at the end of key stage 2 in the core subject indicator (namely English, mathematics and science together) show consistent progress over the last five years. In comparison with similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school has been in the upper 50% over the last four years. There is no consistent pattern of difference between the performance of boys and girls, although girls performed better than boys in 2012.

In English, the percentage of pupils who attained the expected level (level 4 or higher), has been quite consistently high, reaching 100% in two of the last three years. The school has performed consistently better than national and local averages. In comparison with similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, performance has placed the school in the top 25% for two of the last three years. There is no pattern of difference in the performance of boys and girls. The standard of performance has been fairly consistently above national, local and family averages over the last five years for the percentage of pupils who attained the higher levels (level 5 or higher) in English.

In mathematics, the school's performance has been consistently higher than the national, local and family averages, apart from in 2011 when the school almost matched the family average. Over the last three years, in comparison with similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, results placed the school among the upper 50%. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. During the last five years, the percentage of pupils who attained the higher levels (level 5 or higher) in mathematics has been above national, local and family averages. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

The percentage of pupils who attained the higher levels (level 5 or higher) in science has been above national and local averages over the last five years. However, it was lower than the family average in three of those years. In comparison with similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, results in 2011 and 2012 placed the school among the lower 50%. There is no significant pattern of difference between the results of boys and girls.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifty-three responses were received.

The questionnaire responses give a positive picture and the level of satisfaction with the school is around the national average or higher for primary schools in every aspect.

All parents state that their children like school and are making good progress in their work. They are also of the opinion that teaching is good and that the school helps them to become more mature and to shoulder responsibility. Parents are satisfied with the school in general and are of the opinion that pupils are safe there and that behaviour is good. They also say that the school is well run. They feel comfortable in asking a question or identifying a problem.

Nearly all parents say that the staff treat pupils fairly and expect them to do their best. Parents state that the school encourages pupils to be healthy and to take regular physical exercise. Most parents state that homework builds well on what children learn at school. They also understand the school's system for dealing with complaints. All say that their children received support to settle in well when starting at the school and nearly all state that staff expect pupils to work hard and do their best. They also say that the school offers a good variety of activities and regular information on pupils' progress.

Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and twelve pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire.

Overall, pupils' level of satisfaction with the school is around the national averages or higher.

All learners state that they feel safe at school. Nearly all state that the school deals well with any bullying and nearly all know what to do and to whom to speak if they are anxious or find their work difficult.

Nearly all state that teachers and other adults at the school help them to learn and make progress and that there are many opportunities for them to take regular physical exercise. Nearly all say that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Nearly all pupils are of the opinion that they are doing well at school. Many pupils indicated that behaviour is good at the school and that misbehaviour does not affect their ability to work.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

David Evans	Reporting Inspector
Michael Thomas	Team Inspector
Ivor Petherick	Lay Inspector
Nicola Price	Peer Inspector
Mr E Wynne	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