



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

**Ysgol Gynradd Llanybydder
Llanybydder
Carmarthenshire
SA40 9RP**

Date of inspection: May 2013

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

The school is situated on a pleasant site in the village of Llanybydder, approximately seven miles south west of Lampeter. It is a rural area and the school describes the area the children come from as one that is relatively prosperous, on the whole. According to the school, pupils come from a mixture of social backgrounds. The school serves the Llanybydder area and the surrounding areas. It is maintained by Carmarthenshire local authority.

Currently, there are 89 pupils on roll, including 14 full-time nursery age pupils. Pupils are shared between four classes. Pupils are admitted to the school on a full-time basis during the term in which they celebrate their fourth birthday. School staff include a headteacher and four full-time teachers.

Welsh is the school's main language medium and the school aims to ensure that pupils are fully bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary sector. Approximately 49% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. Currently, 10% of pupils at the school are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Approximately 16% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is slightly below the Welsh average. Approximately 36 pupils (40%) are on the additional learning needs register and this is significantly higher than the national figure of 21.2%. A very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The school was last inspected in February 2008. Since its previous headteacher retired, the school has been in the care of a corporate headteacher. Since February 2013, an acting headteacher has been appointed in the school to work alongside the corporate headteacher.

The individual school budget per pupil for Llanybydder C.P. School in 2012-2013 is £3,961. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Carmarthenshire is £25,997 and the minimum is £2,878. Llanybydder C.P. School is in 36th place out of the 108 primary schools in Carmarthenshire 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 make generally good progress during their time at school;
- most pupils in the Foundation Phase make particularly good progress in Welsh;
- the standard of teaching is consistently good;
- the school provides a wide range of experiences which engage pupils' interest; and
- assessment for learning strategies have been established very firmly.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school's leaders have a clear vision for the future;
- the school has developed effective self-evaluation arrangements which give due attention to the opinions of parents and pupils;
- the school development plan pays attention to the school's most important priorities and focuses appropriately on raising standards;
- all members of staff at the school work together effectively as a team; and
- governors know the school and its performance very well.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards of oral Welsh in key stage 2
- R2 Improve the presentation and accuracy of work in key stage 2
- R3 Ensure opportunities for pupils to write more extensively in both languages in key stage 2
- R4 Ensure high expectations and appropriate challenge for more able pupils
- R5 Ensure stability in the school's leadership structure.

What happens next?

Ysgol Llanybydder will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, most pupils' basic skills are below average, particularly in language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh and mathematical development. Most pupils make good progress in all learning areas by the end of the Foundation Phase, with particularly good progress in Welsh. By the end of key stage 2, the majority speak Welsh fairly correctly in formal situations, although not extensively.

Current work in pupils' books, along with what was seen in classes during observations, shows clear progress in standards of skills across the school, in general. Most pupils use their skills appropriately across the curriculum.

Most pupils listen attentively during lessons. They respond well to teachers' questions verbally and are eager to contribute to class discussions and within their discussion groups. However, there is a tendency for the majority of pupils in key stage 2 to use English when discussing work with one another.

On the whole, pupils' reading skills are good. In the Foundation Phase, most pupils read books with expression, using a range of strategies effectively when reading unfamiliar words. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have sound reading skills. They are able to discuss their favourite authors and use information books well to research facts to use in cross-curricular work.

In the Foundation Phase, many pupils write independently and begin to vary their sentences and use basic punctuation correctly. Pupils' writing skills in key stage 2 are good, on the whole, and are developing appropriately. Many write well for a variety of purposes and most pupils use their writing skills appropriately in other subjects. However, the majority of pupils do not write extensively enough in both languages.

The majority of pupils use their thinking skills and research skills purposefully in their work across subjects. All pupils work well with each other and respond enthusiastically to the tasks that are given to them.

Pupils start well in terms of learning and using Welsh during the Foundation Phase. However, their Welsh speaking and writing skills do not develop consistently enough as they move through key stage 2. A few pupils lack confidence when using Welsh outside of familiar contexts.

Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress and achieve their targets.

In general, the standard of tidiness, handwriting and accuracy in the work of key stage 2 pupils varies.

As the school has a comparatively small number of pupils, data on performance over time must be treated with care as one child's results can account for a high percentage of the cohort in each year.

At the end of the Foundation Phase, achievements at the expected outcome (outcome 5) in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity and in mathematics compare favourably with the averages for the family and Wales and place the school among the top 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals in both of these learning areas. Achievements in language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh and the core subject indicator do not compare as well, and place the school among the bottom 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals.

In general, the school's performance at the end of key stage 2 at the expected level has increased in all core subjects (Welsh, English, mathematics and science) since 2010. This places the school among the top 25% of similar schools on the basis of entitlement to free school meals, and also higher than the average of schools in the same family. However, pupils' achievement at the higher level in all core subjects has been lower than that of similar schools over a long period of time. No pupils achieved level 5 in a core subject (Welsh, English, mathematics and science) during the last three years, except in English in 2011.

In general, there is no significant gap between the achievements of boys and girls, except at outcome 6 at the end of the Foundation Phase in language, literacy and communication skills and mathematics.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils are aware of the importance of health, fitness and eating healthily and they achieve consistently well in their personal and social development. Nearly all pupils feel safe at school and know with whom to talk if something is worrying them. They enjoy their lessons and take advantage of opportunities to express sensible opinions on what they learn. Pupils' behaviour is good across the school and most are polite when responding to adults and peers. The majority of pupils contribute well in lessons.

Attendance levels at the school place it among the top 50% of similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. They are also higher than the national average.

The school council and eco-committee have been established at the school and members have met to elect officers and suggest ideas. Pupils are beginning to voice their opinions and participate in decisions relating to their school.

Through school activities, the community and extra-curricular experiences, most pupils' social skills and life skills are developing effectively. In the Foundation Phase, pupils accept responsibility confidently and make decisions which have a positive effect on their learning. This has not developed specifically enough across key stage 2.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

A suitable range of learning experiences are provided, which engage and motivate most pupils and meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Phase. Whole-school planning ensures that pupils, in general, are stimulated and challenged purposefully by activities that are appropriate for their age and ability. Developing pupils' skills is given a prominent place within planning, but planning for developing spoken Welsh in key stage 2 has not been developed appropriately.

The school provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture of their local area and the Welsh dimension through art, history, geography and music. Examples of these are the history of 'Merched Beca' and the locality of Llanybydder and Lampeter.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship is developing appropriately at the school. The school has a range of effective arrangements for recycling and reducing waste. By studying other countries and through the eco-council, the school gives pupils appropriate opportunities to collect for charities, recycle, use less energy and buy fair trade products.

Teaching: Good

Teachers have sound subject knowledge and there is a suitable working relationship between teachers and pupils. Teaching is consistently good and teachers use a variety of teaching methods to engage pupils' interest and participation. The aim of the lesson is clear and pupils play an active part in setting their own success criteria. This is a strong feature of the teaching. Teachers ask probing questions and intervene appropriately in order to motivate and challenge pupils to achieve better. Lessons are planned appropriately, although expectations are not always challenging enough for more able pupils.

Teachers use a range of resources purposefully and successfully to support teaching and learning. Classroom assistants contribute significantly towards the quality of pupils' learning and give pupils appropriate support, where needed, in order for them to complete their tasks. Teachers and assistants work effectively as a team.

Appropriate assessment arrangements are in place, including a system to track pupils' progress throughout the school. The school makes suitable use of data to monitor pupils' progress and provide additional educational programmes, as required. The system of levelling and moderating pupils' work within the school develops teachers' understanding of National Curriculum levels.

A range of effective assessment for learning strategies have been established very firmly across the school, which gives pupils good opportunities to assess their work and the work of their peers. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and offer constructive comments. This helps pupils to know how to improve the standard of their work.

Parents receive clear information about their children's progress and achievement through reports and regular meetings.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has appropriate arrangements for encouraging pupils to be healthy and all pupils feel that the school teaches them how to live a healthy life. The school is a caring community, and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. There are systems for rewarding good behaviour and also for improving pupils' self-confidence in their work.

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are not a cause for concern. Clear guidance is available for all members of staff and they are aware of the requirements.

Members of staff work effectively with external agencies and specialist services to support pupils, as required.

The school's arrangements for identifying additional learning needs are appropriate and comply with the Code of Practice. Teachers identify pupils' different needs quickly and act promptly and purposefully. Individual education plans identify clear targets and outline specific activities to ensure progress. Good use is made of teaching assistants to support teaching.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community in which pupils are treated equally in all school activities. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure access to the site for disabled children or adults. The school's policies, plans and procedures promote equality and social diversity.

There are sufficient learning resources to ensure that pupils have good learning experiences. Classrooms are colourful and attractive and have a variety of displays, which include pupils' work. The dedicated hall is used effectively for collective worship, serving lunch and physical education activities. Although the outdoor area for the Foundation Phase is attractive and used creatively to promote learning, it has not been organised to be a natural extension of the classroom.

The building and grounds are well maintained.

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

Following a period of instability, the school is currently being led by a corporate headteacher, who is the headteacher of another school, and an acting headteacher. Both have a clear vision, which is crystallised in the school motto, 'Safonau Uchel, Sylfaen Gadarn' ("High Standards, Firm Foundation"). Staff, governors and parents share this vision.

The management structure allocates responsibilities clearly and the senior management team succeeds in ensuring that the school runs smoothly. The effect of these relatively new arrangements can be seen on pupils' wellbeing, particularly in terms of attendance and behaviour. However, it is too early to measure the effect of these developments on pupils' standards and achievements.

The roles of subject co-ordinators have not yet been developed appropriately. However, all members of staff work well together and contribute constructively to weekly discussions about the school development plan, provision and pupils' standards in staff meetings. This work is beginning to have a positive effect on provision across the school.

Governors know the school very well as an institution and understand their roles and responsibilities. They know about the school's performance in comparison with that of other schools and challenge the school effectively. Their expectations are high.

The school responds appropriately to local and national priorities. Literacy and numeracy skills are given good attention in lessons. The Foundation Phase and assessment for learning are firmly established and have a positive effect on the standards of pupils' work.

Improving quality: Good

The school has developed an effective self-evaluation process. Leaders monitor standards and provision regularly by observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work and teachers' schemes of work. Reports that stem from these activities are analytical and focus suitably on pupils' outcomes. The school gives due attention to the opinions of parents and pupils through questionnaires. Leaders and teachers record pupils' achievement effectively and analyse data appropriately to measure progress.

The self-evaluation report is a detailed and analytical document. The school's staff and governors have discussed it thoroughly and reviewed it appropriately. Although the self-evaluation report and the school development plan address the same priorities for improvement, the link between the two documents does not feed directly from one document to the other clearly enough.

The development plan gives good attention to the school's most important priorities in the short term, and over a longer period, and identifies actions effectively. Leaders monitor and evaluate the progress of priorities and report on them in every meeting of the governing body.

Recently, the school's teachers have visited other schools to share good practice in teaching and learning. The school has also established a professional learning community with three other schools to plan the development of literacy and numeracy skills.

Partnership working: Good

In general, there is a good relationship between the school and parents. The school has strengthened communication arrangements and this has had a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing.

There has been effective co-operation with the local authority during the last two years, which has ensured important positive developments in leadership and provision. The school also benefits from the support of the authority's music and learning needs services, including specific support for pupils who do not speak Welsh or English at home.

The school works closely with other schools in the district. However, to date, arrangements for moderating end of key stage assessments across schools have not developed sufficiently. Good links with other schools within the local authority have enriched provision. The partnership with the nursery group, which is located at the school, is very good, and both institutions benefit from visits by pupils and co-operation between teachers in both institutions.

The transfer agreement with the secondary school the pupils attend after they leave is effective. Direct links and a programme of preparatory visits ensure that the school's older pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

The curriculum is enriched appropriately through visits by a number of visitors who support provision and improve pupils' outcomes. The school has undertaken some visits and educational trips, which offer good experiences to pupils.

Resource management: Good

There are enough qualified staff at the school to meet the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and religious education. Appropriate use is made of some individuals' expertise to enrich provision in some areas, such as music. Arrangements for ensuring planning, preparation and assessment time for all teachers are effective. The practice of having this time simultaneously is a good feature, which promotes professional discussion among staff.

Statutory requirements for performance management are being met. There is no formal arrangement for managing the performance of classroom assistants, but occasional meetings with the corporate headteacher ensure that they can benefit from career development opportunities. Teachers and support staff take advantage of opportunities to receive training in specific areas.

The school manages its resources well. The governing body and finance sub-committee meet regularly and monitor the budget in detail.

On this basis, and because pupils achieve good standards, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Care must be taken when handling data in small schools because the small cohorts of pupils who are assessed at the end of stages.

At the end of the Foundation Phase, achievements at the expected outcome (outcome 5) in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity and in mathematics compare favourably with the averages for the family and Wales and place the school among the top 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of the entitlement to free school meals in both of these learning areas. Achievements in language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh and the core subject indicator do not compare as well, and place the school among the bottom 25% in comparison with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals.

The percentage of pupils who achieved above the expected level (outcome 6) in language skills and personal and social development was higher than the family and all-Wales averages. In comparison with schools that have a similar level of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the percentage of pupils who achieved higher than expected placed the school among the top 25% in language skills and personal and social development, but among the lower 50% in mathematical development.

As this is the first year that Foundation Phase data has been published, there is no information available about trends.

In 2009, 2011 and 2012, all pupils succeeded in attaining the expected level (level 4 or above) in Welsh, English, mathematics and science combined (the core subject indicator) at the end of key stage 2. The same is true in the individual subjects. However, the school's performance in science has been higher than the family average for the last five years. Over the last two years, the school's performance has improved and, in general, has placed the school among the top 25% in all learning areas in comparison with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals, except in Welsh in 2011, where the school was among the lower 50% (third quartile).

A very few pupils have achieved level 5 considering the school's results over the last five years. No pupils achieved level 5 in any of the core subjects (Welsh, English, mathematics and science) during the last three years, except in English in 2011.

As the number of pupils is so small, it is unfair to compare the achievement of pupils who receive free school meals with the achievement of the remainder of the pupils. Over a period of time, girls have performed better than boys, in general, in the Foundation Phase. In key stage 2, girls perform better than boys, except in mathematics (at level 4+).

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Thirty seven responses were received from pupils in key stage 2.

All are of the opinion that:

- the school teaches them how to stay healthy; and
- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress.

Nearly all are of the opinion that:

- they feel safe at school;
- they know with whom to talk if they are worried or anxious;
- they know what to do and with whom to talk if they find their work hard;
- their homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school; and
- there are enough books, equipment, and computers for them to do their work.

Most are of the opinion that:

- they are doing well at school and the school deals well with any bullying.

Many are of the opinion that:

- nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time.

The majority are of the opinion that:

- there are many opportunities at school for them to undertake regular exercise and other children behave well and they can do their work.

Pupils' responses compare less favourably with the average responses of pupils across Wales in all but four statements, namely that the school teaches them how to stay healthy, that the teachers and other adults at the school help them to learn and make progress, that they know with whom to talk if they are worried or anxious, and that their homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Of the 32 responses received from parents, most are of the opinion that:

- they are satisfied with the school, in general;
- their child likes the school;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;

- their child makes good progress at school;
- the homework that is given builds well on what their child learns in school;
- their child feels safe at school;
- their child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school;
- their child is prepared well for moving on to the next school;
- the school helps their child to become more mature and take on responsibility;
and
- the school is well run.

Many are of the opinion that:

- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- teaching is good;
- staff expect their child to work hard and do his or her best;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect; and
- they feel comfortable about asking the school a question, making suggestions or identifying a problem.

The majority are of the opinion that:

- pupils behave well in school;
- they receive regular information about their child's progress;
- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints; and
- there is a good range of activities, including trips or visits.

Parents' responses compare less positively than the average responses of parents across Wales in all but three statements, namely that the homework that is given builds well on what their child learns in school, that their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs, and that their child is prepared well for moving on to the next school.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Meinir Howells	Reporting Inspector
Terwyn Tomos	Team Inspector
Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Doris Edwards	Peer Inspector
Gareth Jones	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language;
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language;
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.