



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 Pen y Pîl
Heol Glan-y-Mor
Trowbridge
Rumney
Cardiff
CF3 1RQ**

Date of inspection: May 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

Ysgol Pen y Pîl is a Welsh-medium community school in the Trowbridge area of east Cardiff, which is an area that is described as one that is, on the whole, socially and economically disadvantaged.

The school was established as a starter class in September 2007 on the site of a nearby English-medium school, because of the increasing demand for Welsh-medium education in this part of the city, and because there was not enough space at Ysgol Bro Eirwg. It moved to its site in January 2011. The school was opened officially in December 2011.

The school now has 51 pupils in three classes from reception age to Year 4. The school is managed by the headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Eirwg, with the support of a lead teacher. Some of the teachers at Ysgol Bro Eirwg have responsibilities for developing specific areas at Ysgol Pen y Pîl. The governors have started the process of appointing a permanent headteacher for the school.

Five (10%) pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. Ten pupils come from mixed ethnic backgrounds. Thirty-seven per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is considerably higher than the average for the local authority and for Wales, and 16% of pupils are on the special educational needs register.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Pen y Pîl in 2011-2012 is £9,608. The maximum per pupil in Cardiff primary schools is £19,708 and the minimum is £2,828. Ysgol Pen y Pîl is in third place out of the 116 primary schools in Cardiff in terms of the individual 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' standards are consistently good;
- nearly all pupils make progress that is as good as, or better than expected;
- pupils' oral, reading and writing standards are consistently good throughout the school;
- pupils succeed in communicating effectively in Welsh, although most come from English-speaking homes;
- provision for all pupils is robust; and
- the quality of teaching is consistently good.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the acting headteacher has a robust vision and she gives clear, strong and strategic leadership;
- the school puts a strong focus on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching;
- co-operating closely with another school has contributed positively to the school's development;
- teachers make good use of data in order to identify priorities; and
- the self-evaluation process gives a clear direction to the school development plan, that identifies appropriate priorities for improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 improve pupils' attendance;
- R2 develop the role of governors as strategic leaders; and
- R3 ensure a permanent leadership team for the school.

What happens next?

The school will create an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations above.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Pupils at the school are making good progress. Pupils' standards of work in their books, and during the learning sessions, are appropriate to their age and ability, and the work of the best is of a high standard.

Nearly all pupils are industrious during the sessions, and they show interest in the class activity. They can discuss their work intelligently and, by the time they reach the bottom of key stage 2, they show increasing independence when working.

Although pupils nearly all come from homes where English is spoken as a first language, they communicate confidently orally in Welsh and English from an early age. They can converse clearly and enthusiastically about their work, using vocabulary that is increasingly rich. Usually, most choose to converse in Welsh with their friends in informal situations.

Pupils are developing into effective readers. By the time they reach key stage 2, the majority of them can read fluently, accurately and intelligently in Welsh and English, using voice intonation to convey meaning. They can discuss the content of books effectively, express an opinion on them, and use their reading skills effectively to obtain information across a range of areas. They write successfully in Welsh and English across the curriculum, taking care in presenting their work.

There is only performance data available for key stage 1, and only for 2010 and 2011. Because the size of cohorts is very small, with one pupil corresponding to 16.5% of the cohort, for both years, it is not possible to come to a meaningful judgement on the basis of this data.

The school's internal tracking records show that almost all pupils are making progress that is as good as, or better than expected.

Within the limited data that is available, it is not possible to find any pattern in the results for boys and girls, pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals, or pupils from ethnic backgrounds.

Interim results for the end of the Foundation Phase for 2012 show that all pupils attain the expected standards in wellbeing and mathematical development, and that many of them attain the same standard in communication skills.

Pupils who have special educational needs show good progress towards their personal targets, and pupils of higher ability attain high standards.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils' standards of wellbeing across the school are robust.

Pupils' understanding of the importance of living healthily and keeping healthy is developing appropriately. They know which foods and drinks are best for them, and they enjoy taking part in physical activities during lessons, and in after-school clubs.

Pupils' behaviour is very good in the learning sessions, at lunch-time and when playing together in the yard, and they show respect and care for one another.

They apply themselves excellently in lessons and show enthusiasm towards their learning. They persevere to complete their tasks with increasing independence. Their thinking and problem-solving skills are developing effectively, and this is beginning to have an effect on the wider life of the school through the work of the school council and the eco committee.

In comparison with similar schools on the basis of the percentage of pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals, the school's attendance figures are among the bottom 25% during the three years up to 2011. The latest statistics show that the school's attendance figures are lower than the average for the family of schools and for Wales. However, the attendance percentage is showing progress during the last year.

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

The school's curriculum enables pupils to make good progress regardless of their background and their initial attainment. In their schemes of work, teachers identify good opportunities to enrich the curriculum and to capture the interest of pupils, through extra-curricular activities and plans to target the needs of specific groups of pupils.

Provision for improving skills, especially oral skills, is a high priority throughout the school, and the provision for Welsh and the Welsh dimension is evident in every aspect of the school's work. There are good opportunities for using and developing numeracy and information and communication technology skills in the schemes of work.

Through the medium of class themes, and extra-curricular and charity activities, there are appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of global citizenship. Activities to develop pupils' understanding of recycling and saving energy are developing.

Teaching: Good

The standard of teaching in every lesson is good. Teachers have appropriate knowledge about all the teaching areas, and they have benefited from appropriate training. The philosophy and teaching methods of the Foundation Phase are well established, and have a positive impact on pupils' development as independent learners.

Teachers and assistants model Welsh language standards very well.

Teachers vary the pace of lessons effectively in order to ensure that pupils are actively busy and stay on task for extended periods. They are skilful in differentiating in their preparations, in order to develop individuals to the best of their ability.

Lessons build intelligently on pupils' previous learning and teachers have high expectations. Classroom assistants are effective in supporting activities.

School resources are used effectively in order to promote pupils' independence in different learning areas.

The school's assessment processes are good. The school has robust information about its pupils' attainment. That information is used to plan in detail for developing the individual, and teachers use various strategies in order to target skills to be improved.

Teachers' response to pupils' work is thorough and constructive and pupils have an opportunity to respond. This, along with other assessment for learning techniques, enables pupils to understand their own learning, and what they need to do to improve.

All parents receive regular information about their child's progress, and challenging targets are regularly set jointly with pupils.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school organises effectively and contributes well to developing its pupils' wellbeing. The school's 'golden rules', along with activities and displays, support pupils' awareness of the essentials of a healthy life. The school listens to the pupil's voice and is committed to developing respect among all members of the school community.

Through the medium of charity activities, assemblies and visits, the school ensures pupils' moral and social development well. Cultural activities such as concerts and an eisteddfod, enrich pupils' experiences. The act of joint worship contributes positively to their spiritual development and fulfils the statutory requirements.

The school co-operates closely with external agencies and specialists from the local authority in order to ensure success in areas such as health, confidence, behaviour and achievement.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Teachers co-operate effectively with the additional learning needs co-ordinator in order to plan for reinforcing pupils' skills. The school identifies individuals' learning needs early, including pupils of higher ability. Suitable individual education plans are agreed and implemented jointly by class teachers and support teachers. Parents have an appropriate part in the process. Teachers ensure appropriate support for pupils with learning needs in their lessons.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a happy and inclusive community and the staff ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. The ethos of respect for others is prominent in the school and the school promotes diversity effectively. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work and successes.

The building and outdoor resources are of very good quality and are maintained well. There are colourful and appropriate displays in every room in order to support learning. There is a good variety of learning stimuli and opportunities to celebrate pupils' work.

A large number of developments to the building have been completed in preparation for the proposed increase in the number of pupils.

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

The headteacher in charge gives clear, strong and strategic leadership and management to the life and work of the school. She conveys high expectations among the staff and ensures that school continues to develop. In partnership with local authority officers and the governors, the headteacher in charge takes a constructive part in the process of formalising permanent leadership.

The acting headteacher and strategic teams at a nearby school co-operate closely with members of the senior management team and they make good use of data analyses on pupils' performance.

The governing body supports the school enthusiastically but at present many of them are developing their role. They receive data analyses from the headteacher on pupils' performance and are aware of pupils' standards and attainment.

The school responds very well to national and local priorities such as the development of the Foundation Phase, assessment for learning and the obvious emphasis on raising standards of literacy.

Improving quality: Good

The school has a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching.

Self-evaluation processes are developing as a natural part of school life. Everyone's opinion, including that of staff, parents and children is important, and is included. The self-evaluation report is of good quality and the information that was collected throughout the process is used effectively in order to identify priorities in the school development plan. The school development plan is a comprehensive document and there is a good link between it and the self-evaluation report. The development plan sets suitable and clear priorities for improvement, and indicates the necessary expenditure. It is an operational document that gives clear direction to the development of the school.

Teachers have clear responsibilities and expectations. They contact members of staff at the nearby school regularly in order to evaluate learners' standards, the quality of teaching and the use made of resources. There are good opportunities for teachers at the school to meet and discuss good practice in specific areas such as literacy and additional learning needs. As a result, teachers develop effective schemes of work that ensure consistent progress in standards.

Partnership working: Good

The school has developed a number of effective partnerships. The partnership between Ysgol Pen y Pîl and a nearby school is a strength. There has been good co-operation between staff in both schools and the link has a good influence on the provision for the school's pupils and on its standards. Both schools have shared resources, held joint meetings and shared expertise.

The relationship with parents is very strong.

Although no pupils will be leaving the school for another two years, links are beginning to be established with a new secondary school that will open in the area in September 2012.

The school has received good support from local companies, and partnerships between a range of different agencies, such as the local authority's education services, are good. This enriches the school's provision and pupils are developing a good understanding of the world of business and of community life.

Resource management: Good

There is a good range of resources for learning and teaching throughout the school. There are enough experienced staff and support staff, and they are used effectively. The standard of the building and the outdoor environment is good.

Very good use is made of staff expertise to offer extra-curricular opportunities and improve the quality of education and raise pupils' standards. The whole-staff performance management arrangements are effective and lead to fulfilling training needs, including early professional development.

All staff make the best use of their time, their expertise and their experience in order to improve pupils' wellbeing and results.

The school has invested extensively in developing new outdoor and indoor areas. These areas provide rich opportunities which promote pupils' learning experiences across the school.

In relation to pupils' standards and the provision, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Only performance data for key stage 1 is available, and only for 2010 and 2011. During the two years, there were six pupils (four boys and two girls) in the cohort at the end of key stage 1.

Because the size of the cohorts is very small, with one pupil corresponding to 16.5% of the cohort, for both years, it is not possible to come to a meaningful judgement on the basis of this data.

In 2012, there were nine pupils (six girls and three boys) in the cohort. Every pupil attained the expected standard (Outcome 5+) in mathematical development and development of wellbeing, and 77% attained the same standard in communication.

Sixty-six point six per cent (66.6%) of pupils attained higher standards than expected (Outcome 6) in development of wellbeing, 13% in mathematical development, and no pupils in communication.

It is not possible to find any pattern in results for boys and girls, pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals, or pupils from ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils who have special educational needs show good progress towards their personal targets, and pupils of higher ability attain high standards.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Pupil responses

Twelve pupils responded to the questionnaire, namely all key stage 2 pupils at the school. The response is very positive, and all agree with every statement, apart from the statement that refers to pupils' behaviour during break times or lunch-times. Twenty-five per cent (three pupils) disagreed that all children behave well.

They all believe that the school supports and assists them well, and shows them how to keep healthy. All pupils say that they feel safe at school, and that they are doing well.

In general, the response is more positive than the average across Wales.

Parent responses

Responses were received from 12 parents. The answers are much more positive than the average across Wales. All parents have responded positively to all but three of the 19 questions. All of them are satisfied with the school in general and say that their children like the school. They say that the school gives good guidance and strong support to their children, and that staff have high expectations.

The opinion of most parents is that the school is run well, and that their children are encouraged to be healthy and take physical exercise. They also understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Terwyn Tomos	Reporting Inspector
Terry Williams	Team Inspector
Jeremy Turner	Lay Inspector
Gwyn Jones	Peer Inspector
Gaynor Williams	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. If it is available, the data report can be seen on our website alongside this report.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

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

Core subject indicator in all key stages

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

All-Wales Core Data sets

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