



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**Heol-Y-Celyn Primary School
Holly Street
Rhydyfelin
Pontypridd
RCT
CF37 5DB**

Date of visit: November 2015

by

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

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The monitoring team

Terwyn Tomos	Reporting Inspector
Kevin Davies	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring

Heol-y-Celyn Primary School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in June 2014.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is increasing the level of follow-up activity.

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about 12 months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve pupils' writing skills in both languages across the school

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

In the Foundation Phase, many pupils' ability to write extended pieces in literacy sessions in Welsh and in English, and in their work across the curriculum, is limited. Teachers do not set tasks that are specific enough and the over use of worksheets in many lessons limits the amount that these pupils write. Many pupils do not use basic punctuation consistently in their work and spelling is often inaccurate. However, when given the opportunity, more able pupils are beginning to write at length and use basic punctuation and spelling correctly.

In key stage 2, many pupils are beginning to write at length in Welsh and English in a suitable range of genres including biographies, dialogues, diaries, newspaper reports and poetry. However, there are still limited opportunities for pupils to develop more creative writing skills. All teachers have received suitable training in developing writing across the key stage. This involves teaching in small steps, which aim to develop pupils' ability to write at length in a range of genres. However, the link between these small tasks and the final extended pieces of writing is not always sufficient to raise standards. The amount of teaching time spent on these tasks is not consistent and, in a few classes, also limits the opportunities for pupils to write at length in other areas of the curriculum.

Across the key stage, many pupils do not use punctuation consistently well and spelling of common words is often inaccurate. When given the opportunity, more able pupils are able to write at length to an appropriate standard using accurate spelling and punctuation. However, writing tasks in both languages do not always challenge these pupils sufficiently.

In general, pupils' quality of handwriting and presentation varies across the school. In the Foundation Phase, many pupils form their letters correctly and present their work appropriately. In key stage 2, many pupils are developing legible cursive handwriting and are able to present their work neatly and in an organised manner.

Recommendation 2: Raise standards of Welsh and Welsh second language across the school

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Standards in Welsh second language are improving. Many pupils in the Foundation Phase display positive attitudes to learning Welsh and make good progress in their use and understanding of the Welsh language. They speak confidently about familiar topics and follow basic instructions in Welsh very well. Many pupils can follow basic sentence patterns to write appropriately on familiar topics and themes.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils speak about themselves and a wide range of familiar topics with accuracy and good pronunciation. They are able to recite poetry, which they have performed at the school eisteddfod, with accuracy and good intonation. Many pupils read appropriately for their age and write to a good standard in a limited range of styles and contexts.

Teachers now plan well for the development of Welsh language skills across the school, which ensures good progression between all classes. However, the school does not always take enough advantage of the opportunities and the expertise within the provision in the Welsh stream to stretch pupils who are learning Welsh as a second language.

Teachers have received appropriate training for the development of Welsh as a first language across the school. They now use the new Welsh scheme of work to plan suitable genres of writing across the school. However, the implementation of the new strategy for developing pupils' writing is not effective in many classes. In these less effective lessons, activities do not link clearly with the extended writing tasks and they do not challenge pupils sufficiently. This limits opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers' marking does not always focus enough on improving pupils' punctuation and spelling, nor does it identify what they are doing well and how they can improve their work. As a result, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to be a part of their own learning and to improve standards.

Recommendation 3: Improve the achievements of higher ability pupils at the end of both stages

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has an appropriate policy that outlines clearly how the school identifies and meets the needs of more able and talented pupils. School leaders have worked well with local schools to provide 'challenge days' for more able pupils to extend their writing, numeracy and science skills. Teachers identify pupils across the school who excel in literacy and numeracy and track progress appropriately.

The school has identified groups of learners in Years 5 and 6 who have the potential to achieve at the higher levels at the end of key stage 2. Teachers provide these pupils with suitable activities in small groups in order to develop their writing skills.

However, teachers' lesson planning is not explicit enough to provide for the needs of more able and talented pupils across the school. For example, most tasks are differentiated according to outcome and there is an over reliance on the use of graded success criteria. This does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils of higher ability.

Recommendation 4: Ensure better consistency in the quality of teaching and assessment across the school

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

There is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching and the level of challenge for pupils. In a few classes, pupils receive a wide range of learning opportunities and an appropriate level of challenge. However, in a minority of classes, teachers do not engage pupils effectively enough in the activity, and have low expectations.

In a minority of classes, teachers provide tasks that ensure pupils of all abilities make good progress according to their ability. However, too often, especially in key stage 2, teachers accept work that is poorly presented and is not of an appropriate standard.

The majority of teachers evaluate their own teaching and identify successes and areas for improvement that inform their future planning appropriately. However, this is inconsistent across the school and is too descriptive in the majority of cases. There are too few comments about the impact on pupils' progress.

Teachers are now using various published programmes to deliver the curriculum, particularly for the development of literacy, but these have not embedded fully enough to have significant impact on pupil outcomes. As a result, many teachers make too much use of inappropriate worksheets and low-level writing activities.

Marking in nearly all classes follows a consistent approach and teachers provide written feedback for pupils. However, the quality of this feedback is variable and pupils receive few opportunities to respond to marking in order to adapt, refine or improve their work. The school is developing sound approaches for pupils to assess their own learning and the work of others, but it is too early to see the impact on standards.

Staff have access to a wide range of data to assess pupils' achievements and progress. However, they do not use this information well enough, for example through prioritising actions and initiatives to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. There is no whole-school tracking system in place and this prevents teachers from setting challenging targets for their pupils.

Recommendation 5: Develop the role of governors further in order to challenge the school about its performance

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

The governing body meets regularly and has a clear structure of distributed responsibilities. It carries out its statutory duties appropriately.

School governors receive detailed information about the school, including performance data and reports on monitoring activities by school leaders and local authority officials. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's performance over time, including for making comparisons with that of similar schools. However, very few governors take an active part in self-evaluation activities, such as learning walks, to increase their understanding and evaluation of provision and standards.

Recently, the governors have created a detailed annual work programme that includes the monitoring and evaluation of school improvement plans. However, this programme has not had time to make an impact on school improvement. Governors still do not challenge the school's leaders robustly enough on standards of learning and teaching to have a meaningful impact on school improvement.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen the link between self-evaluation and the school improvement plan

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The newly seconded headteacher has a clear vision for the school and, supported by the deputy headteacher, she has recently put in place a comprehensive self-evaluation process. It takes account of first hand evidence from a range of sources, and includes the views of staff and pupils. Based on this evidence, the self-evaluation process identifies relevant priorities for improvement, with a clear focus on improving teaching and raising standards.

The school's current self-evaluation report is an informative and useful working document. The school development plan sets out clear plans of action for these priorities and includes a timetable for monitoring and evaluating progress.

Monitoring procedures to date include the scrutiny of pupils' work, pupil progress meetings and lesson observations. The senior management team take appropriate monitoring roles in this process. However, their contribution to the strategic leadership of the school is yet to be fully developed.

Recent monitoring reports identify strengths and shortcomings effectively, particularly in teaching. However, it is too early to identify what impact these reports will have on classroom practice and on pupil standards and outcomes.

Recommendations

In order to improve on this progress, the school should continue to address the recommendations identified in the core inspection in 2014.