



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 Babanod Mochdre**

**Station Road
Mochdre
Conwy
LL28 5EF**

Date of inspection: March 2011

by

Mr Goronwy Morris

Under Contract for

**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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

Mochdre Infants' School is situated in the village of Mochdre near Colwyn Bay and is maintained by Colwyn County Borough Council. It provides education for pupils from the ages of three to seven. Approximately 50% of the school roll comes from an area which is socially and economically disadvantaged. All pupils come from homes where English is the first language.

There are currently 58 pupils on roll including 13 who attend the nursery in the mornings. Approximately 53% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM). This figure is significantly higher than local and national averages. Baseline indications show that attainment on entry is below national and local averages. The school has identified 31% of pupils as having additional educational needs (ALN), none of whom have statements of ALN.

The present Headteacher was appointed for September 2010. She also teaches Year 2 on a 0.5 basis. A new appointment was also made for a Year 1 teacher who also started in September 2010. The school was last inspected in 2005.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil is £4604, which compares with a maximum of £9,816 and a minimum of £2,909 for primary schools in Conwy. The school has the 15th highest budget per pupil out of the 61 primary schools in Conwy.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school is good because:

- R1 Nearly all pupils make good progress in relation to their ability, interests and previous performance;
- R2 there is a welcoming ethos that ensures that all pupils are happy, safe and secure; and
- R3 teaching is good and pupils benefit from an interesting curriculum;

Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because:

- the headteacher, provides a clear sense of purpose and direction;
- there is a clear focus on improving the school and raising standards; and
- effective team working and a commitment to partnership working.

Recommendations

In order to improve further the school should:

R1 strengthen the development of pupils' writing skills;

R2 improve standards in Welsh as a second language;

R3 ensure effective planning for the development of pupils' key skills, and

R3 ensure that the link between the self-evaluation report, priorities in the School Improvement Plan and pupils' targets are clear.

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
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Standards: Good

Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, achieve well in most areas during their time at the school.

Statutory teacher assessments at KS1 in 2010 indicate that 73% per cent of pupils achieved the core subject indicator (CSI) i.e. the expected level 2 in the three subjects of English, mathematics and science in comparison with the family average of 63.2% and the national percentage of 81.6%.

Performance at KS1 shows improvement in CSI and in all 3 subjects since 2006 but a slight decline since 2008. Over the past three years, performance is consistently above the family average but generally below LA and national figures.

When compared with schools which have a similar number of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, performance at CSI is consistently in the upper 50% of schools in Wales. Performance in English was in the top 25% in two of the past three years.

The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in English, mathematics and science is generally below family and national averages.

Comparison of girls and boys performance in mathematics and science varies. In English boys' performance has exceeded that of the girls for the past three years at both level 2 and above.

Most pupils with ALN achieve well against personal targets and make good progress relative to their ability, interests and previous attainment. Most pupils entitled to free school meals make good progress in line with their ability.

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Most pupils listen well and speak confidently in different situations. Within the wide range of pupils' abilities, most read competently. This enables them to access information at appropriate levels of understanding and use it to improve their learning in a variety of subjects. The majority of pupils make effective use of their developing writing skills. They write with increasing confidence, however, few pupils write at length independently and many have an insecure grasp of syntax and spelling patterns.

All pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they enjoy their lessons. They are well motivated, engaged and eager to learn. They respond positively to all staff. Nearly all concentrate well and persevere with their tasks and activities. From an early age most pupils work well independently.

Overall, pupils' Welsh language skills are adequate. The majority of pupils understand and respond well to a range of simple questions and instructions. By the end of the KS1, a minority of pupils read and write with appropriate confidence and understanding. However, many pupils have yet to develop the necessary skills to use Welsh in different contexts. Most pupils' awareness of Welsh culture and heritage is good.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils are very well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy the wide range of activities on offer and are proud of their work and school. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of being healthy and active. They are happy and feel safe and secure in school.

Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is very good. They act responsibly and sensibly, showing respect, care and concern for others.

Pupils' average percentage attendance over the last three years is consistently in the top 25% of similar schools. The punctuality of nearly all pupils is good.

All pupils feel valued and play a full and active part in school life. Members of the eco group are actively involved in making decisions and represent the views of pupils well. Pupils enjoy the developing range of extra-curricular activities and experiences provided. Their problem solving and thinking skills develop well across the school. Older pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the world of work. This, together with their contribution to community events, ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

Teachers provide a good range of stimulating and enriching learning experiences within and beyond the school to meet the needs of all pupils. Lessons are planned well, using a range of interesting activities that contribute significantly to pupils' understanding and enjoyment in learning. The curriculum requirements of the Foundation Phase and KS1 are well met. Planning of the key skills based curriculum

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is developing well, however it lacks the consistency to ensure the progressive development of skills across the age range, particularly pupils' writing and bilingual skills.

The school has good provision for education for sustainable development and developing the pupils' understanding of varied global issues including meeting people from other parts of the world. The school has achieved the eco schools' 'Green Flag' award as a result of successfully promoting sustainability through schemes such as recycling, energy conservation and healthy living.

Provision and planning for Welsh language development is good. The school has an appropriate policy and scheme of work which teachers are beginning to implement successfully in all classes. Throughout the school, Welsh is increasingly used in many aspects of school life. The use of incidental Welsh by most adults is developing well. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the historical and cultural characteristics of Wales is promoted well particularly with events associated with St David's Day and the Eisteddfod.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is consistently good and ensures that pupils are motivated and engaged. Teachers demonstrate up-to-date subject knowledge. They share the learning intentions of lessons with pupils consistently and use a wide range of effective questioning strategies to encourage the development of pupils' wider thinking skills. All staff have positive working relationships with the pupils and this fosters a very good working environment. Highly effective use is made of the local environment to promote pupils' creative and investigative skills. Learning support staff are utilised effectively to support pupils' learning and make a significant contribution to enhancing pupils' achievement.

Teachers know their pupils well and provide good support and oral feedback. Pupil assessment on entry to the school are carefully recorded, analysed and used effectively as benchmarks against which progress is measured. There is an effective system for tracking pupils' progress in all areas of learning. Marking is appropriate and teachers regularly inform pupils of what they need to do in order to improve their work. The majority of pupils by the end of year 2 are purposefully involved in assessing each other's work and can suggest ways how it might be improved. Reports to parents are detailed and helpful.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a well-ordered caring community where everyone feels valued. Adults and pupils show mutual respect for each other. Rules and procedures are embedded throughout the school. The benefits of healthy living are promoted well across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities.

External agencies and specialist services work in effective partnership with the school, ensuring all pupils' needs are met well.

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

The school effectively identifies pupils' learning needs on entry to the school. Good support is provided and appropriate learning tasks are provided to meet these needs.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community with a very positive ethos. All pupils are valued and have equal access to all areas of provision. The school actively promotes equality and diversity through its personal and social education, religious education and wellbeing programmes. Provision for collective worship contributes well to pupils' spiritual development through opportunities for reflection and worship. Teachers reinforce these principles effectively, particularly by promoting pupils' understanding of diversity.

The school provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn and play. The buildings and grounds are well-maintained and provide a suitable environment for play and learning. The accommodation is colourful, relevant and stimulating and it supports and enhances pupils' learning.

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

The quality of leadership and management at the school is good. The newly appointed head teacher provides effective leadership and, in a relatively short period of time, has developed a strong sense of teamwork where staff and governors share a common sense of purpose and direction. This is reflected well in the very positive ethos throughout the school where high expectations in terms of standards and wellbeing are apparent.

The focus of strategic planning is to improve the school and to raise standards. The head teacher analyses assessment information carefully in order to identify areas for improvement.

Job descriptions set out the roles and responsibilities of staff clearly. Regular staff meetings provide good opportunities for all to discuss progress and to reflect on and share good practice. Support for the newly qualified teacher is purposeful and effective.

The governing body has a good understanding of its responsibilities. Governors have a strong interest in the day-to-day life of the school and are very supportive of the head teacher and staff. They are beginning to develop a better understanding of how the school performs through recently introduced monitoring arrangements and by discussing performance data. They act effectively as critical friends.

The school meets local and national priorities well. Appropriate attention has been given to the development of the Foundation Phase of learning, assessment of and for learning and partnership working.

Improving quality: Adequate

Procedures for evaluating and planning for improvement are adequate. The head teacher, staff and governors are committed to maintaining and improving standards. Performance data is carefully analysed to identify how well pupils achieve and any underperforming that's evident. Evaluation based on first-hand evidence is used effectively in assessing teaching and learning. There are appropriate formal arrangements in place to seek the views of parents and other interested parties and their views are considered carefully.

The self evaluation report tends to be descriptive rather than evaluative and lacks clear and concise judgements on learning outcomes. It does not clearly identify areas for development; therefore, the link between the self-evaluation report, priorities in the school improvement plan (SIP) and pupils' targets for improving their work is not clear. However, evidence shows that most pupils are making good progress in relation to the targets set for them. The cost, timetable and responsibilities of staff in responding to each priority are clear. Good progress has been made in responding to the recommendations identified in the last inspection.

The governing body is fully involved in discussing, commenting and challenging the findings of the self evaluation report.

The school pays good attention to Performance Management and members of staff are given every opportunity to acquire new skills.

Partnership working: Good

Partnerships with parents and the local community are good. A number of parents volunteer to help at the school and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The successful Parents/Teacher association through its fundraising activities provides additional, useful resources which enrich pupils' learning experiences. There are good links with the local junior school and the transfer arrangements for pupils are effective particularly in relation to their well being. The arrangements for a shared teacher assistant with the junior school work well.

There are good partnerships within the local family of schools and the college of higher education. The school's involvement within its professional learning community is effective and the moderation of pupils' work as a cluster of local schools enables staff to have a better understanding of the standards expected.

Links with various charities and agencies promote the wellbeing of pupils well.

Resource management: Good

Resource management is good. All teachers have appropriate knowledge and expertise to teach the curriculum effectively. Effective deployment of staff contributes to the successful development of pupils' learning experiences. Teachers make good use of planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time and statutory requirements are adhered to. The school budget resource plan is linked to the school improvement (SIP) and prioritises areas for the development of strategies. The head and governors review these priorities regularly.

The school gives good value for money in terms of pupils' outcomes and in its use of funding.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Thirteen parent questionnaires were returned and all expressed the view that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the school. All agree their children like school, feel safe and settle in well. All parents believe that their children are making good progress at the school. They say that staff expect the children to work hard and to do their best. All parents say that children behave well in school and that all are treated fairly and with respect. Most parents say that children receive appropriate support in relation to any particular individual needs. Most parents believe that their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school. All parents feel they are well-informed about their child's progress and most understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints. All parents believe the school is well or very well run.

Responses to learner questionnaires

As this is an infant school there were no questionnaires from pupils.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Goronwy Morris	Reporting Inspector
Mervyn Lloyd Jones	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Helen Vernon	Peer Inspector
Sarah Roberts	School Nominee

Contractor:

EPPC/Severn Crossing Ltd
Suite F2A Britannic House
Llandarcy
Neath
SA10 6JQ

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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