



*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

## **Report of Estyn monitoring**

**Cymer Afan Primary School  
Margam Street  
Cymmer  
Port Talbot  
SA13 3EE**

**Date of visit: January 2013**

**by**

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



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**The monitoring team**

Maldwyn Pryse	Reporting Inspector
Peter Roach	Team Inspector
Sharon Pruski	Local authority representative

## **Outcome of monitoring visit**

Cymer Afan primary school is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2011.

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

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

There has been a significant change in the teaching staff and senior management of the school since the inspection. Cymer Afan Primary School is now part of the Upper Afan Valley Federation and is now under new leadership. A primary phase leader has taken up his responsibilities over the primary schools within the federation since the beginning of the term.

## **Progress since the last inspection**

### **Recommendation 1: Raise standards in reading, writing, numeracy and ICT across the school**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Foundation Phase data for 2012 shows that the school is performing close to expectations based on the level of challenge it has within the family. When compared to similar schools based on free school meals, performance is in the top 50% in language, literacy and communication skills in English and in mathematical development. However, there are significant gender issues with girls outperforming boys. No pupil achieved the higher outcome in these learning areas in 2012.

The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level at the end of key stage 2 in 2012 placed the school in the bottom 50% of similar schools in English and mathematics. These results do not compare favourably with the family of schools averages, especially in reading and oracy where the school is the lowest performing in the family. Although standards in writing show an improvement, they remain below the family average. Girls considerably outperform the boys in key stage 2 also, and none of the boys achieved the higher level 5 in any aspect of literacy or mathematics in 2012.

Scrutiny of books and listening to learners show that standards of reading and writing are slowly improving. However, as yet, these improvements have not had time to impact sufficiently on end-of-key- stage 2 attainment.

The majority of Foundation Phase pupils read accurately and fluently, with good expression and understanding. However, a minority of pupils have not developed a wide enough range of phonic and other strategies to help them attempt unfamiliar words. The majority of pupils in key stage 2 read with confidence and fluency, and name authors they enjoy. However, few pupils are able to use the higher order reading skills such as skimming and scanning text well enough.

Early years pupils are beginning to structure their letters correctly with the younger pupils overwriting accurately. As they progress through the Foundation Phase, pupils develop a greater understanding of how form sentences. A few more able pupils use interesting and appropriate vocabulary in their writing.

Pupils' writing in key stage 2 builds appropriately on the skills learnt in the Foundation Phase. By the time they reach year 5 and 6, the majority of pupils are able to write at length and for different audiences. Although presentation has improved there continue to be too many instances of poorly presented work. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils write across a suitable range of genres and for a variety of purposes. However the over use of worksheets hampers the ability of the more able and talented pupils to develop their writing skills fully.

Pupils now use their numeracy and information and communication technology skills appropriately throughout the curriculum.

**Recommendation 2: Continue to develop assessment procedures so that information is used fully to raise standards and ensure that pupils are more involved in assessing their work**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Assessment procedures are beginning to have a positive impact on standards in the classroom. Assessment data is starting to be used effectively to identify pupils who need extra support in the form of intervention strategies. However, insufficient use is made of data to support more able and talented pupils or to tackle the significant gender gap

Assessment moderation procedures at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 are now more robust. All staff have been fully involved in the process and assessments have been fully moderated at local and consortia level.

A suitable range of assessment for learning strategies are in place but they are not yet implemented consistently in all classes across the school. Pupils' involvement in evaluating their own progress is developing but as yet is not fully embedded.

**Recommendation 3: Improve provision for the development of skills to ensure progression and continuity across the curriculum**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school makes appropriate use of a commercial topic-based scheme to support and develop skills across the curriculum. This informs medium and short term planning for the development of skills, together with schemes of work. The choice of themes successfully engages pupils, in particular boys, in learning. Opportunities for pupils to apply skills in their work in subjects are beginning to be embedded across the curriculum. However, there are still too many worksheets used and this hinders pupils' ability to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum. Furthermore, more able and talented pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

The school's monitoring of skills development through lesson observations and book scrutiny identifies some areas for development. However, there is insufficient use of the evidence gathered to evaluate impact and pupils' progress, and to inform the school improvement plan.

**Recommendation 4: Develop a robust system for monitoring all aspects of school provision and ensure that self-evaluation is systematic, rigorous and focuses strongly on pupil outcomes**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school's leadership team has introduced a range of initiatives following the inspection in October 2011 to begin to address this recommendation. Formal self-evaluation is now becoming a more regular part of school life and involves stakeholders in the process. However, self-evaluation is still not robust or self-critical enough.

There is now a suitable rolling programme for evaluating standards in all subjects over a three-year period. The school has also distributed suitable questionnaires to gather the views of parents and pupils and taken notice of suggestions well.

School data and trends in performance are analysed and shared with governors and school staff. This has led to identifying a few areas where improvement is needed and targets for inclusion in the school improvement plan.

Subject leaders and senior management team are involved in a systematic process of classroom observations, book trawls, listening to learners and pupil tracking. However, monitoring reports for the period leading up to spring 2013 are not sufficiently evaluative. Areas for improvement have not been identified clearly enough in order to inform improvement planning.

The recent school self-evaluation report is not sufficiently rigorous in terms of evaluating provision and standards. This is especially true in relation to literacy as only oracy was identified as needing quantifiable targets. The school development plan does not identify two key areas that needed significant improvement in both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

**Recommendation 5: Further develop the role of the governing body and other stakeholders in selfevaluation and school improvement**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Governors are becoming more involved in the school's self-evaluation process. They receive termly reports from the headteacher and are becoming increasingly aware of the progress made against targets in the post-inspection action plan.

The governing body has received training on the use of the school's data through close collaboration with the local secondary school. Some governors also attend local authority governor training courses which make them more aware of new developments and processes in the local authority and further afield. Through this, their understanding of data is improving. However, governors are too reliant on the information they are given.

Since the significant gender gap and lack of pupils attaining the higher levels in both phases were not identified for inclusion in the new school improvement plan they are unable to hold the school to account on these areas sufficiently. Their role as critical friends in holding the school accountable is further hindered because the literacy target within the plan lacks quantifiable targets for reading and writing.

The school is successfully developing the role of other stakeholders in self-evaluation and school improvement. As a result, parental engagement in their children's learning has improved. Pupils and parents are aware of the school's improvement targets.

### **Recommendations**

The school should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.