



Report of visit
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring

Talley C.P School

Date of visit: November 2013

by

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

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The monitoring team

Meinir Howells	Reporting Inspector
Dyfrig Ellis	Team Inspector
Catrin Griffiths	Local authority representative

Outcome of the visit

Talley C.P School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in October 2012.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for 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 requires significant improvement. Talley C.P School will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Estyn inspectors will revisit the school in approximately 12 months to inspect progress in line with the recommendations.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Ensure more progress in written work in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Pupils' standards of writing in Welsh and English have improved. The standards and accuracy of many pupils' written work in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 are good.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase make appropriate progress in their writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, many of them produce pieces for different purposes which include a sequence of sentences and make appropriate use of basic punctuation.

There has been clear progress in the ability of pupils in key stage 2 to write at length in both languages and for different purposes. This year's Welsh and English results show good progress in terms of the expected level. However, pupils' performance in both languages, in the last two years, was not as good in terms of attaining the higher levels.

Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 write at length in an organised manner and in the appropriate register in stories, factual pieces and persuasive pieces in both languages. Many pupils' ability to draft is developing well. However, the standard of handwriting in addition to presentation of work is too varied and untidy, at times.

The school has suitable procedures for tracking pupils' progress, and many pupils attain the targets that are set for them. However, targets for writing in both languages are not always specific or challenging enough.

Recommendation 2: Improve the response to pupils' written work in order to give specific guidance on how to improve their work

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Pupils' written work is now marked regularly and comments are constructive and identify what pupils need to do to improve the standard and accuracy of their work. There is now more consistency in the quality of teachers' marking between both classes. The school has revised the marking policy and pupils have a better understanding of the marking symbols used by teachers. Teachers present learning intentions and success criteria clearly for writing tasks, and they assess what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve their work successfully. Pupils are now developing a clearer understanding of teachers' expectations and how to succeed in tasks.

Teachers use 'two stars and a wish' regularly when marking and these feed appropriately into pupils' individual targets. Although the school has individual targets for more able pupils, these are not always specific enough. Pupils are also beginning to set their own targets. The oldest pupils in key stage 2 have a clear idea of their strengths and areas for development. The school shares targets for individual pupils with parents appropriately.

Teachers give pupils an opportunity to respond to written comments about how they can improve their work. However, pupils need to continue to respond to teachers' comments about how to improve their work. Very recently, pupils have begun to use assessment for learning strategies to help them assess their own progress and the work of their peers.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that the school provides a wide and balanced curriculum in key stage 2

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Activities in key stage 2 offer varied learning experiences which engage many pupils. However, planning is not always specific enough to motivate and meet the needs of the age range and ability of all pupils in the class, and to ensure a full range of learning experiences.

The school has worked with a cluster of schools in order to develop short-term plans which include opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. However, the school's short-term plans are not detailed enough to ensure that these skills, in addition to pupils' information and communication technology skills, are applied coherently across all subjects. Teachers have begun to evaluate the success of the activities provided, along with the quality of their own teaching. However, evaluations are not always incisive enough to enable teachers to plan for pupils' progressive development in skills.

Provision for science has improved since the inspection and pupils now receive rich experiences when conducting investigations. Many predict results intelligently and offer mature explanations when discovering an unexpected result.

Recently, the school has provided appropriate opportunities to develop independent learners. These enable the majority of pupils to make decisions and take some ownership of their learning.

The school does not have robust enough monitoring systems to ensure that the learning experiences provided in key stage 2 cover the required range of the National Curriculum and religious education in full. The school needs to monitor planning carefully in order to ensure that it includes all aspects. Long-term plans do not offer enough guidance to ensure that all pupils build upon previous subject knowledge and develop their skills effectively in all subjects.

Recommendation 4: Use assessments more consistently and more effectively in order to track pupils' achievement and progress

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has useful learner portfolios and school and cluster portfolios for Welsh and English. However, these are not used enough by the school as good examples for improving pupils' standards. Moderating within the cluster and training by the local authority have enabled teachers to level work more effectively. This is confirmed by the 2013 assessments.

The electronic tracking system enables the school to identify the attainment of specific groups and individuals, including boys and girls, pupils who are entitled to free school meals, additional learning needs and looked-after children. However, these procedures have not been embedded to ensure effective intervention to target underachievement.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen the strategic leadership strategies in order to ensure a focus on raising standards

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and the chair has used a range of appropriate activities to identify the school's strengths, in addition to areas for improvement. This includes frequent visits to the school, scrutinising books and lesson observations. In light of this, it offers an appropriate challenge to the headteacher when considering pupils' performance and the quality of teaching and learning.

However, the ability of all governors to contribute to the school's strategic direction has not been developed well enough. Although the headteacher presents information on pupils' attainment data to governors, they do not make enough use of this data to challenge the school in relation to aspects of underperformance, particularly in comparison with similar schools.

The school's arrangements for self-evaluation and planning for improvement have strengthened since the inspection. However, the school's systems are not rigorous enough and do not include input from all of the school's stakeholders. The school's

evaluations do not focus enough on the steps taken and their effect on the standards achieved by pupils.

The headteacher ensures that governors are familiar with the self-evaluation report and the school development plan, but governors do not play an active enough role in terms of setting the school's strategic direction. The self-evaluation report identifies the school's good features but does not offer a critical enough overview.

The school's leadership procedures do not focus enough on raising standards and outcomes are not analysed in enough detail to produce strategies for improvement. Although the school development plan contains individual targets for each priority, they are not measurable enough and do not include detailed enough financial considerations or specific review times. As a result, it is not easy for governors to review progress.