



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 visit
Level of follow-up: significant improvement**

**Tonnau Primary
School Road
Tonna
Neath
SA11 3EJ**

Date of visit: June 2013

by

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



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The monitoring team

Barry Norris	Reporting Inspector
Sarah Lewis	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

Tonnau Primary is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2012.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from any further follow-up activity.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards in key stage 2, especially in English

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school is performing well overall and has sustained or improved on its performance last year. The school has reconsidered and improved its scheme of work for English. It has put in place a good range of intervention strategies to support continued improvement in pupils' literacy skills. Guided reading has become well established and there is a good range of activities and tasks in pupils' work to develop their reading skills appropriately. The school library resources have improved and now better support pupils' wider reading for information and enjoyment.

Most pupils have reading ages that are at or above their chronological age. Those who are falling behind benefit from a range of appropriate support. The school tracks pupils' ability in reading regularly using a standardised test, but this only generates a reading age up to 10 years and 6 months and many older pupils in key stage 2 can read beyond this level. This limits the usefulness of the test as a diagnostic tool to help support pupils' reading development further.

The impact of visitors, such as a story teller and poet, has been very positive in engaging pupils' interest in writing. The outcomes following from these visits are frequently good or very good. After considering a sample of pupils' written work and comparing it with their reading ability, it is clear that, while many pupils have made significant gains in their reading skills, they have not yet transferred this improvement across into their written work.

Recommendation 2: Improve attendance

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Over the last year, the school's attendance rate has improved significantly. Last year, the overall rate was 93.4%, which placed the school in the lowest 25% compared with other similar schools. The overall attendance rate this year has increased to just over 95%. This increase has occurred as a result of the establishment of an electronic system to record and track attendance and improved engagement with the educational welfare officer. It also reflects the much higher profile that regular attendance now has among pupils and parents, and better analysis of information on attendance patterns and issues.

Recommendation 3: Improve subject plans so that the curriculum builds systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has reviewed its curriculum planning arrangements carefully. Teachers use termly planning overviews and curriculum maps to ensure appropriate coverage of areas of learning and subjects. Teachers' weekly planning sets out clear learning objectives and the details of pupil activity in classes. The planning links closely to Foundation Phase outcomes and National Curriculum levels of attainment. Teachers reflect regularly on the effectiveness of their lessons and consider the next steps in pupils' learning in their weekly planning. They make sure that there is appropriate continuity and progression in pupils' learning across the school, especially within the mixed-age classes. Teachers use assessment and performance data appropriately when planning activities and putting together groups for activities in class.

Recommendation 4: Ensure that learning activities are suitably adapted to meet the needs of all pupils

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Teachers regularly plan activities for pupils of different abilities in their classes. They take careful account of a range of assessment and performance data when planning work and constructing groups in classes. They monitor pupils' progress systematically using an electronic tracking system. They identify pupils who are struggling with their learning at an early stage and put in place appropriate support mechanisms, for example speech, language and reading intervention programmes.

The individual education plans for pupils identified as having additional learning needs are child-friendly and set out appropriate learning targets. In nearly all cases, pupils respond well to the extra support they receive and make appropriate gains in their skills, especially in reading.

The school has a policy and a register for more able and talented pupils. Teachers' planning takes appropriate account of more able pupils. In most cases, they adapt the work for these pupils well so they receive an appropriate degree of challenge. On occasions, teachers' planning relies too heavily on more able pupils simply undertaking the same task as others, but producing better work as a result. Overall, the specific adaptation of work for less able pupils in mainstream classes is more limited.

Recommendation 5: Challenge shortcomings in performance, provision and leadership more rigorously

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has taken a number of appropriate actions to challenge shortcomings identified at the time of the previous inspection. These include a more rigorous analysis of data, systematic monitoring of teaching and learning, and regular discussion and sharing of good practice in teaching. All of these approaches have

had a positive impact on standards, provision and leadership in the school.

The school has identified appropriate and challenging targets for pupils' outcomes. School leaders and teachers use the school tracking system, alongside a range of performance data, to monitor pupils' progress and to inform lesson planning effectively. The headteacher and deputy headteacher meet frequently to discuss standards and to consider progress against planned actions.

Regular observations of teaching, both by the headteacher and by external advisers, have helped teachers to plan more effectively for pupils of different abilities. The headteacher also scrutinises pupils' books regularly to monitor progress against targets in the school development plan. Teachers discuss the outcomes of lesson observations and book scrutiny in staff meetings and, as a result, teaching has improved well in some areas. Lesson evaluations and the review of pupils' books identify strengths well, but they do not focus enough on identifying key areas for development.

Recommendation 6: Develop the governing body's role as a critical friend

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Governors are well informed about pupils' outcomes and school developments. They are regular visitors to classes and observe teaching and learning at first hand. This gives governors a useful context for discussion in meetings. The school has worked closely with the local authority to ensure that governors receive appropriate training in the analysis of performance data. This has helped governors to question the headteacher about the school's performance more effectively and with greater understanding. The governing body has worked well with the local authority to develop the skills of its members. This work has improved the level of challenge that the governors offer to the school about its performance and proposed developments.

Recommendation 7: Improve school development planning so that priorities clearly identify targets in terms of pupil outcomes

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

A thorough analysis of performance data has helped the school to identify targets for improvement more accurately. The school's development plan is based firmly on the post-inspection action plan. The plan details specific actions, clear success criteria and sensible monitoring procedures. It includes responsibilities, realistic timescales and likely costs. The development plan gives the school a structured and workable means to make improvements, to develop provision and to raise standards. It has supported improvements in many aspects of the life and work of the school. However, there is not a clear enough link between the outcomes of self-evaluation and the targets in the school development plan.

Recommendation 8: Address the accommodation issues brought to the attention of the governing body

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has addressed all of the accommodation issues brought to the attention of the governing body at the time of the core inspection. The school now offers a safe, secure and pleasant environment for pupils.

Recommendations

The school should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that it has yet to address fully.