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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Caerau Primary School  
Library Road  
Maesteg  
Bridgend  
CF34 0PA**

**Date of inspection: 18-20<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

**by**

**Mr Peter Mathias**

**Reporting Inspector, under contract to Estyn**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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## Context

Caerau Primary School is a new school formed from the amalgamation of Caerau Nursery School, Blaenllynfi Infants School and Caerau Junior School in September 2009. The school operated on two separate sites until building work was completed. The new school became operational in January 2010 and is situated at the upper end of the Llynfi Valley north of the once mining town of Maesteg. Bridgend is the local authority (LA). The area is part of a 'Communities First' initiative and has high levels of social and economic deprivation.

On the whole, pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have on entry, levels of skills that are well below those expected for their age. They enter the nursery at three years of age; currently 40 attend on a full-time basis and 13 part-time. There is a newly formed 'Flying Start' facility for younger pupils on site which many currently in the nursery have previously attended.

Overall, there are 353.5 full-time equivalent pupils on roll. This includes 16 who attend two learning resource bases for pupils of Foundation Phase age and two for those of Key Stage 2 (KS2) age, one for 15 pupils with moderate learning difficulties and one for eight pupils with severe learning difficulties. These pupils come from a wider area.

Sixty-four per cent of pupils are considered to have some degree of additional learning needs (ALN). In line with LA policy, no pupil has a statement of ALN. These are very high figures and well above the local and national averages. Fifty-three per cent of pupils are considered eligible for free school meals. This is again a very high proportion and well above local and national averages. No pupil has the national curriculum (NC) disapplied.

No pupil has Welsh as their home language or has support in English as an additional language. One pupil is from a non-Welsh English speaking background. The headteacher was appointed with effect from September 2009. During the inspection one of the permanent staff was not in the school after being granted a year's leave of absence. His place was taken by a temporary teacher.

The school was part of the 'Early Start' initiative for the introduction of the Foundation Phase and as a result this phase extends to children in Year 2(Y2)

The individual school budget per pupil for Caerau Primary School is £3,998 which compares with a maximum of £4,826 and a minimum of £2,758 for primary schools in the Bridgend LA. The school has the eighth highest budget per pupil out of the 52 primary schools in the Bridgend LA.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The school is good because

- standards in literacy and numeracy in mathematics are good;
- provision for those with ALN is of a high quality;
- the school is well led;
- nearly all pupils behave well;
- the accommodation provides an outstanding resource for learning; and
- most teaching is good.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvements are good because:

- standards have improved the senior management team is very focused on raising standards across the school;
- the professional staff are very well motivated;
- the process of self-evaluation and school improvement is rigorous, robust and well used to effect improvement;
- standards in Welsh, information communications technology (ICT) and the use of investigative skills are uneven across the school;
- there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching between classes; and
- opportunities are missed to develop pupils' personal, spiritual and aesthetic awareness.

## Recommendations

In order to improve further, Caerau Primary School needs to:

- R1 improve standards in Welsh language development, ICT and the use of investigative skills across the curriculum;
- R2 strengthen provision for pupils to develop their personal, spiritual and aesthetic awareness; and
- R3 make the good and excellent teaching consistent across the school.

### *What happens next?*

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>
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<b>Good</b>
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### **Standards: Good**

Many pupils enter the school with very low levels of basic skills compared to those usually found amongst children of their age. Nearly all make good progress in their learning.

Because this is a new school, little reliable information is available to indicate long term trends in standards or progress. The situation is also complicated by the lack of national teacher assessment data for seven year olds because these pupils were not assessed as part of the national assessment arrangements at the end of KS because they were part of the Foundation Phase. Additionally, the 2010 national teacher assessment results for 11 year olds contain a significant group of pupils who attended one of the KS2 resource classes.

In the KS2 national teacher assessments for 11 year olds, pupils in the main school reached standards which overall were close to the national and local averages in English. In mathematics and science results were below these averages. The combined results were also below these averages.

When these results were compared to those schools considered to have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school performed above most of these schools in English and just below in mathematics. In science results were well above. The combined results were also below. Care should be taken when considering the results of similar schools because of the very high proportion of

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pupils in this school who are entitled to free school meals (53%) compared to those schools in the same group which have upwards of 32%.

In 2010 in KS2 the school performed below most of the family of schools to which it belongs.

In the 2010 assessments, boys out performed girls. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels (Level 5) were also below local and national averages. In these assessments many pupils entitled to free school meals reached the expected level (Level 4). Nearly all pupils who are identified as more able or talented achieve well. Those with ALN, including those in the resource bases, make good progress.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase and in KS2 apply their communication and numeracy skills securely in a range of contexts. However, their investigative skills and ability to solve problems are underdeveloped.

By the end of KS2, standards in pupils' books are good in most subjects. In English many pupils write well for a wide variety of reasons and in different styles. A particularly strong feature is the progress many pupils are making in improving their reading skills as a result of recent initiatives. By the end of KS2 many speak clearly and effectively in discussions with other pupils and with adults.

Standards in ICT are mixed. While younger pupils in the Foundation Phase achieve well and make good progress, the oldest in this phase do not. Across the school pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to transfer these skills to their work across the curriculum. As a result, by the end of KS2 standards are not as high as expected. By the end of KS2, standards in Welsh language development are underdeveloped.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Pupils' wellbeing is a strong feature of this school with the provision of a weekly on-site dentist and a medical room for routine tests and treatment being excellent practice.

All pupils feel valued in this safe, secure and very caring environment. Pupils and parents speak highly of the school's promotion of healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise. Older pupils know what is and what is not good for them, including substance abuse.

There has been a significant improvement in attendance, although rates are just below the national average for Wales and the LA. Punctuality is good. There have been no exclusions over the last 12 months.

This is very much a community school and pupils are actively involved in several community based projects. This has had a positive impact on their 'sense of community'. The school council meets regularly and has organised several fundraising activities and sponsored events.

All pupils know the importance of showing care and concern for each other and for their school. Nearly all behave very well and are eager to learn. They listen carefully and respond confidently to their teachers.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Good**

Currently the provision for sustainable development and global citizenship is adequate. The outside environment has a plot tended by the gardening club. Other new natural habitats and wildlife areas are being developed.

This new school has many features which help minimise waste and energy of which all pupils are aware through a graphic display in the school entrance.

**Teaching: Good**

The overall quality of teaching is good and includes a small number of excellent examples. Practitioners working in the Foundation Phase have a clear understanding of the needs of pupils and nearly always provide a wide range of stimulating, effective learning experiences for them.

Across the school teachers plan carefully and make the objectives of their lessons clear. They emphasise what they expect of their pupils in the time available and have high expectations of what can be achieved. They know the individual needs of their pupils well. Their lessons have pace and purpose and they make learning fun. In the best lessons they use ICT very effectively to hold pupils' attention for long periods and to make the subjects come vividly to life.

In the few lessons where teaching is less effective, opportunities to extend pupils' skills in ICT are missed and teachers do not build on previous progress made in Welsh language development. Lessons are uninspiring and expectations of pupils are inadequate.

The school has a clear policy for all aspects of assessment. Pupils are aware of success criteria and judge their own progress effectively. Marking of pupils' work is good and guides their learning forward.

The school makes good use of the assessment data that it collects and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. This is particularly evident in pupils' literacy where pupils are making good progress in assessing their own learning and what they need to do to improve.

The school's annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. They are of a good quality and are sufficiently detailed and informative.

**Care, support and guidance: Good**

Effective and clear arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing. Pupils' personal and social education is particularly well supported in the Foundation Phase. In KS2 the formal time set aside for this is limited.

The provision of specialist services is an excellent feature of the school. The school provides high quality accommodation to a variety of agencies that support pupils. The

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school has excellent systems to identify and track pupils in need of specialist provision both in the mainstream and in the resource bases.

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

Overall, the learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their moral, social and cultural development.

ALN is a strength of the school. The ALN co-ordinator is very effective. Systems have been implemented that ensure that the needs of pupils with ALN are accurately identified and addressed quickly. The support for those underachieving in literacy is a strength of the school.

Parents of ALN pupils are kept well informed and are involved in their children's progress through meetings and pupils' individual action plans.

Staff successfully promote good behaviour and are consistent when applying sanctions. Bullying is not tolerated and pupils feel confident to tell an adult when there are problems.

Assemblies generally are uninspiring and lack a sense of awe and wonder. The spiritual dimension to life is not given sufficient emphasis and pupils do not have enough opportunities to engage in reflection. Across the school, pupils are not asked to consider the aesthetic dimensions to life, for example in art and in music.

**Learning environment: Good**

The school is an inclusive community, where pupils receive equal access to all areas of the school's provision. There is a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity. The schools' policies and procedures actively promote good race relations and the school meets its duties under the Race Relations Act. The school promotes the prevention and elimination of oppressive behaviour.

The nature of the building actively promotes learning, good behaviour and respect for the school environment. It is a highly stimulating and exceptional learning environment which supports both teaching and learning very well. The school is very well resourced.



<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Leadership: Good**

The school is well led. Despite significant delays and structural problems, the headteacher has ensured that the new school has made a very successful start. This is in large part due to the energy, enthusiasm and clarity of purpose which the senior management team (SMT) have brought to the task.

There is a strong commitment from the SMT and all staff to ensure that the educational provision for all pupils is of the highest quality possible. Heavy emphasis is placed on raising standards and in developing strategies to achieve this objective. A particular strength is the very positive ethos amongst all staff to work together as a cohesive and successful team.

Much has been achieved in reviewing the quality of teaching and learning at first hand. The information which has come from this process is well used to plan ahead to provide training and support on an individual and whole school basis, for example to raise standards in literacy.

Provision for the Foundation Phase and the organisation of it is a strength of the school. Links with other schools in the area to agree standards are well organised and effective. However, while the need to continue the process of developing pupils' skills in the Welsh language has been identified as a priority, provision for this is uneven.

The governing body is very well led. The chair knows the local area and the needs of the school very well and is a regular visitor. There is a close working relationship between governors and the professional staff. All governors are equally committed to making the new school a success and an important and constructive force in the community. Their role as a supportive yet critical friend is well established.

**Improving quality: Good**

In the short time that the school has been in existence, effective systems of self-evaluation have been developed and put into practice.

The school generates a wide range of pupil assessment data. This data is analysed by the school's management team very carefully and used effectively to evaluate standards across much of the curriculum. The LA supports the school's own self-evaluation through adviser visits which focus on performance and standards.

The school has successfully involved parents in self-evaluation via a questionnaire, but the influence of the 'pupil voice' is limited. It is currently sought through the school council and there are plans to extend this in the near future. The governing body is involved in self-evaluation and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and developmental priorities.

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The school's self-evaluation informs the school development plan (SDP) which accurately reflects the school's current needs and priorities. The SDP is succinct and has a clear focus on the raising of standards in the key areas of English, mathematics and skills. Its targets are challenging and measurable. It is a well thought out document that is understood and acted upon by the school's staff and governing body.

The school organises a wide variety of continuing professional development (CPD) for both teaching and support staff. CPD is carefully organised to reflect the needs of the school's SDP and staff performance management objectives. The impact of CPD on standards within the school is carefully monitored by the deputy headteacher.

The school is developing a culture of sharing good practice, both within the school and beyond. Professional learning communities have been formed within the local group of schools. These have helped raise standards in literacy and developed teachers' assessment skills.

**Partnership working: Good**

Overall, there is a good range of partnerships both within and beyond the school itself. There are good arrangements for pupils when they begin school including close links with the 'Flying Start' unit based on the school site. There are also good links with other local schools including the secondary school to which nearly all pupils transfer. These ensure there is consistency when end of key stage assessments are made.

Links with services connected to the needs of ALN pupils in the resource bases are a strength of the school. They reflect the very effective partnership between these agencies and staff.

Parental links are strong and much has been put in place to ensure that the school is at the heart of the local community. Partnerships to make the best use of the facilities available are being developed.

**Resource management: Good**

Staffing and financial resources are managed and deployed effectively to support improvement. Overall, the school deploys teaching and support staff well, who have the knowledge and expertise to cover all aspects of the curriculum.

The impact of resources on teaching and learning is kept under review and future needs are carefully predicted. The school's spending decisions relate well to priorities for improvement and the benefit of pupils as outlined in the SDP. Overall, outcomes for pupils are good.

The school has reviewed its management structure in line with the national workload agreement on Provision for teachers to have time to plan, prepare and assess (PPA) is well managed and the time is well used. The school gives good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Thirty-nine parents completed the questionnaire. Overall, they were very happy with the school. Nearly all thought that their children liked school and had settled in well. They felt that their children made good progress, behaved well and were well taught. Parents believed that their children were appropriately challenged in their work and homework was relevant. They said that their children were well treated and encouraged to be healthy. All felt that their children were safe in school and were well supported.

All parents said that they were well informed about their children's progress and were comfortable about approaching the school if they needed to do so. They knew what to do if they had a complaint. They believed that their children were successfully encouraged to be mature and were well prepared for the next phase of their education. All believed that the school provided a good education for their children.

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

Fifty-four pupils responded to the questionnaire. All felt safe in their school and were taught how to be healthy. All felt that staff were helpful and as a result they made progress. All thought that they had enough equipment to learn successfully.

Nearly all who responded felt that bullying was properly dealt with by staff and they knew who to go to if they were upset. Nearly all thought that the school gave them enough opportunities to be fit and healthy. Nearly all believed they were doing well at school and could get help when they needed it. They thought that homework was helpful to their progress. They felt that behaviour at playtimes was good. Most felt that other children behaved well and allowed them to get on with their own work.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Peter Mathias	Reporting Inspector
Helen Wyn Smith	Team Inspector
Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Morien Morgan	Peer Inspector
John Bibby	School Nominee

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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