



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

**Llangennech Junior School
Pontarddulais Road
Llangennech
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA14 8YB**

Date of inspection: December 2010

by

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



**INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL**

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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Context

Llangennech Junior School is situated in the village of Llangennech, on the outskirts of the town of Llanelli in Carmarthenshire. The school serves the village and the surrounding area. There are 197 pupils between 7 and 11 years old on the register. The area is described as one that is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 11.96%, which is lower than the national figure.

The school has pupils from the whole range of ability. Twenty-nine per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register including seven pupils who have statements of additional learning needs. This percentage is higher than the national percentage.

Eighty-seven per cent of the pupils come from homes where English is the main language spoken. The school states that 54% of the pupils speak Welsh to first language standard. There are no children of ethnic minority backgrounds at the school at present.

The school provides education through the medium of Welsh or English in two separate streams. There are four classes where pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh and four classes where pupils are taught through the medium of English, where pupils learn Welsh as a second language.

In 2010-2011, the individual school budget for Llangennech Junior School is £3,511 per pupil. This compares with a maximum of £17,415 and a minimum of £3,014 for primary schools in Carmarthenshire. This places the school 64th amongst the 114 primary schools in Carmarthenshire.

The present headteacher has been in post since September 2009.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- pupils' standards of achievement are consistently high;
- pupils' ability throughout the school to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning is excellent;
- the teaching at the school is consistently good; and
- the school's schemes of work pay good attention to developing pupils' key skills.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are excellent because:

- the school has a successful record of ensuring continuous improvement in standards;
- the school's leadership has a clear vision, which considers the opinion of all stakeholders when developing a strategic direction; and
- the practice of sharing good practice within and outside the school and providing staff with regular opportunities to develop and master new skills ensures a culture of striving continuously to achieve excellence in learning and teaching.

Recommendations

In order to continue to improve, the school needs to:

R1 raise the standards of boys' work;

R2 increase the confidence and willingness of pupils in the English medium stream to use Welsh naturally in situations outside the classroom; and

R3 build on the success of the current self-evaluation procedures so that they include every aspect of school life.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan based on the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

During their time at the school, almost all pupils make good progress in their learning.

Most of the pupils read at a level which is appropriate to their age and ability, and they make full use of their writing skills across different areas of learning. The oral ability of pupils at the upper end of the school is very good. They are able to discuss a variety of subjects very effectively in Welsh or in English, according to the language of the class, using a wide vocabulary. Their knowledge of vocabulary that relates specifically to the learning areas is particularly good.

Pupils in the Welsh medium stream make very good progress in their use of Welsh from the time they start at school. Most of the pupils use the language fluently and effectively whatever the occasion, both formal and informal. The way in which the majority of the pupils use Welsh regularly with each other is a strong feature.

In the English medium classes across the school, the majority of pupils reach good standards in Welsh second language, especially in the school's lower years. They converse effectively, read correctly and with expression and write to an appropriate standard in the context of their lessons. However, beyond that context, many pupils cannot hold an extended conversation. They lack confidence and are unwilling to use the language in a variety of situations.

The results of statutory assessments at the end of key stage 2 show that pupils reach standards which are consistently above the Welsh average. When comparing the results of key stage 2 with similar schools across Wales, the school's results are consistently within the highest 50% in every subject and in the core subject indicator (CSI – the expected level in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science), and reached the highest 25% in Welsh in 2010. There has been a general increase in pupils' achievements in every core subject over a period of four years.

Over three years, the school's performance within its family of schools is significantly higher than expected. The percentage of pupils who reach the expected levels (Level 4+) and the extended levels (Level 5+) is consistently higher than the average of the family of schools in all of the core subjects and the core subject indicator.

There is a significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls, which is larger than the corresponding difference in the family and in Wales. However, boys' results in the school are consistently higher than the average results for boys in the family of schools.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Most of the pupils are very mature in terms of their expression and behaviour. Throughout the school generally, almost all of them take great interest and pride in

their work. They engage very enthusiastically with their tasks, enjoy their work and discuss their work skilfully. Almost all of the pupils contribute ideas in lessons and take part in discussions with confidence. Almost all of the older pupils ask mature and intelligent questions during lessons. Almost all state their opinion and justify this without hesitation, exhibiting a very high standard of reasoning ability. Without exception, they work together very effectively in class, in small groups and in pairs.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent throughout the school. They are polite and affectionate and are respectful and caring towards each other. This respect is also an obvious feature of pupils' behaviour in informal situations, for example in the school yard and in the after-school clubs.

Attendance levels have shown a consistent increase over the last year and they have now reached 94.06%, which compares favourably with the Welsh average.

The pupils feel safe at school, and they all have a positive attitude towards eating healthily and enjoy physical activities. The pupils take advantage of opportunities to take responsibility, which includes the eco council and the school council and as prefects, and they benefit from this. As a result, they develop confidence and positive attitudes and respect towards others.

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

The curriculum is broad and meets pupils' needs appropriately. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' skills in almost all of the subject schemes of work, including the short-term plans. The school ensures that there is consistency between both language streams in terms of the pupils' range of experiences, including skills development.

The teachers place good emphasis on responding to the needs of specific groups of pupils. This includes pupils with additional learning needs or pupils who need additional support in specific areas.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship has been developed thoroughly in work in science and geography, and also in the activities of the eco council. The school's outdoor environment, including the vegetable garden and the outdoor learning areas, is developing as a valuable contribution to the pupils' experiences.

The links with the community and with local employers offer the pupils appropriate and direct experiences of the world of work and enterprise activities, including work with a local company to develop a garden and entrepreneurial work. In addition, the school has developed links with a range of local organisations in order to offer varied and relevant experiences.

The school succeeds in developing a good ethos of Welshness. There are distinctive displays in the classrooms and in corridors which include suitable vocabulary, promoting the pupils' ability to develop the Welsh language and positive attitudes towards Welshness.

Teaching: Good

Good quality teaching throughout the school ensures a high level of interest in work, and good motivation. The teachers make skilful use of a variety of questions to confirm the pupils' understanding and also to challenge them to think. Pupils are encouraged to use their thinking skills across all areas of the curriculum, especially in art and design, English and geography. Teachers explain new concepts clearly and correct any misconceptions quickly.

The relationship between staff and pupils is positive and supportive. As a result, the pupils have the confidence to take risks and learn from their mistakes. Behaviour is managed well and the staff have high expectations of how pupils should behave.

Pupils' progress in learning is assessed regularly and accurately. There is an effective system in place to track pupils' achievements. The teaching staff and the learning assistants provide pupils with useful oral and written feedback and help pupils to know what they have to do in order to improve. 'Assessment for learning' strategies have been implemented in all classes. Pupils have regular opportunities to evaluate their own work and other pupils' work across the school.

The reports for parents and carers are clear and informative.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Policies, procedures and learning experiences promote pupils' personal development effectively, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and wellbeing.

The school successfully promotes healthy lifestyles to pupils. For example, pupils are encouraged to walk to school, to grow vegetables and to eat healthily. Outdoors, especially on the activities path, pupils are encouraged to keep fit. In Years 3 and 4, pupils benefit from '*Wake-up, Shake-up*' sessions outside, which improve their concentration levels and their general physical fitness.

The induction arrangements for pupils who start school and the arrangements for the pupils' transition period to secondary school are thorough.

The school's policy and procedures for safeguarding children are appropriate.

The school ensures good provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Pupils who need additional help with their basic skills are identified effectively. Learning assistants provide these pupils with good quality support. The school uses specialist services appropriately, including speech and language services, to extend its provision. Although the school has identified more able and talented pupils, the provision for them is at an early stage.

The learning environment: Good

The school is an organised and inclusive community, and the quality of relationships is a strong feature. In their questionnaires, 100% of the children stated that the staff

respected them and their backgrounds and helped them to understand and respect people from different backgrounds. The school prepares them effectively for the next stage in their lives.

There are appropriate policies, plans and procedures in place to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils, and equality and social diversity.

The school's extensive site is used with purpose in order to enrich play and learning experiences. The garden is used specifically to grow and sell vegetables. The classrooms are large, with sufficient resources for the purposes of the curriculum.

Across the school, there are colourful and stimulating displays which promote and enrich pupils' learning. The toilets are clean and suitable and the entire site and building are maintained well.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision regarding the school's long-term strategy, and is ready to consider the opinion of all stakeholders, for example through the parents' forum, dedicated questionnaires and the school council.

The senior management team and the governors identify standards thoroughly and develop strategies to deal with a range of matters. As a result, new policies have led to significant improvements in attendance levels, as well as in pupils' behaviour.

The school has clear and agreed aims. All of the school's staff work together successfully as a team and share the same values. As a result of the management team's leadership, there is consistency in the quality of the school's planning documents and in the teaching methods.

Effective arrangements exist for managing staff performance and staff training. Recently, a performance management system for the learning assistants has been established.

The governors are very supportive of the school's work and are fully aware of their responsibilities. There is a programme in place for class visits, discussions with subject co-ordinators and oral feedback to the governing body. From time to time, teachers will attend governors' meetings to report on specific subjects.

Positive steps have been taken to meet national priorities, in areas such as assessment for learning and the School Effectiveness Framework.

Improving quality: Good

The school's self-evaluation procedures are comprehensive and effective. They use an appropriate range of information sources.

The information that stems from self-evaluation leads clearly to deciding the priorities in the school development plan. All of the teaching staff take part in identifying priorities in the plan and they are clear about what needs to be done to continue to improve. Costs are identified appropriately in the school development plan and the plan includes measurable success criteria where appropriate.

The willingness to review and ensure continuous improvement permeates the work of all the school's staff. Knowledge and expertise are shared willingly. Such professional development has a positive effect on school life. A visit by some staff to the local special school supported internal training on managing behaviour, as did sharing good practice and ideas with the infants' school.

Through the headteacher, the school leads work to establish a professional learning community across the family of schools.

The school listens carefully to the views of parents and pupils and responds positively to these. The parents' forum has been key to improving homework practice in the school. The development of the outdoor learning area is a good example of the way in which pupils' views influence the school's priorities

Working in partnership: Good

The school has effective links with parents and carers. Parents receive current information about pupils' progress, new learning strategies and the school's successes. The regular newsletter is colourful and attractive and provides a very good illustration of the pupils' achievements.

The school's teachers work well together with the teachers of the infants' school to ensure a successful transition period to Year 3 classes and to ensure progression and continuity in teaching methods. Some policies, such as disciplinary procedures, are now shared by the two schools.

The school's teachers work closely with local primary and secondary schools to plan valuable learning and social experiences which facilitate the transition period. Effective moderation work takes place in the core subjects, including the preparation of moderation packages for end of key stage assessments, and teachers from the school lead this work in science and mathematics.

There are constructive links with local businesses and with local higher education and further education institutes.

The school's attractive and colourful website is a useful source of information for parents and other stakeholders.

Resource management: Good

The school's leaders use money effectively in order to ensure an appropriate level of trained staff who are qualified to deliver the curriculum. The school's support staff are an important and effective part of the team and have a positive influence on

learning and teaching. The co-ordinators work specifically to improve the provision in order to develop their areas further.

The school provides suitable training in the form of individual courses and joint training courses. The school makes the best possible use of resources to reinforce pupils' learning experiences.

All staff at the school work together effectively to create an exciting and attractive environment, both inside and outside, for the pupils. The school provides value for money in terms of pupils' outcomes and its use of finance.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifty-eight people responded to the questionnaire, which is about a third of parents who have children at the school. Every parent is generally satisfied with the school; they believe that their children like the school and that they are safe there. They state that the school is run well. Almost all of them feel that their children are making good progress at school after having support to settle well there. They believe that the teaching is good and that the teachers and school staff expect pupils to work hard and do their best. The parents are provided with regular information about their children's progress, and homework builds well on the things that pupils learn at school. Most parents feel that pupils have good support according to their needs, and feel happy to ask questions and make suggestions to the school. They feel that the school helps their children to mature and take responsibility at school. In most parents' opinion, the school encourages their children to be healthy and exercise regularly. They believe that there is a good variety of activities including educational visits, and most feel that the school prepares pupils well in order to move on to secondary school.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Ninety-six pupils responded to the questionnaire. All pupils feel safe at school and know what to do and whom to turn to if they need help with their work. Almost all pupils think that they are doing well at school, and that the teachers and other staff help them to learn and make progress. They believe that their homework helps them to understand and improve work and that there are enough relevant resources, including computers, at school for them to do their work. Almost all of the pupils think that the school deals well with any instances of bullying, and they know whom to turn to if they are worried or upset. They believe that the school teaches them how to stay healthy and provides them with many regular opportunities to do physical exercise. Most of the pupils think that other children behave well at play time, lunch time and during lessons.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Terwyn Tomos	Reporting Inspector
Bev Jenkins	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Branwen Llewellyn Jones	Peer Inspector
Gary Anderson	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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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