



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

**St Illtyd Primary School
Station Road
Llantwit Major
Vale of Glamorgan
CF61 1ST**

Date of inspection: September 2011

by

**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:

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

St Illtyd Primary School is in Llantwit Major, in the Vale of Glamorgan. The school is a modern building with good outside space. Many pupils live in the small town of Llantwit Major and in the area to the west of the town. A number of pupils (17%) come from the Royal Air Force base at St Athan. These pupils attend the school for varying periods.

There are 326 pupils on roll, currently organised into 14 classes. A further 42 pupils attend the nursery on a part-time basis, either in the morning or afternoon. Prior to this academic year, the school also hosted a local authority funded resource base class for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The school reports that the intake comprises the full range of ability and pupils come from homes that are not economically disadvantaged. Ten per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. This is well below the national average in Wales. All pupils come from homes where English is the first language.

The school has 23% of pupils with additional educational needs. Three pupils, currently have statements of special educational needs.

The last inspection was in 2005 and the current headteacher was appointed in 2005.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for St Illtyd Primary School is £3,149 which compares with a maximum of £4,491 and a minimum of £2,756 for primary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. The school has the 38th highest budget per pupil out of the 46 primary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- by the end of key stage 2 most pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science;
- most pupils in key stage 2, achieve good standards in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in work across the curriculum;
- nearly all pupils enjoy their learning and have good levels of wellbeing; and
- standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- senior leaders ensure all staff work co-operatively as a team;
- the governing body is well informed about all aspects of the school's performance and what it needs to do to improve;
- the school works well with parents and other partners to continually enhance pupils' wellbeing; and
- additional provision ensures effective support for pupils with special educational needs.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in reading and independent writing for older pupils in the Foundation Phase;
- R2 improve pupils' handwriting and presentation skills;
- R3 ensure work in lessons is differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils;
- R4 improve the school development planning cycle with a clear focus on raising standards; and
- R5 ensure consistent assessment for learning practice in teachers' marking, the setting of pupils' targets for improvement and pupil self-assessment strategies.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan, which shows how the school is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress in addressing the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In key stage 2, most pupils speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils listen well to their peers' ideas and opinions and appreciate that others may have different points of view to their own. In the Foundation Phase, many pupils are developing good listening skills and they concentrate well in teacher led and independent learning tasks. By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils are good speakers and readily answer questions about their work.

In Year 6, many pupils are fluent and expressive readers and confidently discuss books they have read and their favourite authors. Many are developing good independent research skills and they apply these well to find information to enhance class topic work. Support programmes have a very positive impact on improving the reading ability of nearly all targeted pupils in Years 3 and 4. Younger pupils in the Foundation Phase are developing good early reading skills and recall the sounds of initial letters well. As they begin to read, a majority apply their knowledge well to decode simple unfamiliar words. A few more able readers in Year 2, talk confidently about books they have read and explain their preferences. However, by the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils read at a level below that expected for their age.

By the end of key stage 2, many pupils write well independently and for a range of purposes and audiences, across the curriculum. More able pupils write at length and punctuate their work well, using paragraphs correctly. Most pupils spell with increasing accuracy. In Years 5 and 6, many pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their writing. However, in the Foundation Phase, pupils' ability to write independently is underdeveloped. Although many pupils spell simple words correctly, most have an insecure grasp of basic punctuation.

In many classes across the school, pupils' handwriting and presentation is often untidy.

Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress in line with their abilities when they are withdrawn from class for extra support. However, in mainstream lessons, these pupils do not always achieve to the same standard.

Results in key stage 2 include pupils from the resource base class and this tends to depress overall results. Consequently, results vary considerably over the last three years. However, in 2011, the level 4 results (the expected level for pupils of eleven years of age) of pupils in mainstream classes only were in the top 50% of similar schools for mathematics and science. Results in English were on the cusp between the top 25% and top 50%. Girls significantly outperformed boys, reversing the trend of the previous year. More able pupils' English results tend to be above family averages with results in mathematics and science slightly below and around family averages respectively.

In Year 2, results at level 2, (the expected level for pupils of seven years of age) in English have shown a downward trend over the last three years. Performance in mathematics has improved slightly but results in science are relatively static over the same period. Boys perform less well than girls. Results of more able pupils at level 3 are below those achieved in 2007 in all three subjects and show a consistent three year downward trend in English and science.

Across the school, many pupils understand and respond accurately to a range of simple questions and instructions in Welsh during, for example, registration periods and collective worship. However, as they progress through the school, pupils in general do not extend their vocabulary and sentence patterns to enable them to maintain a simple conversation. Nearly all pupils have a good knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel safe and secure in school. They are aware of the importance of eating healthily and are keen to participate in the wide range of sports activities in lessons and extra-curricular clubs.

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work well collaboratively in class and in groups and are keen to share ideas with each other. They show respect for both their peers and adults. Pupils are consistently courteous and well mannered. Behaviour is very good with pupils showing concern for each other.

Through the school council and eco committee, pupils have good opportunities to be involved in decisions about school life. This has, for example, led to better quality Friday assemblies and through Year 6 'buddies' effectively supporting younger pupils at break and lunch times. Pupils' positions of responsibility help them to feel valued as senior members of the school community.

Attendance levels are below that of similar schools and the level of unauthorised absence is high. Punctuality is adequate. However, most incidents of lateness and absenteeism relate to a few families only.

Pupils' social and life skills also develop well through close links with the local community, the church and the French twinning association. Many pupils also develop a wide range of useful life and key skills through the school's key stage 2 enrichment programme.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school offers a good range of learning experiences which engage nearly all pupils. A particularly strong feature is the broad range of practical, research and creative opportunities offered to key stage 2 pupils on Wednesday afternoons. These sessions enhance pupils' key and social skills very effectively.

Planning across the school is thorough and identifies clear aims and objectives for learning, including progression for key skills. However, in the Foundation Phase, an over-reliance on worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to write independently across the curriculum.

The promotion of Welsh heritage and culture is a positive feature of the school. Pupils' awareness of this is promoted effectively through lessons, music, creative activities and appropriate celebrations. However provision for the Welsh language is less well developed.

Provision for education for sustainable development permeates everyday life in St Illtyd school. Pupils are involved in a wide range of activities such as raising money for the development of the nature area, organising an eco fashion show and growing vegetables. The school has recently achieved the prestigious platinum Eco status. However, pupils' awareness of the role they occupy in the wider world is less well developed.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. All teachers have high expectations of pupil behaviour and relationships are very good. All teachers act as good role models for pupils. They plan interesting activities, with clear learning objectives for pupils and this ensures that most pupils are fully engaged in lessons. However, in most classes, tasks are not always differentiated to meet the needs of pupils with additional learning needs and those who are more able and talented.

All teachers involve pupils in discussions and support them well when they are working. They use questioning effectively to improve pupils thinking skills. Both teachers and support staff provide pupils with useful oral feedback. All teachers mark pupils' work regularly and carefully, but comments do not always make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.

Pupils' progress is assessed regularly. A good range of assessment for learning strategies is in place, but these are not always consistently applied and not all pupils have clear targets for improvement.

Annual reports to parents and carers are of a good quality and provide useful information on pupils' progress. Parents have been actively involved in a recent revision to the format of these reports and say they are very pleased with the quality of the information they receive.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy, caring community where all pupils feel valued and supported.

Health and wellbeing are promoted effectively through the provision of a fruit tuck shop and a good range of extra-curricular activities. The wide range of learning experiences provided by the school, promote pupils' personal, moral and spiritual development well. A good range of class visits, successfully raise pupils' awareness of Welsh culture.

Staff promote good behaviour consistently. There are appropriate strategies to deal with any incidents of bullying. Nearly all pupils say that the school deals well with any concerns they have.

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

There are effective partnerships with specialist services such as the education psychologist and other external agencies. Parents and carers receive a good range of information about the life and work of the school via newsletters, the school website and the school newspaper.

Additional provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in withdrawal sessions, but is more variable in mainstream classes. In withdrawal sessions, all pupils receive appropriate support and their progress is monitored carefully. The school involves parents in half-yearly reviews of pupils' individual education plans. However, pupils are not included in the review process and consequently they are not always clear about what they need to do to improve.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a very welcoming and attractive environment which enhances teaching and learning well. There is a good range of resources to support all areas of the curriculum. Displays around the school are creative, attractive and varied.

The school grounds are well maintained and are regularly used for outdoor learning by pupils throughout the school. This enhances the learning experiences pupils' receive.

The school is a very inclusive community where all pupils are valued and have equal opportunities. Differences are celebrated.

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

The senior management team work well together to improve learning experiences, outcomes and the wellbeing of pupils. They all have appropriate and well-defined responsibilities. Leaders share a common understanding of what the school needs to do to improve its provision. Weekly staff meetings focus appropriately on priorities for improvement. Staff know their work is valued by managers and morale is good. However, while informal communication is good, many agreed decisions and actions have no formal record.

All members of the management team monitor the work of teachers. They keep good records of lesson observations and use these well to identify personal targets for improvement. However, the arrangements for managing the performance of learning support staff are too informal and are limited to identifying training needs.

Governors have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Managers provide governors with good data on standards and they work well with school

leaders to identify the priorities for improvement. Governors take appropriate account of all statutory responsibilities and make sure that all new board members receive appropriate training.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school has a wide range of appropriate arrangements for self-evaluation. Pupils, parents and staff regularly contribute their views. Teams of staff across the school work together well to evaluate their work in an established cycle of activity. Managers have first-hand knowledge of standards in the school through their monitoring activities but do not always effectively use the information gathered.

The self-evaluation report is detailed but it does not clearly analyse or evaluate the factors that contribute to any shortcomings in standards. Targets in the school improvement plan are not prioritised clearly and are often too general for progress to be properly assessed. This limits managers' ability to focus on raising standards, especially standards in literacy in the Foundation Phase.

In spite of these shortcomings, managers and staff focus appropriately on planning actions to improve provision for numeracy.

The school is a strong learning community and staff share good practice freely with each other. School staff contribute enthusiastically to the sharing of good practice in the local cluster of schools.

Partnership working: Good

The school has a close partnership with the local authority. It has adopted several initiatives that have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly on reading in Years 3 and 4.

The partnership with local schools is open and strong and they often introduce new practices together, especially those that aid pupils' transition to secondary school.

The school has a strong partnership with parents and they are extremely positive about all aspects of school life, including homework. Parents feel very welcome and the school considers their views actively. This close partnership has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Close partnerships with the local community through the church, the twinning association and local sports clubs also impact positively on pupils' social and life skills.

Resource management: Good

Managers work well to ensure that resources are used effectively. They deploy teachers and other staff appropriately. The school identifies priorities for staff training and these are normally well-matched to the school's plans for improvement.

Managers make wise spending decisions for the purchase of equipment and learning resources following careful analysis of the school's priorities for improvement. The school makes very good use of the funds generated by the parent teacher association.

In view of the progress made by most pupils by the end of key stage 2, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Over the last three years, there has been a downward trend in level 2 results (the expected level for pupils of seven years of age) in English and the core subject indicator (pupils who have achieved the expected levels in English, mathematics and science), with boys performing less well than girls. In 2011, results were in the bottom 50% of similar schools and were below the average for other schools in the same family, the local authority and Wales. Performance at level 2 in mathematics has improved slightly, with results in science being relatively static over the last three years. In 2011 performance in maths was in the top 50% of similar schools and slightly above the average for the family, local authority and Wales. Results in science were in the bottom 50% of similar schools with performance around the average for the family, local authority and Wales.

The level 3 results in English and science of more able pupils in key stage 1 have fallen consistently over the last three years. In 2011 these results are below those achieved in 2007 and below family, local authority and Wales averages. Results at level 3 in mathematics are more variable but are also below levels achieved in 2007 and below the averages for the family, local authority and Wales.

The school's results at key stage 2 include pupils from the Resource Base class. This tends to depress overall results, except in 2010 when three-quarters of pupils in this class achieved level 4 (the expected level for pupils of eleven years of age). Consequently, overall level 4 results have varied over the last three years. Despite this, results in English and science have been above or around the average for schools in the same family, the local authority and Wales. Results in mathematics have been more variable and show no pattern in relation to family, local authority and all-Wales averages.

In 2011, when compared to similar schools, performance in the core subject indicator and all three core subjects was in the bottom 50% of similar schools. However, if the results of pupils in the resource base class are discounted, performance in mathematics and science was in the top 50% of similar schools and performance in English on the cusp between the top 25% and top 50%. Girls significantly outperformed boys in all subjects, a reverse trend to the previous year. Pupils not receiving free school meals perform significantly better than those that do, since 2008.

The results of more able pupils at level 5 also show a three year varying trend. Results in English in 2009 and 2010 were above the average for the family, local authority and Wales. Results in maths are fairly static and are slightly below the family average but around the average for the local authority and Wales. Science results are around the family average but are above local authority and all-Wales averages.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

All pupils say: teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress; they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset; they are taught how to stay healthy; they know what to do or who to ask if they find their work hard; and they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Nearly all pupils agree: they feel safe in school and think the school deals well with any bullying; they are doing well in school; and the school provides regular opportunities for exercise.

Most pupils think other children behave well at play and lunchtimes and many agree others behave well in class. Many pupils also say that homework helps them to understand and improve their work.

Parents' questionnaires (14 returned)

All parents say:

- they are satisfied with the school and teaching is good;
- staff expect their child to work hard and do their best;
- their child is safe in school and pupils behave well;
- their child likes school and settled in quickly when they started;
- staff treat children fairly and with respect;
- homework is useful;
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits;
- children are encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise;
- the school helps their child to mature and take on responsibility;
- children are well prepared for the move to secondary education; and
- the school is well run and they understand procedures should they wish to make a complaint.

Most parents think:

- their child is making good progress and they are well informed about this;
- the school gives appropriate support to children with particular additional needs; and
- they are comfortable about approaching the school with suggestions, questions or a problem.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Rhona Edwards	Reporting Inspector
Eleanor Davies	Team Inspector
David Davies	Team Inspector
Deirdre Emberson	Lay Inspector
Christine Davies	Peer Inspector
Alan Smith (Headteacher)	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

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