



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

**Stebonheath CP School
Marble Hall Road
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA15 1NB**

Date of inspection: June 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

Stebonheath Community Primary School is located in a long-established and largely working class area of Llanelli. There are currently 311 full-time equivalent pupils at the school. There are 12 classes, including one nursery class. Two per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. Five per cent of pupils are from a minority ethnic background.

Twenty-six per cent of pupils are registered to receive a free school meal, which is higher than the local authority and national averages.

Thirty-two per cent of pupils are identified as having additional learning needs (ALN). Nineteen per cent of pupils are on the school action plus register and one per cent have statements of special educational needs (SEN).

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Stebonheath Community Primary School is £3,207, which compares with a maximum of £17,415 and a minimum of £3,014 for primary schools in Carmarthenshire. The school has the 102nd highest budget per pupil out of the 114 primary schools in Carmarthenshire.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2010, having previously been the deputy headteacher.

Summary

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

Current performance

Stebonheath Community Primary School is a good school and its overall performance is good because:

- many pupils, including those with ALN, make good progress in their learning during their time at the school;
- pupils have attained generally good results at key stage 2 and gained improved results in key stage 1;
- the school provides a rich and varied range of learning experiences; and
- teaching has significant strengths.

Prospects for improvement

Stebonheath Community Primary School's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school has very effective and forward-looking leadership;
- there is consistent and well-thought out planning for improvement based on strong self-evaluation processes;
- recent initiatives and developments are having a positive impact on standards and quality; and
- there has been very good progress in addressing all but one of the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

Recommendations

In order to improve Stebonheath Community Primary School needs to:

- R1 reduce the gap in the attainment of boys and girls in key stage 1;
- R2 raise attainment to a more consistent level in science;
- R3 improve the planning for assemblies and ensure that statutory requirements for collective worship are met in full;
- R4 further strengthen the role of governors in challenging school performance; and
- R5 extend the performance management arrangements in place for teaching staff to support staff.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it intends to address the recommendations

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Baseline assessments show that in most years the majority of pupils enter the school with a level of skills expected for their age. Many pupils, including those with ALN, make good progress during their time at the school. While pupils' results at the end of key stage 1 have improved between 2007 and 2010, the percentage of pupils who reach the required levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are still lower than similar schools and all-Wales figures. Girls generally do much better than boys.

In two of those years, key stage 2 pupils have achieved good results in English and mathematics when compared to both similar schools and all-Wales figures. Overall, pupils' performance in science, over the past four years, has not compared as well to that of similar schools.

When compared to that of similar schools, end of key stage performance was not as good in 2010, especially in mathematics and science. In contrast from other years, boys achieved better results than girls. Boys did a little better than averagely achieved by boys in similar schools, while 13% fewer girls than the average in similar schools reached the required levels in the core subjects. It is very likely that a higher than usual percentage of girls on the additional learning needs register is responsible for this difference.

Normally, the percentage of pupils who attain the highest levels is around the average for similar schools but in 2010 it was less than half of this. It is not yet possible to compare the results for 2011 with those of similar schools or with all-Wales figures.

This year, key stage 1 pupils achieved better results in English and science than in any of the last four years. In key stage 2, the results in mathematics matched the best in recent years, but the percentage of pupils gaining the nationally expected levels in English and science was the lowest in the last four years.

In relation to age and ability, a majority of learners read and write well in English. By the end of key stage 2 these pupils read confidently and fluently. The majority are competent writers and many spell and punctuate accurately. They write in varied formats, for different purposes and in different styles. In general, learners have a sound grasp of the rules of grammar and many make good use of relevant subject terminology. Most pupils organise their written work well and take good care in how they present it.

Many learners listen very well and speak clearly, conveying their thoughts and feelings confidently. They are able to explain what they are learning about and make thoughtful comments in both class and group discussion.

Standards in pupils' skills in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are good.

For the first time in 2010, pupils were assessed in Welsh second language. Just 14% reached the level expected, less than half of the percentages for either similar schools or for Wales. The results for 2011 have improved, with 30% of pupils reaching the nationally expected level.

When taking into account the linguistic background of the school, an increasing number of younger pupils are making good progress in Welsh. They use simple everyday Welsh phrases in context and can engage well when most or all the teaching takes place in Welsh. There is currently limited progression in the upper stages of key stage 2.

Wellbeing: Good

The school is a happy and caring environment, where nearly all pupils feel safe and know whom to talk to if they feel worried or upset.

The behaviour of all pupils is good as they move around the school. They have a good relationship with staff, and are generally polite and courteous when speaking to adults.

Nearly all pupils behave well in lessons. They are enthusiastic about their learning and contribute effectively to discussions. Pupils work well in pairs and groups, showing respect for the views of others as they share ideas. All children in the Foundation Phase are effectively involved in planning their learning activities. This approach is being developed in key stage 2.

The school has active school and eco councils; both bodies are aware of their roles and responsibilities and feel that their ideas are listened to and valued. They make decisions that have a positive impact on improvements around the school. For example, the school council has been instrumental in improving playtimes for all pupils by purchasing a range of equipment and introducing new playground rules. The eco council leads projects and activities such as researching and handling data regarding water and electricity usage. Paper, plastic, food waste, clothing and mobile phones are recycled. The introduction of a 'Buddy bench' on the yard demonstrates how the pupils show care and concern for each other.

All pupils have a good understanding of the need to take exercise and eat healthily. Many take part in extra-curricular activities. Many pupils are also involved in activities that involve the wider community.

Attendance figures over the past three years have been around the all-Wales average. The attendance rates for 2010-2011, at 94%, compare well to those of similar schools. Most pupils arrive at school punctually.

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

The school offers a varied range of learning experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum. Foundation Phase and Year 2 learning is planned clearly around the various levels of provision and ensures a very good quality programme. There are also positive indications that recently introduced literacy strategies are enabling pupils throughout the school to progress at a level and pace that suits them best.

The school provides a very interesting programme of educational visits, both locally and further afield, including trips to London and European countries. There are also regular visits from outside speakers and a beneficial range of extra-curricular activities. The school makes well-planned and imaginative use of its environment. These activities reinforce learning very successfully.

Planning and provision for skills is thorough and effective. Schemes of work for subjects are of good quality and cross-reference skills with the knowledge areas in the programmes of study. The school has developed an increasingly effective approach to integrating the 'Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales'; this is succeeding in promoting continuity and progression in communication, numeracy and ICT.

Pupils are given well-targeted support in a range of skills such as writing in varied formats, applying numeracy skills, examining data, undertaking enquiries and recording results of investigations. Pupils have many and varied interesting opportunities to learn about their locality and also about Wales, its history and culture. This includes an increasing emphasis on promoting bilingualism.

The school actively promotes sustainable development in both the curriculum and its daily routines. It has recently been awarded the eco green flag. The school also fosters a strong sense of global citizenship through its wide-ranging international links, its commitment to support peoples in need and its celebration of the diversity in its own school and community.

Teaching: Good

Teaching across the school is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations and secure subject knowledge. They use an effective range of learning and teaching strategies that promote pupil choice and independence. In the Foundation Phase, many enriching and stimulating experiences are prepared for pupils.

Lessons are very well prepared and effectively organised with clear learning objectives, good quality resources and direct links to assessment and key skills.

However, teachers do not always identify what they want pupils to have achieved by the end of the session. Very close attention is given in all classes to matching work to pupils' age and ability levels, including the more and less able. These are very strong features.

All teachers use a good range of teaching strategies and the management of behaviour is very good. Many children are comfortable with setting their own targets and many identify appropriate criteria for improvement.

Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly. They generally track progress carefully at individual and group level. Assessment for learning strategies are well developed and used effectively. Teachers use these strategies well to plan for the needs of their pupils.

Reports to parents are clear and informative. Parents and carers feel well informed by the school about their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Pupils and parents value the school's safe and caring environment.

The school has appropriate policies and effective arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing. It deals well with any issues and concerns regarding bullying, and supports pupils very well in their development of social and life skills. The benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle are promoted well, with pupils acting upon this information by choosing healthy snacks from the tuck shop.

The school has worked hard to develop pupils' moral, social and emotional wellbeing. It skilfully uses a range of approaches and resources to support pupils in managing their feelings and distinguishing right from wrong. This work has resulted in an improvement in pupils' attitudes, confidence and behaviour and their ability to work together effectively in groups or with partners.

Pupils' spiritual development is less well promoted. Opportunities for quiet reflection on the topics and issues under focus during periods of collective worship are limited. The planning for assemblies is not always sufficiently precise. A few pupils occasionally miss assembly due to carrying out other responsibilities. This arrangement does not meet statutory arrangements. The school has a range of strategies to promote good levels of attendance and has implemented a reward system to consolidate this.

The school has clear identification and monitoring arrangements for pupils with ALN. Staff involve pupils in agreeing targets for individual education plans, and parents are encouraged to attend meetings in order to review these targets. Arrangements for pupils with ALN comply with the SEN code of practice.

Groups of pupils are targeted for specific interventions, which are successful in improving their basic skills. The targeted support in literacy has contributed to improved standards of achievement. The school successfully supports pupils with more complex needs and fully includes them in the life of the school.

The training, guidance and support that the school has gained from working closely with a variety of specialist services have ensured that the learning needs of all ALN pupils are met. Teaching assistants provide good quality support for pupils with ALN, which has contributed to an improvement in pupils' confidence.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community where all pupils are valued and treated equally. Very well-planned and implemented arrangements enable the small number of learners with disabilities to have access to all areas of the school, the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Diversity is valued and celebrated. The school has appropriate policies for promoting equality and links these effectively to the school improvement plan.

There is a wide range and variety of resources to support teaching and learning; these are well matched to pupils' needs. The school premises are kept in very good condition. Extensive colourful and informative displays in classrooms and communal areas celebrate pupils' work and achievements along with reflecting the school's involvement in a number of partnerships and initiatives.

The school's grounds are well maintained and have recently been further developed to encourage imaginative and creative learning and play.

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

The headteacher is an efficient and organised leader. He has a clear vision for the school and leads by example. He has a very good grasp of the needs of the school and is very committed to taking the school forward to further success through improving pupils' standards and the quality of provision.

The school is developing a more distributive leadership structure, so that all teachers and support staff are closely involved in decision-making. All staff work well as a team in order to develop provision and raise pupils' standards. They have clear involvement in defining the school's strategic direction. Staff feel valued and this, in turn, positively impacts on the ethos of the school.

The school meets national and local priorities well. It has good relationships with its defined family of schools (a group of schools with similar characteristics) and is making imaginative alterations to the school environment to further improve delivery for the Foundation Phase. The arrangements to update the curricular provision in key stage 2 in line with Curriculum 2008 are increasingly influential in planning and provision.

Governors undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and have a strong interest in the day-to-day life of the school. They undertake suitable training. Governors are beginning to offer a greater challenge to the school in certain areas. Their role as a critical friend to the school is not yet consistently established.

Improving quality: Good

The school has exceptionally good procedures for self-evaluation. The school leadership team has a very clear picture of the school's performance and a perceptive identification of priorities for improvement. The school regularly seeks the views of parents, carers, pupils and staff. Improvement plans are focused, realistic and time related. They are monitored and reviewed regularly.

The school uses a wide range of rigorous monitoring activities, including detailed and evaluative lesson observations by senior leaders. Very good use is made of assessment information to set targets for improvement and identify groups of pupils that may be underperforming. All information gathered is used effectively to produce a clear and detailed school improvement plan.

Self-evaluation processes are used purposefully to influence standards and provision. This is further enhanced by the extremely effective way in which the headteacher and other senior leaders manage the professional development of all staff.

There are well established links with other schools in the area and with the family of schools. These networks of professional practice make a good contribution to the school's overall provision.

Partnership working: Good

The school has successful partnerships with parents and carers and keeps them well informed. It works effectively in partnership with a range of agencies including the local authority and the local community. These partnerships help to enrich and support all pupils' learning and wellbeing.

The links forged with an independent nursery promote a smooth induction as children begin school. There are strong links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer, especially in terms of providing support for pupils' social and emotional wellbeing. Well-thought out and clearly set out transition plans effectively ensure that pupils are prepared for secondary education. There are systematic moderation processes for end of key stage 2 teacher assessments that involve staff from the local cluster of primary schools, the secondary school and the local authority.

Strong links with local businesses raise pupils' awareness of the world of work and introduce them to new skills. For example, pupils recently worked with local businesses to improve the school's outdoor environment and develop sustainable initiatives. There are also long-established links with the regional further education and teacher training institutions.

The school has, for some years, been involved in a successful Comenius project that has helped to establish international partnerships. The project involves schools from England, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Italy. These partnerships have led to enriching experiences for both pupils and staff.

Resource management: Good

The school budget is managed effectively with a firm and consistent focus on linking spending decisions to priorities for improvement. There is a wide and appropriate range of learning resources in the school, including increasingly high quality ICT resources.

There are a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff. These are deployed effectively to best deliver a learning programme that is increasingly well matched to individual pupils' needs. All staff contribute very well to the work of the school.

Two teaching assistants provide cover for teachers to engage in the statutory allocation of planning, preparation and assessment time. These well-established arrangements work efficiently and effectively. They have a positive impact on the quality of planning and assessment.

The school identifies and meets the needs of all staff through regular appraisal, which includes precisely defined performance management targets for teaching staff but not, as yet, for support staff.

The school provides good value for money because of the progress made by many pupils, the efficient and effective use it makes of its funding, the wide range of learning experiences it offers, and the high level of care, support and guidance it provides.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

A small number of parents completed the questionnaire. They are very positive about the school. All parents consider that the children behave well and that the school is well run. There is 100% agreement that children are safe in school and are making good progress. All also think that teaching is good and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem. A very few do not know of the school's procedures for dealing with complaints or think that there is not a good enough range of educational trips or visits. All feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress.

Responses to learner questionnaires

In general, pupils are very complimentary about their school. Almost all feel that the teaching is good, that they are well supported and that they are doing well at school. The same proportion thinks that the school deals well with any incidents of bullying and that they feel safe. Most learners think that there are enough resources to enable them to learn well. However, a third of the pupils (slightly higher proportions of boys than girls) feel that there are occasions when other learners' behaviour stops them getting on with their work. In addition, a quarter of pupils (twice the percentage of boys as girls) do not think that other pupils behave well at playtimes and lunchtimes. Most pupils believe that the school helps them to live healthy lifestyles.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Alun Morgan	Reporting Inspector
Enir Morgan	Team Inspector
Thomas Ivor Petherick	Lay Inspector
Rhian Jones	Peer Inspector
Julian Littler	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