

A report on
Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn Community Primary School
Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 4LA

Date of inspection: May 2011

School Number: 6672309

Inspection Number: 1886

by

Mr Nicholas Jones

Reporting Inspector under contract to Estyn

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

Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn Community Primary School serves the local village and the surrounding rural area near Aberystwyth in Ceredigion. Welsh is the main language of the school. There are 44 pupils on roll between 4 and 11 years of age organised into two classes, one in the Foundation Phase and one in the junior department.

Sixty five per cent of the pupils come from homes where Welsh is the spoken language. Five per cent of pupils come from an ethnic minority background. There is no significant pupil mobility related to the school. Ten extra pupils joined the school in January 2011 following the closure of a nearby primary school.

The area is recognised as neither privileged nor socially or economically advantaged or disadvantaged and no pupils are in receipt of free school meals. This is obviously much lower than local and national averages.

Twenty three per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This is slightly higher than local and national averages. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher has been in post since January 2003. As well as the headteacher, there are two full time teachers in the school and a special needs teacher provides support for pupils for a day and a half per week. The school was last inspected in 2005.

The individual school budget per pupil for Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn School is £4,099, which compares with a maximum of £24,095 and a minimum of £2,741 for primary schools in Ceredigion. The school has the 22nd highest budget per pupil out of the 63 primary schools in Ceredigion.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school is good because:

- the achievement and progress in pupils' work is clearly evident over time;
- standards of pupils' wellbeing are secure and contribute effectively to their social and life skills;
- there are many strengths in the teaching across the school, and there are no important areas that need significant improvement;
- the care, support and guidance encourage pupils' involvement in their school and the wider community;
- there are excellent partnerships with parents and the community;
- the successful leadership and management share a clear vision with everyone involved in school life.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the strategic planning specifically focuses on improving pupils' standards and levels of provision;
- there is purposeful use, detail and effective operational systems related to the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan;
- there are very strong partnerships with the community that support the school's work.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- A1 develop further pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum;
- A2 plan a cohesive provision for key skills across the curriculum that avoids the over use of worksheets;
- A3 continue to develop assessment for learning strategies and a consistent response to pupils' work in order to appropriately challenge all pupils in line with their abilities; and
- A4 create a system of keeping pupils' computer work electronically that promotes ease of use when they save and draft their work.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The basic skills of the majority of pupils when starting school are good or better when compared with the expected averages. Nearly all reach the outcomes relevant to their age by the end of the Foundation Phase.

By scrutinising pupils' work, holding discussions with pupils, and considering their starting points, nearly all pupils make either good or very good progress and achievement during their time at school. A few pupils, although reaching very good levels, do not achieve in relation to their ability. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress from their starting points. There are no pupils in receipt of free school meals; this has been true for many years, therefore, it is not possible to compare specific groups of pupils in this context.

When considering pupils' attainments in the two key stages, in the core subjects and when subjects are combined, it is important to consider the results of teacher assessments carefully because of the small number of pupils in each cohort. The results of one pupil can have a great impact on the school's general performance.

However, even after considering this fact, the school's performance over a number of years is very good.

When benchmarked against schools with the same kind of free school meal entitlement over the past four years, in key stage 1, the school is in the first quarter for every core subject and when subjects are combined. In key stage 2, the school tends to fall in the first quarter in every subject and when subjects are combined.

The percentage of pupils who achieve better than the expected levels over a period in key stage 1 is higher than the family, local authority and Wales in the last two years. At key stage 2, the results tend to be higher than the expected levels when compared with the family, local authority and Wales over time. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls since 2007.

Most of the pupils have good oral communication skills in Welsh and English. They listen very intently, speak clearly and read purposefully. The higher reading skills and extensive writing of most of the pupils have developed very securely and most of the pupils respond appropriately to what they have read. Across the school, most pupils write extensively and purposefully in other subjects across the curriculum. Therefore, most pupils' skills of drafting their work is a very good aspect. The numeracy skills of most pupils are good, however, they do not use their mathematical skills purposefully across the curriculum in line with their ability. Nearly all pupils' computer and technology skills are good, although some are unable to find their previous work on the computers.

Most pupils across the school develop very useful wider skills; their independence as learners and the way they evaluate their own work and that of their peers is developing well. These processes are having a positive impact on their work. The majority of pupils' presentation skills of written work is neat.

There are many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement when considering the progress of nearly all pupils in their skills in the Welsh language. Latecomers to the school make very good progress in Welsh.

Wellbeing: Good

Every pupil is aware of the importance of health and fitness and achieve consistently well in their personal, social and cultural development. All pupils feel safe in school and know how they can keep healthy by eating sensibly and exercising their bodies in lessons and physical activities.

Nearly all pupils are willing learners who enjoy school life. They enjoy their lessons and make the most of opportunities to give sensible opinions about what they are learning. Behaviour is very good across the school and all pupils are very polite when responding respectfully to adults and peers. All pupils show care and respect for one another and for any pupils with special needs.

The attendance rate, around 94%, is higher than national averages but slightly lower than local levels. There has been an improvement recently in this aspect since the school has adopted new strategies to improve attendance. Nearly all pupils are punctual. Members of the school council and eco committee take a very active role

by making purposeful decisions about school life. These pupils enjoy their responsibilities and they realise that they have a strong voice to influence the school's daily life and activities. They report confidently about their work to the governing body every term. Their extra-curricular work and involvement in the village and local community is especially good.

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

Curriculum planning is effective and is good on the whole. There have been changes to the planning process lately in order to conform to the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the planning for key skills is not cohesive and does not allow pupils to build upon their skills systematically from their starting points and in relation to their abilities. Generally, there is insufficient detail and progression when planning the provision for key skills.

The provision for developing information technology skills is good across the school, although pupils have difficulty finding their work as there is no existing system for keeping their work in appropriate files for ease of drafting and improving its content. The provision for developing independent learning and thinking skills receives purposeful attention and these skills are obvious in the daily life of the school and in the pupils' work.

The school ensures that there is effective provision to develop pupils' understanding matters of global citizenship matters. Nearly all pupils discuss entrepreneurship well and the need to care for the environment and the varied and sustainable world in which they live. Collective worship is used appropriately to highlight issues relating to respecting others and personal and social education.

Provision for Welsh language development and the Welsh dimension is developed very effectively across the school through lessons and specific activities.

Teaching: Good

There are many strengths in the teaching and no areas that need significant improvement. Resources are used effectively to support learning. There are successful working relationships between adults and pupils in every class. Suitable questioning seeks to extend pupils' understanding in a supportive learning environment. All pupils benefit from the fact that their teachers speak sensitively to them and praise them for the quality of their work. They give sensible suggestions and encouragement orally to every pupil as to how to improve their work.

The introductions and pace of lessons are beneficial, although some introductions are long and therefore do not motivate pupils to work promptly. The teachers have a sensible balance between leading the learning and giving independence to pupils. However, through scrutinising pupils' work, there is an overdependence on worksheets by teachers that on occasions limit the ability of the more able pupils to

extend their work and their key skills. All of the teaching staff, including support staff, use behaviour strategies effectively.

Although on the whole, there are good aspects to be seen in the marking of pupils' work, there are examples of comments that do not clearly show the way forward for pupils to improve their work. The process of setting useful targets for individual pupils is established throughout the school. These have a constructive impact on pupils' work.

Assessment for learning strategies are beginning to become established in school procedures. Success criteria are beginning to receive the appropriate attention and are beginning to focus pupils on how to develop their work. The system of tracking pupil progress and of levelling and moderating pupils' work over time recognises pupils' levels of achievement accurately.

Reports to parents are very good and meet statutory requirements with appropriate information in place including personal targets. All parents and carers feel that they receive comprehensive information about their children's progress at the end of the school year.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very successfully. Good information about the life of the school is available for pupils and parents and includes the school prospectus and the annual governors' report.

The induction arrangements for new pupils are clear and there are good arrangements to transfer older pupils to secondary education. The structured provision for wellbeing and the advantages of healthy living are clearly promoted. National initiatives such as inclusion and equality are appropriately encouraged and are well supported.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding. The school has effective systems and procedures for identifying pupils who need extra support with their work.

There is planned provision for all pupils with additional learning needs. The support is very effectively co-ordinated and there are good links with specialist external agencies.

Parents and carers are well informed and individual education plans are evaluated and updated regularly. The school's procedures for reporting on additional learning needs meet statutory requirements.

Learning environment: Good

The school ensures equal access to the curriculum for all pupils and it is a wholly inclusive environment. All pupils are included regularly in the life and daily work of the school. This is good practice and a positive aspect for pupils as they work together, consider and appreciate their different backgrounds. The curriculum is

accessible to all whatever their gender, race or religion and the school meets its statutory requirements successfully.

The school uses its accommodation and grounds very effectively and they are well maintained. The addition of a field to the school grounds has promoted opportunities to develop games and outdoor education well. Support staff work effectively under the class teachers' direction to introduce appropriate activities enthusiastically across the school. The quality of resources is good and they are used purposefully to support pupils' learning needs. Although there are space limitations in the classrooms, the school uses it sensibly and in ways that do not impair the education and development of the pupils.

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

The main focus of the strategic planning is to improve the school by further raising pupils' standards. The headteacher and the rest of the staff work closely together to create a positive, whole school ethos that encourages and values team work in order to ensure improvements. This is positive and creates a strong foundation when dealing with raising pupils' standards and providing a consistent curriculum across the school.

Staff meet regularly to note areas for improvement. They are an established team who use regular meetings and whole school training days purposefully to support their professional development in order to move the school forward strategically. Staff have specific responsibilities to develop the school as a learning community and they share practices usefully in a bid to improve their professional practice and pupils' standards.

Performance management systems are established. The school carries out performance management and completes the legal requirement of formally monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching in every class as part of this process.

The school addresses national and local initiatives well and this has a positive effect on pupils' standards and the school's provision. The school has recently won the Quality Mark and Investors in People, the green flag of the Eco School scheme and three leaves of the Healthy School scheme. The Foundation Phase is being implemented effectively for every pupil up to seven years of age.

Governors undertake their roles and responsibilities thoroughly and loyally and they have a strong interest in the day-to-day life of the school. They are developing a good understanding of how the school performs by listening to staff, visiting classes and receiving a termly report from the school council. The chair of governors and other governors attend training and challenge the school well as critical friends. They handle the performance data of the school effectively and understand the obligations that they have to address to make improvements.

Improving quality: Good

The process of planning for improvement is very effective and operational. The process of self-evaluation is long established with the main focus on raising pupils' standards. The whole staff are aware of the purpose and effect of effective self-evaluation and the governors are part of the process by challenging the school as critical friends. Managers and leaders develop an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through the effective self-evaluation strategies.

The school improvement plan, which stems from the self-evaluation, is having a positive effect on improving the school. The plan is focused on targeting specific areas and the use made of data to track pupils' progress challenges the school to raise standards further.

Staff have been involved in a range of training and development opportunities. These include working in partnership with other schools and partners that include the wider community, the education service and the local authority. Consistent progress has been made in response to the recommendations of the last inspection.

Partnership working: Good

Partnerships with parents and the community are excellent. All parents are proud of the school's 'open door' policy. The strategy used by the school in welcoming pupils from a nearby school is a good example of settling pupils into a new school without impairing on their education. Partnerships with visitors and local businesses are effective. This has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of the world of work. Transfer arrangements between the nursery setting and the school are effective and a parent and child club meet in the school whilst the school go to Aberystwyth for swimming sessions. This is good practice. Transfer arrangements between the school and the secondary schools enable older pupils to prepare appropriately for the next stage in their education.

Visits to the community and visitors from the community make a positive contribution to enriching pupils' experiences. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is developed well through studies of other countries such as Lesotho. The school supports appropriate charities and this effectively raises pupils' awareness of the needs of others.

Resource management: Good

Staffing, financial resources and the budget are managed well. Teachers have the appropriate knowledge to deliver a wide curriculum. Support staff are deployed well and they work effectively alongside teachers to improve pupils' achievement in the classroom or on duties throughout the day.

Spending is clearly linked to priorities in the school improvement plan and managers monitor and manage spending well in order to ensure that it remains within budget. There are specific plans in place for any surplus money. Strategic planning is established and focuses on maintaining very good standards and quality teaching over time. Therefore, the school provides good value for money in terms of pupils' outcomes, provision and leadership.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Up to 26 parents or carers responded to the questionnaire. In general, they were all satisfied with the school; agreed that their children liked the school; agreed that their children had help to settle in well when starting in the school; that their children made good progress; that pupils behave well; that teaching is good; that staff expect their children to work hard and do their best; and that homework builds well on what their children learn in school. Also, all parents or carers that responded agreed that staff treat all children fairly and with respect; that their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise; that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem; that the school helps their children to become more mature and take on responsibility; that their children are well prepared for moving on to the next school; that there is a good range of activities, including trips or visits; and that the school is well run. Nearly all thought that their children were safe at school; that there was appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs; that there is regular information about their children`s progress; and that they understand the school`s procedure for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

In response to the questionnaires, all pupils felt safe in the school; that there are many opportunities at school to get regular exercise; that teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress; that they know who to ask if they find their work hard; that homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school; that there are enough books, equipment and computers to do their work; that other children behave well and they can get their work done; and that nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time. Also, they felt that the school deals well with any bullying; they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset; that the school teaches them how to keep healthy; and that they are doing well at school.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Mr Nick Jones	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Eleri Honour	Team Inspector
Mr Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Mrs Siwan Jones	Peer Inspector
Mrs Mair Gwynne Carruthers	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