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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant Primary School
Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant
Oswestry
Powys
SY10 0LG**

Date of inspection: January 2013

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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

The school is situated in the rural village of Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant in north Powys, a village which is within five miles of the boundary with England. The school is maintained by Powys education authority. It serves the village itself and the surrounding rural area. On the whole, the school describes the area from which the children come as fairly prosperous.

There are 78 pupils on roll, including part-time nursery children. Numbers have been fairly consistent over the past three years. The school has two language streams, both of which include a class of pupils in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. The Welsh stream was established in 1998. Thirty-seven per cent of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds at the school.

Four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is much lower than the county and national percentages. Nineteen per cent of pupils receive additional learning needs support, which is slightly lower than the national figure (21.2%). No permanent or fixed-term exclusions were recorded in the year prior to the inspection.

The headteacher was appointed to her post in May 2011.

The individual school budget per pupil for Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant Primary School in 2012-2013 is £3,784. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Powys is £8,253 and the minimum is £3,087. Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant Primary School is 41st out of the 99 primary schools in Powys in terms of the school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant Primary School's current performance is adequate because:

- teaching is consistently good;
- strategies are beginning to have a positive effect on most pupils' standards of reading;
- standards of behaviour and attendance are very good;
- teachers have good subject knowledge, and good cooperation among school staff promotes effective learning; and
- the school is a happy and caring community in which pupils in both the Welsh and English streams have equal opportunities and effective shared learning.

However:

- current schemes of work in key stage 2 do not ensure enough opportunities to develop pupils' extended writing skills;
- the process for assessing and tracking pupils' progress has not been developed fully to target specific groups in order to raise standards;
- there are no appropriate procedures or systems in place to identify and support pupils with additional learning needs; and
- arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet the requirements fully.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher knows the school well and has introduced a number of strategies to raise standards of literacy;
- members of staff have a sound knowledge of the school's performance and a clear understanding of standards of achievement;
- comparative data is analysed effectively to identify priorities for improvement; and
- the school development plan is of a good quality and includes appropriate priorities and quantitative targets for improvement.

Recommendations

- R1 Develop opportunities and raise standards of extended writing in both languages across a range of subjects in key stage 2
- R2 Improve the school's arrangements for assessing and tracking pupils' progress
- R3 Improve provision for additional learning needs
- R4 Ensure that governors respond fully to some concerns regarding the school's arrangements for safeguarding children
- R5 Develop the governors' role as critical friends
- R6 Prioritise and monitor the effect of initiatives more effectively

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Many pupils make good progress during their time at school.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils develop to become independent learners. Many of them use their mathematical and information and communication technology skills successfully across a range of learning areas. Pupils throughout the school listen well to their teachers and many are willing to share ideas in a variety of situations. By the time pupils reach the top of the school, many communicate confidently in both languages, although a limited vocabulary impairs the progress of pupils in the English stream in the Welsh language.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, the majority of pupils write independently using a vocabulary and syntax that are appropriate for their age and ability. In the few best examples, pupils write freely and at length, and punctuate their work well.

By the end of key stage 2, the majority of pupils have a good knowledge of the features of different writing forms in both languages. In the examples of extended work that were seen, most pupils had a firm grasp of sentence syntax in both languages. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary relating to the theme, with a few pupils using extensive vocabulary. However, much of the content of written work in pupils' books is brief and a lack of vocabulary and inconsistency in punctuating impairs the quality of a few pupils' finished work. The standard of the majority of pupils' writing in Welsh second language is developing appropriately throughout the school.

The majority of pupils throughout the school make appropriate progress in their reading skills in both languages. In the Foundation Phase, most pupils read meaningfully and with expression to a standard which is appropriate to their age and ability. They take an interest in books and develop to become independent readers. By the end of key stage 2, the majority show an appropriate understanding of what they are reading. They use their reading skills effectively to collect information and present it in an interesting way.

Pupils with additional learning needs make appropriate progress against their targets.

At the end of the Foundation Phase, achievements at the expected outcome (outcome 5) compare favourably with the average of the family of schools and the Wales average, apart from language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh and mathematics. The school's performance in both of these learning areas is among the lowest 25% compared with schools which have a similar proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, although this is not a reflection of the standards seen during the inspection.

In general, the school's performance at the expected level at the end of key stage 2 has risen in all core subjects (Welsh, English, mathematics and science) since 2009.

Pupils' achievement at the higher level (level 5) has varied and has been lower than the family of schools and Wales averages over a period of time, except in Welsh and science.

In general, there is not a significant gap between the achievement of boys and girls, except at outcome 6 in language, literacy and communication skills in English, and at the higher levels in Welsh in key stage 2. Over a period of time, boys perform better than girls at the higher levels (level 5+).

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe at school. They understand the need to eat healthily and take care of themselves through physical activity and buying fruit and healthy snacks from the school shop.

Nearly all pupils are happy at school, are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They work well with others. In the Foundation Phase, the majority of pupils start to take responsibility and make decisions which have a positive effect on their learning. This has not been developed fully in key stage 2.

Behaviour throughout the school is very good and nearly all pupils show respect towards adults and their peers. The school's attendance places it among the top 25% of similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals.

Members of the school council, eco committee and sports council play a very active role in making suitable decisions about the school's life and work. These councils are an active part of school life and views are heard and considered. Their commitment to the village and the local community is especially good. An example of this is pupils' contribution to concerts in the local area and their role in the official opening of the new village hall.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Adequate

Learning experiences: Adequate

Most teachers provide an appropriate range of learning experiences which engage pupils' interest throughout the school, making effective use of themes to deliver the curriculum.

Teachers from both language streams work closely with one another. However, current schemes of work in key stage 2 do not show skills development clearly. There is a lack of detail in planning and there are not enough opportunities to develop writing skills across the curriculum. A great deal of time is allocated to collective worship, which limits the time that is allocated to some aspects of learning activities.

A prominent place is given to local culture and the Welsh dimension, and Welsh traditions are celebrated by holding the school Eisteddfod and taking part in the village and Urdd Eisteddfodau. The school also promotes the Welsh dimension successfully by studying the story of William Morgan, and the work of Eurig Salisbury and Kyffin Williams.

Provision for developing global citizenship within the curriculum is developing appropriately. An example of this is the work on Patagonia and St Lucia.

Teaching: Adequate

Teaching throughout the school is good. In most lessons where teaching is at its best, lively presentations and probing questioning ensure pupils' understanding.

Teachers have a good subject knowledge and joint planning promotes effective learning. Successful co-operation between teachers and support staff creates an industrious ethos and provides appropriate support to pupils. However, teaching does not always give pupils enough opportunities to think for themselves, particularly in key stage 2, and tasks do not always stretch pupils of a higher ability enough.

There are appropriate assessment for learning systems in place, but they have not yet been developed fully throughout the school. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and, in the best examples, constructive comments are given on how to improve their work. However, this is not consistent throughout the school and comments do not always refer specifically enough to success criteria, particularly in key stage 2.

The school assesses pupils' work formally on a regular basis. However, the process has not been developed fully and is not used effectively enough to identify cohorts of pupils with learning needs nor to track progress. Appropriate use is made of portfolios and pupil profiles to strengthen teachers' recognition of level and outcome criteria. However, these are not used effectively enough to ensure the validity of achievements at the higher levels.

Arrangements for setting personal targets for pupils are developing appropriately, but they are not always specific enough nor challenging enough. Pupils' understanding of what needs to be improved in their work has not been developed fully.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate

Effective arrangements are in place to support pupils' health and wellbeing. The school makes effective use of external agencies and specialist services, including those provided by the authority.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development very effectively. Periods of reflection and worship time are a prominent part of school life and values such as respect and fairness are fostered well.

The school uses a variety of standardised tests and assessments to identify pupils with additional learning needs at an early stage. Education plant exist for groups of pupils, however targets are not always specific enough to respond to individual needs. The school has begun to identify more able and talented pupils in order to better meet their needs.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils give some cause for concern. Not all members of staff are certain enough of the procedure to follow in response to issues which may arise in relation to pupils' safety.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a close-knit, caring and welcoming community in which a sense of respect and co-operation exists. The school promotes equal opportunities well and pupils are given opportunities to take part in sports teams and to attend after-school activities. Language equality is promoted successfully by ensuring that a balance between Welsh and English activities is a natural part of school life.

The school provides a colourful and stimulating environment which enriches pupils' learning experiences. Each classroom is attractive and displays show pupils' current work.

The quality of the accommodation and learning resources is very good and staff and pupils use them effectively.

The building and grounds are well maintained.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which she shares successfully with staff, pupils and governors. The headteacher knows the school well and has introduced a number of appropriate strategies to raise standards of literacy and numeracy in the school. An example of this is the attention to developing pupils' standards of reading in key stage 2. However, it is too early to measure the impact of some of these processes on the standard of provision.

All school staff have job descriptions and all are aware of their roles and responsibilities. All members of staff are given appropriate opportunities to contribute towards the school's self-evaluation report. Staff have a sound knowledge of the school's performance and their understanding of the school's standards in comparison with that of the family of schools is developing well.

The governing body supports school life. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and are aware of strengths and areas for improvement. Governors visit the school regularly and they have appropriate information about the school's performance. However, their role as critical friends has not been developed fully to challenge the school about its performance.

The school gives appropriate attention to local and national priorities, including implementing the Foundation Phase and the recent focus on literacy.

Improving quality: Good

The school's self-evaluation report gives a clear picture of the school's performance. The self-evaluation process gives appropriate consideration to staff discussions, examining documents, analysing data and pupils' opinions. The school's strengths and areas for development are identified. However, the document is too descriptive in places. Many initiatives have been introduced to improve aspects of provision, but the school does not yet monitor the effectiveness of these processes nor their effect on standards and pupils' outcomes effectively enough.

There is a clear link between the self-evaluation process and planning for improvement.

The school development plan is of a good quality and includes appropriate priorities and quantitative targets for improvement, which specify time, finance, actions, responsible personnel and monitoring methods appropriately. Comparative data is analysed appropriately to identify priorities for improvement, along with standardised test results.

Staff work together effectively in a professional learning community within the school to develop literacy skills. The school is part of a professional learning community which is beginning to have an effect on standards of pupils' reading and spelling.

Partnership working: Good

The school has a range of successful partnerships with the community and the family of schools within the catchment area. There are very good links with parents and carers, all of whom support the school's work. Visitors from the community contribute regularly to school life and pupils visit places of interest. All of this has a positive influence on learning.

The school works closely with other schools in the area on various projects. An example of this is the work on Tanat Valley which has enriched pupils' understanding of their local area. Schools in the area hold joint training and work on projects to raise standards in writing and mathematics. Close and effective partnerships exist with the nursery playgroup and 'Ti a Fi' group, which promote successful transition.

Transfer arrangements between the school and the secondary school are good and prepare pupils effectively for the next stage in their education. There are suitable arrangements for moderating and standardising pupils' work.

Appropriate partnerships have been established with external agencies such as health and social services, community organisations and the local authority, which contribute their expertise to support the school's work when necessary.

Resource management: Good

The school has an appropriate staffing level to teach the curriculum effectively. Assistants work together successfully as a team in order to ensure appropriate support for pupils in the classroom. Staff expertise is used effectively to enrich pupils' experiences in sports and art.

Performance management systems have been established appropriately in the school. Training is linked clearly to the school's priorities.

Teachers make appropriate use of planning, preparation and assessment time. This is beginning to have a positive effect on maintaining school standards.

The school has a good range of resources which are used effectively to promote and enhance teaching. Effective use is made of the school hall for the breakfast club and after-school club, along with the Urdd club.

Leaders and managers give due attention to managing resources, staffing and finance. The headteacher and the governing body's finance committee review school expenditure regularly.

Considering the good outcomes, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

At the end of the Foundation Phase, achievements at the expected outcome (outcome 5) in language, literacy and communication skills in English and personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity compare favourably with the average of the family of schools, the authority and the Wales average.

Achievements in language, literacy and communication skills in Welsh, and mathematics, do not compare as well and place the school among the lowest 25% compared with schools which have a similar proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals in both of these learning areas. In general, the school's performance at outcome 6 is not as good, except in language, literacy and communication skills in English.

In 2010 and 2011, all pupils at the end of key stage 2 attained the expected level (level 4 or above) in Welsh or English, mathematics and science combined (CSI). The same picture can be seen in the individual subjects. This follows a two-year period when the achievements of 11-year-old pupils did not compare favourably with the family of schools, local authority or Wales averages. In 2012, the school's performance decreased in all subjects, excluding Welsh. The school's performance in key stage 2 has varied over recent years, but has placed the school among the top 25% in 2010 and 2011 in all core subjects compared with schools which have a similar proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The picture in 2012 is not as positive.

Pupils' achievement at the higher level (level 5) has varied and has been lower than the family of schools, the authority and Wales over a period of time, except in Welsh.

In general, there is not a significant gap between the achievement of boys and girls, except at outcome 6 in language, literacy and communication skills in English, and at the higher levels in Welsh in key stage 2. Over a period of time, boys perform better than girls at the higher levels (level 5+)

The achievement of pupils who are entitled to free school meals compares favourably with the achievement of those who are not.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Forty responses were received from pupils in key stage 2. The responses give a positive picture which is around the national average or above for primary schools in nearly all aspects.

All pupils feel safe in school. Nearly all pupils note that they are doing well at school and all state that teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress. All pupils know what to do and with whom to talk if they find their work difficult. All pupils believe that there are many opportunities at school to exercise regularly and that the school teaches them how to keep healthy. Nearly all pupils note that the school deals well with any bullying. All pupils know with whom to talk if they are worried. Many believe that other children behave well and that they can do their work. Most pupils feel that children behave well during play time and lunch time.

Thirty six responses were received from parents

Parents' responses are very positive and compare favourably with the national averages. Nearly all parents agree or strongly agree that their child likes school and feels safe there. Nearly all parents are satisfied with the school in general and believe that their child is making good progress. Nearly all parents agree that teaching is good and that staff expect their child to work hard and do his or her best. Most agree that their child receives additional support in relation to any particular individual needs, while many parents agree that they are kept well informed of their child's progress. Many parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, make suggestions or identify a problem, and are aware of the school's procedure for dealing with complaints. Nearly all parents feel that their child is encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise.

Many parents feel that the school is well run.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Anwen Griffith	Reporting Inspector
Meinir Howells	Team Inspector
Barry Norris	Team Inspector
Jeremy Turner	Lay Inspector
Mair Curruthers	Peer Inspector
Wendy Jones	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.