



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

**Cwm Glas Primary School
Colwyn Avenue
Winch Wen
Swansea
SA1 7EN**

Date of inspection: January 2011

by

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



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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Context

Cwm Glâs Primary School is located in the middle of a large housing estate on the eastern side of Swansea. Approximately 40% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is significantly higher than the local and national averages. The school describes the area it serves as socially and economically disadvantaged.

There are 285 full-time pupils on roll. The classes are taught by nine full-time and four part-time teachers. They are supported by 19 learning support assistants. A specialist teaching facility for a small number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is sited at the school. There is one pupil who is being 'looked after' by the local authority (LA).

English is the predominant language for all pupils. There are a small number of pupils receiving support for English as an additional language and no pupils use Welsh as a first language. Four per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Around 30% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs (SEN), 5% of whom have a statement of SEN. This is above the LA and national percentages.

In September 2010, 25 pupils joined the school from a neighbouring school that had recently closed as part of the LA's school re-organisation programme. Parents state that their children have settled well into school due to the efforts of staff.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Cwm Glâs Primary School is £3,493, which compares with a maximum of £5,744 and a minimum of £2,550 for primary schools in Swansea. The school has the 29th highest budget per pupil out of the 89 primary schools in Swansea.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school is excellent because:

- most pupils make very good progress and achieve high standards;
- it is a very inclusive and caring environment for pupils to learn and prosper;
- it is very well led;
- nearly all pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour and positive attitudes to learning;
- learning support assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and wellbeing; and
- there are very strong links with parents and carers.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are excellent because:

- the headteacher has a proven track record in maintaining high standards;
- staff regularly update and share their knowledge with colleagues and other schools;
- leaders rigorously analyse and use data to inform planning for improvement; and
- governors make an important contribution to the life and strategic direction of the school.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

R1 raise standards in writing in key stage 1;

R2 further improve the quality of teaching by refining monitoring procedures; and

R3 ensure greater consistency in marking so that comments identify how pupils can improve their work.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how the school is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the school to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Excellent

Standards: Excellent

Many children enter school with basic skills well below those normally expected for children of their age. From these starting points, most make very good progress and attain high standards by the end of key stage 2. Throughout the school, most pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and pupils in receipt of free school meals achieve well in relation to their targets.

In key stage 2 in 2010, the proportion of pupils attaining the core subject indicator (level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science combined) is in the top 25% when compared to the attainment of schools in similar circumstances. This has been the case consistently over the past four years. The performance of pupils is also well above national, local and family of schools averages. In 2010, the school ranks first within its family of schools when comparing the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 in English and mathematics. In addition, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 work in English, mathematics and science over recent years is well above family, local and national averages.

In key stage 1, pupils' performance is good. Over recent years it compares favourably with performance in similar schools and those within its family. However, pupils' performance is more variable when compared to local and national averages. In 2010, the proportion of pupils attaining the core subject indicator (level 2 or above in English, mathematics and science combined) was below the national average. However, 38% of pupils in that year group had special educational needs (SEN) and this had an influence on overall outcomes.

Trends show that, by the end of Year 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (level 2) in writing is below average when compared to results for the family of schools, the LA and Wales. However, by the end of Year 6 many pupils write well for a range of purposes and in varied and interesting styles.

In key stage 1, girls' attainment has been better than boys' over recent years and this difference has been greater than the national trend. This was largely due to a greater percentage of boys with SEN. In 2010, the gap between boys' and girls' attainment narrowed and is now in line with the national difference.

In both key stages, most pupils express themselves clearly and thoughtfully, using a good range of vocabulary. They speak confidently to different audiences including other pupils, teachers and many visitors. Nearly all pupils demonstrate very good listening skills, for instance when working in pairs and during group discussions. Most pupils read well in a variety of contexts and attain levels of fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age and ability.

Most pupils make good use of numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning in subjects across the curriculum, such as

calculating scales in geography or podcasting stories and reports in English. Many pupils also develop very good thinking skills in comparing, questioning and working things out. They respond well to opportunities to undertake follow-up research. Most pupils transfer these skills effectively in a range of subjects across the curriculum. For instance, they apply strategies when contrasting the experiences of evacuees in history lessons and explore misconceptions in science.

Most pupils are enthusiastic about learning Welsh. They understand basic instructions and incidental Welsh used by staff. They use Welsh naturally to greet staff and visitors but do not always make good use of these language skills with their peers. Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in gaining skills in the Welsh language and in key stage 2 the majority of pupils build upon these skills adequately.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils have a broad awareness of health matters and show positive attitudes to adopting healthy lifestyles, for instance by eating healthily in school. Most pupils take part in regular physical exercise, including after-school sports activities. Nearly all feel safe in school and are confident that staff will help them if they have a problem.

Nearly all pupils behave in an exemplary manner, both in the classroom and at breaktimes. They concentrate well, enjoy lessons and work well together. They are also considerate and respectful of others. Most pupils show a good understanding of their own learning and record this very well through their 'learning journals'. They respond enthusiastically to independent research opportunities.

Members of the school council and Eco committee represent other pupils well. They contribute to improvements in school life, for instance in the design of the new gardens. Many pupils contribute well to community life by supporting local charities and by representing the school in a range of activities.

Attendance has improved significantly over recent years and now compares favourably with that of schools in similar circumstances. Attendance in 2009/10, at around 93%, is similar to LA and national rates.

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

The school provides a good range of learning experiences to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers' planning clearly sets out the development of pupils' communication, numeracy, ICT and thinking skills. The daily skills-based 'Question Tree' sessions, for Years 2 to 6, give pupils the confidence to ask interesting and sometimes profound questions, such as 'How did we come about?'

Many adults use Welsh effectively around the school and this enhances pupils' bilingualism. The school's partnership with Menter Iaith, an organisation that promotes the Welsh language in the community, has enriched Welsh language provision, particularly in the Foundation Phase. However, the teaching of Welsh in

key stage 2 is more inconsistent and this hinders pupils' progress. The school effectively promotes pupils' wider understanding of Welsh culture and heritage.

The school has a clear focus on education for sustainable development and global citizenship in work across the curriculum. The development of the school grounds, well-planned visits and the contribution of various visitors have increased pupils' awareness of 'green' issues.

The school provides a worthwhile range of out-of-school activities that many pupils attend. The choir is a particularly strong and successful feature of school life.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching in the lessons observed is good and ensures that pupils are motivated and engaged in their learning. Teachers are knowledgeable, make good use of resources and manage pupils' behaviour very well. They work very closely with learning support assistants in planning, delivering and reviewing lessons. This makes a significant difference to pupils' learning and wellbeing. In the few lessons where teaching has shortcomings, activities are not always well matched to pupils' needs. In the Foundation Phase and key stage 1, on a few occasions, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' independent writing skills across areas of learning. This has a negative impact on standards.

Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and tracked effectively across the school. Teachers give pupils clear and helpful oral feedback at the end of lessons. However, in a very few cases, written comments do not identify clearly enough what pupils need to do to improve their work.

The school takes an active part in the cluster arrangements for assessment and moderation of pupils' work at the end of both key stages. However, in a few cases, assessment of pupils' work in science for the higher level 5 is not always accurate.

Reports to parents and carers are clear and informative. Parents and carers feel that they are very well informed about their children's achievements and progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has well-established and effective arrangements to promote pupils' health and wellbeing. It effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through collective worship and an extensive range of visits and visitors.

The school makes good use of a wide range of specialist services to enhance the support and guidance it gives pupils. It has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Provision for pupils with ALN is good, both in the mainstream classes and the specialist teaching unit. Staff diagnose learning difficulties early and provide pupils with appropriate support. In most cases, staff set and monitor appropriate individual

educational plans and targets for pupils with ALN. In the best practice, these are used well to guide and inform learning and teaching.

Learning environment: Good

The school successfully promotes its vision of 'It's down to you, and you can do something about it'. It is an inclusive and nurturing community where all pupils are valued and treated equally. The school recognises, respects and celebrates diversity and this impacts positively on the quality of the learning environment.

The school makes effective and efficient use of its staff. Support staff are well trained and work very well alongside teachers to plan, deliver and evaluate learning and teaching. The continuous professional development of teachers and support staff ensures that they are able to deliver the curriculum effectively.

The school has plenty of good resources, which are well matched to pupils' needs. The school building is well maintained and extensive use is made of the school grounds and the locality.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher promote a clear vision and commitment to raising standards and providing pupils with the best opportunities for learning. Together, they provide outstanding leadership for the school. For instance, this is very well demonstrated in the rigorous analysis and sharing of data to identify school priorities.

Staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities and work effectively together in delivering the school's aims and objectives. Well-structured performance management arrangements use data, from lesson observations and teacher assessments of pupils' performances, to identify appropriate professional development opportunities for all staff.

Subject co-ordinators are effective in reviewing the quality of their areas of responsibility. Their analysis and evaluation of a wide range of pupil performance data are excellent. Staff use this information to set appropriate whole-school and individual targets leading to measurable improvements in standards.

Governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and help provide a strong steer for the school. Many governors have attended training, and this has helped them to develop a very good working knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They provide appropriate challenge to the school in relation to the standards and quality it achieves.

The school meets local and national priorities well. Staff give a very high priority to tackling social disadvantage and ensuring pupils' wellbeing. The introduction of the Foundation Phase is progressing well.

Improving quality: Good

The school has a comprehensive and well-developed range of processes for self-evaluation, including taking into account the views of teachers, pupils and parents. These provide leaders and governors with an accurate and realistic view of school performance and are used effectively to monitor outcomes and raise standards. Overall, school development planning is effective and supported well through the allocation of resources.

Leaders regularly monitor the quality of learning and teaching. However, evaluations do not always clearly identify areas for improvement.

The school's involvement in professional learning communities is excellent and confirms its continuing drive for improvement. Staff are very well supported by continuous professional development opportunities and benefit from sharing good practice with other schools and colleagues, for instance relating to assessment for learning. The very well-planned training programme for support staff provides them with the skills and knowledge to be extremely effective in their role.

The school has addressed all of the recommendations from the last inspection.

Partnership working: Good

The school has established effective links with a range of partners including teacher training providers, other schools and local businesses. These partnerships contribute well to teachers' professional development and pupils' learning, for instance in developing investigations in science and teaching French to Year 4 pupils. The school also has effective partnerships with a range of outside agencies to meet the particular needs of individuals and groups of pupils, including those with emotional difficulties.

The school has close links with the community. Regular visitors enrich pupils' learning experiences. There are very strong relationships with parents and carers. Family learning and other classes strengthen these ties and improve parents' understanding of how their children learn most effectively. Parents speak highly of the arrangements made for pupils new to the school, including those recently transferred from a local school that was closed. There are also good transfer arrangements for pupils in the specialist teaching unit and older pupils moving on to the next stage of their education.

Resource management: Excellent

The school manages its finances very well. The school's priorities are appropriately resourced and expenditure on these is carefully monitored. The strategic deployment of teaching and support staff is outstanding and contributes significantly to pupils' learning and wellbeing. For instance, the ICT technician provides excellent support to colleagues in developing pupils' computer skills. Senior managers have also skilfully targeted resources to support pupils with ALN, and this has contributed to their good progress. Overall, there are plentiful good-quality learning resources, a

high standard of accommodation and informative and attractive displays of pupils' work.

In view of the very good use the school makes of its funding, the very good progress made by pupils and the high standards they achieve, the school provides excellent value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Most pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Nearly all feel safe in school, know whom to talk to if they have a problem and say that teachers help them to learn. They think that they are doing well at school and believe that there are enough resources to help them learn. All feel that they are taught to stay healthy and have many opportunities to exercise. Nearly all feel that homework is of value to them. There is widespread agreement that the school deals well with any bullying and that behaviour is good.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Many parents completed the questionnaire. All are pleased with the school and think that their children are doing well. Nearly all parents think that the school is well led and find staff approachable if they have any questions or concerns. They think that the school helps their children to mature and take on responsibility. All say that staff have high expectations for children to work hard and do their best. Nearly all parents say that they are well informed about their children's progress. A few parents are uncertain whether their children are well prepared to move on to their next stage of education. Similarly, a few parents are unsure over whether their children receive the right level of additional support for their learning.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Russell Grigg	Reporting Inspector
Rick Hawkley	Team Inspector
Sue Roberts	Team Inspector
Thomas Petherick	Lay Inspector
Catherine James	Peer Inspector
Peter Osborne [Headteacher]	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