

From:
Sent: 05 October 2016 14:06
To:
Cc:
Subject: FOI response

Dear

I refer to your email of 14 September to my colleague Robert Gairey confirming your request as:

1. Any correspondence (internal and external) in relation to Llanbister CP School, under Powys County Council in last 2 years (7 September 2014 – 6 September 2016)

I note that Robert has already asked you if there was anything you were specifically seeking in relation to Llanbister CP School, to which you responded that you were “information” gathering.

It may be helpful if I explained what information we hold. The publication scheme for Estyn (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales), was drawn up under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and in accordance with the approved ICO model publication scheme 2008. This document outlines what information we publish and how it is made available to the public and its aim is to explain what information about Estyn and its work is routinely made available to the public. Section 7 contains reference to inspections, which can be accessed through this hyperlink: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/download/publications/4941.3/estyns-publication-scheme/>

We have trawled our ICT systems for the information you requested, which has produced a considerable amount of information:

 Llanbister	04/10/2016 14:21	Outlook Data File	2,173,737 KB
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As your request is wide ranging exemptions under the FOI Act could/would be applicable. Estyn, in response to previous FOI requests has applied one or a combination of the following exemptions relating to inspection evidence, complaints, individual contractor costs and personal data:

Exemption Applied	Description
Section 12	Costs - a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which is currently £600
Section 21	Information already reasonably accessible
Section 22	Information intended for future publication
Section 33	Prejudice to audit functions - This exemption is used by Estyn where complying with the request would prejudice or would be likely to prejudice its inspection functions
Section 36	Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs – this is applied to inspection documents and evidence gained on inspections and follow-up visits
Section 40 (1)	Personal information (of the requester)
Section 40 (2)	Personal data (where the information concerns a third party) where disclosure would breach any of the Data Protection Principles
Section 40 (5)(a)	Exemption from duty to confirm or deny if the information would constitute personal data of the requester
Section 40 (5)(b)(i)	Exemption from duty to confirm or deny if giving the confirmation or denial would contravene DPA principles
Section 41	Information provided in confidence
Section 42	Legal professional privilege
Section 43	Commercial interests

Guidance set out by the Information Commissioner's Office on FOI can be accessed through this link:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/>

I understand that this may be disappointing, however if you can be more specific on what information you are looking for in respect to Llanbister CP School I'm more than happy to try and help or provide you with further advice and assistance.

You also asked:

2. Why have Powys County Council had access to Estyn's follow-up report, which was the outcome of Estyn's visit in June 2016.

Reports on follow up visits are not published on Estyn's website but the school receives one copy for their action and the local educating authority is copied into the email. I have attached a copy of the report for your information.

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate in contacting us.

Yours sincerely

Information Case Officer

Estyn

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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Llanbister C.P. School
Llanbister
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 6TN**

Date of visit: June 2016

by

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

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The monitoring team

Mr Mike Maguire	Reporting Inspector
Mr Richard Lloyd	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring

Llanbister CP School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in January 2015.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is maintaining the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve standards in ICT, particularly in key stage 2 and pupils' independent writing skills in the Foundation Phase

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Teachers' planning for information and communication technology (ICT) now ensures that pupils' skills develop appropriately throughout the school. By Year 6, nearly all pupils create suitable presentations and use word processing programmes to set out their work neatly. They save and retrieve information confidently in e-files. Nearly all pupils understand how to use a basic database. Most Year 6 pupils create, sort and interrogate a simple database confidently. They are beginning to use email proficiently. Most pupils in key stage 2 have a sound understanding of e-safety. Nearly all pupils use ICT competently in their work across the curriculum, for example when researching information for presentations about farming. The role of pupils as digital leaders is developing appropriately and they are beginning to support other pupils to develop new skills, for example in using QR codes successfully.

The school has improved its long term planning for the teaching of writing in the Foundation Phase. This ensures that pupils receive a suitable range of opportunities to write independently at length in literacy lessons and across the curriculum. Teachers generally provide suitable criteria to help pupils understand how to be successful in their written work. This is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to work independently. For example, pupils are beginning to use this information to assess their own work and that of their peers. Increasingly, pupils improve aspects of their written work, such as the correct use of capital letters and full stops, in response to teachers' marking. Overall, pupils now write at length with increasing independence, for a suitable range of purposes. They are also beginning to develop new skills progressively. For example, pupils use a varied range of sentence starters and time connectives when re-telling familiar tales or writing sets of instructions. However, the accuracy of spelling, sentence structure and the quality of content in pupils' independent work remains too variable.

Recommendation 2: Develop planning to ensure continuity and progression in the development of pupils' skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Planning to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is developing appropriately. The school's plans identify a range of relevant opportunities for pupils to develop these skills.

In literacy, most pupils develop their skills well across the curriculum and to the same standard as in English lessons. For example, in key stage 2, most pupils write effectively to describe features of farming in Celtic times and to produce a character profile about King Solomon in religious education. They speak confidently to present their opinions and read accurately in order to identify key information in problem solving activities.

Improved learning opportunities enable pupils to use their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. For example, pupils in the Foundation Phase measure and track daily temperatures. Pupils in key stage 2 design and plan the layout for a farmyard as part of a task that challenges them to use their knowledge of shape, measure, scale and angles to a good standard. There are useful opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in problem solving activities, for example to identify a burglar by using processes of elimination based on times and a range of relevant numerical information. In these examples, pupils apply their skills as well as they do in their mathematics work. Overall, these improvements are relatively new and pupils' use of numeracy across the curriculum remains at an early stage of development.

Recommendation 3: Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking, problem solving and independent learning skills

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Across the school, provision to develop pupils' problem solving and thinking skills is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

In the Foundation Phase, younger pupils develop their thinking and problem solving skills competently through well-planned activities. They are beginning to apply their thinking skills appropriately to improve the quality of their work, for example, by assessing their written work and identifying areas for improvement.

In key stage 2, staff plan regular opportunities for pupils to use their thinking and problem solving skills in a wide range of activities. For example, all pupils have a 'thinking book' in which they complete a range of suitable tasks. Recently, the school introduced 'problem solving' books for all pupils. These provide pupils with engaging opportunities to solve problems with a mathematical focus. Within these activities, pupils use their numeracy skills well to solve problems and this is beginning to provide appropriate levels of challenge for most pupils.

Throughout the school, there has been a significant reduction in the use of worksheets during lessons. As a result, most pupils are becoming more independent in setting out their own work. In key stage 2, most pupils generally display appropriate levels of independence in their work, although their capacity to improve their own learning, for example through self-assessment, is not fully developed. All pupils in Foundation Phase have a 'Challenge Time' book in which they record activities undertaken during enhanced provision sessions. Generally, these activities are suitable for the ability of many pupils. However, pupils do not yet sustain sufficient focus on learning when working in the absence of an adult and do not direct their own learning as part of their normal daily routine.

Recommendation 4: Use assessment and tracking systems effectively to monitor the progress of all pupils and to identify clearly the next steps in learning

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school's policy gives a concise and appropriate overview of its assessment processes. Teachers have established an annual programme of assessment activities that enables them to collect information about pupils' performance throughout the year. They use an electronic tracking system for recording pupils' progress and this provides a good overview of achievements over time. Teachers review this information regularly and are beginning to use it to inform future planning. Their involvement in school and cluster moderation meetings ensures the accuracy of the assessments made.

All pupils have individual targets for improving their literacy and numeracy skills. Older pupils, in particular, record success against these regularly. Overall, most pupils are aware of their targets and what they need to do to improve their work.

Throughout the school, pupils are beginning to assess their own work and the work of other pupils in books and in class plenary sessions effectively. Pupils use success criteria and pupil-friendly level descriptors appropriately to make judgements about how well they have done their work. In key stage 2, the school continues to use QR codes to store evidence of oracy work. Pupils use these appropriately to assess their own work and to assess the work of their peers.

Teachers generally provide suitable comments on pupils' work and usually link these to the learning objectives. Older pupils, in particular, are now given time to make relevant responses to these comments and this helps them to evaluate their work and to make improvements.

Developments in assessment are beginning to have an impact on the standards of pupils' work and next steps in learning.

Recommendation 5: Establish stable leadership

Limited progress in addressing the recommendation

Since the start of the school year, an acting headteacher has taken charge of the school. She has a significant workload with a considerable teaching commitment, and one and a half days a week to undertake leadership responsibilities. She has worked conscientiously to secure improved standards at the school and to make progress against each of the recommendations.

The local authority employs another leader as an executive headteacher to support the school for one day a week. Through her mentoring role, she provides sound support for the headteacher.

The job descriptions for the headteacher and class teacher outline their specific roles appropriately. The school has suitable performance management processes in place for the headteacher and staff. Targets agreed are generally aligned with the school's post inspection action plan.

The headteacher focuses much of her work on improving the school's curriculum and on recording performance data to track pupils' progress. She and the executive headteacher monitor the quality of teaching and learning to ensure a consistent approach across the school. They have also reviewed and refined key policies.

The local authority's consultation regarding the possible closure of the school has now ended. A formal decision on closure will be made in September. In addition, the current headteacher and executive headteacher's employment at the school terminates at the end of this term. In spite of this, school staff and the governing body have continued to make progress against each of the recommendations since the last visit.

The local authority has secured a new temporary headteacher for the next academic year. Although this has removed uncertainty regarding the stability of leadership for the foreseeable future, at this stage, the impact of these arrangements on the quality of provision and standards is uncertain. Currently, the lack of a definitive decision about whether the school will remain open adds to significant doubts in relation to the school's capacity for further improvement.

Recommendation 6: Develop the role of the governing body as a critical friend

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has a full governing body that meets regularly to oversee the running of the school. Sub-committees for several areas of the school's work now function appropriately.

The governing body has undertaken a suitable range of training to help them understand how to fulfil their roles more effectively. This includes a combination of in-house and external training for self-evaluation, performance management and training for the chair of governors. Nearly all governors are now involved in monitoring and evaluating provision and standards in the school through the scrutiny of pupils' work and learning walks. Through these activities, governors' confidence and knowledge of the school is gradually improving.

The executive headteacher is a member of the governing body and she supports governors to question the school appropriately about its work. For example, governors recently questioned the school about the quality of ICT provision for pupils, the quality of pupils' writing and the content of local authority reports on progress. However, the level of challenge is still at an early stage of development.

Individual governors oversee specific inspection recommendations. They provide reports at governing body meetings and at half-termly improvement board meetings with local authority officers about the progress the school is making. As a result, governors are becoming more aware of the impact that the progress of the school's post inspection action plan is having on the quality of its provision and pupils' standards.

Recommendation 7: Use the outcomes of self-evaluation to identify priorities and to set clear and measurable targets for improvement

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school's policy includes a timetable that identifies the range of self-evaluation evidence it collects in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This range of evidence is appropriate.

Since the last visit, the school has continued to carry out self-evaluation activities. In particular, the headteacher, executive headteacher and local authority staff have undertaken a range of lesson observations, concentrating on the quality of teaching and learning. The school has also carried out detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. The focus of these is generally linked to the school's priorities for improvement. The school also uses reviews by local authority and consortium staff to help it identify areas that need further development.

The headteacher and executive headteacher include self-evaluation information in a detailed report. These leaders have a clear understanding of the school's progress, strengths and further development needs. As a result, the report represents accurately the school's current stage of development.

The school provides regular updates of the progress it is making. Self-evaluation processes are beginning to have an impact in the school on, for example, better opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving activities and improving the standards achieved by pupils. Although these processes are still at a fairly early stage of development they are becoming more well-established as part of the school's annual self-evaluation cycle.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.