



**A report on**

**Llantarnam Community Primary School  
Green Willows  
Oakfield  
Cwmbran  
Gwent NP44 3HA**

**Date of inspection: July 2011**

**by**

**Dr. P. David Ellis**

**Reporting inspector, under contract to Estyn**

**for**

**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:

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

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## Context

Llantarnam Community Primary School was built in 1957 and is situated in the Oakfield housing estate on the outskirts of Cwmbran. It changed its name from Oakfield Primary School in 2009. Pupils are drawn from the local area, which is described as neither advantaged nor disadvantaged. Residences are mainly terraced or semi-detached.

The school caters for 203 pupils between the ages of three and eleven, who are taught in seven classes, two of which contain a mixed age range. One class is for 52 nursery age pupils, who attend on a part-time basis. The number on roll has increased since the last inspection.

Around 17% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is a little below the national and local authority (LA) averages. The intake represents the full ability range. Approximately 20% are identified as requiring additional learning needs (ALN) support, which is also slightly below the national average; none has a statement. Around 4%, mainly of Nepalese origin, come from an ethnic minority background, of whom the majority speak English as an additional language, although none now requires extra support. Four pupils are looked after by the LA. No pupils use Welsh as a first language.

The school was last inspected in June 2005. Since then there have been several staff changes. In 2009 a new deputy headteacher was appointed and a senior teacher was seconded to another school for two years. During the inspection two teachers were absent due to illness and replaced by supply cover.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Llantarnam Community Primary School is £3503 which compares with a maximum of £8471 and a minimum of £2792 for primary schools in Torfaen. The school has the 13th highest budget per pupil out of the 32 primary schools in Torfaen.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- standards of attainment overall are good in both key stages and nearly all pupils make steady progress through the school;
- standards in speaking, listening and reading are good with some excellent features in speaking;
- pupils enjoy coming to school and thrive in its atmosphere of mutual respect;
- pupils' behaviour and the quality of their care are very good; and
- teaching overall is good.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is a trend of improvement in standards and aspects of literacy in both key stages;
- the school has a clear vision for the future, based on a well-considered sense of purpose and direction;
- the school is effectively managed and distributed leadership is well embedded;
- although there are areas for continuing development in self-evaluation, the school has appropriate review processes in place and its improvement plan effectively indicates the way forward; and
- the school is poised to move forward positively with a more stable staffing situation.

## Recommendations

In order to make further progress, the school needs to:

- R1 continue to improve pupils' skills in writing with particular attention to handwriting;
- R2 continue to improve pupils' skills in Welsh second language;
- R3 raise the achievement levels of more able pupils;
- R4 ensure more consistency across the school in curriculum planning, with particular attention to matching work to pupils' ability levels;
- R5 further develop aspects of self-evaluation; and
- R6 improve the provision for information and communications technology (ICT).

### **What happens next?**

*Llantarnam Primary School will create an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.*

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

The school's teacher assessment results for 2010 in key stage 1 were generally better than national, local and the family of schools in English and mathematics at level two or above, but lower at the higher level three, whereas in science they were lower at level two or above, but better at level three. This placed the school in the lower 50% of similar schools for English and science and in the upper 50% for mathematics. Overall, there is a trend of steady improvement over the last four years and there are indications that this progress is currently being maintained.

The school's teacher assessment results for 2010 in key stage 2 were better than national, local and the family of schools in all three core subjects at level four or above and at the higher level five in English, but they were lower in mathematics at level five. This placed the school in the best 25% of similar schools in all three subjects. Overall, although cohorts vary, there is a trend of improvement over the last four years.

Nearly all pupils, whatever their ability or background, make steady progress through the school, although, as results indicate, the more able do not always achieve their potential. Girls tend to attain better in English in both key stages, but boys in key stage 2 outperform them in mathematics and science at the higher level five.

There is evidence that standards in speaking, listening and reading are improving across the school; they are now good with some excellent features especially in speaking. Older pupils, in particular, read fluently and with expression and understand the meaning of their texts. Writing, including spelling, is also good overall, although the quality and quantity varies within and between classes, particularly with regard to handwriting and presentation.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 show a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards learning Welsh. The majority ask, understand and respond to a range of simple questions and instructions, but their range of vocabulary and language patterns is limited. All develop a growing awareness of their Welsh culture and heritage.

#### Wellbeing: Good

All pupils appreciate the very good relationships they have with staff, based on the school's caring ethos. They are happy coming to school and thrive in its atmosphere of mutual respect. The quality of their singing reflects their enjoyment and their social and emotional wellbeing. Older ones undertake a number of additional roles to care for those younger than themselves.

Nearly all pupils are fully engaged in their learning and display confidence and enthusiasm during lessons. They are beginning to acquire a range of thinking and

problem-solving skills. They have a very good understanding of how they can remain safe and live a healthy and active lifestyle.

Nearly all pupils recognise that good behaviour and a calm ethos facilitate their progress. Their behaviour is consistently very good and they are polite and courteous. Attendance levels are above the national average for Wales and compare well with the family of schools. Punctuality is good.

There are good examples of community involvement and the school council meets weekly and is involved in decision-making. Members have a very good grasp of how to run a committee, although their views are not routinely sought. The nominated pupil ambassadors confidently explain to their peers the rights of the child.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Learning experiences: Adequate**

The school provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant and which meets statutory requirements. In the Foundation Phase teachers and support staff provide enriching and stimulating learning experiences for pupils, both inside and outside the classroom, and the skills curriculum in key stage 2 is being effectively implemented.

There is a consistent approach to planning across the school, but, especially in key stage 2, there is a lack of specific detail, particularly in relation to tasks and outcomes for different needs and abilities. This results at times in a lack of challenge and expectations, especially for more able pupils and where there is more than one age group in a class.

Opportunities for pupils to develop key skills are generally well planned. Intervention programmes and strategies, especially for those with ALN, successfully ensure pupils acquire the necessary skills to access the wider curriculum.

The school makes effective use of visits, special events and visitors to enrich pupils' learning. The outdoor provision, extra-curricular activities and links with the community and employers enhance learning opportunities.

Provision and planning for Welsh language teaching and learning are relatively underdeveloped in most classes. Although the school has a clear bilingual policy and has introduced various initiatives, use of the language by staff and pupils remains inconsistent. Pupils' understanding of their Welsh heritage and culture is adequately promoted.

Pupils know about the importance of conserving and reusing resources and they are beginning to understand the concept of global warming. Through the school's Fairtrade initiative, they effectively learn about the needs of others, particularly in third world countries.

**Teaching: Good**

Where teaching is good, introductions to lessons are lively and interesting, activities are well organised and pupils are given opportunities to make choices and their own decisions. Sessions are clearly structured and time is well managed.

Where teaching is less effective, work is not sufficiently well matched to ability levels, the pace of learning slows and tasks are over teacher directed with a lack of investigatory work.

Teachers have appropriate expectations and generally have up-to-date subject knowledge. They make learning objectives explicit, ask relevant questions and give clear explanations.

Independent learning is generally successfully promoted across the school. Well-organised collaborative group work is a prominent feature of many lessons, particularly in key stage 2.

Excellent working relationships exist between teachers and pupils. Behaviour is very well managed, so that a productive working atmosphere prevails in nearly all lessons. Pupils' progress is effectively monitored and praise and encouragement are used well.

Assessment, recording and reporting arrangements meet statutory requirements. The school has a comprehensive tracking system in place, which is being further developed in line with LA guidelines.

Assessment for learning strategies, including critical skills and peer and self-evaluation procedures, are being successfully developed across the school.

Pupils have individual targets, which are agreed with teachers. In the Foundation Phase these are based on 'I can' and 'I need to' statements as part of pupils' effective 'Learning Journey' files.

Most work is marked and dated, based on the school's guidelines, but responses to pupils' work vary and do not sufficiently indicate the way forward.

Reports to parents meet statutory requirements and provide targets for future progress, but they are based on the same format throughout the school, which is less appropriate for the Foundation Phase. In addition, in many classes the comments for different pupils are similar. The school has plans to revise its procedures.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The quality of care for pupils is very good. Staff ensure that there is a warm and welcoming atmosphere and that individual needs are well met.

The school has appropriate policies and procedures to ensure pupils are safe and achieve emotional and physical wellbeing. Healthy living, including understanding of a healthy diet and personal relationships, is effectively promoted.

Personal and social education and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are successfully integrated into the curriculum and daily routines. The

school promotes values that help pupils distinguish right from wrong, to take responsibility for their own actions and to show initiative.

There are consistent whole-school policies and procedures to promote good behaviour, which all teachers follow. Any incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. There are very few reported instances of bullying and there are clear systems in place for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities, reflect on their own beliefs and opinions and develop an understanding of different cultures and religions, although multicultural education is relatively underdeveloped.

Very good facilities for wrap-around care are provided by the school on site. There is a breakfast club and a pre-school setting that caters for the part-time nursery age pupils when they are not attending the nursery.

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

The school actively promotes regular attendance and punctuality and has good procedures for following up absences. Registration is conducted efficiently.

All pupils with ALN have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life. Good use is made of outside agencies and specialist support services.

Pupils' with ALN are mostly well catered for, although less attention is given to the more able. There are early and ongoing interventions for those experiencing learning difficulties and all pupils on the ALN register have an appropriate individual education plan, which is reviewed once every term with parents.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school actively promotes equal opportunities and fosters an inclusive ethos in line with its vision statement. All pupils and staff are treated with mutual respect and feel equally valued regardless of their background.

The school successfully promotes tolerant attitudes to ensure all pupils and staff are free from harassment and oppressive behaviour.

The school has a disability equality scheme and a very detailed accessibility plan, following a recent LA audit. It makes reasonable adjustments, when necessary, to ensure all pupils have access to every area of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

There are sufficient resources and facilities to meet pupils' learning needs, except a lack of computers throughout the school restricts the use of ICT as an integral part of everyday learning. Internally the school is well decorated and attractive displays throughout the building considerably enhance the learning environment.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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## **Leadership: Good**

The school has a clear vision for the future, based on a well-considered sense of purpose and direction.

The headteacher provides a very caring oversight of the school and has a very visible presence around the school. She displays a deep concern for all pupils and staff in her care and enjoys very good relationships with all staff, governors and parents. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher very well and performs his duties and responsibilities very actively and enthusiastically.

Distributed leadership and effective team work are well embedded within the school, despite a number of recent and impending staff changes. The senior leadership team meets regularly to ensure the school runs efficiently and each member leads a curriculum management team. All teachers have a management role and many take on extra responsibilities both within the school and externally.

Performance management arrangements meet statutory requirements. Teachers' targets are linked to their responsibilities and the school improvement plan. Support staff also have annual reviews.

The governing body is well established and meets regularly and relevant committees are in place; it effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors are well informed and have subject interests and most attend relevant training events. A majority visit the school on a regular basis to observe classes and to help with extra-curricular activities.

All statutory policies are in place and regularly reviewed. The prospectus and governing body's annual report to parents meet statutory requirements with only one or two minor omissions. There is an appropriate complaints procedure.

The school takes very good account of local and national priorities. Good progress in implementing the School Effectiveness Framework, for example, is demonstrated by the number of external joint working groups that staff members attend.

## **Improving quality: Adequate**

The school's leadership is diligently establishing appropriate self-evaluation procedures, which provide sufficient evidence to identify relevant targets for improvement, although there are areas for continuing development.

The school uses an appropriate range of first-hand evidence in the self-evaluation process to determine how well the school is developing and which areas require improvement. Where there is a clear focus, for example in targeting less able pupils in literacy, success is evident.

All teaching staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and the canvassing of parents' and pupils' views are useful recent initiatives. Governors' opinions are also taken into account.

The headteacher undertakes lesson observations in each class, mainly once a term, and subject co-ordinators monitor their subjects and produce annual action plans if the subject is on the school improvement plan. The outcomes of monitoring, however, are not sufficiently sharp or focused to trigger improvements.

The self-evaluation report is a useful and honest document, based on a review of standards and provision, although it lacks evaluative comment.

The current school improvement plan prioritises the areas that the self-evaluation process has identified as requiring development and it has an appropriate focus on raising pupils' standards with reference to resources and timescales. It is a working document which clearly indicates the way forward; it is monitored and updated regularly involving the senior leadership team, teachers and governors.

Progress since the last inspection has been modest, due particularly to staff changes. For example, the planning and provision for matching work to pupils' abilities and the development of Welsh second language skills are still ongoing. However, there are examples of measurable improvements arising from recent initiatives and the school is developing systems for monitoring their effectiveness.

The school is a well-established learning community with a culture of collaboration. It takes an active role in professional learning communities involving the LA and local schools. These are beginning to impact on standards, teaching and the curriculum.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Parents are supportive and positive about the school and receive regular information and feedback. They are invited to two official consultation evenings a year to discuss their child's progress, but they can make an appointment at any time if they have any concerns. A few get involved in helping in the school and with events.

There are clear guidelines for parents about homework, which they appreciate, and there is an appropriate home-school agreement.

There are strong links with other schools, especially those in the local cluster, which meets regularly, especially to standardise and moderate pupils' work. There are good partnership arrangements with the LA, local colleges and initial teacher training institutions.

The school is at the heart of the local community and pupils benefit socially and educationally from participating in a variety of events.

The partnership with the local secondary school is strong with good transition links. The relationship with the pre-school provision within the school is especially effective; liaison between staff significantly enhances transition into the nursery and widens experiences and choices for parents. This provision has also helped to increase the number on roll at the school.

### **Resource management: Good**

Although there have been recent staff changes, the school has a full complement of teachers and support staff. Teachers effectively direct teaching assistants to enhance pupils' learning experiences and to undertake a range of interventions, although occasionally supporting adults could be more gainfully deployed.

All staff, including those who are newly qualified, have the opportunity to attend relevant courses and training events and whole-school training is also regularly provided. Professional development is closely aligned to the school improvement plan and performance management targets.

Workforce remodelling and teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time, based on the employment of a higher learning teacher assistant, are effectively implemented and meet statutory requirements.

Resources, facilities and accommodation are effectively managed. The buildings and grounds are well maintained.

The budget is well managed and balanced; expenditure is related to priorities for improvement and is regularly reviewed to ensure cost effectiveness. Based on its outcomes, the school gives good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

Twenty-nine parents completed the questionnaire, of whom sixteen added written comments, nearly all of which were positive and supportive of the school. All parents are satisfied with the school and feel it is well run. Without exception, they think their child likes school and that pupils are well behaved and that teaching is good with an appropriate range of activities. They feel their child settled in well, is safe and makes good progress. They agree that the school promotes healthy living and they are comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns. Except for a few who were not sure, all parents think their child receives any necessary additional support and is helped to become more mature and responsible; they feel that staff expect their children to do their best and prepare them well for secondary education. Nearly all agree that staff treat pupils fairly and with respect, that homework is useful and that they are kept well informed about their child's progress; they understand the procedures for dealing with complaints;

#### **Responses to learner questionnaires**

Eighty-three key stage 2 pupils completed the questionnaire. Nearly all consider that they are doing well and feel safe in school, that they know what to do if they find the work hard and that teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress. Most agree that they are taught to keep healthy and have sufficient opportunities for regular exercise. A very few, mainly boys, consider that the school does not deal well with bullying, while a few, mostly girls, are unsure who to talk to if they are worried or upset. A few, mainly girls, also think that homework does not help them improve their work in school and that they do not have enough resources. Most importantly, over a quarter of pupils of both genders feel that their peers do not behave well enough in class and around a fifth, mainly boys, think there are problems with behaviour at playtimes.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Dr. P. David Ellis	Reporting Inspector
Mrs. Eleri Hurley	Team Inspector
Mrs. Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Mrs. Lisa Greenhalgh	Peer Inspector
Mrs. Anne Webster-Blythe	School Nominee

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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