



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

**Newbridge-On-Wye Church in Wales School
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 6LD**

Date of inspection: February 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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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

This small Church in Wales school is located in Newbridge-on-Wye, a village five miles north of Builth Wells in Powys. In September 2009, a new purpose-built school was opened on the existing site. Pupils attending the school come from the village and the surrounding rural area with a substantial number from outside the school's designated catchment.

Currently there are 80 pupils on roll, aged between three and eleven years of age. They are evenly distributed across four mixed age classes. Numbers have remained reasonably stable over the last few years, despite the admission of pupils from Howey Primary School, which recently closed.

English is the predominant language for all pupils and none speak Welsh as their first language.

The school describes its catchment as neither particularly affluent nor economically disadvantaged and the school's intake as representing the full range of ability. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 9% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared to the all-Wales average of just under 20%.

No pupil has a statement of special needs, but approximately 21% of pupils are on the special educational needs register.

The current headteacher was appointed in 1995.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Newbridge-On-Wye Church in Wales School is £3,379, which compares with a maximum of £11,812 and a minimum of £2,891 for primary schools in Powys. The school has the 69th highest budget per pupil out of the 101 primary schools in Powys.

Summary

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

Current performance

Newbridge-on-Wye Church in Wales School is a good school because:

- by Year 6, nearly all pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities;
- pupils' key skills in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) develop effectively as they move through the school;
- pupils are enthusiastic, independent learners;
- the school works well with parents and the local community; and
- relationships between pupils and staff are very good.

Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because:

- the recent appointment of an experienced deputy headteacher has broadened the experience of the school's leadership team in relation to the Foundation Phase. This has also helped strengthen the school's self-evaluation processes;
- staff work well as a team to support each other and to share new teaching strategies and expertise; and
- the governing body is well informed through its active participation in school life. It provides good challenge and support.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' ability to use phonic strategies to develop fluent reading skills, particularly in the Foundation Phase. *
- R2 Provide greater opportunity for pupils to produce imaginative extended writing to express their ideas and opinions. *
- R3 Ensure that teachers apply assessment for learning strategies and follow the marking policy consistently throughout the school. *
- R4 Increase the variety and quality of Foundation Phase resources for literacy, numeracy and physical development.

* areas identified in the current school development plan

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan to address the recommendations. Progress on meeting these will be reported to the governing body and parents.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most pupils generally achieve good standards in their work by the end of key stage 2. Pupils have a good recall of their previous learning and they acquire many new skills systematically as they move through the school.

Most pupils listen well to members of staff and other pupils. They speak clearly and develop a wide range of vocabulary, which they use to express their ideas and opinions effectively. Progress in reading is more varied, but by Year 6 many pupils read with good fluency and expression. More able pupils are developing good higher order reading skills such as summarising, predicting and skimming and scanning. However, in the Foundation Phase, many pupils' reading is limited by their insecure knowledge of phonics and their inability to decode unfamiliar words.

Pupils' writing skills are developing well overall. Older pupils in the Foundation Phase are beginning to write independently for a range of purposes. They show an increasing awareness of simple punctuation and spell a range of words with increasing accuracy. In key stage 2, most pupils plan and redraft their work when writing poems, play scripts and recounts of visits made as part of class projects. Many pupils use paragraphs and a range of punctuation marks correctly in their work. Presentation and handwriting skills are good. However, across the school, pupils' ability to write at length to express their thoughts and feelings and to use their imagination in their writing is more limited.

Most pupils have good numeracy skills and they apply these skills well across the curriculum. They enjoy problem solving activities and older pupils explain the methods they use effectively. Pupils' confidence to use ICT is well developed in all classes and they use a range of programmes with considerable independence.

Pupils develop their Welsh language skills well as they move through the school. Most pupils respond accurately to a variety of commands and instructions in Welsh. Many speak confidently in simple sentences when they answer questions using the range of patterns they have learned.

Baseline assessment results have fluctuated considerably in recent years, but current results indicate an overall upward trend against previous local authority averages. In the three years from 2007 until 2009, the core subject indicator (CSI), the expected level in English, mathematics and science for pupils at seven years of age, has been around the average for schools in the same family, the local authority and for Wales. In 2010, however, results in all three core subjects improved considerably, with 100% of pupils achieving the level 2 CSI. Before the improvement in results in 2010, there was a consistent downward trend in results in English since 2006 and performance in mathematics and science was uneven. When compared to similar schools, at the end of key stage 1, results in all three core subjects were in the bottom 25% of those for schools in 2008 and 2009.

The percentage of pupils achieving above the expected levels at the end of key stage 1 (level 3+) has fluctuated, but results have been below the family, local authority and all-Wales averages for the last two years.

In key stage 2, performance in English, mathematics and science has been consistently above the local authority and all-Wales averages for the last four years and around the average for other schools in the family. Results in the core subject indicator over the last four years have been in the top 50% or top 25% of those for schools in similar circumstances across Wales.

Since 2007, the percentage of pupils achieving above the expected levels at the end of key stage 2 (level 5+) in English has been consistently above the family, local authority and all-Wales averages. This is also the case in mathematics, except for a fall in performance in 2008, and for science, where performance dipped to the family average in 2010.

There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in either key stage. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress in relation to specific targets in their individual learning plans. More able pupils also make recent good progress in developing their particular talents, for example in mathematics and leadership.

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils feel happy and safe in school. They show respect, care and concern for each other and relate well to their teachers, staff and visitors. Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Buddies and 'play pals' provide good support at break and lunch times.

Pupils show a good awareness of health issues and healthy living. They eat healthily in school and most take part in a good range of physical exercise activities both during school time and in out of school activities.

Pupil attendance is monitored well and for the three terms prior to inspection attendance was at 94%. Most pupils arrive punctually for lessons.

The school council effectively fulfils its role. Older pupils were recently involved in the interviews and appointment of the new deputy headteacher. Council members also helped to raise money for the new soft surface on the outside play area, through organising a five-a-side football tournament.

Pupils regularly raise money for charities and learn to empathise with people in other countries, when for example they raise money for victims of the Haitian earthquake disaster. Most pupils are becoming confident, independent learners who enjoy their work and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a good range of stimulating learning experiences across the curriculum to meet the needs of most pupils. Many teachers provide interesting activities that sometimes challenge pupils at an appropriate level for their ability. Most teachers provide good opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy and ICT skills. A few teachers do not offer sufficient opportunities to develop pupils' reading and extended writing skills.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular experiences for key stage 2 pupils.

There are examples of good work in some subjects in relation to education for sustainable development and global citizenship. The Eco Committee is proactive in making decisions that have a clear influence on the life and work of the school. The school is currently working towards the Healthy Schools Platinum Award.

Provision for the Welsh language is good. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the history and traditions of Wales. Visits to places such as the Museum of Welsh Life and the South Wales Borderers' Museum enhance pupils' learning. Celebrations on St. David's Day and the Class 4 annual residential visit to Llangrannog provide valuable additional opportunities for developing pupils' appreciation of Welsh culture.

Teaching: Good

The overall quality of teaching is good. All teachers and support staff work well as a team and create a purposeful working environment. Most teachers make good links to previous work in most lessons and use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to deepen their understanding. Teachers occasionally differentiate work well to meet the needs of pupils of varying abilities. However, teachers do not always share learning objectives with pupils or consistently use plenary sessions to review their learning.

Most teachers set individual targets for pupils and these targets help them to understand how to improve their work. Teachers give effective verbal feedback to help pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to make progress. All teachers conscientiously mark pupils' work, but their approach to marking is not consistent throughout the school. Most teachers' use of assessment for learning strategies is at an early stage of development.

Procedures are now in place to track and evaluate pupil progress effectively. The school makes good use of a wide variety of tests, outcomes of support programmes and teacher assessments to inform parents of their children's achievements. Reports to parents are consistent, detailed and informative and adhere to statutory requirements.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring and supportive community where pupils are respected and valued. It offers a wide range of initiatives which promote healthy living and wellbeing involving both pupils and parents.

Parents and carers receive a good range of information about the life and work of the school. Arrangements for helping young children to settle quickly in to school life are good as are those for pupils transferring to the two secondary schools.

Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is well promoted and a strength of the school. The personal and social education programme, together with collective worship, make important contributions in these areas.

Partnership with the specialist services is good.

The school has an appropriate policy and good procedures for safeguarding. All staff have received appropriate training and have a clear understanding of procedures to follow should a concern arise.

There are good procedures in place for supporting and monitoring pupils with ALN, particularly in specialist sessions where pupils receive well-focused additional support. The school sets clear targets for pupils in their individual educational plans and measures their progress against these targets effectively. However, pupils are not yet involved in setting their own targets. Provision for more able and talented pupils is beginning to develop well in around half of classes.

Learning environment: Adequate

The school is a very close and caring community that ensures equal opportunities for every pupil. Diversity is celebrated within its daily life and work, particularly during acts of collective worship.

In the Foundation Phase there are not enough resources to effectively support pupils' literacy, numeracy and physical development. Resources are generally appropriate to meet the needs of most pupils in key stage 2.

The new school buildings and outside areas are of a high standard and are well maintained. The accommodation is sufficient for the number of pupils. Classrooms have attractive displays to provide a welcoming, bright learning environment

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide good leadership in both their management and teaching roles. All staff share a common vision for the school. Leaders and governors are now using pupil performance data well to identify areas of underperformance and to set realistic targets in the school development plan.

There is a good range of expertise among the governing body which is used well. Governors gain a good understanding of the work of the school through regular visits to classrooms. The governing body works closely with the headteacher and staff to provide a good level of challenge and support to bring about improvements.

The senior management team take good account of local and national priorities. They have recently begun to develop Foundation Phase provision to extend learning experiences for pupils and to raise standards in literacy, numeracy and physical development.

Improving quality: Good

The school's self-evaluation process is robust. Recent strategies to identify strengths and areas for development in pupils' learning take into good account the views of teaching staff, pupils, parents and the governing body. Monitoring systems now effectively track progress against school development plan priorities. However, there is no system in place to determine the impact of the learning support staff's work on pupils' standards of achievement.

The school is involved in a number of recently formed professional learning communities which focus on key areas for development, such as strategies to extend more able and talented pupils. A professional learning community of teachers and learning support staff within the school is helping to develop common strategies to improve pupils' reading and writing skills.

Partnership working: Good

The school works well with partners, including parents, to provide pupils with good opportunities for learning.

Recently the school has worked effectively with the local authority and the wider school community to design the new school which is appropriate to teaching and learning in 21st century.

The school works well with other schools in its cluster to widen pupils' learning experiences. Through an arrangement with a local secondary school, pupils are learning French and Spanish and are developing an understanding of the cultures of these countries. There are good transition arrangements for Year 6 pupils when they move to the high schools.

Nursery and classroom students from the local further education college and, on occasion, trainee teachers, are supported well.

Resource management: Good

The school has appropriately qualified teachers who are effectively deployed. Support staff are well qualified to support teaching and learning. The recent appointment of a deputy headteacher with expertise in the Foundation Phase has strengthened leadership, management and teaching.

Overall, financial resources are managed and deployed effectively to meet priorities in the school development plan.

By the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils attain well. Therefore, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

All pupils say that they feel safe in school and most think that the school deals well with any incidents of bullying. Many pupils say that other pupils behave well in class and at playtimes and lunchtimes. Nearly all pupils know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset; they feel that school staff help them to learn and make progress and provide good support if they find their work hard. Nearly all pupils say that they have enough books and equipment to support their learning and they feel that they are doing well at school. Many find their homework helpful. Nearly all pupils say that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and many say that they have lots of chances for regular exercise.

Parent questionnaires

Many parents say that they are satisfied with the school and think it is well run, with a good range of activities being provided. Most say that they feel confident to approach staff when they have a query or a problem and many understand the school's procedures if they do need to make a complaint. Most parents say that their children feel safe in school and they settle quickly into school life. Nearly all agree that their children like school and are making good progress, with staff expecting children to work hard and do their best. Many parents say that children behave well in school and that they feel staff treat their children with fairness and respect. Many also think that the teaching is good; appropriate additional support is provided when necessary; homework is useful; and that they are kept well informed about their child's progress. Most parents also think that the school encourages children to be healthy and take regular exercise. Most parents say that the school helps children to mature and take on more responsibility. Many think that the school prepares children well for the next stage of their education.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Rhona Edwards HMI	Reporting Inspector
Penny Lewis HMI	Team Inspector
Helen Adams	Lay Inspector
Christopher Millis	Peer Inspector
Helen Nixon	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