



*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**

**Newton Primary School  
New Road  
Porthcawl  
Bridgend  
CF36 5BL**

**Date of inspection: April 2011**

**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:

<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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court  
Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Crown Copyright 2011: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

## Context

Newton Primary School currently has 228 pupils on roll from the village of Newton and the town of Porthcawl. The local area has a mixture of private and public housing, with pupils coming from a wide range of family backgrounds. The school reports that the areas from which most pupils are drawn are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Just over 20% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is just above the all-Wales average of 19%.

The school has three separate buildings, parts of which are Grade 2 listed. There are nine classes catering for pupils between the ages of three and 11. About 15% of pupils are identified as having additional learning needs and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Nearly all pupils come from homes where English is the main language. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.

The current headteacher was appointed in 2007.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Newton Primary School is £3,158, which compares with a maximum of £4,826 and a minimum of £2,758 for primary schools in Bridgend. The school has the 29th highest budget per pupil out of the 52 primary schools in Bridgend.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

Newton primary school is a good school because:

- the headteacher leads and manages the school effectively;
- most pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points;
- staff provide a safe learning environment for all pupils;
- pupils have great pride in their school and are very polite; and
- there is a high level of care, support and guidance provided to pupils.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher, management team and governors are successful in providing a strategic vision for the school;
- the headteacher provides clear leadership and has high expectations;
- there are effective systems in place to review progress; and
- the school successfully identifies its strengths and areas needing improvement.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the school needs to:

- R1 continue with its clear focus on raising standards across the school;
- R2 further improve standardisation of levelled work across the key stages;
- R3 ensure that assessment for learning strategies are implemented consistently;
- R4 ensure consistency of challenge and differentiation; and
- R5 further develop the role of the governing body in self-evaluation.

### **What happens next?**

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

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

Good

#### Standards: Good

Standards of achievement are consistently good across the school with most pupils making progress and achieving well. There is significant evidence from the lessons observed and the scrutiny of their work that pupils generally achieve and attain better than the end of key stage data indicates. Revised Year 6 targets for 2011 indicate a significant improvement on recent years.

Nearly all pupils across the school listen attentively and speak with confidence, both with other pupils and adults. Most make good progress in their reading and comprehension skills by the end of key stage 2. Pupils in both key stages write appropriately to their age and ability. There are good examples of extended writing across the school, especially by more able pupils. Most make good progress in their learning and recall previous learning well.

Generally, pupils with additional learning needs and potentially vulnerable pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Although pupils receiving free school meals on the whole perform less well than those not in receipt of free school meals, the gap in performance is less than that of the family, local authority and Wales averages by the end of key stage 2.

The language abilities of many children on entry to the school are generally low. For the last two years the key stage 1 core subject indicator (the expected level in English, mathematics and science for pupils at seven years of age) has been slightly above the all-Wales and family of schools average. Performance in English has improved steadily over the last three years, but results in mathematics and science are more variable. In 2010, performance in English places the school in the upper 50% of similar schools. Performance in mathematics and the core subject indicator is in the lower 50% and results in science are in the bottom 25% of those for similar schools.

At key stage 2, performance in the core subject indicator (the expected level for pupils of eleven years of age), English and science has improved considerably over the last three years and is now just above the average for Wales and other schools in the family. Performance in mathematics is more variable. Performance in 2010 results in all three core subjects and the core subject indicator was in the lower 50% of that for similar schools.

The results of pupils achieving above the expected level (level 3 and level 5) in both key stages show an overall decline in the last four years. In both key stages girls outperform boys in the three core subjects. However, the latest end of key stage 2 data shows that boys outperform girls significantly in gaining the higher than expected level in both mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes to Wales and learning Welsh are generally positive. The bilingual and Welsh language skills of the majority of pupils are developing well. Many older pupils hold simple conversations in Welsh and answer straightforward questions appropriately. The majority of pupils show increasing confidence with their writing skills. However, the reading skills of the older pupils are generally under developed.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all pupils have a secure understanding of how they can become healthy through eating responsibly and taking regular exercise. They are happy and feel safe in school. The politeness, co-operation and behaviour of the pupils are exemplary and a strength of the school. This is reflected in their positive and generally enthusiastic attitude to learning.

Pupils' personal, social and life skills are good and are displayed in their involvement in activities within the local community. Their work on personal finances with a local bank and other relevant activities prepares them well for life outside school and in the future.

Attendance over the last three years is good compared with that of similar schools. Overall, punctuality is good.

Through their enthusiastic involvement with the school council, pupils' decision-making skills are effective. They are very proud of their achievements and genuinely feel that their views are valued.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

**Learning experiences: Good**

The school provides a wide range of enriching activities that meets the need of all learners. Boys and girls have equal opportunities to access all activities. Staff plan lessons well ensuring that the learning experiences build on pupils' prior knowledge and develop their understanding of the wider world. Planning for developing communication, numeracy and information and communication technology skills is well organised and ensures progression and continuity.

The school provides pupils with interesting opportunities to learn about sustainability and to become actively involved in recycling activities. Work on global issues is developed effectively through studying religious celebrations and responding to disasters and charity work across the world. Pupils are offered a good range of extra-curricular activities to support their learning and enhance their experiences.

Provision for Welsh development is good. The school continually provides staff with appropriate support in order to improve the provision for Welsh language development across the school. Encouraging the use of incidental Welsh regularly throughout the day and awarding a Tocyn Iaithe for effort are having a positive impact on standards.

Providing opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and the general life of Welsh people and their surroundings is a successful feature of the school's provision. It includes the school's St. David's Day eisteddfod and visits to St Fagan's Museum of Welsh Life and The Welsh Government Assembly Building at Cardiff Bay. The school also specifically links this area to other areas of the curriculum such as studying the work of Kyffin Williams in art, and the borders and coasts of Wales in geography.

### **Teaching: Good**

Most teachers successfully use a range of teaching methods and a variety of resources in order to engage and challenge pupils in their learning. In the best lessons, teachers plan effectively, share learning objectives appropriately and deliver sessions in a lively and clear style. Open questioning is also used effectively to develop pupils' thinking skills. In the very few lessons where teaching is not as effective, this is mainly due to lack of challenge and effective differentiation.

Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team. This ensures that individuals and groups of pupils are provided with suitable learning experiences and appropriate opportunities to discuss their progress and improve their work.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, often giving constructive comments for improvement. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Assessment procedures are in place and successfully inform future planning. Reports to parents and carers contain the appropriate information. The school takes an active part in cluster moderation and this is beginning to impact on the accuracy of teacher assessment at the end of key stage 2.

Teachers and pupils regularly set targets for improvement. Although teachers use a variety of assessment for learning strategies, these are not yet fully embedded and used consistently throughout the school.

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

There are clear, well-ordered procedures for all aspects of school life and pupils have a good awareness of the high standards of behaviour expected of them.

Pupils and parents value the school's safe and caring environment. Pupils learn to play an active and positive role in the school. Learning experiences are successful in advancing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Very effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing. An excellent example of this is the National Behaviour and Attendance Programme. The data analysed as a result of this programme has assisted the school in purposefully changing class groupings to raise pupils' self-esteem and in supporting groups with specific interventions. This has resulted in an improvement in pupils' confidence, attitudes and behaviour. Working collaboratively with other key agencies and specialist services further enhances this provision.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

The school successfully promotes the benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Most pupils act upon this information by choosing healthy snacks from the fruit tuck shop.

Overall, the school has good procedures for identifying, supporting and monitoring pupils' additional learning needs. Individual learning plans identify suitable targets and are reviewed regularly. Evidence to support pupils' development in meeting these targets is systematically recorded by the teacher and the pupil in purposeful individual record books.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is a warm, welcoming and ordered environment that supports teaching and learning effectively. Throughout the school there is a caring and respectful ethos. The school is inclusive and all pupils receive equal access to all areas of the school provision. Pupils are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities and do so enthusiastically. For example, the older pupils look after the younger pupils during break time.

Attractive wall displays in classrooms and communal areas celebrate pupils' achievements very well. The wide range of resources supports pupils' learning, particularly the information and communication technology suite that is very well equipped. The school uses its accommodation very effectively to support the curriculum. Classrooms and outside areas are attractive and well-maintained learning environments. Pupils are very proud of their school.

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

### **Leadership: Good**

The headteacher, management team and governors are successful in providing a strategic vision for the school and its community. This is based on the school motto 'Believe and you will achieve'.

The headteacher provides clear leadership and has high expectations. These, together with his open style of management, lead to a very good whole-school ethos. This promotes improvements in provision and standards well. Effective management team meetings, staff meetings and sound performance management structures are successful in improving learning and teaching.

The governing body is an appropriate representation of the community it serves. Governors challenge the school effectively and support the school conscientiously. Through visits and regular meetings with staff, they have a sound understanding of standards within a range of areas. They also know about the wide range of initiatives the school is developing. Governors take all reasonable steps to inform pupils, parents and members of staff of the procedures for making a complaint or appeal and respond promptly. However, the role of the governors in the self-evaluation process is under developed.

The school is making good progress in introducing initiatives that meet local and national priorities such as the Foundation Phase, The Big Writing Project, the

development of thinking skills, the ICT Quality Mark and the Bridgend TALK project. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing. The school was also a pilot school for the development of the Schools Effectiveness Framework.

### **Improving quality: Good**

There is a thorough and inclusive process for self-evaluation using a wide and appropriate range of first-hand evidence. This evidence includes the performance of pupils, observations of staff, scrutiny of pupils' work and the views of parents and governors. Pupils also make a very valued contribution to the self-evaluation process through the school council, the use of pupil questionnaires and the headteacher's monthly discussions with all pupils.

The school uses outcomes of the self-evaluation process effectively to determine appropriate priorities for school improvement. These are contained in clear plans and targets, which leaders monitor effectively. The implementation of the plan is generally having a positive impact on provision and standards in the school, with a marked improvement in English in key stage 2. There is a three-year long term plan and previous school improvement plans are reviewed regularly.

The school is developing as an effective learning community with a strong culture of collaboration and teamwork both within the school and the Porthcawl Comprehensive cluster of schools. The school is actively involved in a number of professional learning communities, which are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. For example, the National Behaviour and Attendance Review project is having a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing, and the Big Writing project is improving pupils' writing skills.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school has effective partnerships with parents, many of whom regularly help with school activities such as school visits, running the school library and aerobic classes for pupils, and helping with recycling projects. Many parents appreciate the fact that the school arranges specific opportunities in order to inform them about any new initiatives the school introduces. The school also has a very active parent teacher association called 'Team Newton', which organises social and fund raising events.

The school works successfully in partnership with a range of agencies including the local authority, the school nurse and the police school liaison officer. Members of the community are welcomed into the school and often enhance the curriculum by sharing their experiences with pupils. Examples include members of the local allotment society who help with the gardening club and employees of a local bank educating pupils about financial education.

Parents and carers speak highly of the valuable arrangements made for pupils joining the school. Transition plans, agreed by the local secondary school and the feeder primary schools, are appropriate and prepare older pupils very well for the next stage of their education. These links also enable pupils to use resources in the secondary school and ensure that teachers have opportunities to discuss matters

relating to standards with other local teachers. Members of staff have also taken part in training days within the cluster to work on consistency in moderation between schools.

**Resource management: Good**

The school manages its finances well. Supported by the school secretary, the headteacher makes sure that spending decisions are linked clearly to priorities for improvement. There are a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff, which the school deploys effectively. The school identifies and meets the needs of all staff through effective performance management procedures.

The school manages its accommodation well and generally has a good range of learning resources, which it uses appropriately. There are very good arrangements for planning, preparation and assessment time which have a positive impact on teachers' short term planning.

The management of the school is cost effective and efficient. In view of the good progress made by most pupils, the high level of care, support and guidance provided, the efficient use of funding and the wide range of resources, the school provides good value for money.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

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

In total, 55 parents completed questionnaires. The responses were very positive. Nearly all parents are satisfied with the school and feel that their child likes going to school and is making good progress. Nearly all parents say that teaching is good, and that staff expect children to work hard and behave well. Most parents think that homework is useful. In addition, nearly all parents think that staff treat children with respect and make sure they are safe. Many parents feel well informed about their child's progress. Nearly all parents think their child receives appropriate support for identified needs and they are comfortable to approach the school if they have questions, queries or problems. Parents understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints. Nearly all parents agree that the school teaches their child to be healthy and take regular exercise and they say there are a good range of visits and activities. All parents think that the school is run well and that children are helped to mature and take on responsibilities, which prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

#### **Responses to pupil questionnaires**

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and think the school deals well with any bullying. Nearly all say teachers help them to learn and make progress and are approachable if they have a problem with their work. Many think homework helps them to improve and pupils say they are doing well in school. Nearly all feel that the school has enough books, equipment and computers to help them do their work. Nearly all pupils agree that the school teaches them to be healthy and that they have plenty of opportunities for regular exercise; they know to whom to talk if they are worried or upset. Many children think that others behave well at play and lunch times, but a minority are concerned about the behaviour of other children in class and say that this prevents them from doing their work.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Maldwyn Pryse	Reporting Inspector
Huw Watkins	Team Inspector
Julie Ann Price	Lay Inspector
Simon Thomas	Peer Inspector
Mr N Naish (Headteacher)	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

## 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