



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

**Peter Lea Primary School
Carter Place
Fairwater
Cardiff
CF5 3NP**

Date of inspection: March 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:

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

Peter Lea Primary School is situated in the Fairwater area on the outskirts of Cardiff and serves a mixture of private and rented homes. The school admits children to the nursery class at the age of three. Many pupils attend pre-school provision.

There are 255 full-time pupils and 94 part-time pupils on role organised into 12 classes. This is an increase on recent years. Classes are organised into nine single age classes and three mixed-age classes. The classes are taught by 13 full time teachers, three part-time teachers and 20 learning support assistants.

The school describes the area it serves as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged but with a minority of families living in a Communities First area. Approximately 37% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is significantly higher than the local and national averages. At present there are two pupils who are being looked after by the local authority.

English is the predominant language for all pupils. Currently there are 54 pupils receiving support for English as an additional language. There are no pupils who use Welsh as a first language.

Base line indicators show that attainment on entry to the school is wide ranging but overall very slightly below the expected level for pupils of a similar age. Approximately 21% of pupils are identified as having additional learning needs and eight pupils are in receipt of a statement of special educational need. Two pupils received fixed term exclusions in the last year.

The school was facing threat of closure through the local authority school re-organisation plan but this was lifted in 2010. Since the last inspection in 2005 there have been changes to the management structure and senior leadership of the school with the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. The headteacher has been in post since January 2006 but was acting headteacher in the last inspection.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Peter Lea Primary School is £3,587, which compares with a maximum of £14,067 and a minimum of £2,787 for primary schools in Cardiff. The school has the 37th highest budget per pupil out of the 102 primary schools in Cardiff.

Summary

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

Current performance

The judgement for the school's current performance is good because:

- many pupils attain well and make suitable progress whilst in the school;
- standards of reading are high for almost all pupils;
- most pupils behave well and have good standards of wellbeing; and
- staff provide pupils with a very inclusive and caring environment.

Prospects for improvement

The overall judgement for prospects for improvement of the provider is adequate. The school has:

- appropriate systems in place to address school improvement;
- well established roles and responsibilities for leaders and managers;
- a well-informed and supportive governing body; and
- made good improvements in raising standards of reading and behaviour, and in developing strong community links.

However, the school does not:

- analyse data effectively to support self-evaluation processes;
- yet meet all the recommendations from the last inspection;
- consistently and rigorously challenge underperformance; or
- sufficiently prioritise improvements or evaluate their impact in terms of the standards pupils achieve.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards of pupils' writing, numeracy and Welsh language.
- R2 Improve the quality of teaching by having higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and planning more effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able and talented.
- R3 Improve the assessment of pupils' work by consistently applying the systems already in place and more accurately judging pupils' standards of achievement.
- R4 Develop more rigorous methods of self-evaluation and prioritise school improvements in terms of pupil outcomes.
- R5 Provide rigorous challenge to underperformance in the school.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Pupils enter the school with a wide range of skills with the average only slightly below expected levels. Many pupils make suitable progress whilst in school although very few pupils achieve the higher levels at the end of either key stage.

In 2010, when compared to results for the local authority and Wales, attainment for pupils at seven years of age at the end of key stage 1 is around the average for mathematics, and above the average in science, English and the core subject indicator (the percentage of pupils who achieve the expected level in English, mathematics and science in combination).

Compared to schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, the school performs well; being in the upper 50% for mathematics and the top 25% for English, science and the core subject indicator. Results fluctuate widely but, overall, have improved slightly during the last four years.

In relation to its family of schools (those schools which face similar challenges) Peter Lea performs at or slightly above the average for the group. Trends remain fairly consistent over the last four years, other than a rise at the higher level 3 at key stage 1 in mathematics and science.

In almost all areas girls attain more highly than boys but trends show that the difference is reducing. In many cases the gender gap is now around the average for the school's family.

In 2010, compared to results for the local authority and Wales, pupils' attainment at 11 years of age at the end of key stage 2 is below the average for English, around the average for core subject indicator, and above the average in science and mathematics.

Compared to schools with a similar percentage of free school meals the school performs strongly, being in the upper 50% for English and the top 25% for mathematics, science and the core subject indicator. Most results fell between 2006 and 2008 but have improved during the last two years.

In relation to its family the school achieves well, especially at the expected level 4 in science and mathematics in key stage 2. Trends show that results have risen at this level over the last four years but fluctuate widely for the higher level 5 where attainment is currently below the family average.

For the expected level 4 girls attain better than boys but this trend is reversed for the higher level 5.

Pupils in receipt of free school meals do not achieve well in key stage 1, being

around 40 percentage points lower than the average for Wales. By the end of key stage 2 this gap has been significantly reduced to below national and local averages. Most pupils with statements meet their targets within the expected timescales.

Many pupils speak confidently to adults and other children at the appropriate level for their age and ability. Generally, they listen well in class, although a few interrupt others inappropriately.

Progress in reading is good and most pupils read well. They show an interest in books from an early age. They quickly develop a wide range of strategies to gain meaning and understanding but few younger pupils are able to use a contents or index page effectively. Most older pupils read fluently, are able to discuss the plot and character confidently and explain their choice of reading matter clearly. More able pupils can use higher order reading skills well such as 'skimming and scanning'.

Many pupils do not write well and this impacts on their ability to record effectively and develop their work in other subjects. Many copy text well but few write independently at length to record their own ideas and thoughts. Few can sustain or develop their ideas appropriately for different purposes or audiences. Punctuation is often inaccurate and pupils' handwriting is inconsistently formed.

Many pupils do not use or develop their numeracy skills appropriately across other subjects in the curriculum. There is little evidence to show, for example, pupils using charts, graphs and tables to improve their understanding in science or geography. Most pupils use information and communication technology well.

Most pupils enjoy learning Welsh but standards are insufficiently high and pupils' progress is inconsistent. Many understand the instructions and the incidental Welsh used by staff but few are confident when speaking Welsh to others. Most pupils' reading and writing in Welsh is underdeveloped. Their writing is brief and uses a very narrow vocabulary.

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils are enthusiastic, attentive learners. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Little bullying occurs and staff deal with occasional incidences promptly. Nearly all pupils say that they feel safe in school.

Pupils demonstrate a clear appreciation of the importance of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. They make appropriate healthy choices for meals and participate enthusiastically in a range of physical activities. Older pupils take responsibility as 'Buddy Readers', 'Road Safety Officers', or as members of the 'International Committee'.

Many pupils work well independently and in groups. Older pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work but most do not yet regularly contribute to planning what they learn.

Pupils are regularly involved with the community through, for example, fundraising activities for 'Red Nose Day', or 'Ragbags For Japan', visits to residential care

homes, or being involved with 'Fair Trade' issues. The school council and eco-council play an active part in the life of the school. Pupils involved are confident that their voice is being heard and they are effectively involved in planning school improvements. Recent developments include providing playground games and seating, changing lunchtime arrangements and helping develop the school website. The members of the school council have been involved in interviews for teaching staff and meet with governors to discuss what they have done and what improvements they would like to make.

Pupils' attendance, at around 93%, is improving and places the school in the top 25% of similar schools. Most pupils are punctual.

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

All pupils have access to a broad curriculum. Staff plan a wide variety of interesting experiences that motivate and engage pupils. They make effective use of resources available and of the local community. The school enriches pupils' learning through the effective use of a wide range of activities, including residential visits and visitors to the school. These activities help raise standards, develop pupils' confidence and team working skills and raise pupils' awareness of caring for others and the environment. Planning in the Foundation Phase is good. Staff work well together to identify clear learning outcomes for pupils. The school makes effective use of withdrawal groups for pupils with additional learning needs and of setting for mathematics .

Staff plan for, and support, pupils' reading skills very well. Pupils read to adults regularly and are given high-quality feedback to enable them to improve. Very effective reading records support this process and, consequently, most pupils make very good progress. Provision for information and communication technology and oracy is appropriate and suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to develop thinking skills that help them work out things for themselves. Staff planning for numeracy and writing is less well developed, and this impacts on the standards pupils achieve.

Provision for Welsh is inconsistent as not all classes allocate enough time for pupils to achieve well in Welsh. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted very well through, for example, the annual school Eisteddfod, visits to St Fagans, and whole school themes such as 'Proud to be Welsh'. Many teachers use incidental Welsh when taking the register, to greet pupils and when giving basic commands. However, a few teachers do not always use Welsh accurately enough and this impedes pupils' learning.

Most pupils are developing an appropriate awareness of sustainability through their efforts to promote energy-saving and recycling. Global citizenship is well planned for through the international dimension of the curriculum such as the school links with a primary school in Germany.

Teaching: Adequate

In all lessons observed, there are excellent pupil/staff relationships that foster children's positive attitudes to learning and behaviour. Staff manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. Support staff are clear about their role and what they need to do in class and in withdrawal sessions. They contribute well to pupils' learning, particularly in delivering speech and language programmes.

Where teaching is good, the pace of lessons is brisk and teachers have good subject knowledge. They use resources well, including interactive whiteboards, to enhance learning; staff group pupils appropriately; teachers make effective use of learning support assistants; and all staff have high expectations of pupils.

However, this is not consistent throughout the school. In most of those lessons where teaching is less effective, there are insufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and teachers fail to plan effectively on a day-to-day basis to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able. Scrutiny of pupils' books reveals that teachers do not always accurately level pupils' performance. These shortcomings impact on pupils' achievements, especially in terms of their ability to attain the higher levels in the end of key stage assessment.

Older pupils are involved in assessing their own and other children's work and this has helped them to improve their understanding of what they need to do next. Most teachers give helpful suggestions to pupils on how they can develop their work. However these systems are not used consistently by all staff.

The nursery class uses its on-entry assessments well to provide suitable learning experiences that meet individual needs and to identify early pupils in need of additional support in school or from external agencies. The school tracking system is well maintained but is insufficiently developed for the school to be able to identify how groups of pupils are achieving. Parents appreciate the well written reports they receive about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Peter Lea Primary School provides pupils with a caring, nurturing environment. This makes a significant contribution to their health and wellbeing and enables them to make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff and pupils show care and respect for each other and this ethos impacts well on standards of behaviour. This is a significant strength of the school.

Provision for pupils who need additional learning support is good. Pupils' needs are identified early and effectively supported. Individual education plans are regularly evaluated and updated and parents are kept well informed and fully involved. Withdrawal groups and individual support for pupils with additional learning needs are effective. Generally, pupils make appropriate progress against their targets. However, information about pupils' learning needs and objectives is not always incorporated well in teachers' daily planning.

The school offers good support for pupils and makes effective use of a wide range of

professional support from external agencies and support services. The school responds effectively to any enquiries or concerns about the wellbeing and safety of pupils. A few older girls are worried that they have no one to talk to if they are worried or upset.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive learning community where all pupils are valued and diversity celebrated. The school has worked successfully to raise pupils' self-esteem and develop positive attitudes towards school and learning. There are good arrangements in place to ensure that pupils with disabilities do not receive less favourable treatment. Almost all pupils take pride in their school environment.

The school provides a wide range of good quality resources to support learning. It provides a stimulating and well-maintained learning environment to support teaching and learning. The school buildings and grounds are very well maintained. Extensive displays in classrooms and communal areas celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work successfully together to create a welcoming, inclusive and well-ordered learning environment for all pupils. With other members of the senior management team, they have identified many of the school's strengths and areas for development.

All members of staff feel valued and work together as an effective team. They have a good understanding of how they contribute to the aims of the school. There are clearly defined roles within the senior management team and senior managers work hard to fulfil their responsibilities. However, leaders and managers do not consistently challenge underperformance within the school.

The headteacher and governors have worked well together to promote the school through a challenging time when the school was under threat of closure. They have made very good progress in developing the school's community links. Governors have a developing understanding of the school's data, are able to discuss the schools' priorities and can explain how these have been determined. They are aware of the school's self-evaluation processes.

The school has responded positively to local and national priorities. The provision for the Foundation Phase is a particular strength. The requirements of the new skills-based curriculum for key stage 2 pupils have been addressed through updated medium term planning. The school has paid good attention to many aspects of the School Effectiveness Framework.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school has established self-evaluation procedures that draw on a range of first hand evidence and involve all staff. Analysis of data is not used consistently to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation report is a detailed document but it does not always accurately reflect the standards in the school.

The views of parents and pupils are actively sought and acted on. In light of parents' comments, the school has recently improved its communication through a new web site and text messaging service.

Actions in the school's improvement plan have realistic timescales and are supported by the allocation of suitable resources. However, the school improvement plan is not clear enough as to how actions will lead directly to improved outcomes in terms of raising pupils' standards of achievement.

The school has a range of systems to monitor the impact of its developmental actions. For example, senior members of staff regularly undertake lesson observations, scrutinise pupils' work and listen to learners. However, evaluation procedures concentrate too much on actions and pay insufficient attention to the standards that pupils are achieving. A few members of staff make visits to other schools to view good practice, but the impact of these visits is not yet evident.

Teachers are involved in a number of networks of professional practice including a Foundation Phase working group and an international dimension forum. These networks are effective in encouraging collaborative planning and the sharing of good practice within the school and with other local schools. Work undertaken has been particularly effective in improving outcomes for vulnerable pupils.

The school has not fully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

Partnership working: Good

The school has effective partnerships within the local community and with a range of agencies and services that support pupils' wellbeing and help raise their standards of achievement. These include the local leisure centre, library, church and football club. The school is a centre for the community and regularly holds coffee mornings for local citizens. It is the local centre for 'Welsh For Adults' and 'Computing for Adults'. Parents also comment positively on the school's provision for 'before' and 'after-school' care.

They also speak highly of the effective arrangements made for pupils new to the school. Transition plans, agreed by the Fairwater cluster of schools, prepare older pupils well for the next stage of their education. These plans are very well supported by the high school's transition co-ordinator who regularly teaches at Peter Lea and is a member of the school's governing body.

Useful information is available for pupils and parents about the life of the school.

This includes the school prospectus, regular newsletters and the governors' annual report, all of which are available on the school's website.

Resource management: Good

The headteacher and the school's business manager manage the budget appropriately. The school has sufficient qualified teachers and support staff. It deploys the support staff effectively and trains them appropriately in specific areas, for example in language and reading support programmes.

The school has appropriate procedures in place for covering planning, preparation and assessment time for teachers. Sound performance management procedures are in place for teachers and support staff. This ensures that all members of staff receive training in line with the school's priorities for development.

The school manages its accommodation and outside areas very well. It ensures that there is a sufficient supply of good quality resources in order to meet the needs of the pupils and the curriculum and links all spending decisions to priorities for action in the school development plan.

In view of the standards obtained by most of the pupils and the appropriate management of the budget, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Seventeen parents completed the questionnaire. Almost all express very positive views about all aspects of the school. A very few raised concerns about the support of children entering the school or how well the school provides them with information about their child's progress.

Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and seventeen key stage 2 pupils completed the questionnaire. Almost all feel safe in school, believe that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and have lots of chances to get regular exercise. Additionally, they find teachers and other adults supportive and helpful if they find work hard. Almost all pupils believe they are doing well at school and that the school provides plenty of books, equipment and resources to help them do their work.

A minority of pupils are concerned that other children do not behave well in class or at playtime and lunchtime. Most believe that the school deals well with bullying. A few girls are worried that they have no one to talk to if they are worried or upset.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Richard Hawkley	Reporting Inspector
Elizabeth Miles	Team Inspector
Julie Ann Price	Lay Inspector
Susan Roberts	Peer Inspector
Peter Hodgkins	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