



*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**

**Plasnewydd Primary School  
Castle Street  
Maesteg  
Bridgend  
CF34 9UN**

**Date of inspection: 28 June 2011**

**by**

**Dorothy Morris**

**under contract to  
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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## Context

Plasnewydd Primary School caters for pupils aged three to eleven years old and is located in the town of Maesteg in the Llynfi Valley. It is maintained by Bridgend County Borough Council local authority. There are 312 pupils, full-time equivalent, on roll. School numbers have decreased a little over recent years.

Most of the pupils who attend the school come from the immediate area, which includes areas of relative prosperity and those with levels of social and economic deprivation. Twenty nine per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this percentage is above the local authority and national averages.

Nearly all pupils come from homes where English is the predominant language. A very few pupils are of a minority ethnic group. Four pupils receive support in English as an additional language and a very few pupils are currently looked-after by the local authority.

Thirty per cent of pupils are designated as having special educational needs; no pupil has a statement of need. This percentage is above both local and national averages. The school accommodates a local authority learning resource base at key stage 2, which is mainly for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Agency's Quality Standard, the Eco-Schools Award and the Healthy Schools Award.

The present headteacher has been in post since September 2002.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Plasnewydd Primary School is £3004 which compares with a maximum of £4826 and a minimum of £2758 for primary schools in Bridgend. The school has the 41st 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

The school's current performance is good because:

- most pupils make good and sometimes very good progress during their time in the school;
- the identification of pupils' learning needs supported by effective intervention strategies are a strength;
- teaching is consistently good throughout the school;
- most pupils are well behaved, courteous and have good attitudes to learning;
- pupils are offered a good range of learning experiences within a stimulating learning environment.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school is well led with a clear vision for further development;
- staff work effectively as a team and share the same values;
- priorities for further improvement are clearly focused on raising standards based on a thorough analysis of data;
- new initiatives are improving aspects of learning and raising standards;
- daily routines are well ordered and managed efficiently;
- the inclusive ethos promotes pupils' learning and development.

## Recommendations

In order to improve further, the school needs to:

- R1 build on the improvements in pupils' attainments at the end of both key stages, including those of the more able pupils;
- R2 continue to improve the performance of boys;
- R3 improve standards in Welsh second language at both key stages;
- R4 increase the opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communications skills across the curriculum;
- R5 extend the good features in self-evaluation across the broader curriculum, and develop the role of the governing body in the monitoring process.

### What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>
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<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

Many children enter school with skills below those normally expected for children of their age. School data shows that most pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in their learning during their time in the school.

Over the last four years, pupils' results at seven years of age as measured by end of key stage 1 teacher assessments in English and mathematics have been above or similar to the averages for the local authority, national and the family of schools in most years. Results in science fluctuate when measured against comparators. When compared to similar schools nationally, based on entitlement to free school meals, the overall results range between the upper 50% and the top 25%.

Pupils' overall results at the end of key stage 2, including pupils from the learning resource base, fluctuate but demonstrate an upward turn in 2010 with the overall results being above those of the local authority, national and the family of schools' averages in all core subjects. Over the last four years, pupils' results in English, mathematics and science have generally been above the averages for the family of schools. Results in mathematics and science compare favourably with local authority

and national averages in most years but they are lower in English. When compared to similar schools nationally, based on entitlement to free school meals, pupils' results in 2010 placed the school in the upper 25%. This is a significant improvement on the previous three years when the results placed the school in the lower 50%.

In recent years, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 at the end of key stage 1 is above comparators in English in two years out of four. It fluctuates in science and is generally below comparators in mathematics. At the end of key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 compares favourably with the family of schools' averages but it is generally below the local authority and national averages. The results in 2010 demonstrate an upward turn in English and mathematics and were above comparators.

The performance of boys compared to girls has fluctuated but the overall trend is that girls' performance is better than boys. The school has introduced relevant strategies which are leading to improvements in boys' achievements. Most pupils with additional learning needs, including pupils with English as an additional language, make good and sometimes very good progress and achieve their targets. Overall, pupils entitled to free school meals make consistent progress and achieve well relative to their ability and stage of development.

Nearly all pupils listen well and are attentive in class. The majority speak readily, with older pupils in key stage 2 responding in a more extended manner when discussing their work. A minority of pupils across the school offer limited responses during discussion. Most pupils read competently making increasing use of their skills in accessing books and gathering information. Pupils write appropriately in a range of styles with examples of very good work in Year 2. In key stage 2, most pupils write with increasing fluency and accuracy and achieve well overall. Pupils make effective use of their thinking, communication, numeracy and information and communications technology skills in their work in other subjects.

Standards in Welsh are adequate. Across the school, most pupils use greetings confidently and respond accurately to simple questions and instructions. Nevertheless, as they move through the school pupils generally do not extend their vocabulary and sentence patterns sufficiently to maintain a simple conversation or build consistently on their basic reading and writing skills. Pupils' knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage is good.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Most pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning and work productively with others. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to be healthy and safe. They recognise the importance of regular exercise and of eating a healthy diet.

Standards of behaviour are good. Overall, pupils relate well to their teachers, staff and visitors. At 91.6%, attendance is lower than the local authority and all Wales averages. The school has identified the issue and has implemented strategies that have resulted in improved attendance. Most pupils arrive punctually for school.

Across the school, pupils undertake appropriate responsibilities with enthusiasm. Members of the school council, the eco and fair trade committees are aware of their duties and take their roles seriously. They apply their decision making skills well and demonstrate a good awareness of the issues discussed by the committees including improving the school environment, the wellbeing of pupils and care for others less fortunate than themselves. They ensure that the pupil voice is effective.

Pupils acquire a good range of social and life skills which prepares them well for life outside school. The school is an integral part of the local community. As well as welcoming visitors to the school, pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activities including concerts, sporting and cultural events.

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

All teachers provide a good range of stimulating learning experiences which generate interest and meet pupils' needs well. They ensure that lesson content is set at an appropriate level to promote pupils' learning. Planning is in place to develop a skills-based curriculum at key stage 2 and opportunities to develop pupils' thinking, communication and numeracy skills in other subject areas are good. Nevertheless, planning to provide pupils with regular opportunities to apply their information and communications technology skills in different contexts is more limited. Across the school, there is a good emphasis on responding to the needs of pupils with additional learning needs; this is a strength.

The school makes good provision for pupils to understand and take responsibility for their environment. This includes the focus on education for sustainable development and global citizenship in aspects of work across the curriculum. Members of the school council, the eco and fairtrade committees contribute positively to the provision. The wide range of enrichment activities, including sports, clubs and visits, has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to school and their learning. They include the half-termly 'Academy Days' which offer pupils a programme of worthwhile physical and creative activities.

There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about their locality, history and culture of Wales. Provision to foster the Welsh language is developing appropriately through a planned programme including the use of support agencies and a range of learning resources. Teachers are enthusiastic about teaching Welsh and attend further training to develop their own subject knowledge and expertise. This is reflected productively in classroom practice.

### **Teaching: Good**

Teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers plan and structure lessons effectively. They use a good range of teaching approaches and suitable resources which ensures that most pupils are motivated and engaged in their learning. Teachers and other adults work well together and demonstrate a good understanding of pupils' needs. They succeed in establishing a very positive learning environment for pupils.

Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and accurately. Assessment strategies are well established and include effective systems for tracking pupils' progress and achievements. Assessment outcomes are used well to inform future planning, select appropriate intervention strategies and to set targets.

Pupils' skills in assessing their own learning and progress are being fostered across the school. At an appropriate level, pupils are involved in setting and evaluating their targets which helps them to understand how to improve their work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and include relevant comments identifying the next steps forward.

Reports to parents adhere to statutory requirements. They are informative and consistently identify areas for improvement. Parents and carers are regularly informed about their children's achievements and progress.

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

The school's clear procedures and routines offer pupils a supportive and well-ordered environment. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through the curriculum, specific projects and the work of the eco committee, the benefits of healthy living are effectively promoted. The school promotes good behaviour well through its policies and procedures. There is effective use of a range of agencies to provide additional personal and specialist support as required. The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

The overall provision for pupils with additional learning needs is very good. The early identification and the monitoring of pupils' additional learning needs are undertaken thoroughly. It is a school practice that serves the pupils well. Individual educational plans are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that learning needs are met. There is effective use of a range of intervention programmes and support activities of good quality which improve pupils' learning and enables them to achieve their targets.

The school has set in place a teaching and learning structure which maps curricular provision to meet pupils' current learning needs, including the more able and talented. This approach is having a positive impact on pupils' attainments and achievements.

The learning resource base and nurture class make good provision and cater effectively for a broad range of pupils' needs. The learning resource base is successful in promoting pupils' learning skills and in particular their self-esteem. Provision in the nurture class enhances pupils' emotional wellbeing and confidence and emphasises the importance of mutual respect. The quality of the provision is reflected well in pupils' improved personal and social skills including their standards of behaviour.

## **Learning environment: Good**

The school has a fully inclusive ethos and takes good account of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds. It offers pupils equal access to the curriculum and to all aspects of its provision.

The accommodation and grounds are well maintained and are used fully by staff and pupils. Pupils are well supervised during playtimes. The recent adaptations to entry and exit procedures for pupils, staff and visitors improve the safety of all. The school takes reasonable steps to ensure access for pupils with physical disabilities.

Overall, the school has sufficient resources of good quality which are well matched to pupils' needs. Attractive and extensive displays in classrooms and school communal areas celebrate pupils' achievements and create a motivating learning environment. There is effective use of the outside areas for learning.

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

The headteacher has a clearly defined vision for the school which is understood and shared by all. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior leadership team. Changes in management structures are contributing effectively to distributed leadership across the school. There is a strong team ethos. Staff are encouraged to lead aspects of school development supported by opportunities for further professional development.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and members have a good understanding of budgetary matters and of data analysis in future planning. They are provided with regular information on the school's performance by the headteacher. Members visit the school and speak with staff but their monitoring role is less well established.

The school is effective in addressing local and national priorities. It has made good progress in implementing the foundation phase and in developing a skills-based curriculum in key stage 2. Links with other schools are effective in promoting collaborative working in many aspects of provision including improving pupils' basic skills.

## **Improving quality: Good**

The school makes effective use of a range of sources to evaluate its performance and takes into consideration the views of pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and the local authority. Overall, the information gathered from self-evaluation is used well to determine the priorities in the school improvement plan.

Pupils' progress and standards in the core subjects are evaluated effectively through detailed analysis of a range of performance data. Reports of good quality are produced by the deputy headteacher and shared with members of staff to identify strengths and aspects requiring improvement. Cohort reviews are used productively

to determine appropriate intervention strategies to meet pupils' learning needs. These strategies impact well on the quality of learning and improve standards in basic skills. The monitoring of the broader curriculum forms part of a general monitoring cycle co-ordinated appropriately by the senior management team. As a result of self-evaluation, recent initiatives focus effectively on improving aspects of pupils' communication skills and the development of assessment procedures.

All staff are given good opportunities for professional development in line with their specified responsibilities and this is linked appropriately to performance management. The co-coaching training programme led by members of staff impacts well on extending colleagues' professional skills and confidence.

Professional learning communities have been formed within the local cluster and impact well on the school's own provision in aspects such as improving pupils' oracy and writing skills.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school's range of partnerships with local community groups, other schools, higher education institutions, businesses and the local authority make an effective contribution to pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Parents are offered regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress. The very good links with the local comprehensive school include effective transition arrangements, support for more talented pupils in areas such as sport, and joint initiatives to support older pupils at risk of disaffection. The school's good links with a local college and a range of local community groups are used well to support its extra-curricular programme including clubs. There are successful working partnerships with the local community police.

The school plays a key role in cluster planning and is effective in promoting joint working and the sharing of ideas within and beyond the school. A number of staff are involved in leading initiatives across the cluster and the local authority including professional development strategies and provision mapping. These initiatives impact well on the teaching and learning in the school.

### **Resource management: Good**

The school manages its resources well. There are sufficient suitably-qualified teachers to deliver the curriculum. Support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Performance management processes are inclusive of all staff and the school meets the requirements for workforce remodelling. There is good use of staff's subject skills to extend the curriculum for pupils. The school makes full use of its facilities and of a good range of learning resources to support pupils' learning.

The school budget is carefully managed and reviewed. Spending is closely linked to priorities for improvement and pupils' needs. Taking into consideration pupils' achievements and the quality of the learning experiences provided, the school provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

A minority of the parents/carers completed the questionnaire and expressed overall satisfaction with the school. Four letters were received from parents who raised specific issues which were considered further by the inspection team.

Most of the parents who completed the questionnaire make positive responses in relation to most aspects of provision. They say that their children like school and feel that their children are safe there. They believe that their children make good progress and that they as parents are kept well informed. They add that children receive sufficient additional support in relation to their learning needs. They believe that children behave well and are appropriately prepared to move on to their next school. Most parents believe that they can discuss their concerns with the school.

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

Most pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Nearly all state that they feel safe, enjoy school and know who to turn to for help and guidance. Nearly all believe that they are doing well. There is agreement that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and to live healthier lifestyles. Nearly all believe that there are enough resources to enable them to learn well. Many believe that homework helps them improve the standard of their work. The majority feel that other pupils behave well.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Dorothy Morris	Reporting Inspector
Barbara Thorne	Team Inspector
Alona Jones	Team Inspector
Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Tim Britton	Peer Inspector
Neil Watkins	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