



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

**Arddleen C.P. School
Llaymynech
Powys
SY22 6RT**

Date of inspection: December 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

The school is situated in the village of Arddleen in Powys. It provides education for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 years of age. Pupils come from backgrounds described as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The attainment of pupils on entry to the reception class varies significantly each year but, overall, social and linguistic skills are average when compared with those of the local authority. There are currently 90 pupils on roll. Of these, 16 are on the special educational needs register, including one pupil with a statement of special educational need.

The ethnic background of all pupils is white British and the language of communication in nearly all homes is English. Only one pupil speaks Welsh as a first language. Almost five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is significantly lower than the local authority average and the all-Wales average.

The school was last inspected in September 2005. The present headteacher has been in post since September 2009.

The individual school budget per pupil for Arddleen C.P. School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,252 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Powys is £14,685 and the minimum is £3,005. Arddleen C.P. School is 88th out of the 101 primary schools in Powys in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school is good because:

- most pupils make good progress and end of key stage results generally compare well with those of similar schools;
- pupils feel safe and secure and are developing good social and life skills; and
- there are good links with the parents and the community.

Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because:

- the school has a good track record of ensuring that most pupils make good progress;
- the headteacher leads the school effectively and has a clear sense of purpose and direction, which he successfully shares with members of staff and governors; and
- all staff are part of an effective professional learning community.

Recommendations

In order to improve further the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in Welsh;
- R2 increase opportunities for children in the Foundation Phase to work independently and develop their problem solving and creative skills;
- R3 make sure that the self-evaluation report is more evaluative and leads to clear action points; and
- R4 ensure that arrangements for covering teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time at key stage 2 fully meet statutory requirements.

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

Most pupils, across the school, make good progress in their learning. Statutory teacher assessments in 2011 show that the school's performance at both key stages compares well with that of the family of schools and the relative performance of schools with similar percentages of free school meals. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at either key stage.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils become increasingly confident in all areas of learning and, at key stage 2, most pupils continue to make good progress in national curriculum subjects and religious education. Many recall their previous learning well and show good knowledge and understanding of what they have learnt in many subjects. They develop their thinking skills purposefully and apply them well in a range of familiar and new situations. All pupils with additional learning needs achieve well against personal targets and make good progress relative to their ability, interests and prior attainment.

Most pupils throughout the school make good progress in their communication skills. In the Foundation Phase, most children are confident learners; they listen well to others, ask questions and respond enthusiastically to teachers' ideas and direction. Many express their views in writing well for a variety of purposes.

At key stage 2, most pupils speak confidently, listen well and read a good range of texts accurately and with expression. Most pupils' writing skills are good. They write for different purposes and in different styles with increasing maturity.

Throughout the school, work is generally well presented and handwriting develops appropriately in relation to age and ability.

Over the past three years, pupils' performance in oracy, reading and writing at key stage 1 is above the family and all-Wales average and, although results fluctuate at key stage 2, they are generally in line with these averages.

At key stage 2, most pupils' problem solving and creative skills develop well. However, in the Foundation Phase these skills are less well developed.

The majority of pupils across the school are beginning to make appropriate progress in Welsh oral skills and respond to adults enthusiastically. However, their range of vocabulary is very narrow. Pupils' reading and writing skills are at an early stage of development and are currently limited to simple text and sentences. Pupils rarely use Welsh around the school.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils have a good awareness of health and safety issues and understand the need to take exercise and to eat healthily.

Attendance at around 96% is very good and above that of similar schools, the local authority and the all-Wales average. Nearly all pupils arrive punctually for school.

All pupils feel valued, and this impacts very positively on the standards they achieve. All pupils are polite and courteous, and show respect for each other. Most show very positive attitudes to learning and concentrate well when working. The behaviour of nearly all pupils is very good both within classes and at break and lunchtimes. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and say that little bullying or harassment occurs.

Members of the school council are actively involved in making decisions and represent the views of pupils well. Their influence on school life is very evident.

All pupils' personal, social and life skills are developing well and they are well prepared for life and work outside school.

The majority of pupils have a secure knowledge of how well they are doing but their understanding of how to improve their own learning is less well developed.

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

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, including religious education. In the Foundation Phase, pupils enjoy a good range of interesting learning experiences. However, there are not yet enough opportunities for them to learn independently or develop their creative and problem solving skills both inside and outside the classroom.

Teachers provide a good range of stimulating and enriching learning experiences to meet the needs of many pupils.

The school offers a worthwhile range of out-of-school activities. These opportunities, together with an extensive range of visits beyond the school, effectively enrich the pupils' learning experiences.

Teachers, in their weekly planning, identify good opportunities for pupils to apply their communication, numeracy and information and communication technology skills (ICT). However, long term planning to ensure that pupils systematically and progressively develop these skills is at an early stage of development.

The school develops pupils' awareness of sustainable development well, but the promotion of global citizenship is less advanced.

There are insufficient opportunities during the week for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills. Provision for pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical and cultural characteristics of the locality and Wales is well developed.

Teaching: Good

The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations and good up-to-date subject knowledge. Support provided by classroom assistants makes an

important contribution to the learning of groups of pupils. The pace in the majority of lessons is good and a range of approaches, including practical activities and group work, successfully engage most pupils. Teachers have established good working relationships that foster effective learning. However, pupils in some classes do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of the learning intentions and provide helpful oral and written feedback. Opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers, however, are at an early stage of development.

The school has clear and thorough systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress. Teachers use standardised tests and their own assessments effectively to set challenging and realistic targets.

Reports to parents are detailed and helpful. Reports identify clear targets for improvement and include opportunities for parents to comment. Parents say that they are very well informed about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Good arrangements are in place to support pupils' health and wellbeing and to encourage their involvement in the school and the wider community. Their sense of responsibility is developed effectively.

The framework for personal and social education successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school liaises effectively with an extensive range of external agencies and services. Induction programmes are tailored carefully to meet the needs of pupils and transfer arrangements to the local secondary schools are good.

The procedures and systems for identifying, supporting and monitoring pupils with additional learning needs are thorough. Additional support within classes and during withdrawal periods is very effective. Individual education plans are appropriate and are regularly evaluated and updated.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school provides a caring, inclusive environment that ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils. Parents, staff and pupils all comment very favourably on the strong sense of care, inclusion and belonging that exists in the school. The curriculum is fully accessible, regardless of gender, race or religion.

The school actively encourages pupils to consider the needs of others and older pupils care for the younger pupils with a clear sense of pride and maturity. This is particularly evident during break and lunch times.

The accommodation provides a stimulating and well maintained environment to support teaching and learning. The wall displays in all classrooms and corridors are very well presented and celebrate pupils' achievements successfully. Resources are of good quality and are used well to support teaching and learning. The standard of internal decoration has recently been greatly improved and now provides a pleasant environment throughout the school.

The attractive grounds surrounding the school are under used as a learning resource, especially within the Foundation Phase.

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

Since his appointment, the headteacher has set a clear sense of direction for the school, accurately identifying key priorities for development. He has successfully gained the confidence of staff, governors, parents and pupils so that they share a common understanding of the school's core values and aims. All parents agree that the school is well run. The headteacher is also an excellent role model as a class teacher.

Performance management procedures for teaching and support staff are well understood and lead to relevant targets for improvement, which relate well to whole school priorities. The school provides good opportunities for the continuing professional development of staff, which are closely linked to areas for improvement identified in the school development plan.

Members of the governing body are actively involved in the life of the school. They are well informed about its performance through first-hand knowledge of its day-to-day work, discussion of data on pupil progress and meetings with relevant members of staff. Governors regularly attend training courses, which have a clear impact on their understanding of the school's work. A well organised rolling programme of policy reviews ensures that the school meets its statutory responsibilities.

The school pays good attention to national and local priorities such as the 'Healthy Schools' agenda. Its actions have an evident positive impact on pupils' academic outcomes and wellbeing.

Improving quality: Good

The process of self-evaluation and development planning is comprehensive. There are effective arrangements to seek the views of members of staff, parents and pupils and their views and comments are considered seriously. The governing body is fully involved in discussing, commenting and challenging the findings of the self-evaluation report.

A good range of evidence is used effectively to identify strengths and areas for development. Performance data is carefully analysed to identify how well pupils achieve and areas for improvement. However, there are sections within the

self-evaluation report that are not evaluative and tend to describe provision rather than making judgements on how well pupils are doing.

The link between the self-evaluation report and priorities in the school development plan is clear. Priorities focus clearly on improving pupil outcomes but it is not always clear how the actions identified will bring about the desired improvements.

There are good examples of effective teaching being shared within the school and members of staff are given many opportunities to acquire new skills. The effective professional learning community within the school and beyond enables staff to develop and share their professional knowledge purposefully and successfully. This has a positive impact on quality and standards.

Partnership working: Good

The school works well with a range of strategic partners. It collaborates effectively with other schools in the local cluster, for example by engaging in joint in-service training and moderation of standards of pupils' work.

Well established arrangements ease the transition for children from pre-school settings into the nursery/reception class and for pupils at the end of their primary education into high school.

An extremely positive and productive partnership with parents ensures that their children are happy in school and make good progress. All parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. The school actively listens to parents and has made a number of improvements in response to their opinions and suggestions.

The school is at the heart of community life and shares a site with the village hall. Throughout the year, it organises events for parents and the wider community that are well attended and which effectively deepen pupils' sense of belonging and well-being. There are good links with local places of worship such as the church and chapel.

Resource management: Good

The headteacher and governing body carefully monitor and manage the school's budget. Expenditure is well matched to priorities for improvement, such as raising standards in ICT. The 'Friends' Association' raises considerable additional funds, which are well used to improve provision and pupils' standards of achievement.

There is a sufficient number of qualified staff with a range of expertise and experience to teach the curriculum. Overall, there is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning in most subjects, but a lack of Welsh reading books has a negative impact on pupils' outcomes in Welsh.

Effective arrangements exist for covering teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time in the Foundation Phase. However, arrangements for covering this time in key stage 2 do not fully meet statutory requirements.

The school values the expertise of teaching assistants and they support pupils' learning well. However, they are not distributed equitably throughout the school in order to benefit all pupils.

Most pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. The school, therefore, provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Estyn compares schools against two main data sets; their free-school-meal group and their family of schools.

Free-school-meal groups – the results of every school in Wales are compared to those of schools who have similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. There are five bands: (1) up to and including 8%; (2) over 8% and up to and including 16%; (3) over 16% and up to and including 24%; (4) over 24% and up to and including 32%; and (5) above 32%.

Within each of the bands, schools are placed in quartiles in order to judge their performance.

Family of schools – a group of between ten and twelve schools across Wales that have similar characteristics and face similar challenges, in terms of the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, socio-economic factors, Welsh deprivation factoring and numbers of pupils with additional learning needs. Each school's performance is ranked against that of others in its family.

Statutory teacher assessments in 2011 indicate that 83.3% of pupils in key stage 1 achieved the core subject indicator (CSI), the expected level 2 in English, mathematics and science, which is the same as the family average and slightly above the all-Wales average. In key stage 2, 79% of pupils attained the CSI at level 4, which is very close to the family and all-Wales averages.

Pupils' performance at the higher levels in key stage 1, level 3 or above, is above the all-Wales average and the same as the family average in English, higher than both the family and all-Wales averages in mathematics but slightly lower than the family and all-Wales averages in science.

At key stage 2, performance at the higher levels, level 5 or above, is lower than the family and all-Wales average in English and mathematics. In science, pupils' performance is the same as the family average and higher than the all-Wales average.

Over the past three years, when compared with the relative performance of similar schools, pupils' performance at key stage 1 in English and science is consistently in the top 25%. Pupils' performance in mathematics is more variable. At key stage 2, pupils' performance in science is consistently good. However, their performance in English and mathematics is variable.

Over the past three years, oracy, reading and writing levels at key stage 1 are generally above the family and all-Wales averages and, although they fluctuate at key stage 2, levels are generally maintained.

There is no significant difference between the performances of pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at both key stages.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Thirty-one parents completed the questionnaire.

All parents:

- are satisfied with the school;
- believe that their child is helped to become more mature and is expected to do his/her best;
- feel they are kept well informed; think their child is safe at school, well supported and encouraged to keep healthy;
- say that their child likes school;
- feel that their child was helped to settle in well;
- consider that staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect;
- think that pupils are well behaved;
- believe that there is a good range of activities provided; and
- feel comfortable about approaching the school with any suggestions or problems.

Nearly all parents:

- feel that their child makes good progress;
- think that homework is appropriate;
- think that teaching is good;
- think that pupils are being well prepared for moving on to the next stage of their education; and
- understand the procedures for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Fifty-six key stage two pupils completed the questionnaire.

All pupils:

- think that they learn to keep healthy;
- think that they are helped to learn and to make progress;
- believe that they have plenty of opportunities for regular exercise; and
- think that they have enough books and equipment.

Nearly all pupils:

- say that they feel safe in school;
- feel that they are doing well at school;
- believe that the school deals well with any bullying;

- say that they know who to ask if they find work hard;
- consider that homework helps them to improve;
- feel that pupils behave well at playtimes and lunch time; and
- say that they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset.

Most pupils:

- think that pupils behave well and that they can get their work done.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mervyn Lloyd Jones	Reporting Inspector
Stephanie James	Team Inspector
Justine Barlow	Lay Inspector
Sharon Davies	Peer Inspector
Keith Bowyer (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)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

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