



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

**Bishopston Primary School
Bishopston Road
Bishopston
Swansea
SA3 3EN**

Date of inspection: May 2012

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

Bishopston Primary School is in the village of Bishopston, which is on the Gower peninsula and in the local authority of Swansea.

There are 318 pupils aged three to 11 years in the school. This includes 47 part-time nursery pupils. There are 11 classes, including eight with pupils from different year groups. The majority of pupils come from the surrounding villages, but a small number attend the school's specialist teaching facility and come from other areas of Swansea. The school occupies an extensive site with large yard areas and playing fields.

The school describes most of the area it serves as economically advantaged. About 4% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below average for the local authority and Wales. A very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language. The school has identified 20% of pupils as having additional learning needs, including 20 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Most of these pupils attend the specialist facility for those with speech, language and communication difficulties. There have been no exclusions in the last 12 months.

Since the last inspection in 2006, there have been three changes to the teaching staff in the school.

The individual school budget per pupil for Bishopston Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,367 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Swansea is £11,089 and the minimum is £2,560. Bishopston Primary School is 29th out of the 86 primary schools in Swansea in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of Bishopston Primary School is adequate because:

- many pupils make good progress from their starting points;
- nearly all pupils behave very well in classes and around the school;
- staff provide a high level of care, support and guidance to pupils; and
- the overall quality of teaching is good.

However:

- pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science has often not compared well with that of pupils in other similar schools.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement in Bishopston Primary School are good because:

- school leaders and governors have created a supportive ethos for learning, which is having a positive impact on school development;
- there is a sound process for self-evaluation; and
- targets for school improvement are focused appropriately on raising standards and improving quality.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 improve standards in English and mathematics, particularly in the Foundation Phase;
- R2 ensure that work is more closely matched to pupils' abilities;
- R3 provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum;
- R4 improve the provision for information and communication technology;
- R5 sustain the clear focus on literacy and numeracy as key priorities for development; and
- R6 improve aspects of school accommodation highlighted in the report.

What happens next?

Bishopston Primary 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?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Most pupils speak clearly and effectively in lessons when asking and answering questions. Older, more able pupils use a very good range of vocabulary in their group discussions.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils read at an appropriate level. Most older junior pupils are confident readers and access information quickly from different sources, such as reference books and websites.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase write with increasing accuracy. In key stage 2 in English lessons, many older pupils write well for a wide variety of audiences and in different styles. However, they do not always produce work that is presented well.

Pupils with additional learning needs make progress in line with their ability. Most pupils in the special units make good progress in their communication and reading skills, often from very low starting points.

Pupils throughout the school generally apply their numeracy skills well in a range of contexts. Standards in information and communication technology are mixed. While pupils in key stage 2 generally make appropriate progress, pupils' standards in the Foundation Phase are weaker.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase generally achieve good standards in Welsh. Their speaking and listening skills are good and they talk about their feelings and give instructions with increasing confidence. Overall, in key stage 2 standards are adequate. Older pupils talk confidently in the present tense, but are less confident talking about the past and using previously learnt language patterns and vocabulary. Pupils' reading and writing skills are appropriate.

In key stage 1, pupils' performance over the last four years has been very variable and with a significant decrease in 2011. In 2011, pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science did not compare well with that of pupils in other similar schools. In English and mathematics, pupils' performance was the lowest in the family. Pupils' performance at the higher than expected level (level 3) was also below the average when compared with that of similar schools.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance over the last four years has generally not compared well with that of pupils in other similar schools. In 2011, the overall performance of pupils was below the average for the family of schools and in mathematics was the lowest in the family. However, when the performance of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties is taken into account, the difference is less significant.

There has been a steady increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher than expected level (level 5) in key stage 2 and pupils' performance at this level was generally above the average for the family of schools.

In key stage 1 in 2011, far fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level (level 2) in English and in key stage 2, far fewer boys than girls achieved the higher than expected level (level 5).

The school's targets for 2012 in both key stages suggest a significant improvement in pupils' performance on recent years.

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They generally work well in lessons and respond with enthusiasm to tasks set. Pupils enjoy school and co-operate and interact effectively with each other.

Pupils of all ages are involved in setting and monitoring their own targets and they are beginning to make choices about how and what they learn. This contributes to the development of pupils' self-esteem.

Pupils in the mainstream classes and the special units behave very well in classes and around the school. All pupils show courtesy and respect to each other, staff and visitors. They generally feel safe in school and have positive attitudes towards healthy living and eating, although a few pupils' lunchboxes do not always contain healthy foods.

The school council and eco bugs committee are well established and members take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils' decisions have made a positive contribution to school developments, such as the improvements made to the outside environment, the purchase of sports equipment and involvement in Fairtrade issues.

Many pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular sporting and musical activities. Pupils are also involved in a range of community events and fundraising activities and regular visits to places of interest enhance pupils' enjoyment of their work.

Pupils' attendance, at almost 94% is slightly above the average for the local authority and Wales, but is the lowest attendance rate in the family of schools. Many absences are the result of parents taking their children on holidays in term times. All but a very few pupils attend punctually.

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

Teachers plan a good range of appropriate and stimulating learning experiences for pupils throughout the school. The curriculum is organised around relevant topics that motivate and engage pupils, for example 'Fit Kids' and 'Olympics'.

Teachers plan effective provision for developing pupils' oral, reading and numeracy within the curriculum. However, opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum are sometimes constrained by teachers using worksheets too much. Teachers promote pupils' thinking skills well through, for example, providing opportunities for pupils to ask 'big questions' or to use the 'thinking fountain'. Provision for information and communication technology is often limited due to the lack of appropriate equipment.

The wide variety of extra-curricular clubs and visits to places of interest enriches pupils' learning effectively, for example the recent residential visit to Pendine for older junior pupils. Generally, homework builds appropriately on what pupils have learned in lessons.

There are relevant opportunities throughout the school for children to learn about the history and culture of Wales. Teachers practise and reinforce Welsh language patterns well and this has a positive impact on pupils' skills, particularly in the Foundation Phase. In key stage 2, opportunities for pupils to use their language skills independently are at an early stage of development.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the importance of environmental sustainability and global citizenship. For example, they have made teddy bears to send to children in Zambia. In addition, pupils' knowledge of Fairtrade issues has enabled them to influence what local community shops sell.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is generally good throughout the school and particularly effective at the end of key stage 2. In most lessons, teachers plan their work well, use their subject knowledge effectively and employ a wide and stimulating range of teaching strategies. In a few lessons, activities are very challenging and tasks very well matched to pupils' abilities. However, in a few classes, teachers direct activities too much and the tasks do not match tasks well enough to what pupils can do. In all classes, support staff are deployed successfully and assist pupils with their work. The working relationships between all adults and pupils are excellent.

Assessment for learning strategies are developing well throughout the school. Teachers use pupil self-assessment and peer-assessment effectively, particularly at the end of key stage 2, to inform pupils about their progress. Teachers' written feedback to pupils is generally good. Teachers' comments are positive, but do not always give enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Not all teachers are confident in levelling pupils' work accurately.

Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through regular consultation evenings and informal opportunities to discuss issues with teachers. Reports to parents are very detailed and identify suitable areas for improvement. Pupils have opportunities to make comments about the progress they have made and how they need to improve their work.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The good level of care, support and guidance provided for pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils feel, secure, valued and safe within the school's nurturing environment. Pupils and parents indicate a high degree of satisfaction with these arrangements.

The school promotes pupils', spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. As a result, pupils show a great deal of respect and consideration for each other and all adults.

Involvement with outside agencies, for example speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and educational psychologists, has a positive impact on pupils' achievements and wellbeing across the school. This carefully structured support is particularly effective for pupils in the special units.

Procedures for identifying pupils who need additional support with their work are good. Pupils and parents are fully involved in setting improvement targets and the progress pupils make is reviewed regularly. Teachers and support staff use assessment information effectively to ensure that the needs of pupils with additional learning needs are met and further support is provided, if required. This is having a positive effect on the standards these pupils achieve.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Adequate

The school has a very positive ethos in which all feel valued and respected. The school is fully inclusive and celebrates diversity, equality and the positive features of cultural difference within the curriculum and school routines. All pupils and staff display tolerant attitudes.

All pupils have access to the school's curriculum and all aspects of its provision. Pupils from the special units are included regularly in the daily life of the school. This good level of integration has a positive effect on pupils both in the special units and within mainstream classes.

Although improvements to the accommodation have been made, the school environment still has a number of shortcomings.

A few interior parts of the school are poorly decorated and some teaching areas for Foundation Phase pupils are very small. In addition, toilet areas are generally in a poor state and the junior yard has a very loose surface. However, the school uses the accommodation well and the majority of classrooms are attractively presented. Development of the school grounds has greatly enhanced the learning environment for younger pupils. In particular, the outdoor classroom ('George's room') and the Forest School areas are used to good effect.

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

Leadership: Good

The headteacher and senior staff have created a supportive ethos for learning and this has a positive effect on school development. The roles and responsibilities of teachers and senior staff are well understood. There is a clear plan for school improvement. In the last year, the school has focused its attention on developing strategies to improve standards in literacy and numeracy and this is beginning to have a positive impact. Regular management and staff meetings and a sound performance management structure have helped to improve learning and teaching.

Governors support the school very well and know about the initiatives the school is developing. They have a secure understanding of how well pupils are performing, challenge the school and question how this performance compares with that of pupils in other similar schools. There is a clear protocol for governor visits to the school when they discuss curriculum issues with teachers. A recently introduced governor's newsletter keeps parents informed about important aspects of governors' work and why particular decisions about the school are made.

The school is making appropriate progress in introducing initiatives that meet local and national priorities, such as the Foundation Phase, assessment for learning and a focus on meeting the needs of more able and talented pupils. These are generally having a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement.

Improving quality: Good

There is a sound process for self-evaluation that draws on a suitable range of first-hand evidence. This includes the performance of pupils, observations of staff, and the views of pupils and parents.

As a result of seeking parents' views, the school has addressed successfully several issues, including the provision of a 'before-school' club and a short 'brain break' for pupils in the afternoons.

The outcomes of the self-evaluation process are generally used to determine appropriate priorities for school improvement. The school has identified in detail five key areas for improvement in the forthcoming year. These relate well to improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The school is making sound progress in achieving a few of these targets, with evidence in many classes of improvements in reading.

A very good culture of teamwork exists and, as a result, the school is growing as a learning community. Several teachers are members of professional learning communities, for example to raise standards for more able and talented pupils. Staff take part in training activities with other schools in the cluster, for example in science, mathematics and special needs, to improve their professional knowledge.

Staff also take part in a range of relevant training activities with other schools in the cluster.

Partnership working: Good

The partnership with parents is a strength of the school. The school communicates very effectively with parents and regular newsletters are particularly informative. Parents speak highly of the school's open door policy and this ensures that any issues or concerns they may have are dealt with promptly.

Parents and visitors from the community regularly make a positive contribution to enriching pupils' experiences both in school and in the locality. A number of parents are involved in working with pupils for specific activities, such as in the knitting and crochet club and with French language tasks.

The home-school parents' association raises significant funds for the benefit of pupils. This partnership enhances many aspects of the school's provision very effectively. The school has good links with the community and celebrates cultural events, such as the Murton Mayday celebrations.

Good transition programmes are in place with the partner secondary school. This ensures continuity in learning and wellbeing for pupils transferring to the next stage of their education.

Good opportunities are provided for school involvement in cluster standardisation and moderation processes.

Resource management: Adequate

The school generally manages its budget well and, over the last few years, has made some difficult spending decisions. There is a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff and these are deployed effectively. The school identifies and meets the professional development needs of all staff through suitable performance management procedures. There are appropriate arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time and these enable teachers in each of the key stages to work together effectively.

The school identifies and allocates resources appropriately in line with the priorities identified in its school development plan. There is an adequate range of learning resources that are generally managed and used well. In the specialist units, equipment is used effectively to help pupils with physical disabilities. Overall, there is an insufficient number of computers and laptops for pupils throughout the school and in the special units. In addition, several areas in the school are in need of redecoration.

In view of the outcomes achieved, the school overall provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Bishopston Primary School is the eighth most challenged in its family of schools (a group of schools with similar characteristics).

In key stage 1, pupils' performance over the last four years has been very variable and with a significant decrease compared with previous years. In 2011, just over 81% of pupils achieved the core subject indicator (the expected level in English, mathematics and science). Pupils' performance in these subjects did not compare well with pupils in other similar schools. In English and mathematics, pupils' performance placed the school in the bottom quarter and was the lowest performance in the family. In science, more pupils achieved the expected level, but performance was still below the average for the family of schools.

In English, mathematics and science, pupils' performance at the higher than expected level (level 3) has decreased significantly over the last four years. In English and science in 2011, performance at this higher level was the second lowest in the family.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance over the last four years has generally not compared well with pupils in other similar schools and has consistently placed the school in the lower half or bottom quarter of similar schools. In key stage 2, 84% of pupils in 2011 achieved the expected level (level 4) in the core subject indicator. The overall performance of pupils was below the average for the family of schools and was the second lowest performance. In addition, pupils' performance in mathematics was the lowest in the family. However, when the performance of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties is taken into account, this poor comparative performance is less significant.

Over the last few years, there has been a steady increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher than expected level (level 5) in key stage 2 in oracy, reading and writing. In 2011, pupils' performance at the higher level 5 was generally above the average for the family of schools.

In key stage 1, far fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level in English, and in key stage 2 far fewer boys than girls achieved the higher level.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

One hundred and two pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire fully.

All pupils think that teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress and nearly all know whom to talk to if they find their work hard. In addition, nearly all pupils know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. As a result, nearly all pupils state that they feel safe in school and that they are doing well.

All pupils feel the school teaches them how to keep healthy and most state they have lots of opportunities to get regular exercise. Many pupils feel that they have enough books and equipment and most state that homework helps them to improve their work in school.

Nearly all pupils feel that the school deals well with bullying. A minority of pupils feel that the behaviour of others interferes with their work in class and a few feel that children do not behave well at break times.

Overall, all of these views are in line with or slightly better than the views of pupils in other schools across Wales.

Parent questionnaires

Twenty-four parents completed the questionnaire.

Many parents feel that the school is well run. Most parents state that their children were helped to settle into school when they first started. They feel that their children like school and are happy and safe there. Most parents feel that teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard. As a result, they feel that their children are making good progress. Most parents state that their children are becoming more mature, are taking on responsibilities and are encouraged to be healthy. Most parents feel that there is a good range of activities in school, but fewer feel that the homework given is always appropriate. Most parents state that their children are treated fairly and receive enough additional support with their individual learning needs. However, a minority of parents state that pupils are not prepared well enough to move on to their next school.

Many parents state that school staff are approachable if they have concerns or questions, but a minority feel that they are not well informed about their children's progress. Many parents are clear about what to do if they need to raise issues with the school or to make a complaint. All parents feel that pupils behave well in school.

Many of these views are less positive than the views of parents in other schools across Wales. Parents in Bishopston Primary School are much less positive about the appropriateness of the homework provided, how well they are informed about

their children's progress and how well children are prepared for moving to their next stage of education. In addition, far fewer parents strongly agree that the quality of teaching is good and that they are satisfied with the school overall.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mike McGuire	Reporting Inspector
Enir Morgan	Team Inspector
Eleri Honour	Team Inspector
Christine Edwards	Lay Inspector
Julie Price	Peer Inspector
Gareth Widlake	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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FPYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.