



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

**Fairwater Primary School
Wellwright Road
Fairwater
Cardiff
CF5 3ED**

Date of inspection: July 2013

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

Fairwater Primary School is in a western suburb of Cardiff, which is the local authority. The school has a mixed catchment, which includes areas of social housing and of social and economic advantage. It provides education for boys and girls between the ages of four and 11. There are 206 pupils on roll, of which 178 are of statutory school age. Numbers have declined from 216 in 2011 and 271 at the time of the last inspection in 2007. On entry, many pupils have below expected levels of basic skills and maturity.

Ten pupils attend a resource base for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. They come from a wider area. Overall, 24% of pupils are identified with additional learning needs, which is slightly above the average for Welsh schools. A small proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs. Approximately 32% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is above the 2012 figure of 29% and the 2011 figure of 30% and significantly higher than the average for Wales. A very few pupils are “looked after” by the local authority. There were six fixed-term exclusions in the previous year. These related to pupils who attended the resource base.

About 87% of pupils are from white British backgrounds. The remainder are from a wide range of different ethnic groups and traditions. No pupil speaks Welsh at home. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

The individual school budget per pupil for Fairwater Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £4,143 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Cardiff is £12,307 and the minimum is £2,573. Fairwater Primary School is 24th out of the 99 primary schools in Cardiff in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is adequate because:

- the progress of pupils with additional learning needs is good;
- pupils with English as an additional language make good progress;
- teaching is generally of good quality; and
- pupils' attitudes are positive and most are keen to learn.

However:

- standards at the end of the Foundation Stage and at the end of key stage 2 are below those of most similar schools;
- the performance of boys is particularly weak;
- standards in Welsh are judged as adequate; and
- attendance is low when compared to the average for similar schools.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- the new headteacher and senior leadership team have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development;
- recent initiatives to improve standards and provision are beginning to have a positive impact; and
- all staff have a shared commitment and the capacity to raise standards.

However:

- the school's self-evaluation is not firmly based on first-hand evidence and is inaccurate; and
- the self-evaluation process does not take sufficient account of the views of all members of the school community.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards in the Foundation Phase outcomes and in English, Welsh, mathematics and science by the end of key stage 2, with particular attention to the performance of boys
- R2 Improve levels of attendance
- R3 Ensure that the recent improvements in assessment procedures are used consistently across the school to meet the individual needs of all pupils
- R4 Focus the school's evaluations of its performance on first hand evidence
- R5 Extend the roles of all subject co-ordinators so that they impact more effectively on standards

What happens next?

Fairwater 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

Many pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. They respond appropriately to questioning, and communicate effectively with others when discussing in classes about a wide range of topics.

The majority of pupils in the Foundation Phase develop their reading skills well, using a range of reading strategies to read unfamiliar words. Many pupils at key stage 2 read at appropriate levels for their age and stage of development. They enjoy books and reading, and older and more able pupils are developing skills of skimming and scanning, which they use effectively when undertaking research. These pupils use their reading skills effectively to access information in other areas of learning.

Standards in writing are more varied. Younger pupils in the Foundation Phase have limited opportunities to choose to practise their writing. By the end of the Foundation Phase, the majority communicate meaning appropriately through their writing and use simple punctuation correctly. Progress at key stage 2 is inconsistent. A majority of older pupils do not extend their writing enough in relation to their age and ability. The quality of the presentation of pupils' written work is very variable and these pupils write in a fewer range of forms. They develop ideas in interesting ways but are often confined by the over use of worksheets. A minority do not consistently spell familiar words correctly or use an appropriate range of punctuation accurately.

Pupils develop good skills in information and communication technology and they apply these skills effectively in a range of subjects. In science and in geography, older pupils use their numeracy skills well to record and to display data to enhance learning.

Pupils make limited progress in developing their use of the Welsh language. A majority understand and respond to basic instructions, and pupils in the Foundation Phase use an appropriate range of phrases and topic vocabulary regularly. Most older pupils, however, do not progress well enough from this sound starting point. Nearly all have limited skills in reading and writing in Welsh.

In 2012, pupils' outcomes at the end the Foundation Phase were low. For the expected outcome 5 and the higher outcome 6, pupils attained well below the average for pupils in schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, and below the average for the school's family.

When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2012, placed the school in the bottom 25% in relation to English, mathematics and science.

Standards at the end of key stage 2 have dipped sharply since 2010 when they were broadly in line with those in most similar schools. Pupils with additional learning

needs achieve well and those in the special resource base make particularly good progress to meet the individual targets set for them. For the Foundation Phase outcome indicators and the end of key stage 2 assessments, the performance of boys is well below that of girls when compared to the situation in other schools in the family and in other schools in Wales.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most pupils develop a secure understanding of how to keep healthy. They have a positive attitude to participating in sports and recognise the benefits of regular exercise and a healthy diet. Their social and emotional development is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and throughout the school. They are polite and show respect and care for others. Pupils work well together in pairs and as part of a group and are well motivated. The pupils in the special resource base are keen to learn and well behaved.

The school council is developing appropriately as a forum for pupils to influence the life of their school. However, the scope of its activities is rather limited. Pupils successfully take part in a number of community activities and take great pride in their work in the community garden nearby. This and a range of other related activities give them a good understanding of how to be useful members of society.

Attendance levels are in the lower 50% when compared with those of similar schools in Wales and rates of attendance have dropped in the last three years. A minority of pupils are regularly late for school.

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

The school provides a wide range of interesting and relevant learning experiences. There are effective arrangements in place that allow staff to plan together and they collaborate successfully to ensure that provision meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase, the National Curriculum and religious education.

Educational trips and extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' learning experiences very effectively. Teachers plan a broad and balanced curriculum with a positive emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and communication skills. The curriculum in these areas is carefully structured so that the appropriate skills are taught in the same ways across the school. The provision for Welsh language development does not allow for pupils to build on what they already know and can do. There are regular and effective opportunities for pupils to learn about their locality and the history and culture of Wales.

Provision for education for sustainable development is good. It gives pupils a good awareness of sustainable development and how to take care of their environment. They have good opportunities to learn to recycle, save energy and live sustainably. Pupils are developing a sense of the wider world through opportunities to support charities abroad and by promoting fair trade within the school.

Teaching: Good

In all lessons teachers prepare thoroughly to provide stimulating and thought provoking activities. They make the learning objectives clear and often ask pupils to recall previous learning before beginning a new topic. Most teachers question briskly and purposefully so that all pupils are ready to learn more. There is a clear sense of purpose to nearly all the teaching and the lessons move forward at a good pace. All learning support assistants are strategically placed to give well-focused support and encouragement to individuals and groups.

In nearly all lessons, teachers show good subject knowledge and successfully convey their enthusiasm for what they are teaching to their pupils. As a result, pupils work hard, knowing that teachers appreciate their efforts. Nearly all the teachers give regular praise and encouragement. They have high expectations of what should be achieved in the time available.

In a few lessons where there are shortcomings, teachers lack sufficient subject knowledge, for example to teach Welsh effectively. The pace of learning is too slow so that pupils lose attention.

The school has introduced a number of new initiatives to assess, record and track pupils' progress, particularly in literacy and mathematics. However these are not used consistently by all teachers to address the needs of individual pupils. This has a negative impact on the progress of those pupils. Many staff assess and mark pupils' work well on a day to day basis. They provide pupils with clear and helpful oral feedback or written comments that explain how well they are doing.

Teachers do not consistently apply the agreed practices to encourage pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others. Many staff make good use of novel systems to check pupils' understanding but these are not used across classes. All pupils have targets in English and mathematics but are not always clear about these and what they have to do to meet them. Annual reports to parents are detailed and informative, and give a good rounded picture of each pupil's overall progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The provision for promoting pupils' general wellbeing is effective. The school encourages pupils to eat healthily and to engage in an active lifestyle, for example by joining in the good range of extra-curricular clubs or by cycling to school. Pupils learn how to keep safe and are confident to approach staff with their concerns. Pupils in the special resource base and in the main school benefit from a friendly and calm environment, which increases their confidence and self-esteem. There are well-organised and structured intervention groups to support pupils' individual needs in literacy and numeracy, which promote learning well.

The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to become useful members of the community. The school has implemented a range of strategies to promote regular attendance. However, they have not been effective in improving levels of attendance.

Learning support assistants are very well deployed and support individuals effectively so that they make good progress. There are well-established links with specialist support services both for those in the special resource base and in the main school. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. The school promptly identifies pupils who may need extra support by using reliable assessment information specifically for this purpose. Individual education plans are easily understood by all involved and parents and pupils share in setting targets and celebrating success.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The school successfully promotes a fully inclusive ethos where all pupils are treated equally. Pupils attending the special resource base are successfully involved in school life. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. There are appropriate and effective policies and procedures to support staff in promoting positive attitudes and in dealing with any issues of oppressive behaviour.

The classrooms are spacious and staff make good use of additional space for smaller group work and support activities. The school has enough resources to promote teaching and learning effectively throughout the school and to meet pupils' needs. The very extensive outdoor environment has been successfully developed, particularly for younger pupils. The school buildings and site are well maintained. There are attractive displays throughout the buildings, which celebrate success and promote learning. Good use is made of the local community garden to support the curriculum.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which has been successfully shared with all staff. The senior leadership team has been strengthened and is now working closely and effectively with the headteacher to put initiatives in place to raise standards and to improve provision. This is particularly evident in new strategies to improve skills in literacy and numeracy, which are beginning to have a positive effect. All staff share a commitment to tackle under-performance as a matter of urgency and to put in place and use systems to review the impact of teaching and learning regularly.

The headteacher has recently reviewed thoroughly the roles and responsibilities of all staff to make them more effective. Curriculum co-ordinators have assumed greater responsibilities for monitoring performance of pupils in their areas and address relevant areas for improvement. This is now reflected in the purposeful way these teachers work with other staff to raise standards. All staff now carry an appropriate level of responsibility for the outcomes of their teaching. However, many of these

initiatives are relatively new and have yet to impact fully on the quality of teaching and learning.

The governing body is well informed and its influence is developing appropriately. It is reviewing carefully the impact of the senior leadership team's work and the improvements in standards. Governors support the school well and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

There has been good progress in addressing most local and national priorities. The Foundation Phase is well organised. There has been good progress in developing pupils' understanding of ecological issues. Recent initiatives to raise standards in literacy and numeracy are not yet fully effective. However, there has been limited progress in developing pupils' skills in using incidental Welsh in the daily life of the school.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school is developing new procedures to encourage effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders now carry out a range of monitoring procedures, including data analysis, lesson observations and scrutiny of planning. However, other staff are not involved fully enough in the process and have had little opportunity to influence the outcomes.

In the school's self-evaluation, the judgements made are not based upon an accurate interpretation of the evidence available. Often, evaluations of aspects such as standards and teaching do not reflect the outcomes provided by the data available to the school.

The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document, which includes recent changes, identifies priorities and outlines suitable actions and timescales to secure further improvement. It is appropriately linked to the school self-evaluation document and to the priorities identified by co-ordinators. However, it is not sufficiently ambitious in its intentions to raise standards.

There is a growing range of professional learning communities in the school that focus on school improvement. These are developing appropriately. The school is also strengthening links with other schools in the family and with schools locally, and this helps to raise standards further.

Partnership working: Good

There is a wide range of useful partnerships with parents, the community and other schools. Parents are very supportive and are well informed about the school's work and activities through detailed newsletters and the school's informative website. Links with parents have resulted in improvements to the resources available for teaching and learning. The parent teacher association actively raises funds that have provided useful additional resources such as computer equipment. Parents are encouraged successfully to feel fully engaged in school life. There are close links with the local church and community groups, which enrich learning and give pupils a greater awareness of their local community.

The school makes much good use of the surrounding area to support learning. Pupils visit the parish church, the nearby Museum of Welsh Life and the River Ely as part of their local studies. Links with business in the community have increased opportunities for pupils to gain an insight into production techniques and sales, enabling them to appreciate their use in real life. There are strong links with the local high school through planned transition and joint curricular activities. Teachers from local schools meet frequently to develop good practice and to strengthen their joint understanding of standards.

Resource management: Adequate

The school has sufficient, appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and learning support assistants to deliver the curriculum well and to ensure the wellbeing of all pupils. It deploys staff effectively and makes good use of individual expertise.

The school's performance management system is appropriate and sets relevant targets for all members of staff including support staff. Targets focus well on improving the performance of individuals and addressing the priorities set out in the school development plan.

There are appropriate arrangements for planning, preparation and assessment time for teachers. The school has good arrangements for financial management and monitors spending decisions appropriately. Bearing in mind the standards pupils currently attain at the end of the Foundation Phase and at the end of key stage 2, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In the Foundation Phase in 2012, pupils' performance at the expected outcome (level 5 or above) was well below that of similar schools and other schools in the family in language literacy and communication, mathematical development and in personal social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. The results in the Foundation Phase outcome indicator were also below the results of similar schools and other schools in the family. In 2012, for the expected outcomes, the school was in the bottom 25% when compared to similar schools.

At the higher outcome (level 6 or above), the school's results were above the averages for the family and for other Welsh schools in all outcomes. When compared to similar schools, results placed the school in the lower 50% in language, literacy and communication and personal social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity and in the top 50% in mathematical development.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance at both the expected level (level 4 or above) and higher level (level 5 or above) was below the average for similar schools and those in the family. In 2012 at the expected level, the school was in the bottom 25% of schools in English, mathematics and science and in the core subject indicator. At the higher level, the school was in the lower 50% of similar schools in English and science and in the top 50% in mathematics. Results at the expected level were below the family average and the average for Welsh schools in English, mathematics and science. At the higher level, results were below these averages in English and science and above in mathematics. Performance in the core subject indicator in 2012 was below the family and Welsh averages.

Over time, results have fallen sharply since 2010 when they were close to the family and Welsh averages. Boys significantly underperform when compared to girls. This difference is much greater than the average for the family and schools nationally. In 2012, those pupils entitled to free school meals reached levels close to those of pupils not in receipt of free school meals. This difference was less than the family and Welsh averages. Those who have English as an additional language make good progress and often achieve well.

Pupils in the special resource base for those with additional learning needs and those with additional learning needs in the main school achieve at least in line with the expectations held for them.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Parents

Fifty parents or carers completed the questionnaire.

All parents or carers that responded:

- say that the teaching is good.

Nearly all:

- believe that staff expect their children to work hard and do their best;
- say that their child was helped to settle well when he or she started school; and
- say that the school helps their child to become more mature and to take on responsibility.

Most parents say that:

- they are satisfied with the school;
- their child is making good progress;
- pupils behave well;
- the homework which is given builds well on what their children learn in school;
- their child is safe in school;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual need;
- they are comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem; and
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits.

Many say that:

- the staff treat all children with respect;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- they are kept well informed about their child's progress;
- they understood the school's procedures for dealing with complaints;
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school; and
- the school is well run.

The responses of parents and carers are generally more negative than those of other parents or carers in primary schools in Wales.

Pupils

One hundred and thirteen pupils in key stage 2 completed the learner questionnaire.

All pupils know:

- whom to talk to if they are worried or upset.

Nearly all:

- feel safe in school;
- say that the school teaches them to keep healthy;
- believe that there are lots of chances for them to get regular exercise;
- say that they are doing well at school;
- say that the teachers and other adults at school help them to learn and make progress; and
- know what to do and whom to ask if they find work hard.

Most pupils say that:

- homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school.

Many pupils:

- say that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work; and
- believe that all children behave well at play times and lunch times.

A majority:

- say that children behave well and that they can get their work done.

These responses are broadly in line with those of other pupils in primary schools in Wales. Just under half of the pupils think that the behaviour of others prevents them from getting on with their work. This is significantly more negative than the responses from pupils in other schools in Wales.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Peter Mathias	Reporting Inspector
David Kenneth Davies	Team Inspector
Deirdre Emberson	Lay Inspector
Michelle Green	Peer Inspector
Carolyn Mason	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language;
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language;
- mathematics; and
- science.

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.