



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

**Llanbister Primary School,
Llanbister,
Powys,
LD1 6TN**

Date of inspection: March 2012

by

Dr David Gareth Evans

for

**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

Llanbister Primary School serves the village of Llanbister and the surrounding remote rural area, ten miles north of Llandrindod Wells. It is administered by Powys County Council and has 40 pupils on roll aged four to eleven years. The school describes the area as relatively economically advantaged. The annual intake covers the full ability range. The school has no nursery class, but a private nursery is open for two days a week in the community hall.

No pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, are looked after by the local authority or come from a Welsh-speaking home or an ethnic minority background. Eight pupils, or 22% of the school roll, have some form of additional learning need, which is just below the national average. One pupil holds a formal statement.

In September 2007 the school reduced from three to two classes and, since then, the headteacher has had a full-time teaching commitment and no designated management time. A school secretary works for one morning only each week.

The school was last inspected in March 2006. In 2011 the school experienced a prolonged period of significant instability: one of the two full-time teachers was on long-term sick leave and the Welsh peripatetic teacher was taken seriously ill and consequently the school lacked continuity in Welsh language support; in addition, the headteacher, who had been in post since 1997, was on sick leave for a period. A newly qualified teacher was appointed on a permanent, part-time contract in January 2012 to share the teaching in the Foundation Phase class.

The individual school budget per pupil for Llanbister Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £4,029 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Powys is £14,685 and the minimum is £3,005. Llanbister Primary is 32nd 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	Adequate

Current performance

The school's current performance is judged good because:

- most pupils make good progress and achieve well;
- the standard of pupils' wellbeing is good;
- overall the quality of teaching is good; and
- assessment procedures are effective and enable pupils to receive the support they need.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- the headteacher does not have sufficient time to lead and manage the school effectively;
- governors do not contribute well enough to shaping the strategic direction of the school nor do they challenge the school in relation to standards and quality;
- self-evaluation procedures are not regular and consistent; and
- progress since the last inspection is limited.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

R1 raise standards in Welsh in key stage 2;

R2 disseminate the good practices in teaching and assessment through the school;

R3 as a matter of urgency work closely with the local authority to resolve the issues regarding the headteacher's management time;

R4 develop further the governing body's role in strategic planning and self evaluation;

R5 with immediate effect, address those matters relating to school's policy and procedures for safeguarding; and.

R6 ensure that all school documents meet requirements.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In recent years at the end of both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 the number of pupils has been consistently very small. However, those who reached the expected levels 2 and 4 respectively in English and mathematics, in general, compares favourably with the family of schools. The results often placed the school in the top 25% of schools for English and mathematics compared to schools with similar free school meals. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher levels 3 and 5 in the core subjects during the same period, however, was usually below national, local and family averages in the Foundation Phase and variable in key stage 2.

There have been no obvious differences between the attainment of boys and girls over the last few years.

In lessons, most pupils work productively and make good progress. They show an increasing ability to work independently. Those with additional learning needs make good progress on the basis of their specific learning aims.

Most pupils' oral skills develop well. They listen carefully to teachers and to each other. Most, including those who receive additional support, make good progress in their reading skills. They are able to read aloud clearly and meaningfully and the reading ages of many pupils are above their chronological ages. Foundation Phase and key stage 2 pupils discuss with enthusiasm characters and events in the stories they read.

Many Foundation Phase pupils make good initial progress in their ability to write independently. They increase their vocabulary and phrases and begin to vary their sentences and use punctuation. In key stage 2, most make effective progress in their ability to write for an increasing range of purposes, including expressing opinions on current issues. They produce interesting creative work in English that includes engaging style and vocabulary. Most use their extended writing skills effectively in other subjects.

Most pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing their numeracy and information and communication technology skills. Their ability to apply their thinking skills develops well throughout the school and is a strength.

The Welsh language skills of many pupils in the Foundation Phase develop well, but most pupils in key stage 2 lack confidence in using the language during the school day.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel happy and safe in school and express confidence in the care provided by staff. They show respect, care and concern for each other and relate well to their teachers, staff and visitors. They have a good understanding of how to be healthy and recognise the importance of exercise and eating a healthy diet.

Most pupils are highly motivated and enjoy learning. They take pride in their work, collaborate extremely well with one another and strive to complete tasks to the best of their ability. They develop a good range of social and life skills.

Standards of behaviour are good and pupils say that little or no bullying occurs. Attendance figures of 94.6% compare favourably with those of similar schools. Nearly all pupils arrive punctually.

Many pupils readily take on responsibilities. The school council is well established and makes positive contributions to developments at the school; members are actively involved in making decisions about school life.

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

The school provides a wide range of good quality learning experiences that enrich pupils' education. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and meets individual needs successfully. The use of systematic phonics supports the development of pupils' basic skills and their wellbeing effectively and contributes well to raising standards.

Teachers' planning clearly sets out the development of pupils' communication, numeracy, information and communication technology and thinking skills. The activities give pupils regular opportunities to practise and apply their skills and build on prior learning.

The provision for Welsh language and the use of incidental Welsh is developing well. The school promotes the Welsh dimension successfully across all subjects in both key stages, and the study of local history is a good example of this.

The school teaches pupils to act sustainably through developing their awareness of recycling and energy consumption. The promotion of global citizenship is less effective, but pupils develop a mature understanding and broad knowledge of diversity in other cultures.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is good in many lessons. Pupils are constantly encouraged to work independently and to produce work of a good standard. Teachers explain new concepts clearly and use effective questioning techniques.

Many lessons have a good pace. Teaching generally ensures that most pupils are stimulated and motivated to develop into effective learners. Teachers and teaching

assistants are knowledgeable and use an effective range of approaches to engage most pupils. They provide more able pupils with enough challenge to meet their needs.

The good relationships that exist between adults and pupils ensure a positive learning atmosphere that supports and encourages pupils effectively. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour consistently well through the effective use of praise and rewards.

Teachers assess and track pupils' progress well across the school. They often make effective use of assessment for learning strategies to engage and develop pupils' learning, but this is not always consistent.

Teachers give pupils clear and helpful oral feedback and pupils are beginning to assess their own understanding and mark the work of other pupils. In one class the teacher's written comments are detailed and clearly identify what pupils need to do to improve.

Reports to parents are clear and informative.

Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory

The school has a caring ethos and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. All pupils are valued.

There are clear strategies to promote health and wellbeing that encourage pupils to participate in a range of appropriate activities. A well-planned personal and social education programme offers good provision and guidance to pupils.

The school does not have an appropriate policy for safeguarding. The procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues are not fully developed. However, the shortcomings do not jeopardise the day-to-day care, guidance and support that the school gives to pupils.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. There are highly effective procedures for identifying, supporting and monitoring specific pupils. Individual education plans are child-friendly, appropriate, monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. The provision ensures that pupils make progress in all areas of the curriculum, particularly in literacy where results indicate significant improvement.

The special educational needs co-ordinator identifies more able and talented pupils and ensures that they are effectively challenged and extended.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community in which every pupil has an equal right to all areas of the provision and is encouraged to contribute fully to the life of the school.

The building provides appropriate classrooms and facilities and the school makes

full use of every part of the accommodation. The outside areas have been created for Foundation Phase activities and are utilised well. The school displays pupils' written work particularly well.

The buildings and grounds are well maintained and they provide an appropriate environment for playing and learning.

The school is well resourced.

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

The headteacher is very committed to the welfare of pupils and adults in his care. He makes every effort to maintain a good oversight of every aspect of the school. However, his workload is extremely demanding, which means that he cannot always fulfil his strategic responsibilities.

The headteacher has successfully developed a strong vision for the future of the school that everyone shares. Performance management arrangements are appropriate and they support school improvement.

The school has responded appropriately to local and national priorities, such as the promotion of literacy and the implementation of the Foundation Phase.

The governing body is supportive of the school, but it does not ensure that all documentation meet requirements. Its understanding of the school's performance is developing gradually, but governors do not use the relevant information on performance to operate strategically nor to challenge the school.

Improving quality: Adequate

As a result of staffing instability, self-evaluation has not been a regular feature of school life recently and the monitoring of lessons has been spasmodic. The self-evaluation report, which is detailed and generally accurate, is too long.

Data is analysed and used effectively to identify pupils who require additional support in literacy and numeracy and to indicate where improvements can be made in pupils' basic skills. For example, the well-established focus on phonics and reading impacts positively on pupils' confidence in discussing what they have read. However, planning for self-evaluation is not consistent or regularly managed.

The school actively seeks the views of stakeholders in the self-evaluation process.

The school is developing as a reflective unit. For instance, it has participated in a professional learning community, which has led to improvement in the quality of assessment procedures.

Progress in meeting all recommendations from the previous inspection is adequate.

Partnership working: Adequate

Links with parents and carers are good. There is an active parent-teacher association and family members are encouraged to participate in school activities. They feel they are kept well informed through regular newsletters and are comfortable about approaching the school with any issues.

Adequate links exist with the local secondary school, although partnerships with employers and the world of work are minimal. Teachers in the cluster work together successfully to moderate and standardise samples of pupils' work.

The school organises a range of activities which the community can attend and pupils take part in various local events.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its staff and resources appropriately. There is effective deployment of teachers and support staff and their roles and responsibilities are clear. Planning, preparation and assessment time is appropriate for teachers, but not for the headteacher.

Good use is made of the indoor and outdoor space.

The governing body scrutinises the budget carefully and financial resources are linked effectively to school priorities, especially to raising standards in literacy. As a result of the good standards that pupils achieve and the overall quality of teaching, the school offers good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Due to the very small number of pupils at the end of both key stages, the results of teacher assessments have to be treated with great care because one pupil's results can have a significant effect on the school's overall performance.

In the Foundation Phase, in general over the past five years, the proportion of seven-year-old pupils who reach the expected level 2 in English and mathematics compares favourably with national, local and family averages. The core subject indicator, which is the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level in English, mathematics and science combined, has fluctuated over the last five years mainly because of the results in science.

Results in the Foundation Phase have often placed the school in the top 25% of schools for English and mathematics compared with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher level 3 in the core subjects during the same period was usually below national, local and family averages.

In key stage 2, over the last four years the proportion of pupils who reach the expected level 4 in English and mathematics has generally been above national, local and family averages. Results in science were below these averages in two of the last four years. Over the last five years results in English and mathematics have usually placed the school in the top 25% when compared with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals. Performance at the higher level 5 has been variable over the last few years and below family averages in English and science in 2011. There have been no obvious differences between the attainment of boys and girls over the last few years.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Ten were received from parents. All parents were satisfied with the school in general, and said that their children like school. All feel comfortable about asking a question or making suggestions to the school. Each parent says that the teaching is good at the school, that their children are making good progress and they all say that their children have had support to settle in well at the beginning of school. They all agree that their children feel safe in school and that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. Most parents say that the school helps their children to develop maturity and to shoulder responsibility. They also say that the school prepares them well for the next stage in their education. Most say that homework builds well on what their children learn at school and they state that their children are encouraged to keep healthy and do physical exercise. Most say that a good variety of activities are organised by the school and that the school is well-run. A few parents state that pupils do not behave well in school. Very few parents say that they do not receive regular information on their children's progress and that they are also unsure about the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

There is no commentary on the learner questionnaires due to the small number of responses received.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Dr David Gareth Evans	Reporting Inspector
Mr Enir R. Morgan	Team Inspector
Mr Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Mr Anthony Stevenson	Peer Inspector
The school did not appoint a nominee.	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.