



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

**Pencaerau Primary School
Cyntwell Avenue
Caerau
Cardiff
CF5 5QN**

Date of inspection: February 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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Crown Copyright 2012: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Context

Pencaerau Primary School is situated on the western outskirts of Cardiff and it is maintained by Cardiff local authority. It was established as a new school in September 2010 as a result of the amalgamation of Cwrt yr Ala Juniors, Caerau Infants and Caerau Nursery. Pencaerau is currently based on three sites and building work is on-going at the main site to extend the facilities to house all pupils from September 2012.

The school has 374 pupils aged three to 11 years old, which includes 80 pupils who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Children begin school full time after their fourth birthday.

English is the predominant language spoken at home and around 13% of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. English is the main language of communication in the school and Welsh is taught as a second language.

The school is located in a 'Community First Area' due to it being economically disadvantaged, with 51% of pupils entitled to free school meals, a considerably higher proportion than the local authority and all-Wales averages of around 20%. Thirty-two per cent of pupils have been identified as having additional learning needs. Two have a statement of special educational needs.

The individual school budget for Pencaerau Primary School in 2011-2012 is £3,463 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Cardiff is £19,708 and the minimum is £2,828. Pencaerau Primary School is 52nd out of the 101 primary schools in Cardiff in terms of the size of its school budget per pupil.

The headteacher has been in post since the amalgamation of the schools in September 2010 and was previously headteacher of the former junior school from 2004.

Cwrt yr Ala school was previously inspected during the summer term of 2008, Caerau Infants during the spring term of 2009 and Caerau Nursery during the summer term of 2007.

Summary

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

Current performance

Current performance is good because:

- most pupils achieve well, making good progress from their starting point;
- care, support and guidance are of a particularly high standard and fully meet the needs of all pupils; and
- the quality of teaching is good in nearly all classes, with teaching assistants providing effective support.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision and provides astute leadership;
- the senior leadership team and all staff share the same vision and work effectively together; and
- the school is clear about its strengths and areas for development and plans well to address identified priorities.

Recommendations

In order to improve, there is a need to:

R1 raise standards in Welsh second language in key stage 2;

R2 increase the level of challenge for more able pupils;

R3 strengthen procedures for pupils to evaluate the quality of their work; and

R4 develop further the role of the governors in monitoring the school's work.

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

Pupils enter the school with skills that are considerably lower than normally expected for pupils of a similar age. However, many pupils make significant progress throughout the Foundation Phase in each of the learning areas.

However, the percentage attaining the expected level in English and mathematics was above the average for the family of similar schools.

The verified data on pupils' attainment in National Curriculum assessments in 2011 indicates that pupils performed at a good level in English at the end of key stage 1 compared to the Wales average. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is not as favourable. However, the percentage attaining the expected level in English and mathematics was above the average for the family of similar schools. This places the school amongst the 25% highest in Wales in English, the higher 50% in mathematics and the lower 50% in science when benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school's results in English have been constantly above the averages for the family of schools over the past four years. There has been a slight downwards trend in mathematics and science performance levels during the past two years.

In 2011, the data for key stage 2 for all subjects places the school above average for the family of schools and for schools in Wales. The school is amongst the 25% highest in Wales in all subjects when benchmarked against other schools with a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The school's results in English and mathematics have been constantly above the averages for other schools over the past four years and in science over the past two years.

The percentages achieving beyond the expected level in both key stages have been generally above the averages for the family but below the averages for Wales.

Many pupils who are entitled to free school meals, pupils who have additional learning needs and pupils from ethnic minorities achieve well against prior attainment and personal targets and make good progress relative to their ability. However, the more able pupils do not always achieve to their full potential.

There has been no significant trend in the differences between the results of boys and girls over a period of four years. Nearly all pupils across the school work diligently, remain on task and make clear progress in their achievement in lessons and over a period of time.

Pupils' literacy and communication skills are generally good across the school. Nearly all pupils listen attentively to adults and other pupils' contributions. Pupils throughout the school respond appropriately to the contributions of others. They contribute successfully to group and class discussions and respond to the teachers'

questioning effectively. By the end of key stage 2, most are articulate and are able to communicate confidently in a variety of situations.

In the nursery and reception classes, nearly all children make good progress in their early writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, nearly all produce a reasonably wide range of written work. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils are able to apply their writing skills successfully in a variety of cross curricular contexts.

All pupils make good progress in reading. Individual pupils throughout the school respond well to careful and timely interventions and monitoring to achieve their potential. Pupils have a good range of thinking and problem solving skills.

Pupils' progress in Welsh as a second language is good in the Foundation Phase but this progress is not developed upon enough throughout key stage 2. This restricts the ability of pupils to be able to converse confidently in their second language.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe, happy and secure in school. Pupils eat healthily and recognise the importance of keeping fit and taking part in regular exercise.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and have a very positive attitude to learning. They are proud of their school. They take part in a wide range of community activities with enthusiasm and show a good sense of respect and pride.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, showing maturity in their interactions with others. Attendance is slightly above the all-Wales and local averages and above the average for similar schools.

The school council and eco committee are well established and effective in making decisions. They influence school and represent the views of the pupils, for example regarding eco monitoring and contributing to the school's self-evaluation process.

As pupils move through the school they develop good personal and social skills that prepare them well for life and work outside of school. They display good levels of enthusiasm for participating in extra-curricular activities.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
---	-------------

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which ensures continuity and progression in learning experiences across the school. Provision is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities that extend and enrich pupils' learning experiences. Educational visits, including those to other countries, provide very good opportunities for pupils to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

Lesson planning is thorough and ensures that pupils progress well in their knowledge, understanding and overall skills development. Teachers and classroom assistants plan well together to ensure suitable continuity and progression.

Homework tasks build well on the work that pupils do in school. Good use is made of the local community to enhance pupils' learning experiences. The wide variety of learning experiences make effective use of the resources available, particularly in the Foundation Phase.

The development of pupils' skills is carefully planned, successfully providing opportunities for pupils to develop their cross curricular reading and writing skills. For example, key stage 2 pupils frequently take part in guided reading and research sessions. There is a good range of strategies in place to boost and support the acquisition of basic reading and numeracy skills of pupils in need of additional support throughout the school. More able and talented pupils are identified and receive differentiated provision, but this does not always challenge these pupils enough.

There is a strong Welsh ethos at the school and schemes of work make purposeful provision for the Welsh dimension. The school has developed specific strategies and appropriate planning for the provision for Welsh language development throughout the school. Although this is having a positive impact on standards in the Foundation Phase, these changes are yet to have the necessary impact throughout key stage 2.

The school makes good provision for education for sustainable development, particularly through the work of the school eco-committee. Recycling is very well embedded in the school.

Teaching: Good

Overall, teaching throughout the school is consistently good. Almost all lessons are well prepared and delivered at a good pace. Activities are designed well to meet the needs of learners. Staff set clear learning objectives and use questioning effectively to extend pupils' understanding. Teaching assistants are well prepared and support pupils' learning effectively. There are excellent working relationships between pupils and staff. Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are sensitively managed by all staff. These make a significant contribution to children's learning.

The school makes effective use of appropriate assessment data to map and track individual pupils' progress and wellbeing. Teachers and support staff work closely together to discuss the progress of individual pupils and plan appropriately, particularly in the Foundation Phase. Teachers provide clear and constructive oral feedback to pupils. Marking is generally up-to-date, but does not always provide pupils with enough advice about how to improve their work.

In a few cases, pupils assess their own and each other's work thoughtfully. However this practice does not happen consistently or impact sufficiently on pupils' learning.

Reports to parents and carers are clear and informative. Parents are well informed about, and have appropriate opportunities to discuss, their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school promotes the benefits of healthy living well across the curriculum and in a range of extra-curricular activities.

The policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living and supporting pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing are particularly well established. This is reflected in the exceptionally positive and supportive ethos within the school.

A wide range of provision and initiatives effectively promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Whole-school and class assemblies provide appropriate opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The general ethos of the school and the quality of relationships significantly enhance pupils' social and moral development and encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions.

An outstanding feature of the school is the careful establishment of a very happy, safe and caring environment, enabling all pupils to thrive. There are a number of very successful pastoral arrangements that ensure pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing, enabling a calm environment to foster learning. For example, there is a designated 'safe zone' in which pupils who experience social issues at break times and lunchtimes can retreat for specialised supervision and guidance from well-trained adults.

Personal and social education provision is delivered successfully through a structured approach. Breakfast Club and an extensive programme of extra-curricular provision enable effective 'wrap around' care, further demonstrating the school's commitment to pastoral development.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Highly effective procedures and systems are utilised for identifying, supporting and monitoring pupils with special educational needs. The attendance of these pupils is also tracked effectively. A wide range of interventions are in place and a variety of outside agencies are used effectively. The school employs support staff to enhance this provision and ensures that they are highly trained to undertake their work. Individual education plans have been developed in order to involve pupils fully in their target-setting.

Learning environment: Good

The school has a calm and welcoming ethos that provides pupils with a very safe and supportive learning environment. Parents, staff and pupils feel that there is a strong sense of care, inclusion and belonging in the school.

There are appropriate policies, plans and procedures in place to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. Staff actively promote equal opportunities and all pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision. The school has a very positive ethos where diversity is recognised and valued. Pupils learn about cultures and faiths that are different from their own and display tolerant attitudes towards each other.

Effective use is made of a good range of learning and teaching resources. The accommodation meets the needs of learners. The outside areas, garden and high standard of the wall displays provide the pupils with a stimulating learning environment. The building work and present split-site working do not have a negative impact on the learning provision.

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

Leadership: Good

The headteacher sets out a clear vision for the future development of the school within the local community. This vision is underpinned by specific short and longer-term objectives that cover all areas of the school's work. As a result of her astute leadership, the headteacher has been particularly successful in managing the amalgamation of three schools, building a cohesive staff team, and in establishing a strong sense of purpose.

Together with a supportive senior leadership team, the headteacher provides firm strategic direction and sets out clear expectations for all areas of the school's work. Roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly defined and there are particularly effective arrangements for the sharing of leadership roles. All staff share this common vision, values and purpose.

Through its regular meetings and the work of sub-committees, the governing body carries out its functions and oversees the work of the school appropriately. Governors have a sound appreciation of the strengths and areas for development in the school's work. However, they do not provide robust enough challenge for the standards that the school achieves.

Performance management arrangements support staff development well and have helped improve standards. Senior managers carry out annual formal reviews of the work of all staff. These reviews identify suitable targets that relate directly to whole-school priorities and professional development needs.

The school takes appropriate account of national and local priorities, for example in successfully implementing the Foundation Phase. Staff promote specific initiatives such as healthy schools and the eco-schools programmes well.

Improving quality: Good

The school has effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of its work and for planning for improvement. There are systematic self-evaluation arrangements that take account of the views of all stakeholders, an analysis of performance data and the findings of regular subject reviews. These include useful opportunities for pupils to offer their views about the school's work.

The self-evaluation report is detailed and covers all areas of the school's work. It is evaluative, includes a good range of supporting evidence, and accurately identifies strengths as well as areas for development.

Improvement planning is a strong feature of the school's work. Leaders and managers use the information from self-evaluation to identify appropriate and well-understood whole-school and subject area priorities. Improvement plans follow a consistent format that sets out clear targets and expected outcomes, and a range of specific actions to address each priority. However, several plans do not include measurable success criteria that relate directly to pupil outcomes. There are systematic arrangements to monitor progress against action plans.

The school is developing well as a learning community. Staff work together well and show a strong commitment to improving teaching and learning through sharing good practice. All teachers are assigned to a learning community that oversees the work of a particular group of subjects. Through this work, all teachers contribute to the development of schemes of work, promotion of good practice and improvement planning. These arrangements also encourage the sharing of leadership responsibilities and support professional development well.

Partnership working: Good

The school benefits from a broad range of partnerships that contribute well to pupils' learning and to their welfare and social development.

The school has strong relationships with the local community, and plays an active role, for example in its involvement in the Ely festival and through the public performances of the school choir. Pupils benefit from the regular visits of the fire service and the community police officer in raising pupils' awareness of personal safety and issues such as cyber bullying, alcohol and drug abuse.

There is effective liaison and communication with parents, which ensures that they are supportive and actively involved in the life and work of the school. The 'Friends of Pencaerau' organise fundraising events to raise money and provide additional funding for various projects and initiatives for the school, which have helped to improve facilities and enhance the learning environment. The school provides valuable opportunities for parents to improve their own skills through a range of educational courses.

There is also close liaison with cluster partner schools, for example as part of formal and informal learning communities and to support transition to the local secondary school.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its resources well.

Staff are well qualified and deployed thoughtfully to make best use of their expertise and experience. The headteacher gives particular attention to developing staff competencies, for example by ensuring that teachers work closely in partnership with more experienced colleagues. The emphasis on the sharing of leadership responsibilities has helped several teachers to gain valuable management experience.

Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is allocated carefully to enhance team working and effective lesson planning. The work of the committed and enthusiastic teaching assistants supports pupils' learning effectively.

The school manages its budgets carefully, for example in undertaking three-year budget forecasting. Resources are allocated appropriately in line with priorities identified in the school or subject development plans. The governing body maintains careful oversight of the school's accounts.

The school makes effective use of its resources to achieve good academic and social outcomes for its pupils and provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The percentage of pupils who reached the expected level (level 2) in oracy, reading and writing in English in key stage 1 in 2011 was above the average for schools in the local authority, for the family of similar schools and for all schools in Wales.

The percentage who reached the expected level in mathematics was above the average of the family of schools but below the average for schools in Wales. In science the average was below that of the family of schools and for schools in Wales.

The English results placed the school amongst the top 25% of similar schools in terms of the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school was in the upper 50% for mathematics and in the lower 50% for science.

The percentage exceeding the expected level (level 3 or above) in 2011 in key stage 1 was above the family of schools average but below all-Wales average in all subjects.

Over four years, key stage 1 results in English have been constantly above the averages for the family of schools and schools in Wales, and have been in the top 25% throughout. At level 3 there has been a slight downwards trend during the past two years, results having been above family, local authority and Wales averages until 2009-2010. However, the school's results remains above the family averages.

Performance in mathematics has been generally above the family average but below local authority and Wales averages since 2009-2010 at levels 2 and 3.

Performance in science was above family, local authority and Wales averages until 2010-2011. Performance at level 3 shows the same pattern but still remains above the family average.

The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in all subjects in key stage 2 in 2011 was above the average for schools in Wales and above the average for the results of the family of similar schools.

The school compares favourably in all subjects when benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school is amongst the top 25% in relation to performance in English, mathematics and science.

The percentage achieving beyond the expected level in 2011 in key stage 2 was above the family of schools average but below the all-Wales average in English and mathematics, but also below the family of schools average in science.

English results have been constantly above the family of schools average and similar to or above local authority and all-Wales averages at level 4. However, the results at level 5 have been above the family average but lower than local authority and Wales averages over four years.

In mathematics, the results have been above family, local authority and Wales averages throughout at level 4. At level 5, the results have been similar to or slightly above the family averages but constantly below local authority and all-Wales averages. Science results have been above the family, local authority and Wales averages at level 4 but below all at level 5 during the past two years.

There has been no significant trend in the differences between the results of boys and girls over a period of four years. However, in 2011 boys did not achieve as well as girls at levels 2 and 4, particularly in writing, whilst achieving better than girls at levels 3 and 5 in all subjects.

There are no significant differences in the data at the end of both key stages associated with specific groups of pupils, such as pupils who are entitled to free school meals, pupils with additional learning needs, or those to whom English is an additional language. On the whole, these pupils succeed in reaching levels that are commensurate with their ability and their starting points.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifty-eight responses were received. Each one states that their children have had support to settle in well in the school and that they are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.

Nearly all parents are satisfied with the school in general and of the opinion that their children are safe at school and that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. They feel that the school helps pupils to become more mature and that appropriate additional support is given when needed. They also believe that the school is well run and that the standard of teaching is good.

Almost all parents are of the opinion that pupils behave well. Nearly all are happy with the information that they receive about pupils' progress and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or problems.

Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and one learners from key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. All learners state that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that the teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress.

Nearly all say that there are many opportunities for them to take physical exercise regularly. They know where to turn for support when they are worried or finding the work difficult, and consider that the school deals well with any bullying. They also feel safe in school and believe that they are doing well.

A few pupils disagree that behaviour is good in the school.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Glyn Roberts HMI	Reporting Inspector
John Thomas HMI	Team Inspector
Buddug Bates	Team Inspector
Helen Adams	Lay Inspector
Lisa Greenhalgh	Peer Inspector
Helen Turner	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. FYear 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.