



*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**

**Pentre Church in Wales Controlled Primary School  
Pentre  
Chirk  
Wrexham  
LL14 5AW**

**Date of inspection: September 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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	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

Pentre Church in Wales Voluntary-Controlled Primary School is a small rural school in Wrexham, two miles east of Chirk and six miles south of Wrexham.

The school caters for pupils between three and 11 years of age. There are currently 75 children on roll organised into three classes covering the Foundation Phase, Years 3-4 and Years 5-6. Children enter the nursery during the September after their third birthday. The school also has early entitlement provision where children start the pre-school nursery in the term after their third birthday.

The school has identified 17% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is slightly below the national average for primary schools.

According to the school, pupils come from a range of social backgrounds that are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Just over 13% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below the local and national averages. Nearly all pupils are of white British ethnic origin and no pupil speaks Welsh as their first language. The school uses fixed term exclusions very rarely.

Since the last inspection in 2006, there have been significant changes to the senior management team with the appointment of a senior teacher in 2009 and the current headteacher in 2010.

The individual school budget per pupil for Pentre Church in Wales Voluntary-Controlled Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,589 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Wrexham is £8,569 and the minimum is £2,903. Pentre Church in Wales Voluntary-Controlled Primary School is 17th out of the 60 primary schools in Wrexham in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- most pupils make good progress and achieve well;
- pupils have high standards of wellbeing;
- the quality of care, support and guidance for all groups of pupils meets their needs;
- the overall quality of teaching is good; and
- behaviour is very good throughout the school.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision for the school and high expectations of pupils and staff, and she communicates these successfully;
- the school has broad and systematic self-evaluation procedures;
- the school improvement plan has clear and effective targets, which focus on raising standards and improving quality; and
- there is a good track record of improving standards.

## Recommendations

R1 Improve standards in Welsh.

R2 Raise standards achieved by more able pupils.

R3 Further develop the consistency of the development of pupils' skills in key stage 2.

R4 Strengthen the monitoring arrangements.

### What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it will address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Most pupils enter the school with skills similar or above those normally expected for pupils of their age. Nearly all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, generally make good progress as they move through the school.

Throughout the school, most pupils have well-developed speaking and listening skills. They speak confidently to adults and other children, ask thoughtful questions and use an increasingly wide vocabulary. Most pupils develop good phonic skills in Foundation Phase classes.

Nearly all pupils are enthusiastic readers and use their reading skills effectively and, by the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils read at an appropriate level. By the time they reach the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils read with good expression and fluency. They are able to access information quickly from different sources, with a small minority able to use the higher order skills of scanning and skimming effectively.

Many younger pupils in Foundation Phase show continuous development in terms of early writing skills. Most older Foundation Phase pupils can write at length, using a range of basic punctuation correctly and within a suitable range of written contexts. Pupils build well on these skills and, by the end of key stage 2, most pupils write accurately in a variety of different styles. However, very few pupils, especially the more able, write at length or use the breadth of vocabulary they use in their oral work. Nearly all pupils use their writing skills well across the curriculum for different purposes and for a wide range of audiences.

Pupils throughout the school generally apply their thinking, numeracy and information and communication skills well in a range of contexts.

When taking into account the linguistic background of the school, pupils are making limited progress in Welsh. Many are able to use everyday Welsh phrases in context. However, there is a lack of progression in the range of language patterns and vocabulary used by the pupils as they move through the school.

Due to the small number of pupils at the end of both key stages, the overall performance data for the school has to be treated with care because one pupil's results can have a significant impact on the overall data.

At the end of the Foundation Phase, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected outcome (Outcome 5) in personal and social development, language literacy and communication skills and mathematical development is slightly below the average achieved by pupils in other similar schools. The proportion achieving at the higher than expected outcome (Outcome 6) is slightly below the averages for similar schools.

At the end of key stage 2, there is a slight overall improvement in pupils' performance over the last three years. In 2012, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level (level 4) in English mathematics and science was just below local and national averages and of the average for other similar schools. Over the last two years, the school has managed to arrest the decline in the proportion of more able pupils achieving the higher than expected level (level 5).

In the Foundation Phase, fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level in language literacy and communication, mathematical development and personal and social development. In key stage, 2 fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level for 11-year-olds. These gaps are higher than the national averages but the cohort sizes are quite small.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work well independently or in groups or teams. In lessons, they begin work promptly, stay on task for long periods and take a real interest in what they do. Many pupils work hard at solving problems and have a good understanding of how to improve their work.

Standards of behaviour throughout the school are good. All pupils are polite and courteous and almost all show respect and care towards their peers. Older pupils look after the younger pupils very well. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and believe the school deals well with any bullying. The school council is well established and pupil councillors make a positive contribution to school life.

Nearly all pupils show a clear understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They know about healthy eating and many take regular exercise. Many pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular sporting and musical activities. Many pupils enjoy and benefit from community activities, such as the local church and fundraising activities.

The level of most pupils' attendance is good when compared to that of other similar schools and nearly all arrive on time for school. A few poor attenders have improved their attendance due to the positive action taken by the school.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Learning experiences offer stimulating opportunities for learning that make the most of pupils' experiences within and beyond the school. A particular strength is the way teachers and teaching assistants work, plan and deliver activities together in a highly efficient manner.

Curricular planning provides well for pupils' needs. Planning for the development of skills in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and communication skills in the Foundation Phase is a strong feature of the school. However planning for skills at key stage 2 lacks consistency and tasks do not challenge more able pupils enough. The school provides good support to pupils having difficulty in developing basic skills.

Provision for the development of the Welsh language is limited. While teachers practice and reinforce Welsh language patterns with pupils, the opportunities for pupils to use their language skills independently are at an early stage of development.

The wide variety of extra-curricular clubs and visits to places of interest enriches pupils' learning effectively, for example visits to Chirk Castle and Erddig. Pupils have many interesting opportunities to learn about their locality and also about Wales, its history and culture. Generally, homework builds appropriately on what pupils have learnt in lessons.

There is good provision for pupils to learn about sustainability and global citizenship. This helps pupils to understand the role they and others play in society and to learn more about the wider world. The eco committee leads this well in areas such as waste reduction, energy saving and recycling.

### **Teaching: Good**

The quality of teaching is generally good throughout the school and it is particularly effective in the Foundation Phase. Teachers and other adults have wide and detailed subject knowledge and use a suitable range of approaches and activities to promote learning. Teachers use adult support well in classes and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress.

Most teachers challenge pupils to achieve highly through the use of skilful questioning which promotes pupils' understanding. Teachers give pupils many valuable opportunities to develop their thinking skills. In the Foundation Phase, the emphasis placed on child-led learning is helping pupils to develop their independent learning skills well at an early age.

The school keeps parents and carers well informed about their children's achievements, wellbeing and development. Pupils' ability to evaluate their own performance is good and sometimes very good. In most cases, teachers provide suitable work to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with additional learning needs. However, more able pupils are not always challenged enough.

Procedures for assessment, recording and reporting meet statutory requirements and inform planning and teaching appropriately. The school's tracking system includes results from a variety of informative tests and the school analyses data on performance well.

Teachers use assessment for learning strategies effectively. Oral feedback to pupils enables them to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Highly effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing as well as to encourage their involvement in the school and wider community. Older pupils are particularly receptive and take on board the ideas and opinions of others and act as positive role models for the younger pupils. Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

Collective worship fully meets statutory requirements. Pupils are clear about values such as honesty, fairness and respect. Acts of collective worship have a positive impact on the behaviour and attitudes of all pupils.

The school work with other key agencies to reduce the risk of harm to pupils. Clearly-targeted support for groups of vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvement, for instance in pupils' attitudes, behaviour, confidence, achievement or relationships. The school identifies pupils' learning needs when they join and ensures that these needs are met. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good and it enables them to make good progress in relation to their individual education plan targets, which are carefully agreed. Reviews of progress are carried out termly with regular parental consultations.

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

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is a close, welcoming community with a very inclusive ethos. It provides equal opportunities to all and everyone shows a desire to help and support one another.

Most pupils develop tolerant attitudes which ensure staff and pupils are free from harassment. Nearly all pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and at break and lunch times. The school has well-attended breakfast and after-school clubs, which meet the needs and interests of the children.

The school buildings and grounds have been improved recently and now meet the needs of the current curriculum in full. The classrooms provide a clean, stimulating learning environment with colourful wall displays celebrating pupils' achievements. The school has a variety of good quality resources, which are well matched to pupils' needs.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The headteacher provides strong leadership and has supported the introduction of effective developments within the school. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school. This has led to improvement over the past two years. There is a positive working environment in the school where everyone works well together at all levels.

Roles are sensibly distributed and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Appropriate job descriptions are in place for all staff and lines of accountability are clear. Regular staff meetings provide good opportunities for all staff to contribute to the strategic direction of the school. Effective performance management arrangements for all staff are in place and link well to school development priorities.

The governing body fulfils its statutory obligations and supports the school well. Governors share the headteacher's vision for the school and have a good awareness of the school's current position and future priorities. A recent initiative is the introduction of 'governor of the month'. This is having a positive effect on the way in which the governing body collects information about the school. Consequently, governors provide a strong sense of direction and appropriately hold the school to account for the standards and quality it achieves.

The school has made appropriate progress in meeting local and national priorities, for example in the introduction of the Foundation Phase and the School Effectiveness Framework.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Self-evaluation procedures are well developed across the school. They involve all staff and draw on a wide range of first-hand evidence. Good account is taken of the views of all stakeholders and there is a shared ethos of reflection and improvement in the school. The comprehensive self-evaluation report is accurate and focuses well on end of key stage outcomes and the progress pupils make. It identifies strengths and ways forward and links closely to the priorities identified in the School Development Plan. The plan is a useful document and provides clear targets for improvement, which are appropriately linked to costs and staff training.

The headteacher uses performance data well to monitor progress and to plan for improvement. Other monitoring activities, such as lesson observations and book scrutiny, are more informal and less effective.

The headteacher actively promotes the engagement of staff in increasing their professional skills.

There is a high level of teamwork and the school is growing as a learning community as a result. The school is an active member of the cluster of local primary schools and has taken the lead within the cluster on child led learning in the Foundation phase and learner profiles at the end of key stage 2. This has had a positive impact on teachers' understanding of the levelling and moderation process.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school plays a pivotal role within its community and encourages close partnership working with parents. Parents and visitors regularly make a positive contribution to enriching pupils' experiences both in school and in the local community. The provision for children's early pre-school education is well supported by parents within the school setting. There are good arrangements with the local playgroup which facilitates children's transfer to the school's early entitlement class and nursery.

The school actively develops strategic partnerships with local businesses, which have resulted in the school being able to refurbish the library and areas of the mobile class rooms. Effective links exist with initial teacher training providers and with local colleges.

Good transition and moderation arrangements are in place with the local high school. This ensures continuity in learning and wellbeing for pupils transferring to the next stage of their education. Partnerships with other local schools and the local authority are good.

**Resource management: Good**

The school manages its budget efficiently and, overall, the school uses its resources well. Spending decisions link clearly to priorities within the school development plan. There are sufficient suitably-qualified staff, who are deployed appropriately, to teach the curriculum effectively.

The provision for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is managed well. There are effective arrangements to support the professional development of all staff.

The school accommodation is well ordered and managed. Although the buildings are beginning to show their age, the working environment for pupils and staff has improved over recent years. This has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and staff morale. The addition of a new library has also improved pupils' enjoyment of reading.

In view of the good outcomes achieved by most pupils and the good quality of provision overall, the school provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Pentre Church In Wales Primary School is the fourth most challenged school in its family of schools (a group of schools with similar characteristics).

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

In the Foundation Phase, 73% of pupils achieved the Foundation Phase indicator at the expected level (Foundation Phase Outcome 5) in personal and social development, language literacy and communication skills and mathematical development. In language literacy and communication skills and mathematical development, pupils' performance placed the school in the bottom 25% of similar schools in 2012. However, pupils' performance in personal and social development placed the school in the top 25% of similar schools. As this is the first cohort to be assessed on Foundation Phase outcomes, there is no data available to comment on trends in performance over three years.

The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher than expected level (Foundation Phase Outcome 6) is slightly below the family averages. Performance at this higher level placed the school in the bottom 30% of schools within the family in 2012.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance over the last five years has been inconsistent when compared with that of pupils in other similar schools. However, there is a slight overall trend of improvement in performance over the last three years.

In 2012, 80% of the pupils achieved the expected level (level 4) in the core subject indicator English, mathematics and science). This was below the average for other schools in the same family

Over the last two years, the school has managed to arrest the decline in the number of more able pupils achieving the higher than expected level (level 5). The school now performs on or just below the average for similar schools.

In the Foundation Phase, fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level in language literacy and communication, mathematical development and personal and social development in 2012. In key stage 2, fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level for 11-year-olds.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Learner questionnaires

There were 50 responses to the learner questionnaire.

All pupils say they feel safe in school that they have someone to turn to if they have any concerns. The school deals well with bullying and as a result all pupils state they are doing well at school. All pupils think that teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress and all know whom to talk to if they find their work hard.

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

All pupils think that other pupils behave well in class, but a minority feel that children do not behave well at break times.

The views of pupils are slightly better than the views of pupils in other primary schools in Wales.

#### Parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received (fewer than 10).

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Peter Roach	Reporting Inspector
Lowri Evans	Team Inspector
Peter Haworth	Lay Inspector
Catrin Foulkes	Peer Inspector
Alison Heale	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://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.