



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

**Pil Primary School
Pyle Inn Way
Bridgend
Mid Glamorgan
CF33 6AB**

Date of inspection: January 2012

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

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

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Context

Pil Primary School is situated in the village of Pyle, which is in the Bridgend local authority. The school describes much of the area it serves as economically disadvantaged with considerable levels of social deprivation.

There are 231 pupils aged three to eleven years in the school. Pupils are organised into nine classes, one of which contains pupils of mixed ages. There is also a class of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and a few of these come from outside the school catchment area. A number of Gypsy and Traveller children, 25 at present, attend the school and come from a near-by site in the neighbouring local authority area.

Approximately 48% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly above the local authority and the all-Wales averages. Around 15% of pupils come from an ethnic minority background, which is higher than the local authority average of 10%. No pupils are natural Welsh speakers. Eleven pupils are in the care of the local authority. The school has identified 28 pupils with additional learning needs but, in line with local authority policy, none receive a statement of special educational needs. Three pupils have been temporarily excluded in the twelve months prior to the inspection with an additional pupil subject to a 'managed move' to another school.

Since the last inspection in 2006, the senior leadership of the school has changed. There was an acting headteacher and deputy headteacher from September 2008 to December 2010. The newly appointed headteacher took up his post a year ago and the newly appointed deputy headteacher joined the school in May 2011.

The individual school budget per pupil for Pil Primary School in 2011-2012 is £3,284 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Bridgend is £5,486 and the minimum is £2,737. Pil Primary School is 17th out of the 52 primary schools in Bridgend in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of Pil Primary School is judged as adequate because:

- a majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points;
- most pupils behave very well in classes and around the school;
- the level of care, support and guidance provided to pupils is good; and
- the overall quality of teaching is good.

However:

- pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science has often not compared well with that of pupils in other similar schools, in particular, at the higher levels; and
- standards in pupils' writing and spelling are still in need of improvement.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement in Pil Primary School are judged as good because:

- the school is well led and leaders have high expectations;
- since his recent appointment the new headteacher has achieved a great deal;
- there is a sound process for self-evaluation; and
- targets for school improvement are focused appropriately on raising standards and improving quality.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 improve standards in writing and spelling across the school and the level of challenge for more able pupils;
- R2 disseminate best practice to ensure a consistently high standard of teaching and assessment in all classes;
- R3 ensure that the curriculum contains an appropriate progression of skills;
- R4 further develop provision for outdoor learning for pupils in the Foundation Phase;
- R5 strengthen the role of governors in challenging the school; and
- R6 make sure all relevant pupils attend daily acts of collective worship.

What happens next?

Pil 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

In key stage 1 in 2011, the performance of pupils was in the second quarter but has been consistently below the average for the family of schools over the last four years. Although pupils' performance at the higher level (level 3) is improving in English and mathematics it does not compare well with that of pupils in other similar schools. In addition, significantly fewer pupils achieve the higher level in writing than in oracy or reading.

In key stage 2 in 2011, the performance of pupils improved slightly. Over the last four years, the performance of pupils has remained in the 1st or 2nd quarters but has generally been below the family, local authority and all-Wales averages. Pupils' performance at the higher level (level 5) in all subjects does not compare well with that of pupils in other similar schools.

Most pupils work well together in pairs or in groups. They generally respond well to tasks set and to questions posed by their teachers and other adults. A majority of pupils make good progress in relation to their age and ability.

Most pupils listen well and many speak confidently in a wide range of situations. The majority of pupils read competently for their age and are able to discuss the content of their books enthusiastically. They generally apply these skills effectively to tasks across the curriculum but, by the end of key stage 2, only a few pupils write well at length. In addition, many pupils throughout the school spell a range of common words incorrectly and do not have a secure grasp of punctuation.

Nearly all pupils with additional learning needs, including those with moderate learning difficulties, achieve in line with their ability. Pupils who receive free school meals and Gypsy and Traveller pupils generally do not achieve as well as other pupils of a similar age. In addition, the performance of boys is much worse than that of girls and in oracy and writing significantly fewer boys than girls achieve well. However, when the performance of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is taken into account, the difference is much less significant.

Most pupils make appropriate progress in gaining skills in the Welsh language. They achieve well in their structured lessons and listen and respond appropriately to greetings and general instructions. Pupils' awareness of the Welsh culture and heritage is developing well but their ability to use Welsh outside the classroom is limited.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel safe in the school and most consider they are well protected from oppressive behaviour. They are also well aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to maintain it. Through regular contacts with police, the fire service

and health workers, pupils have a good understanding of the potential danger from strangers, hazardous substances and the internet.

Attendance has been below 89% for the last three years, but a significant increase in the current year has seen this rise to just over 91% which is just below the average for similar schools. Most pupils arrive punctually in the mornings although a very few are regularly late.

Most pupils behave very well in classes and around the school. They are courteous and polite and generally interested in their work. Pupils' views are sought and valued but generally their opportunities to influence what and how they learn are limited. However, pupils benefit from their involvement in making decisions about how to improve the school accommodation. For example, they have organised events to raise money for an adventure trail in the playground. Members of the school council feel their views are listened to and valued and they have been involved in the selection processes for new staff.

Older pupils enjoy their work as helpers, monitors, playground peacemakers and house captains and they take these responsibilities seriously.

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

Most teachers provide a good range of interesting and relevant learning experiences for pupils. Staff generally collaborate well to ensure that the full range of National Curriculum subjects are taught and that pupils are able to build their knowledge and understanding systematically.

Pupils' learning is effectively extended with a good range of extra-curricular activities, for example sporting activities, Welsh club, choir, 'fit and funky' club and creative club for younger pupils. These activities are well attended and are having a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing and their enjoyment of school.

Arrangements for ensuring that pupils develop the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in all areas of the curriculum are in place. However, these arrangements are not yet refined enough to ensure that specific skills are acquired in a progressive and ordered way throughout the school. The school has identified those pupils who are more able and talented but has yet to develop its provision to fully meet their needs and to challenge them appropriately.

Provision for the Welsh language is good. Most teachers use Welsh consistently and enthusiastically. Pupils receive sound experiences that help them understand the cultural, historic and linguistic characteristics of Wales. Recent examples include visits to the National Museum of Wales, the local Welsh chapel and participation in an annual Cymanfa Ganu event in Porthcawl. However, in a few classes, work on Welsh culture and traditions is not developed enough.

There are appropriate arrangements for the promotion of sustainable development and global citizenship. For example, each year group has a whole school

responsibility for specific aspects of sustainability such as recycling, composting and collecting waste paper. However, provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship is not embedded across the curriculum.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is good or better. In the best classes, teachers provide very challenging activities for pupils giving them a wide and relevant range of opportunities to interact effectively with others in pairs and groups.

In most classes, teachers share clear learning objectives and success criteria effectively with pupils. They adapt their lessons well and use a variety of strategies to meet the range of pupils' needs. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils, provide clear timescales and motivate pupils to complete their work. However, in a minority of classes, the more able pupils are not challenged enough.

Teachers generally make effective use of a good range of resources to enhance and support their teaching. In a few classes, teachers use exciting up-to-date resources such as electronic 'speech bubbles' to stimulate and motivate pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support specific individuals or groups of pupils.

The school generally has appropriate forms of assessment that provide staff with clear evidence of the standards pupils achieve in order for them to measure progress. All pupils' work is marked thoroughly but in a few classes marking does not always indicate what the next steps in pupils' learning should be.

End of year reports provide parents with a good overview of their children's progress in all aspects of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to make their own comments on the progress their children have made. These reports also suggest future targets that help pupils improve their work. Formal consultation meetings between teachers and parents are held at least twice a year and other opportunities exist for parents to meet with teachers less formally.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness is developed appropriately in lessons, through the wide range of relevant extra-curricular activities and during acts of collective worship. However, on a few occasions, a small group of pupils hold meetings during assembly times.

The school has good arrangements for supporting pupils' health and wellbeing and most are confident of having someone to talk to if they have a concern. The school also has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour and attendance and these are having a very positive impact throughout the school.

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

The school makes effective use of a wide range of specialist services to enhance the support and guidance it provides for pupils. These include effective support from educational psychologists, behaviour support teams, inclusion teams and the mental

health service. In addition, the fire service and local health teams regularly provide interesting lessons to pupils on a variety of relevant topics.

Pupils who have additional learning needs are identified early and given well-planned and targeted support, both in class and in withdrawal groups. Detailed individual education plans ensure that the work provided for these pupils matches their needs. Effectively targeted work for pupils with moderate learning difficulties ensures they make appropriate progress and achieve well in terms of their ability.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a fully inclusive community. It deals very well with the individual needs of pupils while ensuring they are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.

The well-maintained school buildings and grounds generally meet the needs of pupils well. There have been some particularly effective additions made to the school accommodation during the last year. The new reading support room has been particularly successful in providing additional space for pupils. Outdoor provision for nursery pupils has been improved with the addition of raised flower beds, a play house and a paved path. However, outdoor provision for other pupils in the Foundation phase is not yet developed well enough.

There is generally a good supply of learning resources which is well appreciated by pupils. Recent additions to resources include a new reading scheme and new white board projectors in each classroom.

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

The headteacher provides a clear vision for the school and since his recent appointment he has achieved a great deal. He and the new deputy-headteacher have high expectations and work together well to secure improvements in provision and standards. Revised roles and responsibilities of staff and effective senior management team and staff meetings contribute well to the school's focus on raising standards. In addition, the introduction of a recent performance management structure for all staff is beginning to have an impact on improving quality.

Governors are enthusiastic and very supportive of the school, and recently have made some difficult decisions. They know about the performance of pupils and how a variety of local factors can affect this performance. They are also generally aware of how pupils' performance compares with the performance of pupils in other similar schools. However, governors' involvement in reviewing policies regularly and challenging the school is not yet firmly enough established.

The school is making appropriate progress in introducing initiatives that meet local and national priorities such as the Foundation Phase and improving reading. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

Improving quality: Good

The school's self-evaluation process is developing well. Evidence of the school's strengths and areas for development is based on a good range of first-hand evidence. This evidence includes an analysis of the performance of pupils, observations of teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and seeking the views of teachers, pupils and parents.

The outcomes of the self-evaluation process are used to determine targets for school improvement. These are focused appropriately on raising standards and improving quality. The school is making good progress in achieving a few of these targets with clear evidence in most classes of improvements in teaching and assessment.

A culture of collaboration and good teamwork is beginning to develop in the school and this is helping it grow as a reflective learning community. Teachers are beginning to share good practice with others across the school. There is also good involvement of support staff in key areas of development, for example a recent reading initiative. Staff also collaborate well with other local primary schools and the local secondary school to enhance their professional knowledge of particular subjects, for example literacy and education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

Partnership working: Good

Overall, the school has a good range of strong partnerships. Relationships with parents are good and they appreciate the ease with which they can approach the school. Recent home-school link books have strengthened the partnership between school and parents by involving them more directly in their children's learning.

The school benefits from very close working relationships with a wide range of services which support effectively pupils with additional learning needs. Links with the community and voluntary organisations are good.

Effective arrangements are in place for pupils' transition to the local comprehensive school. Teachers work well with their cluster of schools to share good practice and to produce portfolios of work to moderate and agree the levels awarded to pupils' work.

The school provides good support for trainees from colleges who are gaining work experience or who are training to be teachers. This support is highly valued by the trainees and their colleges. The school deploys trainees well to support pupils' outcomes.

Resource management: Adequate

There is a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff and these are deployed effectively. The school is beginning to identify and meet the needs of all staff through its performance management procedures. There are appropriate arrangements for the provision of planning, preparation and assessment time for all teachers.

The school accommodation is very well ordered and managed. The school identifies and allocates resources appropriately in line with the priorities identified in its school improvement plan. Recent spending on school security, accommodation, reading materials and information and communication technology equipment has been well targeted and is having a very positive impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

In view of the outcomes achieved by most of the pupils, the standard of care, support and guidance provided, and the efficient management of the budget, the school overall provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In key stage 1, pupils' performance in the core subject indicator, the expected level in English, mathematics and science, for the last four years has consistently remained in the 1st or 2nd quarters. In 2011, 79% of pupils achieved the expected level (level 2) in all three core subjects. However, pupils' performance over the last four years in reading, writing and mathematics has been consistently below the family, local authority and all-Wales averages.

Although pupils' performance at the higher level (level 3) is improving in English and mathematics it does not compare well with that of pupils in other similar schools. In science, pupils' performance at the higher level is the worst in the family of schools. In addition, significantly fewer pupils achieve the higher level in writing than in oracy or reading.

In key stage 2 in 2011, the performance of pupils improved slightly with 80% of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science, which is generally in line with the performance of pupils in other similar schools.

Over the last four years, the performance of pupils has remained in the 1st or 2nd quarters. However, the combined performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is below the family, local authority and all-Wales averages.

In key stage 2, the performance of boys is much worse than that of girls and in oracy and writing 40% fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level. Pupils' performance at the higher level (level 5) in all subjects does not compare well with that of pupils in other similar schools.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

One hundred and eleven pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire fully. Inspectors also talked to individual pupils and representative groups of pupils across the school. Nearly all pupils think that teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress and pupils know who to talk to if they find their work hard. In addition, most pupils know who to talk to if they are worried or upset. As a result, all pupils state that they feel safe in school and most feel that they are doing well.

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

Most pupils feel that the school deals well with bullying and children behave well at break and lunchtimes. A very few pupils feel that the behaviour of others interferes with their work in class.

Overall, many of these views are in line with or better than the views of pupils in other schools across Wales. Pupils in Pil Primary School are much more positive about behaviour in the school than other pupils generally in Wales.

Parent questionnaires

Six parents attended the parents' meeting and sixty-two parents completed the questionnaires. Overall, most parents feel the school is well run and all express a great deal of satisfaction with the school.

All parents state that their children were helped to settle into school when they first started. All feel that their children like school and are happy and safe there. All parents feel that teaching is good and children are expected to work hard. As a result, nearly all feel their children are making good progress. Most parents feel their children are becoming more mature and taking on responsibilities and all feel their children are encouraged to be healthy. All parents feel there is a good range of activities in school and that homework given is appropriate. Most also feel that their children are treated fairly and receive enough additional support with their individual learning needs. As a result, most parents state that children are well prepared to move on to their next school.

Most parents state that school staff are approachable if they have concerns or questions and they are well informed about their children's progress. Nearly all parents feel that children behave well in school. Many parents are clear about what to do if they need to raise issues with the school or to make a complaint.

Many of these views are more positive than the views of parents in other schools across Wales. Parents in Pil Primary School are much more positive about the homework their children are given and about the information they get from the school on their children's progress.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mike Maguire	Reporting Inspector
Chris Dolby	Team Inspector
Edward Tipper	Lay Inspector
Robert Purchase	Peer Inspector
Neil Pryce (Headteacher)	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.