



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

**Rhos Street C.P. School
Rhos Street
Rhuthin
Denbighshire
LL15 1DY**

Date of inspection: March 2013

by

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



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

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

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

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

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

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

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:

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Context

Rhos Street Community Primary School is situated in Ruthin and shares a site with a Welsh medium primary school. Pupils are from a wide range of backgrounds and live in the town and the surrounding villages.

The school caters for pupils between the ages of three and 11. Currently, 169 pupils attend the school, including 13 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Pupil numbers have fallen since the last inspection. The school is organised into eight single-age classes. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language and a very few pupils receive support for English as an additional language. Fourteen per cent of pupils come from an ethnic-minority community.

Eight per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is lower than the local authority and all-Wales averages. The school has identified 9% of pupils as having additional learning needs and a few pupils have a statement of special educational need.

The school shares several facilities with the Welsh medium school, including a computer room, hall, canteen and field. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are taught in a building separated from the main school by the playing field.

The headteacher has been in post since April 2009 and the school was last inspected in February 2007.

The individual school budget per pupil for Rhos Street Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,810 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Denbighshire is £9,659 and the minimum is £3,064. Rhos Street Primary School is 36th out of the 52 primary schools in Denbighshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The overall judgement of the school's current performance is good because:

- nearly all pupils achieve good standards in many aspects of their work and many pupils who are more able achieve very well;
- teaching effectively engages and challenges pupils;
- pupils are well behaved, confident and eager to learn; and
- the school provides good care and support for all pupils, including those with additional needs.

Prospects for improvement

The school has excellent prospects for improvement because:

- the senior managers and governors have a very clear vision for the school, which is underpinned by exceptionally effective planning for improvement;
- the headteacher provides very strong leadership and is well supported by an effective senior management team;
- the school continually evaluates the impact of new initiatives through rigorous monitoring;
- the clear focus on improvements is having a very positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve; and
- the school has made very good progress since the last inspection.

Recommendations

R1 Improve the standard of boys' writing

R2 Ensure that pupils use their knowledge of the Welsh language throughout the school day

R3 Improve pupils' attendance

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will invite the school to prepare a written case study, describing the excellent practice identified during the inspection.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

Pupils represent the full range of ability, with attainment on entry close to the local average. The achievement and progress of nearly all pupils in lessons are good. Nearly all pupils have a sound recall of their previous learning and build on their skills progressively as they move through the school.

Pupils' communication skills develop well across the school. Nearly all pupils listen carefully and respond to questions with good understanding. Key stage 2 pupils contribute well to discussions, with carefully considered ideas. Pupils in the Foundation Phase use a wide range of vocabulary related to their class topic and key stage 2 pupils use subject specific language with good understanding.

Nearly all pupils in the Foundation Phase make good progress in developing their reading skills. All pupils handle books well and most pupils talk enthusiastically about books they have read and their favourite authors. The more able pupils read challenging texts with confidence and accuracy. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts, and explain clearly how to locate information in non-fiction books. By the end of key stage 2 most pupils are confident readers. They read with fluency and expression, paying good attention to punctuation.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils' writing develops well and by the end of the phase many pupils write independently and with increasing fluency. Most pupils in key stage 2 make good progress in developing the content of their writing. They produce lively and interesting pieces of written work, including poetry and persuasive writing. As they move through the school, most pupils make good progress in developing spelling skills and the use of punctuation. They make good use of information sources to develop their use of descriptive language. The boys do not always make as much progress as the girls in developing their writing skills.

All pupils use their literacy skills well to support their work across the curriculum.

Across key stage 2 the more able pupils frequently achieve very good standards in English and mathematics. Pupils identified with additional learning needs achieve well against the targets in their individual education plans and good progress is made by pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Most pupils achieve good standards in Welsh during formal lessons. However, many pupils do not make sufficient use of their Welsh language skills throughout the school day.

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012, results were above the family average in all areas of learning. Rhos Street Primary is the most challenged school in the family group. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, results for nearly all areas of learning at the expected level (outcome

5) and at outcome 6 placed it in the highest 25%. Results for mathematical development at outcome 5 placed the school in the higher 50%.

Results at the end of key stage 2 have shown continuous improvement over the last four years in English and mathematics at the expected level, (level 4). The proportion of pupils who achieved level 4 in science was high in 2009 and dipped slightly in 2010, before recovering in 2012. Results at level 5 have risen in all subjects.

At the end of key stage 2 in 2012, results were above the family average in all subjects. When compared to similar schools on the basis of the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 4 or higher placed the school in the higher 50% for all subjects. Results for English and mathematics at level 5 placed it in the highest 25%.

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils develop a secure understanding of how to keep healthy and safe as they move through the school. They feel safe in school and know whom to approach if they have any problems. Pupils show respect and consideration for each other and have a positive attitude to school life. The standard of behaviour in classes and around the school is good.

During lessons, nearly all pupils are enthusiastic, well-motivated learners who concentrate well on tasks and enjoy their learning. Most pupils have an input into what and how they learn. Pupils are actively involved in setting their own targets. They understand what to do in lessons and can evaluate their progress against specific objectives with maturity. This is a notable feature amongst older pupils.

Nearly all pupils arrive at school punctually. Attendance has fallen slightly in the last three years from 95% to 94%. When compared to that of similar schools, attendance was in the highest 25% in 2011 but in the lower 50% in 2012.

Nearly all pupils make good progress in developing their social and life skills. They display pride in their school and its achievements. Pupils regularly carry out a range of responsibilities in class and in the wider life of the school with confidence and maturity. Pupils' awareness of the local community is developing well and they take an active part in community affairs. They participate in a wide range of local activities, such as working closely with the community to reduce the speed limit outside the school.

The school council meet regularly to discuss issues, make decisions and report the outcomes to the other pupils. They have a significant impact on improvements in the school. For example, they have played a leading role in developing provision for pupils at playtimes.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides a wide range of challenging and interesting learning that provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. The school meets the needs of different groups of learners effectively. Foundation Phase pupils make good use of the outdoor environment, which impacts positively on their learning. Provision for more able pupils in English and mathematics is exceptional. High quality, innovative arrangements are leading to very positive outcomes.

The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance the learning experiences of pupils. A wide range of extra-curricular activities contribute effectively to the school's overall provision.

Teachers plan relevant and interesting activities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills (ICT) across the curriculum. They ensure that pupils build their skills in an ordered and progressive way as they move through the school.

There is good provision to develop Welsh language skills through formal lessons. However, the use of incidental Welsh to promote the language in informal situations is inconsistent. The inclusion of the Welsh dimension across the curriculum is good, with a wide range of opportunities provided for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the celebrations, history and culture of Wales.

The school provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to learn about sustainability and global citizenship.

Teaching: Good

All teaching is good or better. Teachers in all classes plan lessons with clear learning objectives and share these with pupils, so that pupils understand the purpose of the activities. They use a wide range of teaching strategies effectively and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills. Teachers plan work that is carefully matched to the ability levels of the pupils and builds well on their previous experience. Teachers and support staff work well together in all classes. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. A few examples of excellent teaching provide high quality learning experiences that very effectively engage and challenge pupils.

Staff assess pupils' progress regularly in all classes. They use the school's tracking system effectively to identify how well pupils are achieving and to plan for the next steps in their learning.

The process of setting targets for pupils is well established and has a positive impact on the standards that they achieve. Staff give pupils good oral feedback during lessons and provide clear guidance to pupils on how to improve through the marking of work. The involvement of pupils in assessing their own work and that of others is consistently and very effectively developed as pupils move through the school.

Reports to parents are comprehensive and provide clear information on the progress pupils are making.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring and welcoming community where staff place a high emphasis on the wellbeing of their pupils. There are good arrangements in place to develop pupils' understanding of wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. Pupils learn how to keep safe and there are effective strategies to encourage good behaviour.

Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school encourages pupils to work well with each other and to show respect, care and concern for others.

Positive relationships between staff and pupils are evident across the school. Members of staff know pupils well and use this knowledge to provide high quality support and guidance for each individual. The school liaises effectively with specialist agencies to access valuable support for pupils. Staff ensure that the information received from support services impacts positively on the learning experiences of pupils.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is strong. Staff identify any pupils with additional needs effectively at an early stage. The school provides well-planned, targeted support for them through a wide range of programmes. Targets in individual education plans are specific, and clearly address each pupil's needs. Efficient systems are in place to monitor and assess progress. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with additional needs.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school succeeds in operating as an inclusive community where everyone receives respect. It places a clear emphasis on recognising and celebrating diversity and promotes equal opportunities well. The school regularly reminds pupils in assemblies and in discussions of the importance of treating each other with care and consideration. There are rigorous policies and procedures in place to deal with the infrequent instances of unacceptable behaviour.

The school site and buildings are clean and well maintained. Displays in classes and around the school are attractive and informative. There are enough books, equipment and computers to support the curriculum. Resources are of good quality and appropriately matched to pupils' needs.

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

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He works very effectively with the senior management team and governors to provide a clear vision and strategic

direction for the school. Senior managers use data effectively to identify areas for improvement, both for individuals and specific groups of pupils. They set specific targets for improvement which are prioritised and clearly understood by all staff. They continually and rigorously monitor progress against the targets and consistently communicate high expectations to staff and pupils. All staff have clear roles and responsibilities. They understand their roles well and work effectively as a close team. The impact of strong leadership is evident in the continuous improvement in pupil outcomes.

Senior managers have appropriate arrangements in place for the performance management of staff. They ensure that targets are linked to priorities in the school development plan and identify professional development needs for all staff.

The governors have a good understanding of their role in supporting the school. They have a thorough understanding of the school's performance data and use this information to evaluate the effectiveness of new initiatives. The governors challenge and support the school appropriately and fulfil their statutory duties well.

The school addresses local and national priorities well. For example, it currently places particular emphasis on ensuring that the boys achieve as well as the girls, and on improving the literacy and numeracy skills of all pupils. The school's work on these priorities is having a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve.

Improving quality: Excellent

The school has developed very thorough self-evaluation procedures and uses them effectively to secure improvement. The process of self-evaluation is securely based on the school's performance data and the outcomes of rigorous monitoring. The school takes very good account of the views of stakeholders, such as governors, parents and pupils, through formal meetings, questionnaires and the school council. The self-evaluation report is concise and accurate and clearly identifies areas where improvements are needed.

Senior managers ensure that there are clear links between the self-evaluation report and priorities for improvement. There are clear priorities and challenging targets for improvement identified in the school development plan. Teachers have worked with senior managers to identify a target for each class, linked to the main whole-school target. All staff and pupils are aware of their respective targets and this contributes exceptionally well towards the overall effectiveness of the school development plan. The strong focus on improving standards is an excellent feature of the school.

Staff work together well to share good practice and resources within the school and with other providers. This has ensured that new initiatives, such as raising standards of mathematics among those pupils who are more able, are shared with other providers.

The school has successfully addressed all the areas for development identified in the previous inspection and the strategies implemented are having a very positive impact on pupil attainment. For example, the challenge for more able pupils is now impacting on the end of key stage results and the involvement of pupils in the assessment process is a strength of the school.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a wide range of partners, which has a beneficial effect on pupils.

The school has a strong partnership with parents and they are extremely positive about all aspects of school life. Comprehensive newsletters and an informative website help keep parents well informed. The school works closely with parents and work in the areas of home/school diaries and guidance for homework has had a positive impact on standards.

Staff work in close co-operation with local schools. This enables, for example, the school to ensure that standards of work are assessed accurately and aspects of specialist support are used to best effect. It also ensures greater consistency, provides an opportunity to share good practice and helps develop expertise linked to specific areas of learning and the school targets.

Senior managers work effectively with the adjoining school to ensure that best use is made of joint resources and facilities, which benefits pupils in both schools. For example, the shared use of a computer suite and performance room ensures that the available accommodation is well used. Detailed transition plans and joint activities support pupils' smooth transition to the secondary school.

The school liaises well with many external support agencies within the local authority, health and social services.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its finances well. It links its budget clearly to priorities in the school development plan and governors monitor expenditure carefully. Senior managers continually review the impact of resources on the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes. The use of shared resources contributes towards improving standards.

The school deploys teaching and support staff well. It makes good use of the experience and expertise of staff which enables them to contribute effectively towards the delivery of the curriculum and other activities. Senior managers use performance management procedures to identify appropriate opportunities for the development and training of all staff. There is a comprehensive range of learning resources and the school manages these well.

In view of the good standards achieved by the pupils, the school gives good value for money

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012, results were above the family and all-Wales averages in all areas of learning. Rhos Street Primary is the most challenged school in the family group. All pupils achieved at least outcome 5 in personal, social, wellbeing and cultural diversity. The proportion of pupils who achieved outcome 6 in mathematical development was the highest in the family group and results in the other areas of learning placed the school second in the family.

When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, results for nearly all areas of learning at the expected level (outcome 5) and at outcome 6, placed the school in the highest 25%. Results for mathematical development at outcome 5 placed it in the higher 50%.

Results at the end of key stage 2 have shown continuous improvement over the last four years in English and mathematics at the expected level (level 4). The proportion of pupils who achieved level 4 in science was high in 2009, dipped slightly in 2010, before recovering in 2012. At the higher level (level 5), results have risen in all subjects.

At the end of key stage 2 in 2012, results were above the family and all-Wales averages in all subjects. The proportions of pupils who achieved level 4 or above in the core subject indicator (CSI) and English were the highest in the family. Results at level 4 and above in mathematics were the third highest in the family and science results were fifth.

When compared to similar schools, results for English placed the school in the highest 25% and results in science placed it in the higher 50%. The proportion of pupils who achieved level 4 or above in mathematics placed the school in the higher 50%, with results at level 5 in the highest 25%.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Eighty-six pupils completed the questionnaire.

Nearly all pupils think that they are doing well at school. They feel safe in school and know whom to talk to if they feel worried or upset. Nearly all pupils feel that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and they say there are lots of chances at school to get regular exercise. They think that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

All pupils agree that teachers and other adults in school help them to learn and make progress. They know what to do and whom to ask if they find their work hard. Most feel that homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school. Nearly all pupils think that the school deals well with bullying. Most pupils agree that all children behave well at playtime and lunch time. A minority do not think that other children behave well so that they can get on with their work.

Pupils' responses to all questions are more positive than the views of pupils in other schools across Wales.

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifty-nine parents completed the questionnaire.

Nearly all parents expressed overall satisfaction with the school. They feel that their child was helped to settle in school when they started school. They say that their child likes school and is making good progress. Nearly all parents think that teaching is good and that staff expect children to work hard and do their best. They feel that their child is safe in school and agree that all staff treat children fairly and with respect. Most parents feel they are well informed about their child's progress.

Nearly all parents agree that children receive appropriate additional support in relation to any particular needs. They think that there is a good range of activities including trips and visits. They agree that their child is encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise. They think that the homework that is given builds well on what children learn in school.

Nearly all parents think that the school is well run. They say that children behave well in school and agree that the school helps children to become more mature and take responsibility. They feel that their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school. bNearly all parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem. Most parents understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Overall, parents' responses are more positive than the views of parents in other schools across Wales.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Jane Williams	Reporting Inspector
William Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
Peter Howarth	Lay Inspector
Jacqueline O'Toole	Peer Inspector
Bryn Jones	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

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

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms – Primary

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

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

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

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

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

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

The core subject indicator (CSI)

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

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

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

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

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

All-Wales Core Data sets

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

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

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