



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

**St Anne's Catholic Primary School
Prince Charles Road
Wrexham
LL13 8TH**

Date of inspection: January 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.

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Context

St Anne's Catholic Primary school is a voluntary aided school in Caia Park, on the outskirts of Wrexham, and is maintained by Wrexham local authority. Most pupils live on the local estate and the school's catchment area is recognised as being economically deprived.

The area is predominantly English speaking, but 34% of pupils have English as an additional language. In addition, about 11% of pupils are from the Gypsy and Traveller community. Seven per cent of pupils come from an ethnic-minority community. One hundred and eighty-four pupils attend the school, including 20 who attend nursery on a part-time basis. Pupil numbers have increased slightly over the past few years. The school is organised into 8 classes, including a resourced unit for pupils with additional learning needs.

Forty-seven per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is substantially higher than the local authority and all-Wales averages. The school identifies around 42% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, which is higher than the local authority average. A very few pupils have a statement of special needs.

The individual budget per pupil for St Anne's Catholic Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,826 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the Primary Schools in Wrexham is £10,422 and the minimum is £2,923. St Anne's Catholic Primary School is 18th out of the 60 Primary Schools in Wrexham 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 the school is adequate because:

- most pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress during their time at the school;
- teachers know their pupils well, they plan interesting learning activities for them and monitor their progress carefully;
- nearly all pupils behave well and exhibit a high level of respect for fellow pupils and staff, which enables them to make the best use of learning opportunities;
- strong partnerships with parents have a positive impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing; and
- the school's strong community, sense of purpose and inclusive ethos underpin all aspects of school life, and contribute significantly to raising the aspirations and improving outcomes of all pupils.

However:

- the school's performance has regularly been in the lower 50% when compared with that of similar schools over the last four years; and
- attendance rates are below expected levels.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- senior leaders work well as a team to ensure good outcomes for all pupils relative to their age and ability;
- the staff share a strong commitment to continuous improvement;
- the school's self-evaluation is accurate;
- there is detailed planning and a strong track-record of delivering improvements; and
- there are strong partnerships with specialist services, which have a positive impact on standards.

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to raise pupils' standards in end of key stage assessments
- R2 Provide better opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning
- R3 Ensure consistency in the marking of work so that pupils are more aware of what needs to be done to improve their work
- R4 Develop the role of the governing body so that they provide challenge as well as support to the school
- R5 Improve attendance rates

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

The majority of pupils enter school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below those that would normally be expected of pupils of a similar age. Most pupils make good progress from their starting points as they move through the school. The achievement and progress of most pupils in lessons are good. They have a sound recall of previous learning and apply their learning confidently in new situations.

Pupils' communication skills develop well across the school. In the Foundation Phase, pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. As they move through the school, pupils develop the ability to listen carefully and attentively to staff and each other. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils speak confidently. A majority provide thoughtful and often lengthy responses using suitable terms and vocabulary.

Many pupils in the Foundation Phase talk enthusiastically about books and their favourite stories. They handle books well and the more able read simple texts accurately. They make good use of their knowledge of sounds to help them read words they encounter for the first time.

By the end of key stage 2, many pupils are self-motivated and confident readers. They use a wide range of reading strategies. Many read with fluency and expression, paying good attention to punctuation.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils' writing develops well and by the end of Year 2 most pupils write independently with increasing fluency. Most pupils make steady progress in developing their handwriting and use of basic punctuation. They make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to spell simple words correctly.

Many pupils in key stage 2 make good progress in developing the content of their writing. They organise and present imaginative and factual writing in different ways. All ability groups produce thoughtful work. Many pupils use interesting vocabulary and their good development of ideas are strong features of their work.

All pupils use their literacy skills well to support their work across the curriculum. Most have developed good thinking skills and these are having a positive impact on their learning and the standards they achieve.

Pupils identified with additional learning needs achieve well against the targets in their individual education plans. Nearly all pupils entitled to free school meals achieve well. A few more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. Pupils with English as an additional language and pupils from the Gypsy and Traveller community achieve well.

Across the school, many pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills in Welsh. Most pupils can follow a range of instructions and respond appropriately to questions. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils speak with increasing confidence to convey personal information and achieve good standards when writing a range of simple sentences in Welsh. Older pupils read simple texts confidently in Welsh, with good pronunciation and understanding.

Results at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 do not compare well to those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. At the expected level (outcome 5), results were in the lower 50% or the lowest 25% in all areas of learning. The proportions of pupils who achieved outcomes 5 and 6 were all below the family average. The girls did not achieve as well as the boys. This is particularly apparent in the area of language, literacy and communication and personal and social development.

At the end of key stage 2 in 2012, results in English, mathematics and science placed the school in the lowest 25% when compared with those schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. Pupil outcomes show that the school consistently performs below the family average. Since 2010, in the core subject indicator (English, mathematics and science combined), outcomes show an upward trend.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils develop a secure understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Behaviour is almost always good. All pupils show courtesy and respect to each other, staff and visitors. Pupils say that instances of poor behaviour are rare. Where such instances do arise, pupils know who to approach for support.

Nearly all pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They focus well on tasks and work well with others. Skills to improve their own learning and their ability to solve problems are appropriate.

The role of the school council is at an early stage of development and pupils are involved in making decisions on improving aspects of the school environment. Older pupils take on additional responsibilities, and by the end of key stage 2 nearly all pupils can work independently. Each class has a vegetable patch and children learn many life skills through growing and cooking their own food. Many pupils take part in community activities. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

There are robust procedures in place to monitor attendance and lateness. Attendance levels have increased but are still low compared with both national figures and those for schools with a similar proportion of free school meals.

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

The school meets the needs of all learners well. The curriculum develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills systematically as they move through the school.

All staff plan imaginative learning experiences for the pupils. Teachers make good use of visitors to school and visits into the community and beyond to enhance the curriculum. They give older pupils appropriate opportunities to contribute their ideas within the planning of their learning.

The school makes good provision for pupils' literacy and communication skills. A strong feature is the wide range of intervention programmes and good opportunities for pupils to write widely across a range of subjects. This has a significant positive impact on the standards they achieve. Planning for the development of pupils' skills in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum is systematic and thorough.

The school identifies well the groups of pupils who need additional support. Withdrawal groups and very effective learning programmes meet the needs of these individuals very well and are strength of the school. Provision for more able pupils is enhanced through structured programmes.

The school operates in a sustainable way. The strong involvement of pupils with projects run by the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development supports well the pupils' understanding of cultures around the world.

Provision for developing pupils' knowledge of the Welsh language is good. The curriculum contributes well to developing pupils' knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good in all lessons. All teachers establish very good working relationships with pupils and have high expectations. Lessons are well planned with shared, clear learning objectives and they are interesting, lively and often innovative. Teachers ensure that work is appropriate for pupils who are less able. Many lessons provide a good level of challenge for more able pupils. In many lessons, staff use skilful questioning to test pupils' thinking and understanding.

Teachers and support staff work very well together. Teaching assistants support individuals and groups of pupils very well and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Staff regularly mark pupils work and give constructive oral feedback on what the pupils have achieved. However, written comments do not consistently inform pupils of what they need to do to improve their work. The use of target setting to help pupils improve is effective in Year 6 but less effective in other year groups. Teachers use assessment for learning strategies well. In a few lessons where there is best practice pupils evaluate their work and that of their peers. Teachers track pupil progress well and the assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 are accurate.

Reports to parents/carers keep them well informed about their children's achievements, wellbeing and progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils. Pupils and parents value the school's safe and caring environment. There are good arrangements in place to support pupils' wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. Pupils learn how to keep safe and there are very effective strategies to encourage good behaviour. The school has good policies and procedures for eliminating any oppressive behaviour or bullying.

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. The school's liaison arrangements with a range of external and support services are very good. These links provide access to useful information and guidance for pupils and parents. Provision within the breakfast club demonstrates the school's commitment to the development of pupils' wellbeing.

The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is very good. Good systems are in place to identify pupils' additional needs. There are clear, detailed targets for improvement in pupils' individual plans. Targets are regularly reviewed and updated.

Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils with additional needs, and parents are kept well informed about pupils' progress.

Staff have begun to identify more able and talented pupils throughout the school, and are working to ensure that these pupils are provided with appropriate levels of challenge.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school is inclusive and offers equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. The school promotes successfully the importance of diversity. It has a very caring ethos and there is an effective, supportive atmosphere in the school, with very good working relations between staff and pupils. There are good systems in place to support pupils who may be at a disadvantage.

Accommodation is of suitable quality and is currently sufficient for the number of pupils on roll. It is well maintained and provides an environment that promotes learning successfully. Wall displays are attractive and enhance the supportive atmosphere within the school. The school's outdoor area and facilities are good.

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

Senior leaders set a clear vision and direction for the school and promote the values of the school successfully. They are supported well by all staff. All recognise and

value the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and are committed to providing a stable and secure environment in which pupils can develop. Effective teamwork is a strength of the school and ensures all staff are challenged to bring about improvements in pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Roles are distributed effectively and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Support staff have clearly defined roles. Effective performance management arrangements ensure that all contribute positively to the school's priorities for improvement.

The senior leadership team evaluate pupils' progress and plan improvements in provision well. All staff ensure that the curriculum meets pupils' needs. The headteacher and senior staff analyse performance data carefully and use it well to monitor the performance of the school.

The headteacher's reports to the governing body are thorough and ensure that they are well informed about the school's life and work. They are increasingly aware of how the school's performance compares with that of similar schools. Governors are very supportive of the school. However, they do not offer sufficiently constructive challenge and their role in holding the school to account is not developed enough.

The school has made good progress towards implementing the Foundation Phase. However, the school's response to other national priorities, such as the School Effectiveness Framework, is more limited. The impact of professional learning communities that support improving standards is weak.

Improving quality: Good

Leaders and managers use a wide range of first-hand evidence to judge how well the school is performing and to compile accurate self-evaluation reports. They carry out careful, detailed analysis of a wide range of data on pupils' attainment and test results. They carry out regular sampling of pupils' work and observe teachers in their classrooms. Learning walks enable staff, members of the governing body and local authority advisers to sample aspects of the school's work. The monitoring of teaching is generally effective; it is rigorous and clearly focused on standards. Learners play a valued role in self-evaluation through the school council voice and occasional pupil questionnaires.

The findings of self-evaluation form the basis of the school improvement plan. The latest plan is comprehensive and detailed. It identifies costs, timescales and responsibilities appropriately. Work on implementing the priorities in the school improvement plan has had a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils.

Teachers in the school collaborate effectively in sharing good practice, for example in relation to effective learning techniques. There are effective networks with neighbouring schools that have led to improvement in standards, pupils' behaviour and teachers' knowledge of restraint procedures.

Partnership working: Good

The school works hard to build its partnership with parents. The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. There is an active "St Anne's Association", which raises funds that, for example, enable all pupils to participate in educational visits. The school has appointed a parent support adviser who works closely with parents.

Polish-speaking teaching assistants promote strong links with the Polish community. The school benefits greatly from partnership with the local authority's Traveller and ethnic minority support service.

There are strong links with the church and the Caia community. Local businesses have recently contributed to the planting of 60 trees in the grounds. Partners that contribute effectively to pupils' safety and wellbeing include the police liaison officer, school nurse and the local rugby league team.

Effective arrangements with the main secondary school to which pupils transfer ensure a smooth transition for pupils. Links with primary schools within the diocese and across Wrexham are good. The schools have jointly produced portfolios of work that enable teacher assessments to be accurate and reliable.

Resource management: Good

The headteacher and the governing body's finance committee manage and monitor the school's budget carefully and strive to achieve good value for money. The school uses its budget efficiently and spending decisions link appropriately to school improvement priorities. Leaders and managers keep the level of reserves within recommended limits.

The school provides a suitable and well maintained standard of accommodation. Learning resources are sufficient and match pupils' needs well.

There are enough appropriately qualified teachers and assistants to teach the curriculum. Staff deployment is efficient and they work well together in creating a welcoming and stimulating atmosphere for the pupils.

Strategies to meet requirements regarding teachers' workload satisfy statutory requirements and all staff have appropriate time for planning, preparation and assessment. Performance management arrangements are efficient and lead to professional development opportunities for teachers and support staff that have a positive impact on pupils' standards.

Most pupils make good progress, compared with their starting points, as they move through the school and the quality of provision for them is sound overall. Therefore, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The majority of pupils enter school with skills well below those that would normally be expected of pupils of a similar age.

Foundation phase assessments in 2012, when compared with those in schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, have shortcomings. Results are in the lower 50% for mathematical development and in the lowest 25% for personal and social development, language, literacy and communication and in the Foundation Phase indicator (the percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcome in all areas). The school does less well than other schools in its family in all areas. Very few more able Foundation Phase pupils attain the higher outcome (outcome 6) in all areas.

Results of key stage 2 assessments for 2012 are below the average for similar schools. When compared with schools with similar percentages of free school meals, the school is in the lower 50% for English, science, mathematics and the core subject indicator (the percentage of pupils who achieve the expected level in English, mathematics and science).

In 2012, results for more able pupils did not build on previous improvement and the attainment levels placed the school in the lower 50% of similar schools.

At both the expected and higher levels, the school consistently performs less well than other schools in its family. Pupils' standards of oracy, reading and writing are improving, but remain below that of the average for the school's family. Nearly all pupils who have extra help with their learning make strong progress. The gap between the performance of boys and girls varies too much and it is often the widest in the school's family. Many pupils entitled to free school meals do well and reach the expected levels at the end of each key stage. Most pupils with English as an additional language achieve well and make good progress.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Sixty-eight of the pupils completed the pupil questionnaire.

All pupils feel safe and most think the school deals well with any bullying. They feel that they are helped by adults to learn and make progress and they think that they are doing well at school.

Most pupils say they know what to do, whom to ask if they find their work hard and whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. They feel that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

They agree that there are lots of chances to take regular exercise and that the school teaches them to keep healthy.

Most pupils feel that homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school.

They agree that nearly all children behave well at playtimes and lunch times. However, a quarter of the pupils do not agree with the statement that other children behave well and they can get on with their work.

Overall, learners in the school are more positive in their responses than learners in other schools across Wales.

Parent and carer questionnaire

Forty-three parents completed the questionnaire.

All parents or carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed overall satisfaction with the school.

They think that their child was helped to settle in well when they started school and they say that their child likes school.

They agree that all staff treat children fairly and with respect and that all staff expect their child to work hard and do their best.

They think that teaching is good and feel that their child is making good progress.

All parents feel their child is safe in school and that their child is encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise.

Most parents feel that the school is well run and provides a good range of activities, including trips and visits.

All parents think that pupils behave well in school. They agree that the school helps their child to become more mature and responsible. They feel that their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular needs.

Most parents understand the procedures for dealing with complaints and would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

Nearly all parents feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress.

Nearly all feel that homework builds well on what their child learns in school and that their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school.

Overall, parents in the school are more positive in their responses about the school than parents in other schools across Wales.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Carolyn Thomas	Reporting Inspector
Chris Dolby	Team Inspector
Peter Haworth	Lay Inspector
Paul Davies	Peer Inspector
Sharon Daltrey	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.