



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 Ethelwold's Primary School
Melrose Avenue
Shotton
Deeside
CH5 1NG**

Date of inspection: February 2012

by

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



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

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

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

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

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

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

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

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Context

St. Ethelwold's Primary is a voluntary aided Church in Wales school situated in Deeside, which is in the Flintshire local authority. The school serves an area that is socially and economically disadvantaged.

There are 80 pupils aged four to eleven years on roll that are taught in three mixed aged classes. Pupil numbers have decreased since the last inspection. There are relatively high levels of pupil mobility during the academic year.

The school has identified around 40% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, including one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. Approximately 32% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the local authority and all-Wales averages. Three pupils are looked-after by the local authority. In the 12 months prior to the inspection there were four temporary exclusions.

Nearly all pupils are of white British ethnicity and no pupil speaks Welsh at home.

Since the last inspection there have been many staffing changes, a reduction in the number of classes and changes to the leadership structure of the school. The headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

The individual school budget per pupil for St Ethelwold's Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,632 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Flintshire is £10,075 and the minimum is £2,616. St Ethelwold's Primary School is 18th out of the 76 primary schools in Flintshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of St. Ethelwold's Primary School is adequate because:

- the majority of pupils make steady progress in their learning;
- pupils' standards in reading and writing are improving;
- most pupils work well together and are motivated to learn; and
- most pupils behave well in classes and around the school.

However:

- pupils' performance, particularly in English, has often not compared well with that of pupils in other similar schools; and
- the curriculum is not sufficiently coherent or challenging, particularly for more able pupils.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are adequate because, although the school is improving and there is a sound process for self-evaluation:

- pupils' progress, until relatively recently, has been too slow;
- there is not enough focus on consistently addressing key priorities to improve pupils' standards;
- leaders do not always tackle under performance well enough;
- a number of initiatives are not embedded across the school; and
- the school has made slow progress in addressing a few national priorities and recommendations from the last inspection.

Recommendations

In order to improve, St. Ethelwold's Primary School needs to:

- R1 continue to improve standards in reading, writing and numeracy;
- R2 improve the clarity, consistency and organisation of planning to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged;
- R3 implement the Foundation Phase fully;
- R4 improve the consistency of teaching and assessment;
- R5 ensure that self-evaluation systems are robust and based on first hand evidence; and
- R6 use the outcomes of self-evaluation to ensure a clear focus for school development planning.

What happens next?

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress 12 months after the publication of this report.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

In lessons, the majority of pupils make steady progress in their learning. In the recently introduced structured reading and writing sessions many pupils make good progress in developing their reading and writing skills. However, they do not yet transfer this learning well enough to other areas of the curriculum.

A significant minority of pupils enter the school with weak comprehension and oral skills. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well. They listen carefully to the ideas of others, speak confidently to visitors and express their ideas clearly.

More able pupils read fluently and with expression. They locate information confidently in non-fiction books. When reading fiction texts they demonstrate a good understanding of the story. A minority of pupils make inferences and formulate their own implicit and explicit questions. Pupils of average and below average ability are beginning to have a firmer grasp of phonics and are developing a range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words. Although pupils' reading skills are now developing well, a significant minority read at a level more than a year below their chronological age.

Across the school, progress in writing is variable. By the end of the Foundation Phase, more able pupils produce short pieces of writing that are generally punctuated appropriately. They are beginning to use an interesting vocabulary and usually spell common words accurately. In key stage 2, pupils write for a variety of purposes and demonstrate a good understanding of the different forms of writing. However, many pupils find it difficult to structure their writing or develop their ideas. Many have an insecure grasp of grammar and punctuation. Across the school, pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are weak.

In limited contexts, many pupils have acceptable numeracy and information and communication technology skills. However, pupils do not apply these well enough across the curriculum.

Most pupils make good progress in their ability to understand and follow basic instructions in Welsh. Nearly all pupils display a positive attitude to Welsh and many are eager to convey personal information. By the end of key stage 2, a minority have a sound grasp of individual sentence structures and use them consistently in their written work.

Pupils with additional learning needs generally make adequate progress in developing their reading and writing skills.

In both key stages, pupils' performance at the expected level does not generally compare well with that of pupils in other similar schools, particularly in English. In key stage 1, there has been a three year downward trend in pupils' performance in English and the core subject indicator. In key stage 2 in 2010-2011, there was a

significant improvement in pupils' performance. Nearly 86% of pupils achieved the expected level in the core subject indicator, English and mathematics and all pupils achieved the expected level in science.

There is no discernible trend in the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals. Although girls tend to achieve better than boys, particularly in English, the difference in performance is not generally significant.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. The school deals well with any bullying and pupils feel safe in school. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They are courteous and show care, respect and consideration to others. In lessons, pupils collaborate well and are motivated to learn. Many pupils are appropriately involved in community activities and many attend after-school clubs.

Most pupils have an acceptable understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from a breakfast club which helps them to understand the value of having a good nutritional start to the day.

The school has good procedures for improving attendance. As a result, attendance now compares very well to that of other similar schools. Most pupils arrive punctually.

The recently established school council are beginning to develop an understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have begun to influence some aspects of school life especially in relation to the presentation of the school building. However, pupils are not yet an effective voice in representing the views of their peers.

Across the school, pupils have little say about what and how they learn. Many pupils are not aware of their personal improvement targets and few know how to improve their own learning.

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

The organisation of the curriculum does not fully ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are acquired systematically as they move through the school. Although lesson plans generally make reference to the development of skills, the school does not ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum.

Learning experiences do not always meet the needs of all pupils. On many occasions, work does not provide sufficient challenge for all pupils. However, pupils generally have good opportunities to work in pairs and groups and this contributes well to the development of their collaborative skills.

The Foundation Phase has not been implemented fully. There are not enough opportunities for all pupils to learn through play. The activities on offer do not always engage all pupils successfully and there are limited opportunities for outdoor learning. In key stage 2, pupils do not always receive full access to the National Curriculum and sometimes spend too much time on unstructured activities.

The school's curriculum provision to enable all pupils to learn about sustainability and global citizenship is weak. Although members of the eco council are very keen to act sustainably, they have not received enough support or guidance to effectively carry out their role.

The school has a positive attitude towards Welsh language development and staff develop pupils' knowledge of Welsh systematically. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales.

There is a varied range of extra-curricular activities and these impact positively on the health and wellbeing of pupils.

Teaching: Adequate

The overall quality of teaching is adequate. All teachers establish good working relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well. Where teaching is most effective, lessons have a good pace and pupils are stimulated to learn. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use an effective range of teaching strategies. Support staff are generally used well to support pupils' learning within classes. A few teachers share and discuss learning objectives with their pupils.

However, in a vast majority of lessons teachers do not adapt their planning well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, too many pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. In a few classes, teachers do not structure sessions well enough and pupils spend too much time on low level activities.

The school gathers a wide range of pupil assessment data and a whole school tracking system has recently been established. However, staff are not yet using this information well enough to consistently inform their teaching.

The school has introduced regular assessment weeks and these have helped to improve teachers' knowledge of levelling pupils' work. End of key stage assessments are accurate. Many teachers regularly mark pupils' work. Their comments are generally positive but do not always help pupils to understand how to improve their work.

Annual reports to parents provide clear information about pupils' achievements. Parents and carers are well informed about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate

The school provides a caring and safe community. It has implemented a few activities to make pupils aware of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted informally throughout the

curriculum. As a result, most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to manage their feelings and know how to treat others fairly and with respect.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is adequately promoted. Provision to develop pupils' cultural awareness is weaker.

The school successfully identifies pupils that need additional support and provides appropriate catch-up programmes. Teachers and support staff effectively use a new phonic programme to target small groups of pupils. These interventions are successful in improving pupils' literacy skills. However, targets on individual educational plans are not always specific enough or reviewed regularly enough to secure progress. Across the school, the short individual withdrawal sessions are not always effective in addressing pupils' additional learning needs.

The school works closely with external agencies to support individual pupils and their families. Nearly all parents and carers feel able to approach staff for advice and guidance when required.

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

Learning environment: Adequate

The school is an inclusive community where all pupils are valued. There is an appropriate emphasis on celebrating diversity.

All pupils have equal access to the school's provision. The school has appropriate procedures to deal with harassment and to eliminate any oppressive behaviour. The headteacher has received appropriate equality training.

The school provides a pleasant environment for its pupils. The building and grounds are sufficiently maintained given the age of the building and inherent problems with the flat roof. The wall displays in classrooms and corridors help to create a stimulating learning environment. There is a generally appropriate range of learning resources that meet the needs of pupils.

The school has extensive grounds and pupils have access to two large playgrounds. However, the development of the rest of the outside environment is at an early stage. Outdoor provision for pupils in the Foundation Phase is underdeveloped.

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

The headteacher has created a supportive ethos for learning. All staff feel valued and generally work well together to bring about the necessary improvements.

The recently formed senior leadership team, the involvement of subject leaders in school improvement planning and a sound performance management structure are beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning. However, priorities for school improvement are not clearly focused. As a result, a number of developments

and initiatives have not been fully implemented nor embedded consistently across the school.

Leaders are beginning to analyse data well and share outcomes with staff. However, they do not always ensure that the data is used effectively to raise pupils' standards, nor do they consistently challenge under-performance.

The governing body is supportive of the school. Governors have a good awareness of the school's data, current position and future priorities. However, their role in self-evaluation is not developed well enough.

The school is making sound progress in meeting a few local and national priorities. The structured reading and writing programme, for example, is impacting positively on pupils' literacy standards and the family learning programmes are tackling social deprivation well. However, the Foundation Phase is not fully embedded and the school has not fully implemented the healthy schools' agenda or furthered pupils' understanding of education for sustainability and global citizenship well enough.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school has a sound process for self-evaluation. The self-evaluation report is a generally accurate document, although it tends to describe rather than evaluate the schools' current position. All staff contribute to the evaluation process and leaders regularly seek the views of parents through annual questionnaires and the parent council.

The school has recently put into place more structured monitoring procedures, including lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work. These procedures are helping staff to focus more appropriately on the standards that pupils achieve.

The outcomes of the self-evaluation process are generally used well to determine priorities for school improvement. Although the school development plan is detailed, it contains too many targets and tasks. However, the plan has been used well to raise pupils' standards in reading and writing and to improve behaviour and attendance.

Overall, the school has made slow progress over the past six years. However, improvements over the last year have begun to meet the recommendations of the last inspection report and bring about improvements in the standards that pupils achieve in limited areas of the curriculum.

The majority of teachers are involved in working with staff from other schools. A few have visited other providers to view good practice. This has been particularly useful for staff new to the Foundation Phase.

Partnership working: Adequate

The school has established an adequate range of partnerships. However, it does not always strategically develop these partnerships well enough for the benefit of pupils.

The new parent council group has improved communication between the school and parents. A few parents regularly contribute to the work of the school.

The partnership with Communities First to establish a street dance club has had a positive effect on pupils' self-esteem. The club has received national recognition and this has helped to generate a great deal of enthusiasm both within the school and the local community. The school has effectively built on this partnership by incorporating street dance into its provision for physical education.

Partnerships with a range of agencies including the local authority support services, the school nurse, and the police school liaison officer are generally having a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing.

The school works well with the local high school and nursery to ensure effective transition and continuity in pupils' learning and wellbeing. End of key stage 2 moderation is effective and ensures the accuracy of pupil assessments.

Resource management: Adequate

The school manages its budget appropriately. There is a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff and these are generally deployed effectively. However, the organisation of additional learning support does not always provide good value for money.

The school has appropriate performance management procedures for teachers. There are also sound arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time. Designated leadership time is not always well distributed between members of the senior leadership team.

There is an appropriate range of learning resources to support pupils' learning. However, pupils in the Foundation Phase do not have enough outside play equipment to develop their skills.

The school generally identifies and allocates resources in line with its goals and targets identified in the school improvement plan. In view of the standards achieved by a majority of pupils and the appropriate management of finances, the school overall provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Pupils' performance at key stage 1 at the expected level (level 2) does not generally compare well with that of schools in the same free school meal band. For the past two years, pupils' performance in the core subject indicator has been in the lowest 25% compared to the relative performance of other schools. Pupils' performance in the core subject indicator and English has only been in the higher 50% once in the past five years. Pupils' performance in mathematics is more variable. The school has been in the top 25% of similar schools for two of past five years. Pupils' performance in science at the expected level is better and the school has been in the higher 50% for the past two years.

In key stage 2, over the past five years, pupils' performance at the expected level (level 4) has been variable but particularly weak in English when compared to that of other similar schools. However, in 2010-2011 there was a significant improvement in pupils' performance with nearly 86% achieving the expected level in the core subject indicator, English and mathematics and all pupils achieving the expected level in science.

In both key stages, pupils' performance at the higher level in English and mathematics is variable. However, over time, in both key stages pupils' performance in science at the higher level is weak when compared to that of other similar schools.

When compared to the performance levels of other schools in the family, pupils' performance is again variable. In key stage 1 in 2010-2011, the school was in line with the average for the family in English, just above in science but below in mathematics and the core subject indicator. There has been a downward trend in pupils' performance in English and the core subject indicator for the past three years.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance in the core subject indicator, English and science has generally been below the average for the family in recent years. Pupils' performance in mathematics is more positive. The significant increase in pupils' performance in 2010-2011 meant that the school was ranked amongst the highest performers in its family in all three subjects.

There is no discernible trend in the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals and those who are not. Girls tend to achieve better than boys, particularly in English, although the difference in performance is not generally significant.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Sixteen parents completed the parent questionnaires and twelve attended the meeting for parents.

Parents' responses are generally more positive than the views of parents in other schools in Wales. All parents feel the school is well run and express a great deal of satisfaction with the school.

All parents state that:

- their child likes the school and was helped to settle in when they started;
- teaching is good and that staff expect their child to work hard;
- the school gives their child appropriate additional support to meet their particular needs;
- homework that is given builds well on what their child learns in school;
- the school helps their child to become more mature and responsible; and
- they feel comfortable approaching the school with question, suggestions or problems.

Nearly all parents think that:

- their child is safe in school;
- their child is making good progress in school;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise; and
- the school has a good range of activities including trips and visits.

Most parents agree that:

- pupils behave well in school;
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next stage of their education; and
- they understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Fifty-one pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaires.

Pupils' responses are generally more positive than the views of pupils in other schools in Wales. In particular, pupils are more positive about the behaviour of others at break times. Only a few pupils expressed negative views about the behaviour of other pupils in class.

All pupils say that:

- they feel safe in school and there are lots of chances to take regular exercise;
- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress; and

- they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Nearly all pupils state that:

- the school deals well with any bullying;
- they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- the school teaches them how to be healthy;
- they are doing well in school and know whom to ask if they are finding work hard; and
- their homework helps them to understand and improve on the work they do in class.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Liz Miles	Reporting Inspector
Anwen Griffiths	Team Inspector
Peter Haworth	Lay Inspector
Julia Buckley-Jones	Peer Inspector
Paul Oliver	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.