



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 Philip Evans R.C. Primary School
134-340 Coed-Y-Gores
Llanedeyrn
Cardiff
CF23 9NX**

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 Philip Evans Roman Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided primary school in the Cardiff suburb of Llanederyn. The school serves the parish of St Philip Evans RC Church and the communities of Penylan, Cyncoed and Pontprennau. Almost all pupils live in the immediate area. The school's intake is generally neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.

There are currently 355 pupils on the school roll aged from three to 11 years, including 49 children who attend part-time for either morning or afternoon sessions in the nursery. There is little difference in the number of boys and girls in each year group. No pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The school is situated in a predominantly English speaking part of South Wales. However, about 40% of pupils learn English as an additional language and speak other languages at home. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language.

About a quarter of pupils are currently entitled to receive free school meals. The school identifies 17% of pupils as having additional learning needs, nearly all of whom have moderate learning difficulties. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

The school's accommodation is semi-open plan. In most year groups, two classes share the space allocated.

The school was last inspected in February 2007. The number of pupils at the school has increased significantly since then and there is movement in the school population with new pupils joining, particularly in key stage 2.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2000. In September 2012, the school appointed a new deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher, and restructured the senior management team.

The individual school budget per pupil for St Philip Evans R.C. Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,470 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Cardiff is £12,307 and the minimum is £2,873. St Philip Evans R.C. Primary School is 55th out of the 99 primary schools in Cardiff in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

St Philip Evans RC Primary School is an excellent school because:

- most pupils achieve very good standards and make more than the progress expected, especially in literacy;
- from a young age, pupils begin to take ownership of their learning and make worthwhile contributions to planning activities;
- pupils benefit from the school's active participation in a range of community projects;
- the curriculum is imaginative, and teachers plan and deliver very good quality lessons;
- pupils' individual learning needs are central to the planning process; and
- pupils understand how to evaluate their own and others' learning so as to promote improvement.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are excellent because:

- senior managers have very high expectations that are understood and shared by everyone;
- staff and pupils are committed to the school, its ethos and values;
- leaders and managers have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development;
- there is a strong culture of inclusion where everyone's opinions and ideas are valued; and
- the school has a strong track record of excellence and commitment to continuous improvement.

Recommendations

R1 Continue to build opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge and understanding of Welsh language outside the classroom

R2 Continue to develop the skills-based curriculum for science and evaluate its impact on raising standards

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which 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?

Excellent

Standards: Excellent

The baseline assessment on entry to the school shows that many pupils have knowledge, understanding and skills that are considered below average when they join the reception classes. Overall, almost all pupils make very good progress as they move through the school.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, nearly all pupils show high levels of competence in literacy. Almost all children listen very well and speak with confidence. In many cases, pupils' vocabulary is impressive and they enjoy learning and using words that are new to them. Pupils discuss their tasks with enthusiasm, in pairs and groups, and respond well to teachers' questioning.

Across the school, most pupils make very good and rapid progress in reading, often from a low base. They read with expression and use effective strategies to decode words. Most pupils develop a genuine love of books and are keen to explain their choices.

Throughout the school, the quality of pupils' written work is outstanding. From a young age, pupils learn to form letters correctly, use appropriate strategies to attempt spelling and set out their work very carefully in all subjects. Pupils value and take pride in their work, and have high expectations of themselves. All pupils use their very good literacy skills effectively across a range of subjects. For example, in their writing in religious education, pupils in Year 6 express opinions and show a depth of understanding that is unusual for their age. Their written work is well organised in paragraphs with largely accurate spelling and punctuation. The quality of pupils' work and pupils' well-developed thinking skills are examples of sector leading practice.

Almost all pupils with additional learning needs, and those entitled to receive free school meals, make good progress and many of them achieve better standards than might be expected. The school has a wide range of support programmes for literacy and numeracy that are effective in raising the standards of targeted pupils.

Across the school, there is little obvious difference in the performance of boys and girls although at the end of key stage 2, for the last five years, boys have outperformed girls in all subjects at the expected level (level 4). At the higher level (level 5), girls outperformed boys in English.

Pupils who learn English as an additional language usually make rapid progress although a few who join the school in Year 5 or Year 6 from overseas have less time to reach the expected standard by the end of the key stage. Nevertheless, these pupils make good progress in the time available.

Standards in Welsh second language are very good throughout the school. Pupils make good, steady progress and are enthusiastic in lessons. By Year 6, pupils read accurately with confidence and develop very good pronunciation. However, pupils' use of incidental Welsh outside the classroom is less well developed.

In 2012, the performance of pupils achieving the expected outcome 5 at the end of the Foundation Phase compares very favourably with the performance of pupils in schools of the same family. When compared with schools that have a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school is in the upper 50% in all three areas of learning. At the higher than expected outcome 6, the school is in the top 25% for mathematical development and language, literacy and communication.

In 2012, at key stage 2, all pupils who started in the school's reception class attained at least the expected level 4 and half of them attained the higher level 5. Overall, the school has maintained a steady improvement in outcomes at key stage 2 for the last four years despite a rising percentage of pupils being eligible for free school meals. Attainment at level 5 is a strong feature with the school placed first in its family and with outcomes well above the average for schools in the authority and across Wales.

Overall, the standards of pupils' achievement show that the school adds significant value, with many pupils far exceeding expectations.

Wellbeing: Excellent

Pupils are keen to learn and are proud of their school. They feel safe in school and enjoy coming. Their attendance rates are better than in similar schools. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They are very well mannered and welcoming to visitors. They have good relationships with the staff and collaborate well with each other. They are aware of the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle and have a good understanding of how to maintain a healthy diet.

In all classes, pupils have a considerable influence on what and how they learn. Their ideas and opinions are given great prominence, particularly in setting and agreeing success criteria in lessons. The impact of the school's development of 'pupil voice' initiatives is considerable in promoting pupils' confidence, enjoyment of school and their enthusiasm for learning. In the Foundation Phase, pupils contribute ideas for activities linked to the class topic. These are often included in the following week's programme. The activity's success is evaluated by staff and the class so the pupils know that their suggestions are important.

Pupils have very good opportunities to represent the school on various committees. Representatives display mature and responsible attitudes and are regularly involved in making decisions. They represent other pupils' opinions very well.

Through imaginative projects, such as the woodland conservation project, pupils develop very good links with the community and gain invaluable skills which prepare them very well for life outside of school. The school's excellent communication with parents reinforces the partnership between home and school, and impacts positively on pupils' wellbeing and learning.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Excellent

Learning experiences: Excellent

The school provides a rich, varied curriculum that takes very good account of the learning needs of individual pupils. The semi-open plan accommodation and mixed age classes in key stage 2 present the staff with particular challenges in planning a suitable programme. However, through their consistent approach to planning, and attention to detail, staff ensure that all pupils build on previous learning as they move through the school. Planning takes particular account of 'pupil voice'. Planning documents are of high quality and generally include appropriate focus on developing pupils' skills. The school is developing a skills-based approach in planning for science but this is at an early stage.

In the Foundation Phase, planning is very imaginative and provides pupils with excellent opportunities to learn through play while maintaining high standards in developing basic skills. The range of activities offered is stimulating.

The school uses highly effective intervention strategies to support targeted groups of pupils and meet their learning and pastoral needs. Pupils benefit from a very wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Provision for Welsh language development is good. Staff use incidental Welsh effectively throughout their lessons to encourage bilingualism although there are fewer opportunities outside the classroom. Overall, the school promotes the Welsh ethos well through displays, use of the language and events.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to practise sustainable development and gain an understanding of their place in the wider world. This is recognised in the school's success in gaining a variety of related awards.

Teaching: Excellent

The quality of teaching across the school is excellent. Teachers' enthusiasm is infectious. They have very high expectations of their pupils. This has a significant and positive impact on the quality of pupils' work and the progress that pupils make. Teachers manage their classes exceptionally well.

Lessons are well organised. All staff are closely involved in the planning process and everyone knows their particular area of responsibility in delivering high quality lessons. This culture of collaboration is well embedded.

Teachers deliver all lessons at a good pace. They have good subject knowledge and use effective, brisk questioning. Across the school, teachers regularly encourage pupils to discuss aspects of their work in pairs and groups. Pupils respond with maturity and the impact of these opportunities on their literacy and thinking is notable.

Teachers all follow the school's marking policy consistently and well. Marking is clear and provides pupils with useful information about how they can improve their work. Self and peer assessment are well established in the school's day-to-day work, often through imaginative and unique systems. From a young age, pupils set high standards for themselves.

The school carries out rigorous assessment and analyses the outcomes well to identify targets for individuals and groups of pupils, and plan appropriate intervention. The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing pupils' health and wellbeing. It provides valuable opportunities for promoting their emotional, social and cultural development that have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. All pupils can take on responsibilities and influence directly the life of the school and wider community. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Arrangements to ensure good attendance and behaviour are effective.

The support for pupils with additional learning needs is very good. The school uses assessment effectively when pupils join, to identify those who may need support. Teachers act promptly to provide appropriate personalised learning programmes. They develop good quality individual education plans for pupils, which include clear targets that the pupils understand. Teachers review the plans regularly and involve parents appropriately in the process. There are strong links between the school and a wide range of other professional agencies. The school caters well for the large number of pupils who learn English as an additional language.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a well-ordered, caring community where everyone feels valued.

There is a very well-established inclusive ethos that focuses on the needs of the individual pupil. This positive ethos permeates all aspects of the curriculum and school life. All pupils have equal access to school activities and diversity is valued. Curriculum planning includes various cultural themes that emphasise and promote tolerance and respect.

Classrooms are well organised to stimulate learning and meet the needs of pupils. Displays are attractive and are used well to celebrate pupils' achievements. Across the school, there is good provision of books and other learning resources that, overall, are in very good condition. The provision for information and communication technology, with mini-suites attached to each classroom, is particularly effective. There is generous outdoor space that has been developed well to provide a variety of good learning experiences for pupils including, for example, a wildlife area. The accommodation is secure and well maintained.

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

The headteacher provides a very clear and able lead to the school. The senior management team and other staff work very closely as a highly committed professional community. Subject co-ordinators have a full and accurate understanding of the needs of their subjects and the standards being achieved. They give very good guidance to other staff. All share their expertise willingly and very effectively together and have high expectations.

Senior managers monitor the school's work exceptionally well. They have created a positive but rigorous culture of improvement where lesson observation, book scrutiny and professional discussion are part of day-to-day work. The outcome is a clear consistency across all the school's work that has a significant impact on ensuring high standards for staff and pupils.

The chair of governors is particularly well informed and works closely with the headteacher and other governors. They define and address longer term need very thoughtfully and plan carefully. Governors are very supportive of the work of the staff and properly hold the professional leadership to account. They are kept fully informed about the school's performance.

The school meets national and local initiatives and priorities very well. It has identified and is addressing the need to improve standards in literacy, numeracy and pupils' wellbeing. Very good progress has been made in putting in place initiatives to overcome the effects of social deprivation. The Foundation Phase is very well developed and resourced.

Improving quality: Good

The school has well-developed systems to evaluate its performance that are firmly based on first hand evidence and link directly to its strategic planning. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. There is rigorous analysis of a range of data and appropriate consideration of how pupils' outcomes compare with those of other schools, both locally and nationally. The school seeks the views of pupils and parents regularly. Their opinions are carefully considered along with those of other stakeholders.

A particular strength in the self-evaluation process is the way in which all staff share their ideas, knowledge and expertise. Subject co-ordinators carry out very rigorous reviews to ensure they have a clear picture of standards and provision. The priorities they identify are carefully included in the school's improvement plan. This document is used very effectively to continue to raise standards, to promote school improvement and to allocate resources to meet the identified priorities.

The school is developing good links with other schools in its family. This enables staff to have useful opportunities to share good practice. Within the school, staff share their professional knowledge well. In the last year, they have researched and developed ways to improve pupils' emotional literacy and also worked together to develop strategies to raise the attainment of boys.

Partnership working: Good

The school has effective links with a wide range of partners that have a beneficial impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing. The partnership with parents is very good. The school works hard to encourage parents to support their child's learning. The weekly newsletter for parents is particularly informative and gives details of the work in each class and how parents can help their child. Parents are encouraged to attend family literacy and numeracy courses at the school that are held during the school day. The school seeks the views of parents through regular questionnaires and welcomes their suggestions.

The school has well established links with the community. An outstanding example of its work is the eco committee's involvement in a project to regenerate a local woodland area; this has been popular with the local residents' association.

The school has well-established links with a range of training providers including local universities. It provides good work experience opportunities for students and high school pupils. Almost all pupils transfer from Year 6 to the local Catholic high school and there are clear and appropriate arrangements to ensure that pupils transfer smoothly. The school links closely with other local schools on various projects and also to standardise pupils' work effectively.

Resource management: Excellent

The school is staffed by a sufficient number of well qualified teachers that have a good breadth of experience. The school deploys its support staff thoughtfully and strategically to help to improve standards in literacy, numeracy and to support groups and individuals.

Performance management systems are robust and well focused on addressing the school's priorities. The school is well resourced for teaching and learning. Outdoor resources are particularly rich and well organised.

The provision for teachers to plan, prepare and assess is very well organised. It has a significant impact on enriching the curriculum in physical education, personal and social education and music and helps to raise pupils' standards of wellbeing and learning.

Financial resources are carefully managed and very well focused on continuing to improve resources and the quality of teaching. The school improvement plan is accurately costed and regularly reviewed.

As pupils achieve well and make very good progress, and the school has many strong features, the school provides excellent value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The school is the third most challenged in its family of schools. The family of schools is a group of schools that faces broadly similar challenges.

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012, over 91% of pupils achieve outcome 5 (the expected level) in relation to the development of their language and mathematical skills. All pupils achieve the expected level in development of their personal skills. These outcomes are above the average for all other schools in the family and well above the average for all schools across Wales. The performance of pupils who achieve above the expected level (outcome 6) is also well above family, local and all-Wales averages.

The school performs well in relation to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals. Its performance in 2012 placed it in the top 25% of schools for the development of pupils' personal skills and the Foundation Phase Indicator (language, mathematical and personal skills combined). It is placed in the top 50% for pupils' language and mathematical development.

In 2012, the cohort of pupils at the end of key stage 2 was unusual. Only 22 of the 34 pupils had joined the school's reception class. Most newcomers had joined later in key stage 2. Of these, a few pupils had significant special educational needs or came from overseas speaking very little English. This impacted on the school's overall outcomes.

In key stage 2, the percentage of pupils who attain level 4 (the expected level) or above in English, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator) has shown steady improvement over the last five years and is well above the average for schools in the family of similar schools. Performance in English is particularly strong while performance in science is more variable. The school performs consistently well at the higher level 5 in all three subjects where its performance is well above the family average. All pupils who had joined the school in the reception class attained at least level 4 and more than half attained level 5.

In relation to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school is in the upper 50% for English and the lower 50% for mathematics and science although it is very close to the upper boundary. The percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals has increased steadily over the last five years placing the school close to the boundary with the next banding group. When compared with that group, the school's performance is in the top 50% for all three subjects.

Fischer Family Trust Data indicates that the school added significant value to pupils' performance in 2011-2012. It also shows that there is a three year trend of attainment that is significantly higher than expected.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to the parent and carers questionnaire

Eighty-four parents or carers responded to the questionnaire. All of them expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school and feel that it is run well. All agree that their child feels safe in school, that teaching is good and that staff expect their child to work hard and do their best. They all feel that homework builds well on what their child learns in school. All parents or carers also feel that their child is encouraged to be healthy, and to become more mature and take on responsibility. Almost all of them agree that their child likes this school and many strongly agree. Nearly all of them also strongly agree that their child was helped to settle in well when he or she first started in the school.

Almost all parents or carers feel that their child is making good progress at school, that the school keeps them well informed about their child's progress and that pupils behave well in school. They agree that staff treat children fairly and with respect, that their child receives appropriate support and that the school provides a good range of activities. Nearly all of them also think that their child is prepared well for the next stage of their education. Almost all say they feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have a question, suggestion or a problem. Most agree that they know the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Responses to the learner questionnaire

Overall, pupils provided positive responses to the questionnaire. Almost all of them say that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they feel worried or upset. Nearly all pupils think that the school teaches them how to be healthy and encourages them to take regular exercise. Almost all of them also feel that they are doing well at school, and that teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress. Most pupils say they know what to do and who to ask if they find their work hard, and think that they have enough books and equipment. Many pupils agree that homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school. Many pupils also feel that the school deals well with any bullying. A minority of pupils say that other children do not behave well in class, or at playtime and lunch time.

Overall, pupils' responses are a little more positive than the responses to the questions received from pupils at other primary schools across Wales. However, pupils at St Philip Evans School are less positive in their responses regarding other children's behaviour at playtime and lunch time.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Rosemary Lait	Reporting Inspector
Peter Mathias	Team Inspector
Enir Rees Morgan	Team Inspector
Edward Tipper	Lay Inspector
Rachel Lewis	Peer Inspector
Catherine Power	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.