



*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**

**Trealaw Primary School  
Miskin Road  
Trealaw  
Tonypandy  
CF40 2QW**

**Date of inspection: July 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:

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

Publication Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**© Crown Copyright 2012: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

**Publication date: 05/09/2012**

## Context

Trealaw Primary school is in the Rhondda Valley and caters for pupils aged between three and eleven years. The building, which is more than 100 years old, is in the centre of the village of Trealaw. In recent years, the village has seen an increase in unemployment and is a Communities First area. Approximately 48% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Around 20% of pupils have additional educational needs, but none has a statement of special educational needs. Pupils' skills on entry are below the local authority average. All pupils' first language is English. Nursery pupils attend full time from their third birthday. The school was last inspected in 2006. Since then, the number on roll has dropped slightly. The acting headteacher has been in post since October 2010.

The individual school budget per pupil for Trealaw Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,344 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £6,499 and the minimum is £2,788. Trealaw Primary School is 62nd out of the 114 primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- outcomes for pupils are good and they make rapid progress in almost all lessons and over time;
- standards have improved over the last few years and are now above those of the family of broadly similar schools to which the school belongs;
- nearly all pupils are polite, work together effectively and behave well;
- the quality of teaching is almost always good and pupils enjoy their learning;
- the school provides its pupils with imaginative and engaging learning experiences; and
- there are effective links with parents, nearly all of whom are positive about the school and say that it has improved significantly over the past few years.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- the acting headteacher and senior managers have a clear vision for the future development of the school;
- the quality of teamwork is good, based on an open leadership style and the effective distribution of leadership roles;
- the self-evaluation process is based on wide-ranging consultation and the close monitoring of the quality of provision, teaching and learning by senior managers, governors and the school council;
- the school's development plan is comprehensive, with clear and relevant targets for improvement;
- the school takes good account of local and national priorities; and
- professional learning communities are helping to improve standards effectively.

## Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 raise pupils' attainment in science further to match the high attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6, particularly their ability to draw accurate conclusions from their investigations;
- R2 refine teachers' assessment of pupils' work by clearly identifying how learning in lessons will be assessed against the main learning objectives;
- R3 make sure that governors undertake appropriate training so that they are better equipped to contribute to shaping the school's educational direction; and
- R4 improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least in line with that of similar schools and the punctuality of pupils who are persistently late.

### **What happens next?**

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

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Almost all pupils work together well and respond enthusiastically to the tasks they are given. They have a good recall of what they have learned before and use this well to acquire new knowledge and skills.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well, although many children come into the school with poorly developed communication skills. Most pupils use their communication and thinking skills effectively at key stage 2. Pupils listen well in lessons in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 and levels of concentration are high in almost all classes. Older pupils use a growing vocabulary in both English and Welsh. For example, when talking about the experiences of evacuees in the Second World War, they phrase questions effectively, using the kind of language used in the 1940s.

Most pupils are enthusiastic readers and their skills develop well through the Foundation Phase. Younger pupils have a good grasp of letters and the sounds they make. At key stage 2, most pupils read an increasing range of texts confidently and with enjoyment. More able pupils read with expression and predict accurately what will happen next. Many pupils have clear opinions about authors and refer to specific sections of text to support their views. They use their reading skills effectively, for example when researching the internet to find out about the habitat of birds in Uganda.

The majority of pupils' writing skills develop well from the Foundation Phase onwards, although few attain the higher-than-expected level (outcome 6). They have an increasingly interesting and imaginative vocabulary and, by the end of Year 6, their ability to express themselves in writing is well developed. More able pupils write in a wide range of styles and genres, including persuasive writing about why pupils should be allowed to stay in at break time. Most pupils use their writing skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum, including neatly-presented, word-processed documents.

The majority pupils have well-developed numeracy skills, which they use effectively in other subjects, such as science when recording and analysing their heart rates at rest and after exercise. Pupils' Welsh language and bilingual skills are developing well. Most pupils' standards in oracy in Welsh are good and their reading and writing skills in Welsh are developing well throughout the school.

The relatively small year groups, together with the high numbers of pupils with additional learning needs, mean that the school's performance varies greatly from year to year. Children come into school with low levels of literacy and numeracy skills. In 2011, the school's performance when compared with that of its family (a group of schools in similar circumstances) shows that it performed above the expected level at the end of the Foundation Phase. At the end of key stage 2, the

school performed above the expected level in English, mathematics and science when compared with its family of schools. Standards have improved significantly since 2009. At the end of Year 6, current standards, based on unverified data, are generally above average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. However, pupils' ability to draw accurate conclusions from their science investigations is underdeveloped. Older pupils write up their investigations effectively, but younger pupils' writing is sometimes limited by the over use of work sheets.

### **Wellbeing: Adequate**

Pupils have good attitudes to keeping healthy and safe. Older pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and physical exercise. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes, in class and around the school, are very good; this is a significant strength. Pupils are polite, courteous and helpful, both to each other and to visitors. However, wellbeing is judged to be adequate because, in 2011, whole-school attendance was well below the all-Wales average of 93.2% and below the average of other local schools, and it has consistently been in the lowest 25% in comparison with that of similar schools for the past four years. In the spring term of 2012 levels rose to 92.0%, which are above the local authority target for the school of 90.3%. Most pupils are punctual, although a few pupils are persistently late to school.

The elected school council provides a very good forum for all pupils to have a say in how their school can be improved. The school is clearly committed to engage with extended families and the communities in which they live. It is very involved with a great number of community groups. Members of the eco committee actively promote eco issues and show concern for the environment. All pupils are involved in self-evaluations of their learning tasks at times and most are able to explain their evaluations.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
---	-------------

### **Learning experiences: Good**

The school meets the needs of pupils well. Teachers' planning ensures an appropriate range of learning experiences across the curriculum. Regular collaborative planning and sharing of strategies ensure progression and continuity in the development of pupils' skills. The development of literacy, communication, numeracy and information technology skills is encouraged through cross-curricular learning activities. These are planned appropriately according to pupils' stage of development. Pupils use thinking skills in their daily learning. Staff promote independent learning and support pupils in assessing their own learning well from an early age. This ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how they have achieved in a particular task and how they can improve.

The school implements effective intervention strategies to support pupils. The use of ability groups at times enables the school to provide appropriate support and challenge for individuals and to ensure good progress. The school arranges a suitable range of extra-curricular learning activities and special events, and these help to enrich the overall provision. They provide good opportunities and support the development of pupils' life skills.

Welsh language provision is a strength in the school and strategies to develop competence and skills are well embedded in the school. Most pupils' awareness of Wales and Welsh culture through work in geography, history and music is good. They celebrate Welsh cultural events such as St David's Day and study areas of Wales, such as Cardiff, Porthcawl and areas around the Ceredigion coast.

Although the school has an eco-committee, many of the strategies are at an early stage of development. Classes do recycle and an effort is made to conserve water and electricity. The eco garden thrives and pupils plan themselves what to do with the produce. Pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world through their study of Uganda and other initiatives.

### **Teaching: Good**

There are strong working relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults. This results in a positive environment for learning and pupils clearly enjoy their time in school. Teachers and other staff work well as a team, which ensures that all pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make good progress. Teachers make learning interesting by planning lessons that are imaginative and that develop pupils ability to work independently. In nearly all lessons, the levels of pupils' engagement are high because teachers use a wide range of teaching methods and techniques that match their learning styles effectively. Most work is sufficiently challenging and tasks match pupils' needs well. In many lessons, teachers make effective use of technology to engage pupils and to demonstrate key points. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and implement the system of rewards and sanctions consistently across the school.

Teachers assess pupils' work and track their progress effectively. Occasionally, teachers do not always make effective links between the main purpose of the lesson and the way they plan to assess pupils' learning. This leaves pupils unsure about how successfully they have achieved the lesson objectives. Teachers and other adults give clear and helpful feedback and most pupils assess their own learning well. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is constructive and identifies clearly what pupils need to do to improve, using 'two stars and a wish' as a framework. Good links with other schools for moderation ensure that assessments are accurate. Annual reports to parents are informative and provide a clear indication of the next steps their children need to take in their learning.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Teachers know their pupils and their families well. Consistent strategies are in place to ensure high standards of behaviour. Good co-operation with the attendance welfare officer is improving attendance and punctuality, although these are not yet good as they should be. Healthy living is a priority and the school has good arrangements to encourage pupils to be healthy and physically fit. Good strategies, which are well known by the pupils, are in place should there be any bullying or harassment. At present, the personal, social and health education programme is too broad and general. However, the school's provision for sex and relationships and drugs misuse is good. The school has procedures and has an appropriate policy for safeguarding. Nearly all pupils' spiritual and moral development are very good.

Pupils have ample opportunity to reflect about Christian beliefs and appreciate the beliefs of others. They are developing a good understanding of right and wrong, honesty and fairness. Socially, pupils interact well.

The school follows effective procedures to identify pupils who have additional learning needs. Twice-yearly, detailed individual education plans ensure appropriate support and guidance for all identified pupils. The school seeks and accesses supplementary advice from specialist external agencies as necessary. This support is effective and most pupils make good progress as a result. The school's tracking system is used well to identify pupils' progress. All relevant staff and parents are regularly involved in updates on progress.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school promotes equality of opportunity all and actively challenges negative stereotyping. It helps pupils develop an understanding for others and encourages high expectations for all. This supports the good progress made by most pupils. The school has also been successful in narrowing the gap in performance between boys and girls. Suitable adaptations have been made to the building to ensure equality of access for all users.

The overall quality of the accommodation is good. The interior of the school is brightly decorated with some very good artwork and displays creating an environment that is conducive to learning. The little raised areas in the classrooms are a very attractive feature and increase the useable space in the classes. Pupils use these effectively to support their learning and to develop their social skills. The toilet facilities for the pupils are excellent. The youngest children have a suitable, safe play area with 'soft-fall' tarmac enabling them to learn through play safely. Older pupils enjoy the two fitness trails, which they use well, and this helps them develop co-ordination and raise their fitness levels.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
--	-------------

### **Leadership: Good**

The acting headteacher provides effective leadership. She ensures that there is a strong link between initiatives undertaken by the school and their positive effect on pupils' standards. Senior staff have established a clear and appropriate vision for the school that is shared and promoted by all. Decisions made are reviewed regularly to inform progress. There is a good distributed management system, which has encouraged subject leaders and middle managers to develop their roles effectively. This has enabled them to have a good grasp of the wider implications of their work. Performance management is effective and contributes significantly to the good quality of teaching and to improvements in pupils' standards.

The governing body provides effective support. They have a good understanding of the way the school is performing when compared with similar schools. Governors are aware of the issues arising from data analysis and the school's own self-evaluation. They regularly use this information to challenge and support the school's professional leadership. However, many members of the governing body

have not undertaken training to help them to shape the educational direction of the school effectively. The governors have appropriate policies to undertake their statutory duties. They also give full attention to relevant legislation and guidance.

The school implements local and national priorities well, such as adopting and implementing principles and procedures from the School Effectiveness Framework.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The school's self-evaluation process is effective and every member of staff contributes well to it. It includes a thorough analysis of performance data, the monitoring of provision and a review of all aspects of the school's life and work. The self-evaluation report is a useful and comprehensive document that focuses clearly on improving pupils' standards. The acting headteacher and senior management team have very clear picture of the school's performance, its strengths and areas for development. There is a wide range of rigorous monitoring activities, including accurate and evaluative lesson observations. The school has been effective in ensuring continued improvement over the last few years. The school has established effective networks of professional practice in the school and with other schools and partners in the community. Members of staff take advantage of all opportunities to develop their expertise and are very keen to take part in activities to improve their effectiveness.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Partnerships with parents, the community and other schools are good and contribute to realising the school's aims effectively. Pupils receive visitors from the community to speak to them. This makes a positive contribution towards enriching their learning experiences and their awareness of their locality, Wales and the wider world. There are constructive links with local businesses and higher education establishments to provide students with work experience in the school. There are strong links with 'Communities First', which promote projects such as the school garden. There is effective collaboration and planning between the school and the local secondary school, two schools in the family of schools and schools in the local cluster, resulting in effective transition from primary to secondary education.

### **Resource management: Good**

The acting headteacher and senior management team administer all resources efficiently and effectively. The school management structure ensures an appropriate level of staffing, so that teachers can deliver the curriculum successfully. Members of staff succeed in creating an attractive and stimulating learning environment in all classes and learning areas. School expenditure decisions are linked well with priorities for improvement and developing pupils' wellbeing. Sharing resources with partners, such as schools in the cluster, is a strength and leads to better outcomes for pupils. Teachers are released to engage in the statutory allocation of planning, assessment and preparation time, which has a positive effect on their professional development. As a result of the good progress made by many pupils, the school provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

In 2011, standards at the end of key stage 1 in English were above the average for the family (a group of schools that face similar levels of challenge) but below local authority and national averages. In mathematics and science, the school was below all three comparators. Compared with relative performance levels in schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were in the upper 50% for English and in the lower 50% for mathematics and science. In English, mathematics and science combined (the core subject indicator), they were in the upper 50% compared with those of similar schools. Standards have improved since 2009 and the overall trend is upward. Over the last four years, standards in the core subject indicator declined from the top 25% to the lowest 25%, then recovered to the upper 50% for the last two years.

At the end of key stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science were above the family average, but below the local authority and national averages. Compared with those of similar schools, standards were in the top 25% for the core subject indicator. They were in the upper 50% for English and mathematics and in the lower 50% for science. The overall trend over the last three years has been strongly upward. Over the last four years, standards in the core subject indicator declined from the lower 50% to the lowest 25%, then recovered, first to the upper 50% then the top 25% over the last two years.

Boys strongly outperformed girls at key stage 1, but at key stage 2 girls' performance levels were only slightly below those of boys. At the end of key stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was above the family average, but below the local authority and national average. In English and science, percentages were below in all three indicators. Pupils who were eligible for free school meals performed below average in all three indicators at both key stages.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Parent questionnaires

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaires due to the small number of responses received (fewer than 10).

#### Learner questionnaires

There were 64 responses to the questionnaire for pupils and they unanimously state that:

- they feel safe in school; and
- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress.

Nearly all pupils state that:

- they know whom to go to if they are worried or upset;
- the school teaches them how to keep healthy;
- there are lots of chances at school for them to take regular exercise;
- they understand how well they were doing in school;
- they know what to do and whom to ask if they find their work hard;
- homework helps them understand and improve their work in school; and
- they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

A few pupils disagree that:

- the school deals well with any bullying;
- other children behave well and that they can get on with their work; and
- nearly all children behave well at playtime and at lunch time.

These responses compare well with the national benchmarks for responses from pupils.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Stephen Dennett	Reporting Inspector
Enir Morgan	Team Inspector
Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Isabel Hind	Peer Inspector
Catherine James	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://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.