



*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**

**White Rose Primary  
White Rose Way  
New Tredegar  
NP24 6DF**

**Date of inspection: February 2012**

**by**

**Dr P D Ellis**

**for**

**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.

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## Context

White Rose Primary School is situated in New Tredegar and was formed in 2004 from the amalgamation of three local primary schools. It is part of a complex that contains a resource centre and an integrated children's centre. The hall is shared by the school and the community.

The traditional catchment area includes the village of New Tredegar and the surrounding area, but a significant percentage of pupils come from further afield due to parental choice and around a quarter of families are relatively mobile. The majority of pupils live in the eighth most deprived ward in Wales and the most disadvantaged in Caerphilly County Borough. Around 35% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is above the local authority and national averages. The ability of pupils on entry is generally below average.

Currently there are 294 pupils in the school, aged three to eleven, taught in five mixed age and four single age classes, plus a nursery which contains 48 part-time pupils. The number on roll has declined since the last inspection. Around 22% of pupils are registered as requiring special educational needs support, which is similar to the national average; three have a statement. Around 2% come from an ethnic minority background, but none receives support in English as an additional language. Two pupils use Welsh as their first language and four are looked after by the local authority.

The school was last inspected in February 2006. In October 2011 a new headteacher was appointed; he is temporarily in charge of White Rose and a neighbouring primary school and so divides his time between them. As a result, the deputy headteacher has a part-time teaching commitment.

The individual school budget per pupil for White Rose Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £2969 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Caerphilly is £6779 and the minimum is £2494. White Rose Primary School is 37th out of the 75 primary schools in Caerphilly in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The school's overall performance is adequate because:

- although there are indications of improvement, standards have generally been below local authority and Wales averages over the last three years and they have been consistently low at the higher levels 3 and 5;
- standards in reading and writing in the Foundation Phase are below the family, local authority and Wales averages and show a downward trend, although in key stage 2 they are improving;
- across the school boys consistently perform less well than girls in the three core subjects at the expected levels, especially in all aspects of literacy;
- although most pupils make good progress through the school, many on free school meals and who are more able underachieve relative to their potential; and
- attendance is below the family, local authority and national averages.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the recently appointed headteacher is beginning to strengthen the school's leadership and management arrangements;
- all staff work very effectively together and are committed to taking the school forward;
- teaching and self-evaluation are good;
- the school's facilities and resources are excellent; and
- strong local partnerships provide support and a good basis for further improvement.

## Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in English and mathematics across the school with particular attention to reading, writing and presentation;
- R2 ensure pupils on free school meals and those who are more able achieve their potential;
- R3 raise levels of attendance; and
- R4 ensure marking of pupils' work is consistent within and between classes.

### **What happens next?**

*The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.*

## Main findings

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

Adequate

#### Standards: Adequate

Standards in oracy are good and better than the family across the school. Nearly all pupils speak clearly and listen attentively. They participate well in discussions within lessons and socially .

Standards in reading and writing in the Foundation Phase are below the family, local authority and Wales averages and show a downward trend, but in key stage 2 they are improving. Most pupils make good progress in phonic and decoding skills and by the end of key stage 2 many are enthusiastic readers.

Most pupils' writing skills are adequate. They write for an appropriate range of purposes, but work is often restricted and contains errors in spelling and punctuation. Handwriting and presentation are untidy in many books both in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

Standards in numeracy and thinking skills are good. Nearly all pupils use problem-solving skills well across the curriculum.

Information and communication technology skills are very good across the school. Pupils use a wide range of software and applications to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.

Over the last few years cohorts have varied, as have standards in both key stages in English and mathematics at the expected levels. There has been a downward trend overall recently in the Foundation Phase, but improvements have occurred in key stage 2. At times results have been better than the family, but generally they have been below local authority and Wales averages. They have been higher in science, especially in the Foundation Phase. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels 3 and 5 in particular has been consistently low.

Results at the expected levels over the last five years in both key stages indicate that the school performs at least better than the majority of similar schools, except recently in English in the Foundation Phase and in mathematics in key stage 2. At the higher levels, however, the school has been mainly in the lower 50% or 25% of similar schools, especially in key stage 2.

Across the school boys consistently perform less well than girls in the three core subjects at the expected levels, especially in all aspects of literacy.

Although most pupils make good progress through the school, many on free school meals and who are more able underachieve relative to their potential.

Standards in Welsh language development are good overall, although there is some uneven progress from class to class. Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning Welsh.

## **Wellbeing: Adequate**

Nearly all pupils enjoy school; they are well motivated and keen to learn. All say they feel safe at school and nearly all know who to approach if they need help. Their very good behaviour reflects their positive attitude towards school life. They are consistently courteous towards visitors and each other.

All pupils have a secure understanding of healthy lifestyles and most try to make sensible food choices. The sports council organises a range of fitness activities, which has impacted on pupils' understanding of the need to take regular exercise.

Nearly all pupils work successfully together to solve problems or to achieve a given task and older ones participate in various entrepreneurial activities. With support from staff, they consider how to improve their work by sharing ideas and reflecting on progress against agreed goals.

In the academic year 2010-2011 whole school attendance was 91.0%; this is well below the family, local authority and national averages. The level has been maintained at 91.3% from the start of the Autumn term 2011 to date. A few pupils regularly arrive in school late.

Most pupils make full use of opportunities to take on responsibilities and to participate in decision-making. They develop a strong sense of allegiance to the school and the wider community. The school council is well developed and members are committed and active.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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## **Learning experiences: Good**

The school plans and provides an interesting, broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements; it is based around a two-year cycle of themes, which engage and stimulate most pupils and build on previous knowledge systematically. Recommended contact time is exceeded in both key stages.

The school plans well to develop skills across all areas of the curriculum and pupils have relevant opportunities to use these in meaningful contexts. Provision to develop information and communication technology skills is particularly good.

The provision for Welsh language is developing effectively and provides a firm foundation for pupils' language skills. The school plans very well to provide for the Welsh dimension in all subjects.

Staff work closely together to ensure that identified pupils have appropriate additional support. Recently introduced intervention programmes and a new reading scheme are having a significant impact on standards for individual pupils.

The school provides a wide range of interesting extra-curricular clubs which are generally well attended. Together with educational visits, they make a significant contribution to pupils' social and learning skills.

The eco committee and the eco code encourage pupils to think in a responsible way about conservation issues and the importance of recycling and re-usage; members are very actively involved. Pupils' understanding of global citizenship, however, is relatively underdeveloped.

### **Teaching: Good**

All teachers have up-to-date subject knowledge and provide good language role models. They plan well and share learning objectives effectively. They use a very good range of teaching methods and resources that stimulate and hold pupils' interest well. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and pupil-led activities.

Teaching is generally well paced, although occasionally introductions are overlong. In nearly all lessons there are good links to previous work. In the best lessons there are high expectations.

Levels of challenge are generally appropriate with work planned to suit all ages and abilities, including those with special needs. In a few lessons, however, teaching does not always sufficiently stretch the more able.

Staff relationships with pupils are very good and this creates a very positive environment for learning.

The school has clear and comprehensive assessment policies. Effective records are used to track pupils' progress and to signal intervention when necessary.

The quality of teachers' oral feedback in lessons is generally good and provides pupils with a clear way forward. However, marking is not consistent, although, where it is good, it is thorough with well-considered, supportive comments.

Assessment for learning procedures support pupils' progress and improvement and older pupils are involved in target setting and self and peer assessment. However, these aspects are not embedded consistently across the school.

Annual reports to parents are informative and meet statutory requirements.

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

There are effective arrangements to provide care, support and guidance, involving a range of initiatives and 'wrap around' care provision.

Pupils have opportunities to learn about nutrition and a balanced diet and physical exercise is provided frequently.

Personal and social education is appropriately planned and extensive. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Staff consistently emphasise positive values and manage behaviour very well.

There are regular and successful fund-raising events that help develop pupils' empathy for others and a sense of responsibility. Charities are well supported and older pupils help younger ones.

Specialist services, local authority agencies and visitors to school enhance the provision and bring particular expertise which is beneficial to pupils' learning and wellbeing.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding. All necessary health and safety measures are in place.

There are effective arrangements to support pupils with additional needs, including those who are vulnerable, and their progress is carefully monitored. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly with parents.

The system for recording attendance is time-consuming; it is in the process of revision to include a first-day response system. The education welfare officer is very active in supporting the school's efforts to improve attendance.

### **Learning environment: Excellent**

The school is a fully inclusive community where diversity is recognised and celebrated and where tolerant attitudes are developed. Pupils and parents agree that any incidents of harassment, bullying or inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

The school has a strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. All necessary policies and procedures are in place to ensure fairness and equity for all.

The school is purpose-built to cater for pupils and staff with any disability and, as a result, all parts of the building and site are fully accessible.

The school provides an excellent and very stimulating learning environment. The use of well-equipped specialist rooms makes a major contribution to pupils' all-round development. Imaginative displays enhance the classrooms and corridors.

Externally, the playground is used very well and enables pupils to experience outdoor learning and play with purpose. The large library is well stocked, although the books are not displayed to best advantage to encourage browsing.

An excellent range of quality resources supplement and enrich the curriculum. Computer and laptop facilities are very good throughout the school.

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

The school's vision, mission and aims are clearly outlined in the prospectus and regularly reviewed. They form a firm foundation for the school's positive ethos, which ensures all pupils and staff feel valued and included.

Since his appointment, the headteacher has carefully analysed the school's current strengths and areas for development, but there has been insufficient time for his influence to have an impact on standards. He has established good relationships with pupils, staff, governors and parents and is beginning to strengthen the school's leadership and management arrangements.

The deputy headteacher is very supportive and efficiently undertakes several managerial responsibilities.

Distributed leadership is well embedded across the school. The senior management team is beginning to take a more strategic role, although its structure is currently under review. All teachers are subject leaders and their role is being successfully developed.

Staff work very effectively together and meet regularly to share information and good practice.

Performance management procedures meet statutory requirements and involve all teachers, although the arrangements are being reviewed. All support staff have an annual interview. Targets are aligned to professional needs and the priorities of the school development plan.

The governing body meets at least once a term; it is supportive and kept well informed. Each governor has a subject interest and most visit regularly and attend training events. They contribute to the school's strategic direction, but are heavily reliant on the headteacher and staff for the generation of documentation.

All statutory policies are in place and there are procedures for making a complaint, but the governing body's annual report to parents has several omissions.

The school effectively addresses local and national priorities.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The school uses a comprehensive range of processes to inform strategic planning and to determine its strengths and weaknesses. The self-evaluation report is comprehensive, although in places it is overly descriptive.

All staff participate in self-evaluation and development planning and outcomes from the monitoring of teaching and learning effectively feed into this process. Parents and pupils also contribute their views and the school makes good use of local authority monitoring visits to evaluate standards and provision.

The school development plan has been drawn up following careful consideration of the school's priorities and targets for improvement. It is appropriately costed and

defined in terms of the actions required and it is closely linked to the self-evaluation report.

In relation to progress since the last inspection, there has been improvement in the quality of teaching and in the role of subject leaders, but the other two recommendations have not yet been fully addressed. .

The shared headship arrangement has helped to create professional working partnerships between the two schools involved with a natural exchange of ideas. Both schools belong to a network for the development of Welsh within the cluster and one for physical education is at the planning stage. Other collaborative initiatives allow staff to work together to promote good practice.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school works well with a range of partners. Parents are encouraged to participate in activities, but their involvement is limited. Nearly all pupils and parents are satisfied with the homework arrangements.

Links with the integrated children's centre on site are particularly strong. Staff from this facility and the school work very well together to provide high quality services for children and families. Transition arrangements from pre-school to nursery are very good.

Transition to the receiving secondary school is good and teachers meet regularly to moderate pupils' work in the core subjects and Welsh. Local authority and school standards portfolios are used in most subjects to provide teachers with benchmarking guidance. This helps to help ensure that the school is accurate in its assessments.

The school benefits from the close proximity of community facilities, including a library and museum; these are used well to support pupils' learning.

There are useful links with local businesses and community groups which provide additional learning experiences for pupils.

The school provides placements for student teachers and teaching assistants; all benefit from the support and experiences provided.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

The school is well staffed. It has a full complement of well-qualified and experienced teachers and an increasing number of valuable support staff. All work well together, are clear about their roles and are effectively deployed.

All staff are provided with continuing professional development opportunities related to their performance management targets and school priorities. All teachers attend relevant in-service courses, which are evaluated and discussed in staff meetings. In-house staff development also occurs regularly during closure days, often in association with the local cluster.

An agreed policy and an effective timetable for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time are in place. All requirements of the national workload agreement are met.

The school buildings are secure and very well maintained. There is an on-going programme of accommodation improvements and the cleaning and appearance of the school is carefully monitored.

The very good quality resources are well managed, easily accessed by pupils and appropriately stored, so that the school has a very orderly and tidy appearance.

Spending decisions are monitored by the governing body finance committee. They are closely matched to school priorities and are based on raising standards. Due mainly to the shared headship arrangement, the budget for 2010-11 showed a surplus of around 13%, but this has now been considerably reduced.

Even though the school has good prospects for improvement, there are shortcomings in outcomes and so the school provides adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

In 2011 in the Foundation Phase results overall and in English at the expected level 2 were below the previous four years and the family, local authority and Wales averages. In mathematics results were very similar to the previous two years and the family, but below local authority and Wales averages. In science results were better than 2009 and the family and Wales averages and similar to the local authority average, but below 2010. The trend has fluctuated in English and science, but has been fairly static in mathematics.

In 2011 in the Foundation Phase results at the higher level 3 in English were better than the previous two years and the family, but below local authority and Wales averages. In mathematics and science results were below the family and Wales averages, which they have been consistently in all previous four years. The trend in all three subjects has fluctuated.

In 2011 in key stage 2 results overall at the expected level 4 were marginally better than the previous two years and similar to the family, but below local authority and Wales averages. In English results were better than the previous four years and the family, but below local authority and Wales averages, as they have been consistently for the previous four years. In mathematics results were below the previous two years and the family, local authority and Wales averages. In science results were below the previous two years and local authority and Wales averages, but better than the family. The trend in English is steadily upwards to 2011, but in mathematics it has fluctuated and in science it has been fairly static.

In 2011 results at the higher level 5 in key stage 2 in all three core subjects were below the previous year and well below the family, local authority and Wales averages, as they have been consistently for the previous four years. The trend has fluctuated in English and mathematics over the last five years, but has been steadily downwards in science since 2008.

Results in 2011 in the Foundation Phase in oracy were above the family and Wales averages, but below the local authority average; in reading and writing they were below the family, local authority and Wales averages. In oracy the trend has been fluctuating and in reading and writing it has been slowly downwards since 2008. Results in 2011 in key stage 2 in oracy and writing were above the family and similar to local authority and Wales averages, but in reading, although similar to the family, they were below local authority and Wales averages. The trend in oracy has levelled out recently after a rise to 2009 and in reading and writing it has been generally upwards.

Results at the expected levels over the last five years in both key stages indicate that the school performs at least better than the majority of similar schools, except recently in English in the Foundation Phase and in mathematics in key stage 2. At the higher levels, however, the school has been mainly in the lower 50% or 25% of similar schools, especially in key stage 2.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

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

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and one pupils completed the questionnaire.

All pupils consider:

- they feel safe in school;
- they learn how to keep healthy; and
- they are doing well at school.

Nearly all pupils think:

- they are helped to learn and to make progress;
- they have enough books and equipment;
- they know who to ask if they find their work hard;
- the school deals well with any bullying;
- they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- they have plenty of opportunities for regular exercise; and
- homework helps them to improve their work in school.

Most pupils believe:

- other pupils behave well so they can get their work done; and
- nearly all pupils behave well at playtimes and lunch time.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Dr P David Ellis	Reporting Inspector
Mrs. Gillian Harrison	Team Inspector
Mrs. Margaret Turford	Team Inspector
Mrs. Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Mrs. Catherine Barnett	Peer Inspector
Mr. Graham Phillips	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. FPYear 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.