



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

**Report of visit
Level of follow-up: Estyn monitoring**

**Fairwater Primary School
Wellwright Road
Fairwater
Cardiff
CF5 3ED**

Date of visit: September 2014

by

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

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The monitoring team

Rhona Edwards	Reporting Inspector
Kevin Davies	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

Fairwater Primary School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in July 2013.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is increasing the level of follow-up activity.

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan, showing how it is going to address the recommendations.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about 12 months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards in the Foundation Phase outcomes and in English, Welsh, mathematics and science by the end of key stage 2, with particular attention to the performance of boys

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

In the Foundation Phase at the expected outcome 5, when compared with that of similar schools, the school's performance in 2014 remains in the bottom 25% for literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. Although outcomes in literacy show a slight improvement on 2013 performance, outcomes in numeracy and personal and social development have declined. At the higher than expected outcome 6, performance in 2014 has improved in literacy and numeracy. Performance in literacy places the school in the lower 50% of similar schools, with performance in numeracy placing it in the higher 50%. However, in personal and social development, outcomes have declined, moving the school to the bottom 25% of similar schools. Continuing to raise performance at both the expected and higher outcomes remains a priority for the school.

In 2014 at the expected level 4, performance in English in key stage 2 has improved on 2013 levels, with the school moving from the bottom 25% to the lower 50% of similar schools. Performance in mathematics has improved notably, moving the school from the bottom 25% to the higher 50%, but for outcomes in science the school has remained in the bottom 25%. At the higher than expected level 5, performance in 2014 in English and science has improved considerably. For performance in both of these subjects, the school has moved from the lower 50% to the top 25% of similar schools. Performance in mathematics has also improved, moving the school from the higher 50% to the top 25% of similar schools.

The gap in performance between boys and girls in all three areas of learning and in the three core subjects remains greater than the average for other schools in the same family. Reducing the gap in performance continues to be an important priority for the school.

The teacher assessment outcomes above relate to the performance of both pupils in the main school and in the learning resource base at both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. However, discounting the performance of pupils in the specialist class makes little difference to the overall results. In addition, scrutiny of pupils' work from 2013 to 2014 at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 indicates that assessment at the higher than expected levels is overgenerous in literacy and mathematics, as most pupils' work does not show significant improvement over the year.

In both Year 2 and Year 6, as many activities are worksheet based, most pupils' ability to write extended pieces in literacy sessions and in their work across the curriculum is limited. Many pupils do not spell accurately at a level appropriate to their age and ability and their use of basic punctuation is not secure. The handwriting of many pupils is untidy, as is their presentation of work. However, tasks for pupils of lower ability in literacy are appropriate and this enables them to make progress in line with their ability.

In mathematics lessons, there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils, who often complete the same work as pupils of average ability. However, tasks for less able pupils are adapted well to meet their needs. Although many pupils are developing their problem solving skills in number, they do not apply these well in other areas of mathematics and this means that it is difficult for pupils to achieve the higher than expected level. Nearly all pupils' ability to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum is limited. However, in key stage 2 science, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills. This means that teacher assessment at the higher level is secure in science and many pupils achieve well.

The school has made good progress in developing the Welsh language. Many pupils in the Foundation Phase display positive attitudes to learning Welsh and make good progress in their use and understanding of the Welsh language. They speak confidently about familiar topics and follow basic instructions in Welsh very well. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils speak about themselves and a wide range of familiar topics with accuracy and good pronunciation. Most pupils read appropriately for their age and many write to a good standard in a limited range of styles and contexts.

Recommendation 2: Improve levels of attendance

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Between 2010 and 2013, attendance declined, moving the school from the top 25% to the lower 50% of similar schools. However, unverified data for 2014 indicates a two-percentage point increase on 2013 levels to 94.4%. This is a notable improvement.

Over the last 12 months, newly introduced procedures have reduced by one-third the numbers of pupils with attendance of 90% or less and punctuality has improved considerably. The weekly class and whole school 'Attendance Race' are having a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to regular attendance. In addition, attendance figures published on the school website weekly and in the half-termly newsletter effectively raise parental awareness of the importance of their children attending

school regularly and being punctual in the mornings. However, maintaining improved attendance and reducing lateness in the mornings remain priorities for the school.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that the recent improvements in assessment procedures are used consistently across the school to meet the individual needs of all pupils

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school continues to develop its strategies to assess, record and track pupils' progress in mathematics and literacy. However, these strategies are not yet having a positive effect on raising the standards that most pupils achieve.

Nearly all staff assess and mark pupils' work well on a day to day basis. Comments consistently give a clear indication of what pupils have achieved and indicate the next steps needed to improve their work. However, the setting of individual targets to help pupils improve their work in literacy and numeracy remains inconsistent. Most pupils are unaware of their personal targets.

The school is continuing to develop its tracking of pupils' progress and staff use this information well to identify pupils who are at risk of underperforming due to under development of their basic skills. As a result, teachers plan appropriate support in intervention groups and this has a positive effect on raising achievement at the expected level at the end of each key stage. Pupils with additional learning needs also work on tasks appropriate to their ability. However, systems are not yet sufficiently robust to set challenging targets to meet the specific needs of all pupils, particularly those who are more able. Improving the accuracy and reliability of teacher assessment at the higher levels in literacy and mathematics, in particular, remains a priority for development.

Recommendation 4: Focus the school's evaluations of its performance on first hand evidence

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has now established a self-evaluation process that uses an appropriate range of first-hand evidence to inform judgements about its performance. Subject co-ordinators monitor progress through the good use of data analysis, occasional lesson observations and the scrutiny of books. They produce detailed future improvement plans as a result, and these form the basis of the whole school improvement plan. However, most priorities in this plan do not have clear success criteria against which to measure progress and there are too many non-specific targets. This means that the school's priorities for development lack a clear focus.

The senior management team's role in the self-evaluation process lacks strategic direction. Leaders do not take sufficient responsibility for overall standards within the school. There are no systems for senior leaders to monitor and evaluate issues identified by co-ordinators as areas for development to ensure consistent improvements in teaching and learning. This means that, since the inspection of the school in July 2013, senior leaders have made too little progress in moving the school forward.

Recommendation 5: Extend the roles of all subject co-ordinators so that they impact more effectively on standards

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Over the last 12 months, subject leaders, particularly the co-ordinator for literacy and numeracy, who has a senior leadership role, have worked hard to develop their roles by monitoring provision and standards in their subjects across the school. They undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and with enthusiasm. Their ability to evaluate accurately the standards that pupils achieve is developing. This is through the occasional observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work to identify strengths and areas for development.

However, senior leaders do not ensure that issues for improvement identified by subject co-ordinators are followed up, or that support is provided for teachers where necessary to bring about improvements in practice. This means that too many of the initiatives introduced since the summer of 2013 have little impact on improving the overall quality of teaching and learning.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.