



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: significant improvement**

**Nant Celyn Primary School
Henllys Way
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 7DJ
United Kingdom**

Date of visit: November 2013

by

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

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The monitoring team

Mike Maguire	Reporting Inspector
Eleanor Davies	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

Nant Celyn Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in September 2012.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards in end of key stage assessments in both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Pupils' performance in the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2 has generally improved.

In the Foundation Phase, scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that most pupils make good progress in their learning. They produce work of a standard appropriate to their age and ability in language, mathematical and personal and social development. In all areas of learning, pupils' progress now compares very well with that of pupils in other similar schools.

End-of-key-stage 2 assessments show an upward trend in pupils' performance over the last three years. Scrutiny of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science also indicates that there has been an improvement in standards with many pupils now producing work that is of the expected level. In English and science, the performance of pupils at the higher level compares very well with the performance of pupils in other similar schools.

To further improve, the school needs to continue with its sound strategies to raise standards, particularly at key stage 2.

Recommendation 2: Raise standards of reading and writing across the school

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

There are now good opportunities for pupils to read independently and to an adult. Also, there are appropriate arrangements to support the learning of different ability groups of pupils, particularly at the top end of key stage 2. These strategies are helping to improve pupils' reading skills and the most recent assessments indicate that many pupils across the school are making good progress.

By the end of Year 2, almost half of pupils read very well. These pupils generally read with fluency and make good attempts to pronounce new words. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils understand what they read, express opinions about their books clearly and predict what is likely to happen in a story. They read with increasing confidence but are not yet fluent and expressive enough when reading a range of different texts.

In literacy lessons across the school, pupils are given a good range of opportunities to write for a variety of different purposes. There are also many opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. For example, older key stage 2 pupils use information and communication technology programs to summarise a text for inclusion in a comic strip.

Pupils' writing skills across the school are generally improving. In the Foundation Phase, more able pupils produce written work that makes sense, is well organised and is punctuated accurately. In key stage 2, many pupils write for a wide range of different audiences. They use an appropriate range of vocabulary and are beginning to structure their work well. However, many pupils across the school spell a range of common words incorrectly. In addition, standards of literacy amongst girls are generally better than those of boys.

The school needs to continue with its strategies to improve the general underperformance of boys and the accuracy of pupils' spelling.

Recommendation 3: Raise standards of pupils' Welsh language

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Pupils' attainment in Welsh second language at the end of key stage 2 was much better in 2013 than in the previous year. It is now better than the local authority and Wales averages at the expected level.

The school now devotes appropriate time to the formal teaching of the Welsh language. All classrooms have relevant displays illustrating the use of common Welsh terms describing, for example, the weather and aspects of the history and culture of Wales.

Older pupils read simple stories in Welsh well and make good attempts to pronounce unfamiliar words. They ask and respond confidently to questions in a familiar context and are beginning to write short texts in Welsh using a range of sentence patterns. However, most pupils find it difficult to use their knowledge of Welsh words and phrases to respond to questions in less familiar contexts.

The school needs to extend the range of vocabulary and sentence patterns that pupils use as they progress through the school.

Recommendation 4: Raise the levels of expectation and challenge provided for pupils in lessons

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school's leaders and managers ensure that all teachers understand fully what is expected of them in providing pupils with challenging learning experiences. They have done this, in part, by introducing common planning formats. These ensure that teachers plan to support pupils of different abilities through tasks that are well matched to their abilities. This has raised teachers' expectations and they now expect pupils to produce work of the highest standard of which they are capable.

All teachers have challenging performance management targets that relate to improving the quality of their teaching. Nearly all teachers have responded well to these targets.

The school's monitoring records of lessons and pupils' work show that the standard of teaching has improved considerably over the last year. Teachers work well in teams to plan and monitor each other's lessons to make sure that the school's requirements for providing all pupils with a suitable level of challenge are met. These actions have begun to have a very positive impact on the standard of pupils' work, particularly in the Foundation Phase and at the higher levels in English and science at key stage 2.

The school has good plans to further challenge pupils with tasks that extend their thinking and problem solving skills so that they can learn better independently.

Recommendation 5: Improve feedback for pupils so that they are clear about how to improve their work

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

There is now a strong whole-school focus on the development of assessment for learning.

Teachers use a good range of strategies to support pupils and to give them feedback on how well they are doing. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and usually provide clear written comments that indicate what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. They also discuss work with pupils regularly and identify suitable targets for improvement. Nearly all pupils are aware of their targets and are generally eager to make progress in order to achieve them. This is helping to raise standards in reading and writing throughout the school.

This detailed feedback to pupils is not yet consistent or specific enough in all classes throughout the school.

Recommendation 6: Improve the rigour with which leaders and managers respond to shortcomings in teaching and learning

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school's leaders and managers have made very good progress in implementing this recommendation. They have introduced effective procedures for monitoring teaching and learning through lesson observations and the regular scrutiny of pupils' work. This enables any shortcomings to be identified.

Managers support staff to undertake appropriate training and professional development to address any shortcomings and to improve the quality of teaching and learning generally. All teachers discuss and agree appropriate development plans with managers and these contain specific targets for improvement. These processes are helping the school to develop as a strong learning community.

The school also has good systems to ensure that teachers use consistent methods for the teaching of particular skills. For example, in the Foundation Phase, teachers monitor each other's lessons on the teaching of reading to ensure that all pupils have a good range of high quality learning experiences.

Leaders and managers introduced these rigorous systems shortly after the last inspection. Since that time, there has been a steady improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and this has generally had a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve.

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.