



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: special measures**

**Oak Field Primary School
Amroth Court
Caldy Close
Gibbonsdown
Barry
Vale of Glamorgan
CF62 9DU**

Date of visit: June 2013

by

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



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The monitoring team

Mike Maguire	Reporting Inspector
Richard Lloyd	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

Oak Field Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in June 2011.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from any further follow-up activity.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards in literacy across the curriculum

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Teachers provide a very good range of opportunities for pupils to write in different contexts and purposes across the curriculum. They ensure that pupils are fully aware of the key features they require to create successful written work.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. They develop a sound understanding of basic spelling patterns and punctuation. Many write well for a variety of purposes and most present their work well. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils write effectively across the curriculum. Many also present their work neatly, organise it appropriately in paragraphs and use punctuation correctly.

Pupils' reading ages indicate that many pupils across the school make good progress in improving their reading skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, 75% of pupils have reading ages above their actual ages. By the end of key stage 2, 86% of pupils have a reading age that is at least equal to their actual age and many read with fluency and good understanding. Most pupils have positive attitudes to reading and express clear preferences for different authors and styles of books. More able pupils display very good reading skills such as the ability to draw hidden messages from the text.

Recommendation 2: Plan the curriculum to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills more coherently and systematically and make sure it meets statutory requirements

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The systems and structures for planning lessons are firmly in place. Teachers plan well for the long, medium and short term using a common format. This is improving the consistency in planning between classes. Teachers often plan literacy work well and in considerable detail. For example, plans for different ability groups have a clear focus on relevant and specific learning outcomes. This is enabling many of the more able pupils in upper key stage 2 to make better progress. Curriculum plans in the Foundation Phase are precise and often contain detailed evaluations that help to inform the next stage of learning.

In key stage 2, there is now an appropriate coverage of the subjects of the National Curriculum and plans clearly identify the content to be covered. The use of 'skill ladders' ensures continuity and progression in planning for the development of skills within each subject area.

Senior leaders monitor planning and its evaluation effectively.

Recommendation 3: Provide effective and consistent leadership at all levels

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school continues to address areas for improvement in a methodical way. The acting headteacher has communicated a clear vision for the strategic direction of the school. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities well and work together as an effective team. There is a regular programme of staff, senior management team and governor meetings and these focus appropriately on relevant school improvement issues. This clear emphasis on improvement has had a very positive impact on raising standards of pupils' literacy.

Performance management arrangements are working well and targets for the development of staff are linked to improvements in standards and teaching. There is a now full complement of governors and they provide supportive leadership and challenge the school effectively.

Good progress has been made regarding the future leadership of the school. A permanent headteacher has recently been appointed. He will work with the current acting headteacher for a short period of time in order to provide for the effective transition of leadership roles. The school plans to appoint a deputy-headteacher for the beginning of the autumn term 2013. These permanent appointments provide the school with a significant degree of stability.

Recommendation 4: Provide training for all staff so they can develop their professional skills and experience excellent teaching and learning in other schools and settings

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has good processes for identifying staff development needs. Teachers and support staff receive appropriate professional development opportunities that help them to improve. They regularly share best practice and evaluate the impact of training they receive. This programme of continuous professional development is increasingly effective in raising standards of teaching, learning and wellbeing.

Professional development is also having a very positive impact on staff confidence, particularly in the Foundation Phase. Visits to other schools to observe learning and teaching have provided staff with assurances that their own practices are developing well and that the school is making good progress.

School staff have worked well with consultants from the local consortium and with other schools that face similar challenges in order to further develop professional

practices. For example, following a visit to a school in the same family, teachers have strengthened opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum in a range of different contexts. This enhanced provision for writing has contributed to raising standards of pupils' written work.

Professional development activities have also helped staff to meet the wider needs of pupils well and a school nurture initiative is having a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing. The school's administration officer has also received training and, as a result of her visit to the local high school, she has refined the school's financial management procedures to make them more efficient.

Recommendation 5: Manage resources more efficiently and effectively to ensure value for money

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school continues to manage its resources very efficiently and spends within the allocated budget.

The school accesses substantial funding from various grants which it uses appropriately to support literacy and information and communications technology development. The creation of a new library provides pupils with an attractive well-resourced reading area. The school allocates significant funding from the Pupil Deprivation Grant to support improvements in literacy across the age ranges. In addition, the employment of a resident health mentor has had a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of older pupils. Pupils make good use of the recently developed outdoor areas, including the eco and willow garden, to enhance their learning.

Recommendation 6: Improve the governing body's understanding of benchmarked performance data to increase the level of scrutiny and challenge it provides

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The work of the governing body and its knowledge of the school have improved significantly. The role of link governors is developing well. Several governors have visited the school to discuss issues with key members of staff and have informed all governors of their findings. These strategies are improving governors' first-hand knowledge of the work of the school.

Governors have undertaken training and discussions about the performance of pupils in the school and how this compares with that of pupils in other similar schools. Governors now question and challenge the school effectively. They have challenged the level of pupils' progress and the low numbers achieving the higher level 5 in literacy at key stage 2.

Recommendation 7: Establish rigorous systems to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school uses self-evaluation processes to accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Senior leaders routinely gather evidence from direct classroom observations, scrutinise pupils' work, analyse data and gather the opinions of staff, pupils and governors.

The headteacher has undertaken observations of all teachers. These identify strengths and areas for development. This process provides teachers with a clear idea of how well they are performing and the progress pupils make. Most teachers also monitor pupils' progress effectively through detailed analyses of assessment information. The school has gathered the views of parents, analysed the results and responded in detail to all concerns raised.

Recommendation 8: Align self-evaluation and school improvement planning in order to improve standards and the effective use of resources

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The outcomes of the school's self-evaluation processes have been shared with staff and governors and, as a result, they are clear about the school's main areas for improvement. School plans for improvement now focus on important areas for development, for example raising standards of pupils' literacy skills. Ongoing amendments to plans indicate that the school responds promptly to reviews of progress and changing circumstances.

Recommendations

In order to build on this progress, the school needs to:

- R1 Continue to develop the good team ethos that now exists
- R2 Continue to improve standards of learning and teaching
- R3 Resolve key stage 2 staffing issues