



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**

**St Ethelwold's Primary School
Melrose Avenue
Shotton
Deeside
Flintshire
CH5 1NG**

Date of visit: May 2013

by

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



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The monitoring team

Jane Rees	Reporting Inspector
Anwen Griffith	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

St Ethelwold's Voluntary Aided School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in February 2012.

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: Continue to improve standards in reading, writing and numeracy

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has put a range of literacy and numeracy strategies in place which have had a positive effect on raising standards, as reflected in the current school performance data. Nearly all pupils start school with weak literacy and numeracy skills. However, by the time they leave the school, most pupils make appropriate progress according to their age and ability.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase make appropriate progress in reading. They show interest in reading and teachers match books well to their ability. By the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils read with fluency and understanding. Many have a good knowledge of phonics and use this successfully to decode words. Older, more able pupils write in a variety of forms for different audiences. They are beginning to use punctuation accurately. However, due to the overuse of worksheets, few pupils write imaginatively and at length across the curriculum.

As they progress through key stage 2, most pupils make good progress in their reading. They read with fluency and show good understanding of the text. Most pupils are able to use research skills effectively to locate relevant information. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils write with confidence in a range of genres. Most have a sound grasp of punctuation and many organise their work into clear paragraphs. More able pupils use a wide vocabulary to good effect. Many pupils write in detail and at length. However, they do not demonstrate these skills as well across a range of subjects.

In the Foundation Phase, the majority of pupils' numeracy skills are developing appropriately in mathematics lessons. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use these skills across the curriculum. In key stage 2, most pupils have a sound understanding of place value and number concepts and can use them with confidence in a range of problem solving activities. They are beginning to apply numeracy skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum.

Recommendation 2: Improve the clarity, consistency and organisation of planning to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school's current long term planning provides a range of learning experiences to enhance pupils learning through a topic based curriculum.

Planning in the Foundation Phase ensures that pupils acquire relevant skills in the seven areas of learning and have regular opportunities to practise these skills. Throughout the school teachers have begun to plan opportunities to develop thinking, literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. However, these are at an early stage of development.

Short term planning is more consistent and identifies opportunities and activities for differentiation and challenge across the whole school, particularly in numeracy and literacy. Where planning is most effective, plans are evaluated and pupils' progress is monitored successfully. These processes are beginning to impact on future planning. Teachers' short term plans are now monitored effectively by the senior management team.

The school has identified the need to develop curriculum planning further in order to incorporate literacy and numeracy skills more consistently across all subjects.

Recommendation 3: Implement the Foundation Phase fully

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

Following the inspection the school reviewed its staffing and class structure. As a result, the Foundation Phase now works effectively as a unit with two classes sharing resources and the outdoor area. Both the indoor and outdoor areas are stimulating and well organised. Staff make appropriate use of good quality, clearly labelled resources to ensure that pupils have opportunities to make choices about their learning and access to a wide range of experiences.

There is a good balance between pupil-initiated and teacher-led tasks and pupils have regular opportunities to learn through play. Class routines are well developed and this helps pupils to become more independent. Pupils understand what is required of them in each of the learning areas and co-operate well to complete tasks independently. Pupils sustain interest in their chosen activity and are well supported by staff who extend their learning through the use of effective questioning techniques.

Recommendation 4: Improve the consistency of teaching and assessment

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Lesson observations and book scrutiny, show that teaching across the school is generally good. Teachers often display good subject knowledge and plan a wide range of activities appropriately. Where teaching is best, teachers plan effectively and share clear learning objectives with all pupils. In literacy and numeracy sessions, teachers differentiate tasks appropriately and at times challenge the more able pupils. However, this is not consistent across the school and across other subjects where differentiation is mainly by outcome.

The school has recently implemented assessment for learning and an appropriate range of strategies are now in place. However, these processes are not fully developed and do not have sufficient impact on standards. In the Foundation Phase, staff make appropriate assessments of pupils' progress through careful observation, and identify the next steps pupils' need to take in their learning. Across the school teachers mark pupils' work regularly and generally link comments to learning objectives. There is some evidence of pupils responding to marking, but this is not consistent and does not have enough impact on pupils' outcomes. At key stage 2 pupils are beginning to use self-assessment and peer assessment effectively. Most pupils have individual targets for literacy and numeracy and are aware of them. These are beginning to impact positively on pupils' learning.

Teachers use continuous assessments well to identify pupils who require additional support. The school responds quickly to pupils' needs. However, the school has not yet developed an assessment system that takes into account a wide enough range of different assessments. Through moderation processes, teachers' accuracy of levelling work is developing well.

Recommendation 5: Ensure that self-evaluation systems are robust and based on first hand evidence

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school now has an effective timetable for self-evaluation with a clear focus on the use of first-hand evidence to inform the process. Leaders and governors involve all members of the school community in the process and take account of the views of parents, staff and pupils successfully. They use information on pupil performance well and plan effectively to improve areas of under-attainment. There is a clear focus on raising standards of achievement and improving the quality of provision for all learners. This has resulted in improving standards in literacy and numeracy.

Most staff play an active role in self-evaluation and take responsibility for monitoring specific areas of the curriculum. The self-evaluation process draws firmly on direct evidence and includes session observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, a review of planning and an in-depth analysis of data. Leaders and managers make effective use of the information gathered to develop a clear picture of the school that identifies its strengths and weaknesses.

Recommendation 6: Use the outcomes of self-evaluation to ensure a clear focus for school development planning

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Following the inspection, the school set up a committee made up of members of the governing body and school staff to focus on development planning and improving standards. This committee has taken a lead role in developing an appropriate action plan and in monitoring its impact very effectively. It has produced a detailed and accurate assessment of the progress made towards the recommendations from the inspection. In addition, leaders and managers identify suitable priorities for improvement from the school's rigorous self-evaluation processes and use these to develop an outline plan for school development over the next three years.

The school now needs to complete a detailed development plan which indicates time scales, responsibilities and success criteria.

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.

In addition, it should address the health and safety issue which was brought to the attention of the school during the monitoring visit.