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Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Deighton Primary School
Stockton Way
Tredegar
Blaenau Gwent
NP22 3ES**

Date of inspection: October 17th – 20th 2011

by

**Dr. P. David Ellis
Reporting Inspector, under contract to Estyn**

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:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	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

Deighton Primary School was built in 1984 when it replaced Earl Street Infant and Junior school. It is situated on the outskirts of Tredegar at the head of the Sirhowy Valley within the Tredegar Central and West Ward, which is one of the two most deprived wards in the local authority (LA). The school serves a wide area and draws pupils from a range of social backgrounds; many families live in rented accommodation. Around 34% are entitled to receive free school meals, which is significantly above the LA and national averages.

There are currently 213 pupils on roll, taught in eight classes, two of which are mixed age, plus a nursery for 20 part-time pupils. The number on roll has steadily declined since the last inspection. There are ten full-time teachers and one part-time teacher, including the headteacher.

Baseline assessments indicate that ability on entry is generally well below the national average. Around 18% of pupils are registered as requiring special educational needs (SEN) support, which is below the national average; four have a statement. No pupils are looked after by the LA. Around 9% come from homes where English is an additional language, of whom around a third are from an ethnic minority background and about three quarters receive extra support in school. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language.

The school was last inspected in September 2005. It has been a Foundation Phase Early Start School since 2007, which means that no core data is available for key stage 1 since this date. There have been a number of recent staff changes, including the appointment of an acting deputy headteacher.

The individual school budget per pupil for Deighton Primary School in 2011-12 is £3467 per pupil, which compares with a maximum of £5429 and a minimum of £3194 for primary schools in Blaenau Gwent. The school has the 22nd highest budget per pupil out of the 27 primary schools in Blaenau Gwent.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

The school's overall performance is adequate because:

- although there is evidence of recent improvement in 2011, standards in previous years in key stage 2 have declined and almost always have been below the family, LA and Wales averages at both the expected and higher levels, especially in science;
- although intervention programmes are beginning to have a positive impact, most pupils' literacy skills, especially in reading and writing, remain below average;
- nearly all pupils only make modest progress through the school in their learning;
- Welsh language skills overall remain at an early stage of development;
- teaching and assessment are good overall, but are only beginning to impact sufficiently on standards; and
- there are shortcomings in the policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- although management structures are being appropriately developed, there are shortcomings in aspects of leadership and the organisation of school routines and resources;
- although there is evidence of good team work, practices vary between staff;
- in relation to self-evaluation, there is a lack of a systematic approach to monitoring and the use of first-hand evidence; and
- the school has made insufficient progress since the last inspection.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 improve skills and achievement in all aspects of literacy, including handwriting, through continuing to implement appropriate intervention programmes;
- R2 raise attainment levels by the end of key stage 2 at the expected and higher levels in each core subject, especially science;
- R3 continue to improve standards and provision in Welsh second language;
- R4 as a matter of urgency, ensure all necessary safeguarding arrangements and guidelines are in place;
- R5 address the management of behaviour issues raised in the report; and
- R6 effect improvements in leadership, management and self-evaluation.

What happens next?

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress 12 months after the publication of this report.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Starting from a low base, most pupils' literacy skills remain below average. In the Foundation Phase the majority attain the expected outcomes, although very few perform above this level. In key stage 2 results in oracy, reading and writing have consistently been well below the family, LA and Wales averages.

However, nearly all pupils listen well and speak clearly, although a majority in most year groups are hesitant readers and read below their chronological age. Most make adequate progress in their writing skills, with some good examples of different types of writing in Year 6, but generally a limited range of written work is produced, which is often poorly presented. Spelling is variable, but improves towards the end of key stage 2. Handwriting is particularly underdeveloped across the school.

Most pupils develop adequate numeracy and information and communication technology skills, but use them insufficiently across the curriculum. They are beginning to develop appropriate thinking skills.

In key stage 2 results in the three core subjects have almost always been below the family, LA and Wales averages over the last few years at both the expected and higher levels, particularly in science, with a downward trend especially in English, although there was a marked improvement in 2011 in all three subjects. The school has consistently been in the lower 50% or lowest 25% for each core subject over the last five years in comparison to similar schools.

In English and mathematics nearly all pupils make modest progress through key stage 2 and most achieve their predicted levels, but a significant minority fall behind in science.

There is no consistent trend in performance between boys and girls either in the Foundation Phase or in key stage 2, although boys have attained better in basic skills and core subjects recently. No specific groups appear to underachieve relative to their potential.

In Welsh second language most pupils have an understanding of, and respond to, a limited range of simple questions and instructions. Most in the Foundation Phase and many in key stage 2 show a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards using the language during lessons, but skills overall are underdeveloped and progress through the school is limited.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They have positive attitudes to keeping healthy and safe and understand the need to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. They

know who to approach if they feel worried or upset and generally develop well in their self-esteem and personal confidence.

Most pupils show care and concern for each other and older ones take responsibility as 'buddies' and prefects.

Most pupils engage conscientiously and enthusiastically in their set tasks. They develop appropriate independent learning skills and work together successfully. They make good progress in social and life skills, so that they are well prepared for experiences outside school. However, many are unsure about how to improve their learning and do not have sufficiently developed problem-solving skills.

Behaviour overall is good during lessons, especially in the Foundation Phase, but at times a low level of disruption affects learning. Anti-social behaviour arises more commonly during break and lunch times, particularly in the junior yard and when pupils are returning to classes in the afternoon.

Attendance, at 91.2% in 2010-11, has improved over the last four years, but remains below the averages for Wales and similar schools. A few pupils regularly arrive at school late.

Pupils feel that their voice is heard and they are involved in decision-making in various aspects of their learning. Through the school council, in particular, they participate profitably in the life and work of the school.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Adequate
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Learning experiences: Adequate

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is accessible to all.

An effective approach to planning and practice, especially in the Foundation Phase, ensures continuity and progression in learning. However, in key stage 2 expectations to ensure all pupils, especially the more able, are suitably challenged are less consistent.

There is a uniform whole-school approach to the planning and teaching of literacy based on a synthetic phonics approach. Pupils from reception to Year 6 are placed in ability sets for literacy work for four days each week and there are targeted intervention groups. These initiatives are beginning to impact positively on standards.

Numeracy and information and communication technology are planned and taught discretely as well as across the curriculum, although computers are not generally used as an integral part of lessons.

Personal and social education is based on the social and emotional aspects of learning framework. Foundation subjects are covered through a topic approach, in which pupils are involved in decision-making and developing their own ideas. Opportunities for a few pupils to widen their knowledge and understanding, however, are restricted due to the timing of withdrawal sessions.

Staff make effective use of visits, special events, extra-curricular activities and visitors to enrich pupils' experiences and good use is made of the outdoor areas to support learning.

At present, the overall provision for Welsh does not sufficiently impact on standards and very little progress has been made since the last inspection. Very recent staff training, however, has promoted more use of incidental Welsh during the school day.

The planning and delivery of the cultural, historical and economic characteristics of Wales are inconsistent and not sufficiently embedded across the curriculum. Most pupils only have a sparse awareness of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig, although older ones, in particular, have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of their locality.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship is good. An eco-committee is well established and organises relevant activities. Pupils are encouraged to reduce, reuse and recycle and they are made aware of the importance of taking individual responsibility and action. They have good opportunities to learn about life in other countries, particularly in the third world.

Teaching: Adequate

Most teaching is good and appropriate assessment procedures are in place, but the impact on pupils' achievement and progress is only beginning to be evident.

In the best lessons there is a good emphasis on independent learning and pupils making their own decisions and reaching their own solutions. On these occasions, teachers conduct sessions at a brisk pace, have good background knowledge and use time management strategies well.

The majority of lessons are well prepared, effectively structured and well managed with opportunities for pupils to share their results. Teachers use a range of methods, give clear directions and make learning objectives and success criteria explicit. They generally monitor individuals and groups well and use praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement to stimulate learning.

Where there are shortcomings in teaching, these include activities not well matched to pupils' abilities and a tendency to keep pupils inactive for too long, so that they become restless. All teachers do not give enough attention to handwriting and presentation.

There is evidence of teachers collaborating and working together well, but there is an inconsistency in practice at times, particularly in key stage 2.

The school uses appropriate formative and summative forms of assessment that effectively track pupils' progress and inform planning and teaching. Individual attainment targets are set in liaison with the LA, but until recently these have not always been realistic or achievable. Relevant personal targets are identified in exercise books, but in key stage 2 these vary in format and substance and in the frequency of review.

Teachers are beginning to use assessment for learning strategies, involving self and peer assessment, to make pupils more aware of their strengths and areas for development.

Feedback to pupils is provided through discussion and marking, but there are variations in practice. Most work is marked, but comments rarely refer back to the learning objectives and success criteria or indicate how improvements might be made.

Written reports to parents meet statutory requirements and provide information on progress across all areas of the curriculum, but the way forward is not indicated in key stage 2 and there is no overall commentary. There are regular opportunities for parents to meet teachers to discuss their child's learning.

Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory

The school is a friendly community with a supportive atmosphere that ensures pupils feel safe and secure. Pupil-adult relationships are good.

The school has effective policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living and emotional and physical wellbeing. Pupils' understanding of personal relationships and safety are fostered through curriculum based topics and links with outside agencies.

There is appropriate provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although aspects, for example in relation to spirituality and multicultural education, remain relatively underdeveloped. Pupils regularly support charities and those less fortunate than themselves.

The school does not have an appropriate policy for safeguarding. Procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues are not fully developed. Not all staff have been suitably trained and there are no clear guidelines for addressing allegations against those designated with responsibility for child protection.

The management of behaviour in class is generally good and appropriate steps are taken to minimise any disruption to learning. However, behaviour management at play times and lunch times is not always effective. A 'buddy' system has recently been introduced.

There are some very good initiatives in place to raise the school's attendance figures. The education welfare officer, together with the cluster school nurse, works closely with the headteacher to support families where attendance is an issue.

Pupils with SEN are identified for additional support from reception onwards. The school is active in working with a range of agencies and ensures appropriate support and intervention programmes are in place. Pupils on school action and school action plus have relevant individual education or behaviour plans, which are reviewed regularly and involve parents.

Pupils who have English as an additional language are successfully integrated into school life and have their needs met.

Three health and safety issues were brought to the attention of the governing body.

Learning environment: Good

The school has an inclusive ethos where everyone feels valued. It has relevant policies and procedures that ensure all pupils and staff have the same opportunities. All parents feel their child is treated fairly and with respect.

The school successfully promotes positive attitudes to ensure all are free from harassment and oppressive behaviour. Pupils are aware that bullying is not tolerated and any incidents are normally dealt with promptly and effectively.

The school caters well for those with any physical disability and works closely with specialist advisers, where necessary; a disability equality scheme and a detailed accessibility plan are in place. Diversity is respected.

Accommodation is generous for the number of pupils on roll, especially in the Foundation Phase, and provides a stimulating and safe learning environment. Displays are a good mixture of pupils' work, well-painted murals and information.

Resources overall are adequate to meet pupils' needs. Interactive whiteboards are available in all classes; there is a computer suite, but only one computer in each classroom. There are several mobile lap tops, although these are mainly reserved for Year 6.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
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Leadership: Adequate

The school has appropriate vision and mission statements, which are regularly reviewed by the governing body.

The headteacher is conscientious and has developed an effective partnership with staff, governors and parents. There is an insufficient overview, however, of the school's strategic direction, daily routines and classroom practice.

The senior management team and recently appointed acting deputy headteacher are beginning to develop their roles; they meet regularly with the headteacher and staff, but have not yet had time to impact significantly on standards and progress.

Staff meetings are held every week and minuted. Staff work together well, although effective team work is not always evident in practice, especially in key stage 2.

Teachers' management responsibilities are currently being revised in line with the Foundation Phase areas of learning, based on teams of curriculum leaders. To date this has not involved any rigorous review or evaluation procedures.

Performance management arrangements are in place for all staff and meet statutory requirements.

The governing body is appropriately constituted and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors provide good support and act as appropriate critical friends. They meet regularly, are well informed and have a good understanding of their roles. They have a suitable range of knowledge and expertise and have individual links with subject teams.

National and local priorities are being addressed and evidence is emerging that various recent initiatives are beginning to produce improvements.

All statutory policies and procedures, except safeguarding details, are in place and are regularly reviewed.

Improving quality: Adequate

The school is developing adequate self-evaluation procedures that focus on pupils' standards and accurately assess many of its strengths and weaknesses. However, the use and impact of first-hand evidence is limited.

The school uses assessment data effectively to monitor progress and to identify trends, groups of pupils needing support and areas for improvement.

The senior management team monitors teaching once a term, but the process is insufficiently robust. Subject teams are beginning to evaluate their areas of responsibility more rigorously, but this does not result in any consistent annual action plans.

Appropriate targets are identified in the school development plan with clear strategies for improvement, but progress since the last inspection has been slow and many aspects only show small measurable progress or have only recently been implemented. The majority of recommendations from the previous inspection have not been fully addressed.

There are good examples of the school beginning to act as a professional learning community in association with other schools in its cluster and family. Sharing good practice within the school, however, is in the early stages of development.

The school has held open evenings for other schools in relation to planning, assessment and classroom organisation in the Foundation Phase and staff from elsewhere have visited to observe good practice.

Partnership working: Adequate

Links with parents are adequate. There is an active parent-teacher association and family members are encouraged to participate in school activities, but their response at times is limited. They feel they are kept well informed through regular newsletters and are comfortable about approaching the school with any issues. The setting of homework is inconsistent between classes.

A few parents, especially those with English as an additional language, are well supported through family learning programmes, while others attend training sessions provided by the school in literacy and personal and social education.

Beneficial training links exist with the local secondary school and further education college, although partnerships with employers and the world of work are minimal. There is appropriate liaison with the LA, for example in relation to literacy and Welsh.

The school organises a range of activities which the community can attend and pupils take part in various local events.

Transition arrangements with three pre-school nursery settings and with the receiving secondary school are good. All parents think their child is helped to settle in well when starting school and when transferring to the next stage of their education. An appropriate transition plan is in place.

Teachers in the cluster work together successfully to moderate and standardise samples of pupils' work. The school has been involved in producing a cluster portfolio for science as part of a Welsh Assembly Government working party.

Resource management: Adequate

Staff are suitably qualified to teach the curriculum effectively and are well deployed. Good use is made of learning assistants to deliver a range of support programmes and to enhance pupils' learning.

All staff have the opportunity to attend relevant courses and events and whole-school training is regularly provided. Professional development is closely aligned to the school development plan and performance management targets, especially in relation to national and local priorities.

Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time, based currently on the employment of a part-time teacher in the Foundation Phase and supply teachers in key stage 2, is effectively implemented and meets statutory requirements. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the monitoring and mentoring of newly qualified teachers.

Good use is made of the site and buildings and they are kept clean and well maintained; improvements have been made to their appearance since the last inspection, although some areas, especially in key stage 2, are cluttered and untidy. Conversely, a few classrooms are very well organised. Resources are not always well stored and a few books in the library are well worn.

Spending priorities and decisions are linked to the school development plan and reflect the school's educational priorities. However, after two years of surpluses, the budget is currently in deficit. The school has taken action to address this issue.

Due to the lack of progress since the last inspection and the shortcomings in standards, provision and management, the school provides adequate value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

No core data is available for pupils' performance in key stage 1 for the last four years, as the school has been a Foundation Phase Early Start school since September 2007. However, end of Foundation Phase data indicates that, although results fluctuate, the majority of pupils in the Foundation Phase over the last four years attain at least Outcome level 5 in most cohorts in language, literacy and communication skills and in all cohorts in mathematical development and personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. Results are consistently low for attainment at Outcome level 6.

In key stage 2 in 2011 results at level 4 and above in English, mathematics and science were better than the previous three or four years, but still below the family, LA and Wales averages. Over the last five years, results have declined in English and have tended to fluctuate in mathematics and science with a recovery in 2011. No pupils attained level 5 in any of the three core subjects in 2011 and very few did so in the previous two years in English and mathematics and none did so in science. Results at level 5 for the past five years have been consistently below the Wales averages and, except for English and science in 2008 and in mathematics in 2007 and 2008, they have also been consistently below the family and LA averages. The trend has been downwards since 2008.

There is no comparative data available to indicate how well the school has performed in the Foundation Phase over the last four years in relation to similar schools. In key stage 2 the school has consistently been in the lower 50% or lowest 25% for each core subject over the last five years in comparison to similar schools.

There is no consistent trend in performance between boys and girls either in the Foundation Phase or in key stage 2, although boys have attained better in basic skills and core subjects recently. No specific groups appear to underachieve relative to their potential, although results indicate that the more able are insufficiently challenged.

No core data is available for performance in oracy, reading or writing in the Foundation Phase. In 2011 in key stage 2 in oracy, reading and writing results are well below the family, LA and Wales. Boys achieve better than girls in oracy and reading and similar to girls in writing. The trend is downwards in oracy and writing and fluctuating in reading, but with a sharp rise in all three areas in 2011.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifteen parents completed the questionnaire. Six parents added written comments, most of which were positive. Concerns about home-school links, security and leadership were expressed.

All parents:

- say that their child likes school;
- feel their child was helped to settle in well, as well as being well prepared for moving on to the next stage of his/her education;
- think teaching is good;
- feel their child makes good progress, is helped to become more mature and responsible and is expected to do his/her best;
- consider staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect; and
- think their child is safe at school, well supported and encouraged to keep healthy.

All except one parent:

- are satisfied with the school;
- think that homework is appropriate;
- feel they are kept well informed;
- believe there is a good range of activities provided;
- feel comfortable about approaching the school with any suggestions or problems; and
- think the school is well run.

All except two parents:

- think pupils are well behaved; and
- understand the procedures for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred key stage 2 pupils completed the questionnaire.

Nearly all pupils:

- say they feel safe in school;
- think they learn to keep healthy and have plenty of opportunities for regular exercise; and
- think they are helped to learn and to make progress

Most pupils:

- feel they are doing well at school;
- consider the school deals well with any bullying;
- say they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- say they know who to ask if they find work hard; and
- think they have enough books and equipment.

Many pupils:

- consider that homework helps them to improve; and
- think that pupils behave well in class

The majority of pupils:

- feel pupils behave well at playtimes and lunch time.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Dr. P. David Ellis	Reporting Inspector
Mrs. Eleri Hurley	Team Inspector
Mrs. Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Mrs. Anne Bowsher	Peer Inspector
Mr. Roger Fawke	School Nominee

Below text is for maintained school inspection reports only – for other sectors please replace with relevant information concerning background and legislative basis for inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (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' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 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	R	Y1	Y2	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:

Key stage 1	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