



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

A report on

**Rhosddu Primary School
Prices Lane
Rhosddu
Wrexham
LL11 2NB**

Date of inspection: October 2011

by

**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

Rhosddu Primary School is located about a mile to the west of Wrexham town centre. Pupils come from a wide background and from both owner occupied and rented properties. The school reports that the majority of pupils come from homes that are neither prosperous nor substantially disadvantaged. This is a well-established residential area and several generations of some families have attended the school.

The school has 324 pupils aged three to 11 years old, which includes 45 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Children enter the nursery during September after their third birthday. A 'Nursery Plus' facility is also located within the school, where some of the school's nursery pupils receive childcare in the morning. The number of pupils attending the school has increased considerably since the previous inspection.

English is the predominant language spoken at home for 88% of pupils and 15 other languages are spoken at home by 12% of pupils. Thirteen per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. No pupils speak Welsh at home. English is the main language of communication in the school and Welsh is taught as a second language.

Seventeen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is just under the local authority and Wales average of around 20%. Four per cent of pupils have been identified as having additional learning needs. None have a statement of special educational needs.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Rhosddu Primary School is £2,914, which compares with a maximum of £9,122 and a minimum of £2,734 for primary schools in Wrexham. The school has the 55th highest budget per pupil out of the 62 primary schools in Wrexham.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2011.

The school was previously inspected during the autumn term 2005.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the provider is good because:

- nearly all pupils make good progress in learning and achieve good standards in key skills across the curriculum;
- all teachers provide valuable learning experiences that motivate pupils to learn;
- there is a very warm and welcoming ethos which makes pupils feel secure and happy in school;
- the good support and guidance provided contribute significantly to pupils' wellbeing and have a very positive impact on learning; and
- all pupils are enthusiastic and participate fully in lessons.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school has a proven track record of securing improvement in standards and performance;
- the school senior management team and other leaders identify strengths and areas for development in a systematic way;
- the clear vision of the newly appointed head is embraced by all the staff and governors; and
- the analysis of performance data from a range of different sources has a very positive impact on improving standards.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 continue to raise standards in boys' literacy;
- R2 continue to raise standards in Welsh second language and develop pupils' confidence in speaking Welsh in a range of context;
- R3 clarify the structure of the senior management team to ensure the continued success of planning for improvement; and
- R4 formalise the structure of the governing body to enable it to develop its strategic role.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how the school is going to address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most pupils start school with skills that are appropriate to their age and ability. Almost all pupils make good progress throughout the Foundation Phase in all areas of learning.

Most pupils listen intently to instructions, teachers' presentations and their peers' contributions. Almost all pupils communicate confidently with adults and other children in a variety of contexts. Most pupils speak clearly and fluently and they can give reasons for answers and justify their decisions using extended sentences. They can recall previous learning well. In key stage 2, they show an understanding of how specific skills have been used in different contexts in previous lessons.

Most pupils throughout the school read competently for their age and stage of development. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils use their reading skills well to access other areas of the curriculum.

Many pupils in the nursery and reception classes show a continued progression in early writing skills. Most pupils by the end of the Foundation Phase can use a range of punctuation accurately and within a suitable range of written contexts. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils can write with fluency and at length. Most able pupils write to a very high standard. Progress in lessons is generally good throughout the school and almost all pupils complete their work well and remain on task, showing interest and perseverance.

Nearly all pupils with special educational needs achieve well against prior attainment and personal targets and make appropriate progress relative to their ability. There has been a significant improvement in the attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals this year with all of them achieving their targets.

At the end of key stage 1, pupils performed at a relatively high level in English, mathematics and science in 2011. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level is higher than the average for similar schools.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils performed well in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level is higher than the average for similar schools. Even though there has been a steady improvement in the English results over a four year period, the school's result is below the average for similar schools. When comparing the results for the combination of reading, writing and mathematics, the school performs above the family of schools and Wales averages.

Even though there has been a steady improvement in the boys' performance over four years, girls continue to perform better than boys in English, particularly at key stage 1.

The more able pupils produce a high standard of work and achieve their expected levels.

Although outcomes of teacher assessment show an improvement in the standards of Welsh over the last three years, pupils generally are not able to use Welsh effectively in a range of contexts outside the formal structure of the Welsh lesson. Standards achieved in lessons do not show consistency and continuity in progress.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including the need for regular exercise. Attendance has improved recently following the implementation of new initiatives. Attendance is now at 95% and exceeds the national average for Wales.

Pupils speak with enthusiasm about school life. They feel happy and safe in school and are confident that any concerns are treated seriously and acted upon quickly and fairly. Nearly all pupils are attentive, take an active role in their own learning and display great pride in their work. There is a high level of involvement from pupils in school life. The school council fully represents their peers by canvassing opinion among fellow pupils and presenting and acting upon their findings.

Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Nearly all pupils show respect and concern for others and the older pupils work successfully with younger pupils. The older pupils take responsibility for the playtime equipment and escort the younger pupils in at the end of break times. Pupils are articulate and courteous. Pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural development is developing effectively.

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

All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The experiences provided by the school offer the pupils valuable opportunities to enrich their learning. Effective use is made of a wide range of activities, including educational visits and inviting visitors to the school. The school also provides a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities such as the gardening and computer club. All of these impact well on pupils' learning experiences.

There is effective planning for the areas of learning, subjects and the implementation of the key skills across the curriculum. Pupils throughout the school are increasingly contributing to the planning of their own work. The learning environment is motivating and creatively supports independent learning.

The school makes effective and appropriate use of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig to raise pupils' awareness of their Welsh heritage and history. All staff ensure that appropriate use is made of opportunities to promote the use of the Welsh language. However, provision for Welsh language does not sufficiently plan for consistency and continuity in progress.

The school provides well for education for sustainable development; however, global citizenship is a developing area. The school has achieved the Eco-Schools' 'Bronze' and 'Silver' awards as a result of successfully promoting sustainability through schemes such as recycling, energy conservation and healthy living. All classes have an Energy, Recycling and Water Monitor responsible for encouraging others to save resources.

Teaching: Good

In all classes, there are very positive supportive and effective relationships between the adults and pupils. As a result, pupils work confidently and are well aware that they are valued as individuals.

All teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum and focus activities to fully motivate and engage pupils. Teacher and classroom assistants support pupils well, enhancing the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers use a wide range of resources well to enhance and support teaching. All teachers evaluate their lessons thoroughly as a basis for planning future work. The format of lesson planning consistently supports the identification of skills to be developed and the evaluation of progress. Teachers plan well to cater for the needs of individual pupils and share learning objectives with pupils. Teachers' use of a good range of teaching strategies and classroom management is very effective in fully engaging pupils.

Teachers mark pupils' work and regularly provide helpful feedback on achievement and ways to improve and continuously evaluate learning. Teachers assess and track pupils' progress regularly and carefully and the school's assessment arrangements are clear and robust. Teachers identify the attainment and progress of all pupils very well and make good use of the assessment evidence to plan and target effective learning.

Pupils effectively self-evaluate their own learning and that of their peers. They also set their own targets for improvement and this encourages them to become more responsible for their own learning. Reports to parents are clear and inform them well of their children's progress and targets for improvement.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There is good provision for the health and wellbeing of all pupils. Many specialist services and outside agencies provide effective support, which is having a positive impact on the standards of wellbeing.

The school is a very caring, well-ordered community where everyone feels valued. Pupils receive beneficial support and guidance when they start school and they are encouraged to take an active role in school life. Adults and pupils show mutual respect for each other and pupils feel able to approach staff for advice and guidance.

Effective arrangements exist to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has an effective framework for personal and social education. It is also involved in a very beneficial professional learning community for wellbeing, which is having a good impact on the quality of care. The school continuously monitors pupils' wellbeing and provides extra support where needed.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good and the early identification of difficulties is a priority for the school. Support staff and teachers work diligently, using a range of intervention strategies to ensure pupils' progress. Individual education plans are reviewed and evaluated regularly and contain appropriate targets.

Learning environment: Good

The school has a fully inclusive ethos. It treats everyone equally and with respect, regardless of gender, social background, race or faith. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to diversity and equality. They have equal opportunity to access all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

The school provides a safe, caring and very welcoming environment for all pupils.

The school buildings and outside areas are well maintained and sufficient for the number of pupils. Very good use is made of the outside school environment. All available space is very well utilised by all the pupils. Displays in corridors and community areas are bright, creative and stimulating and greatly enhance the learning environment.

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

The newly appointed headteacher, with the experienced and able support of the deputy headteacher, is currently providing clear, purposeful leadership. She is building effectively on the work of the previous leadership team. She is working to build a collaborative and devolved style of leadership and she communicates well with staff. Staff morale is high.

The current senior management team, though small, and other leaders develop their areas of responsibility very well and contribute positively to self-evaluation and whole-school developments. Teachers have a good understanding of the current priorities for development in the school improvement plan.

The governing body fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors are informed well about the school's day-to-day activities and its performance. They monitor the financial aspects of school management effectively. However, their scrutiny of school performance data is not rigorous enough and most members do not contribute proactively to school self-evaluation. Also, their strategic leadership role is underdeveloped.

The school has responded well to many national and local priorities. It has addressed many of the principles of the School Effectiveness Framework, especially in the areas of pupils' wellbeing. The Foundation Phase is well developed. The school has also progressed well in the implementation of assessment for learning and other initiatives such as sustainability, healthy eating and the United Nations

'rights of the child'. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

Improving quality: Good

The school's senior management team and other leaders identify strengths and areas for development in a systematic way. Curriculum leaders regularly undertake a wide range of focused monitoring activities. These include observing lessons and scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, as well as focused 'learning walks'. The evaluation reports that stem from this work are of good quality.

The work of the 'Data Group' in analysing performance data from a range of different sources, including social and welfare issues, is excellent. The school tracks individual pupil progress closely, and robust action is taken to ensure a clear, positive impact on provision and on pupils' standards and wellbeing. This is a particular strength of the school.

The findings of all self-evaluation clearly inform the school improvement plan and priorities for development. The school improvement plan is a useful document and targets the appropriate areas for development. Criteria for success are identified and are measurable. However, these are not specific enough in that they only track progress made, and do not set specific targets for improvement.

The school regularly seeks the views of parents and learners and these have fed through into school development activities. Staff collaborate well in two professional learning communities, which have had a particularly positive impact on standards and wellbeing. Effective improvement strategies have supported an upward trend in performance over the last four years.

Partnership working: Good

Strategic partnerships are good. The school has planned and developed a range of effective partnerships that contribute well to extending the range of choices for pupils. This helps to promote pupils' standards and welfare.

Collaborative working with other local schools including the secondary school has ensured successful joint working practices, particularly when agreeing standards. The partnership with the local nursery is good and prepares pupils well prior to their admission.

Strong communication links with parents and the community, such as the effective use of the web site, make a positive contribution to enriching pupils' experiences.

Resource management: Good

The school deploys staff efficiently and teachers manage support staff in classes well. The school makes good use of its well-appointed internal space and external areas. There is a good range of resources to support the curriculum and teachers use them well.

The headteacher and governing body oversee the budget carefully. The school prioritises its spending effectively and currently has a small surplus of around 3% of the total budget. Expenditure on resources links well to the school's priorities, for example in the development of pupils' reading.

Current performance is good. Pupils generally make good progress and there is a clear trend of improvement in performance outcomes over the last four years. Overall, therefore, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The verified data on key stage 1 pupils' attainment in National Curriculum assessment in 2011 indicates that pupils performed at a higher level than the average for the family of schools (a group of schools with similar characteristics) and Wales in English, mathematics, science and the core subject indicator (the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science in combination). The school's results were above the average for the family and Wales in oracy, reading and writing.

The school has also performed well when benchmarked against schools that have a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The results placed the school amongst the highest 25% of schools in mathematics and in the upper 50% in science, English and the core subject indicator.

There has been consistent improvement between 2009 and 2011 in English, mathematics and the core subject indicator. English has moved up from being in the bottom 25% in 2009 to the upper 50% in 2011. Mathematics and science moved up to the upper 50% in 2010 and remained there this year. The core subject indicator also moved up from the bottom 25% in 2009 to the upper 50%, where it has remained this year.

The percentage of pupils that attain beyond the expected level was higher than the average for the family of schools and Wales this year in English and science but lower in mathematics.

Even though the school's results this year were above the averages for the family and Wales, there is a gap of 20% between the relative performance of boys and girls. This pattern has been consistent over the last four years.

At key stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in mathematics and science was above family of schools and all-Wales averages. However, the percentage attaining the expected level in English was lower than the averages for the family of schools and Wales. In oracy, the results were similar to the Wales average but below that of the family. In writing, they were above average for Wales. However, in reading the results were below the averages for the family of schools and Wales.

When benchmarked against schools that have a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the results placed the school amongst the highest 25% in mathematics and science. The results in the core subject indicator were in the upper 50%, but English results were in the lower 50%.

The percentage of pupils attaining beyond the expected level was lower than the average for the family of schools and Wales this year in English and similar to the family and Wales averages in science and mathematics.

When considering the combination of the results for reading, writing and mathematics, the school has performed above the averages for the family and Wales.

Overall there has been an upwards trend over the last four years.

This year, the cohort of pupils tested contained 15% of pupils with special educational needs, 15% with English as an additional language and 24% identified with personal, social or health issues.

There has been a significant improvement in the attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals this year, with all of them gaining the expected levels in the 2011 teacher assessments in all of the core subjects compared to 38% in 2010.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Fifty-nine questionnaires were returned, and in each one all of the parents stated that they feel that their children are safe in school. They also believe that pupils are encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise and that the school helps the children to become more mature and take on responsibility. They agree that the children are making good progress at school. All of the parents that responded state that pupils behave well in school, that the standard of teaching is good, that they feel comfortable about approaching the school, and that the school is well run.

Almost all of the parents state that they receive regular information about their children's progress. They state that staff treat all children with respect and that the school provides a good range of activities including trips or visits.

Many of the parents say that they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

The questionnaire was completed by 103 key stage 2 pupils and members of the team spoke to pupils during the inspection. All of the pupils that responded state that they feel secure in school, and that the teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress.

Nearly all say that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that they know what to do and whom to ask if they find their work hard.

Most pupils feel that they are doing well at school, know whom to talk to if worried or upset, and feel that there are lots of chances at school for them to get regular exercise. Many also feel that the school deals well with bullying, that they have enough equipment, and that homework helps them to understand and improve their work.

A minority of pupils disagree with the statements that other children behave well in class and during play times. However, the inspection team's observations do not concur with this view and believe that pupils behave well at the school.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Glyn Roberts	Reporting Inspector
Terwyn Tomas	Team Inspector
Carolyn Thomas	Team Inspector
Justine Barlow	Lay Inspector
Beverley Cole	Peer Inspector
Marian Young (Headteacher)	School Nominee

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