



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

**Deri Primary School
Glynmarch Street
Deri
Bargoed
CF81 9HZ**

Date of inspection: July 2012

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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Publication date: 05/09/2012

Context

Deri Primary School is a community school for pupils aged between three and 11 years of age. Most of the pupils come from the village of Deri, near Bargoed in the Rhymney Valley area of Caerphilly. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The school also hosts a resource base for Reception to Year 2 pupils who have complex needs. There are 91 pupils on roll. This includes six full-time Nursery, five rising threes and three pupils in the resource base. The school considers its catchment area to be neither economically advantaged nor disadvantaged.

Around 21% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. All of the pupils come from homes where English is the predominant language. Thirty-two per cent of pupils (including resource base pupils) are identified as having special educational needs. Four pupils in the school have statements of special educational need.

The headteacher has been in post since November 2006 and was acting headteacher during the last inspection in May 2006.

The individual school budget per pupil for Deri Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,876 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Caerphilly is £6,779 and the minimum is £2,494. Deri Primary School is fifth out of the 75 primary schools in Caerphilly in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- nearly all pupils make good progress in their learning during their time in the school;
- the behaviour and attitudes to learning of nearly all pupils are good;
- care, support and guidance are good;
- pupils are enthusiastic about learning and participate well in lessons;
- teachers use data on pupils' performance well to monitor their progress and to support their development; and
- pupils with additional learning needs receive support of high quality and they make good progress.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher and governing body have set a clear strategic direction for the school;
- the headteacher leads well by example and enjoys good relationships with all stakeholders;
- all staff work well as a team;
- self-evaluation processes identify relevant priorities for improvement that are well understood by staff; and
- the pupils' voice is a strength and impacts upon whole school decisions.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

R1 improve the proportion of pupils who achieve above the expected levels in writing;

R2 improve overall attendance rates in the school; and

R3 develop the role of the governing body to use whole school data more effectively to challenge standards.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The majority of pupils enter the school with skills that are below what is normally expected. During their time in school, nearly all pupils make good progress in their learning.

Due to the small number of pupils at the end of both key stages, the results of pupil assessments have to be treated with care because one pupil's results can have a significant impact on the school's performance.

The performance of seven-year-old pupils has fluctuated over the last three years. In two of those three years the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 2 or above in English has compared favourably with the average for similar schools and has been higher than the all-Wales average. The percentage of pupils attaining level 2 or above in mathematics and science is below similar schools and all-Wales averages.

The attainment of pupils in the mainstream classes has been consistently higher than similar schools and all-Wales averages over the three years.

The most recent teacher assessments indicate that all pupils reached the expected level at the end of Year 2.

The data for 11-year-old pupils shows an upward trend over four years for pupils attaining the expected level 4 or above for English and mathematics. English attainment is very near the average for similar schools and above the national average, while attainment in mathematics has consistently been above the average for all comparators over three years. The data for science fluctuates over three years, but is consistently above similar schools and all-Wales averages.

In key stages 1 and 2, there is an improving trend over at least three years in the percentage of pupils attaining levels higher than expected.

There is no significant pattern in the performances of boys compared to girls, or between those pupils entitled to free school meals and those who are not.

Pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes, and those who are more able and talented, all make good progress. A few pupils make very good progress. The most recent teacher assessments show that 33% of the original cohort progressed by three levels, rather than the expected two levels, between Year 2 and Year 6.

Throughout the school, pupils' oral skills are good. They communicate their ideas and responses well in pairs, groups and whole class discussions. Most pupils listen well to each other. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read competently for their

age and stage of development and use their reading skills effectively to access other areas of the curriculum. The majority of pupils make good progress in their writing skills relative to their aptitude and ability. The standard of the majority of pupils' writing is good and most pupils write for different purposes to good effect across the curriculum. However, a minority of pupils do not use their writing skills sufficiently to reach the higher levels.

Thinking skills are developed effectively from nursery to Year 6. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning and they progressively develop their independence and maturity.

All pupils have positive attitudes to learning Welsh. A majority use the language effectively in a range of contexts outside the formal structure of Welsh lessons. Nearly all have a good knowledge of their local history and the culture of Wales.

Wellbeing: Good

Deri Primary School is a very happy and inclusive school where pupils are keen and enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils are respectful at all times towards peers and staff. They have a good understanding of the need to be healthy and active. Pupils feel safe and secure in the school. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have developed a real understanding of how to look after themselves and others.

Attendance rates for the past three years have been below the national, local authority and family averages. The school has been consistently in the lowest 25% when compared to schools with similar levels of free school meals. However, the school is actively tackling low attendance and this is leading to improvements. Attendance for this year has risen to 93.63%.

The school listens carefully to the ideas and opinions of pupils. Through the work of a variety of councils and committees, pupils have, for example, contributed to the development of the outdoor environment.

Nearly all pupils have good social and life skills. All pupils are members of one representative group or another, such as the school council, eco-committee, Welsh council, sports council, school environment council or teaching and learning committee. The pupils on these groups have specific responsibilities within school, which they undertake with maturity. They accept responsibility for their work and actions. They take part in a wide range of community activities, and support local and national charities well. For example, the pupils raised money by singing in a local supermarket, and also entertained residents in a local home for the elderly.

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

The school provides a good range of stimulating learning experiences, which meet the needs of pupils well. Planning for developing pupils' skills is thorough and ensures effective continuity and progression for mixed-age classes. This includes

regular opportunities for pupils to contribute to planning topics and to apply their communication and thinking skills in different contexts. Foundation Phase pupils make good use of the outdoor environment, which impacts positively on their understanding and enjoyment of learning. Effective opportunities to develop pupils' reading and extended writing skills are well embedded across the curriculum. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' learning.

The provision for Welsh language development and the Welsh dimension is good. Careful planning ensures continuity and progression throughout the school. Education for sustainable development and global citizenship is promoted actively within the school. It is introduced in subject lessons and there is an established school eco committee, which has obtained its second green flag. The school acts sustainably and involves the local community in its initiatives. For example, the pupils recently organised a table-top sale in order to raise money for the school to adopt a penguin.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teaching and support staff act as good role models for pupils and foster strong relationships, which benefit pupils' progress. Lessons are well prepared and staff make effective use of resources to support and enhance pupils' learning. Teachers make good links to previous learning and plan activities to develop pupils' skills progressively. They share learning objectives consistently with pupils and make good use of plenary sessions to review their learning. However, in a minority of lessons, activities are not differentiated sufficiently to fully challenge all pupils. Classroom assistants support learners who need additional help effectively.

Pupils' work is marked consistently. In the best examples, written feedback to pupils clearly identifies what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils have good opportunities to assess their own and others' work. Assessment for learning strategies are well developed and are used effectively to inform both pupils and teachers of the next stage of learning. The school has effective procedures to accurately track and evaluate pupil progress. Teachers use this information well to monitor individual pupils and to identify those who may need additional support. Annual reports give parents clear information about their children's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a very well ordered and caring community where staff place a high priority on pupils' wellbeing. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. School assemblies provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect on their values and rights. Relationships between staff, pupils, parents and friends are very good.

The school works well with other agencies to ensure effective provision for personal and specialist support. Clearly targeted support for groups of vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvement, for instance in their achievements and relationships.

There is well-planned provision for pupils with additional learning needs, and support is co-ordinated effectively. Good support is provided for pupils alongside their peers and by intervention through withdrawal groups. Individual education plans are clear and specific and are regularly reviewed in consultation with pupils and parents. Pupils who attend the resource base receive good levels of specialised support and their specific needs are met very well.

The school has procedures and has an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

Every child matters within the school and everyone has the opportunity to participate in all its activities. This ethos of inclusivity is a great strength. Policies and procedures to promote equality and accessibility for all are obvious throughout the school. Pupils learn how to develop a tolerant attitude towards each other and values are nurtured well. Pupils are taught how to deal with oppressive behaviour sensitively and effectively.

The learning environment is attractive and welcoming with very good use made of the outside for play and learning. The school building is clean and well maintained. There are plenty of good quality resources and staff and pupils use them well for their teaching and learning. Attractive and stimulating displays celebrate pupils' achievements and provide useful information for parents and visitors.

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

Staff and governors share a purposeful vision and set a clear strategic direction for the school. This leads to high expectations for pupils' wellbeing and achievement.

The headteacher leads well by example and is a very visible presence around the school. She enjoys good relationships with pupils, staff, governors and parents. All teachers support the headteacher very well. All staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, which they undertake thoroughly and conscientiously. There is a good level of teamwork throughout the school.

Performance management is well developed. Staff have appropriate targets linked to their professional development and the priorities within the school development plan. All support staff also have an annual performance interview, which identifies appropriate training and development needs well.

The school is very aware of local and national initiatives. As a result provision for the Foundation Phase and assessment for learning are well developed and impact positively on pupils' achievements.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively. Governors receive appropriately detailed information on the school's performance from the headteacher. This is helping them to develop their role as a 'critical friend'. However, governors do not, as yet, use whole school data sufficiently to challenge standards.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation is central to the school's life and work. There is a successful system in place to review every subject and aspect of the school's work through an agreed rolling programme. The quality of teaching and learning through classroom observations is at the heart of this process. Pupils make a valuable contribution to self-evaluation through their various representative groups, and by meeting regularly with the school governors to put their views across. The headteacher also makes effective use of the local authority's monitoring reports to set priorities for improvement.

There is a close link between the outcomes of the self-evaluation procedure and the priorities in the school improvement plan. This plan is of good quality and includes appropriate strategies and tasks and agreed timescales. Responsibilities for co-ordinating the strategies identified are allocated appropriately to various members of staff and have led to specific improvements in standards across the school, for example the improvement in literacy over the last three years.

The school works closely with nearby schools, including the local secondary school to develop effective networks of professional practice. This has led to improvements in curriculum planning and valuable developments in the arrangements for children's welfare.

Partnership working: Good

The school has established an extensive range of partnerships with other schools, higher education institutions and relevant services within the local authority. Close co-operation with the partner secondary and primary schools has led to the development of an effective transition plan. Good use is made of transition meetings, visit days and additional learning needs review meetings. These promote the smooth transition of pupils to secondary schools.

Visits to and from the community enrich pupils' experiences. Good links with local industry promote pupils' understanding of the world of work effectively. Close links with a local voluntary organisation have resulted in the school obtaining additional funding to develop its garden and the library.

The relationship with parents is strong. Parents' evenings are well structured with clear aims. Communication with parents is good and effective use is made of the school's website, texting service and newsletters as an additional means of communication.

Parents are regularly informed about the work that their children are doing in school. The active 'Friends of Deri Primary School' and the 'Helping Hands Group' contribute well to the financial and social wellbeing of the school. The school encourages parents to support pupils at all times.

The school's partnership with the local authority's school development service is having a good impact on provision and standards.

Resource management: Good

There are enough well-qualified and experienced teachers and other staff to support pupils' learning. Appropriate arrangements are in place for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time. The school uses its accommodation and resources very well.

The headteacher and the finance committee of the governing body monitor the school's budget effectively. Expenditure closely matches the priorities identified by the school through its self-evaluation processes.

The good standards achieved by pupils and the many strengths in the quality of provision show that the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Due to the small number of pupils at the end of both key stages, the results of pupil assessments have to be treated with care. This is because one pupil's results can have a significant impact on the school's performance.

The school has a resource base in the Foundation Phase for teaching pupils with complex needs. These pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities and starting points. However, when analysing pupil attainment in relation to local, national and family of school comparators, it is important to consider the attainment of mainstream pupils separately to gain a clear picture of how the school's data compares to that of other schools.

Performance data over the last year fours shows a fluctuating pattern in the attainment of seven-year-olds who achieve the expected level 2 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, the attainment of mainstream pupils over the last three years has been higher than the average for similar schools and the all-Wales average. In 2011, all mainstream pupils at the end of attained the expected level 2 in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of seven-year-olds achieving the higher level 3 shows an upward trend over four years in the three core subjects. In 2011, this was above the local, national and family of schools averages for mathematics and science, and above the national average for English.

Performance data shows an upward pattern over four years for 11-year-olds attaining the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science in combination. In 2011, all pupils attained level 4 in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 in English was less than 1% below the family average, and was higher than the national and local averages. When compared to schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, Deri was in the top 50% for all core subjects in 2011. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5, in English and mathematics, has increased over three years and, in 2011, was significantly higher than all comparators. The proportion of pupils attaining level 5 in science has fluctuated over five years, but in 2011 was also significantly higher than all comparators.

There is no significant pattern of a difference in the performance of boys and girls, or between pupils entitled to free school meals and those who are not.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaire

In total, 51 pupils completed the pupil questionnaire. All responses were very positive and compared favourably to the national average. All pupils agree that:

- they feel safe in school;
- they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- the school teaches them how to keep healthy;
- there are lots of chances at school to get regular exercise;
- they are doing well at school;
- they know what to do and whom to ask of they find their work hard;
- homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school; and
- they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Nearly all agree that:

- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress; and that
- nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time.

Most agree that:

- the school deals well with bullying; and that
- other children behave well in class.

Parent questionnaire

Estyn received responses from 54 parents. Nearly all responses were more positive than the national average.

All the parents either agree or strongly agree that:

- teaching is good;
- staff expect their child to work hard and do their best;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- the school helps their child to become more mature and take on responsibility; and that
- the school is well run.

Nearly all agree or strongly agree that:

- they are satisfied overall with the school;
- their child likes the school;
- their child was helped to settle in well when he or she started;

- their child is making good progress;
- pupils behave well at the school;
- homework that is given builds well on what their child learns in school;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect;
- their child is safe in school;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;
- they are kept well informed about their child's progress;
- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints;
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next stage in their education; and that
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits.

Most agree or agree strongly that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Michael Hayes	Reporting Inspector
Carolyn Thomas	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Andrew Brasington	Peer Inspector
Nicola Williams	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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	Reception, 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

Glossary of terms – Primary

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.