



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

**Tonypandy Primary School
Primrose Street
Tonypandy
RCT
CF40 1BQ**

Date of inspection: November 2013

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

Tonypandy Primary School is in the village of Tonypandy in the Rhondda Valley.

There are 128 pupils aged three to 11 years at the school, including 20 full-time children in the nursery. There are five classes, including the nursery class. The school admits pupils to the nursery at the age of three. Nearly all pupils come from the immediate catchment area.

Around 32% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well above the average for primary schools in the local authority and in Wales.

The school has identified about 29% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is slightly above the average for primary schools in Wales. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Currently, there are no pupils who are 'looked after' by the local authority. There have been no exclusions in the last three years.

Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. No pupil speaks Welsh as a first language at home.

The last inspection was in October 2007. The current headteacher was appointed in 2007.

The individual school budget per pupil for Tonypandy Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,903 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Rhondda Cynan Taf is £7,033 and the minimum is £2,659. Tonypandy Primary School is 37th out of the 110 primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf 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:

- pupils make good progress from their low starting-points as they move through the school;
- all pupils are well behaved in classes, enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic to learn;
- the school provides a stimulating variety of learning experiences, which capture the interest of all pupils and strongly sustain their motivation to learn;
- all adults have a positive attitude towards teaching Welsh, and this is apparent in all classes and helps to sustain good standards; and
- teachers and other adults use a suitable range of teaching methods effectively.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher conveys a clear vision for the school, which focuses on delivering rich learning experiences in an environment of high quality for all pupils;
- the governing body has a good understanding of the school's performance relative to that of other schools, and holds the school to account for the standards and quality it achieves;
- there is an effective programme of school self-evaluation in place;
- self-evaluation draws on a suitable range of evidence, such as questionnaires completed by pupils and parents, and observation visits by governors;
- the school has a good track record of implementing improvements which have had a positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching;
- there are effective partnerships with a range of agencies and organisations, including the local authority and the community; and
- the school manages its resources well.

Recommendations

R1 Improve attendance

R2 Improve pupils' awareness of the culture and heritage of Wales

R3 Strengthen on-going pupil assessments to provide consistent and systematic records on each pupil

R4 Improve leadership and management systems to maximise their positive impact on meeting pupils' needs

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.'

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, many pupils have language, mathematical and personal and social skills that are significantly below the level normally expected of pupils of a similar age. As they move through the school, there is a clear improvement in the quality of pupils' work, and by the end of key stage 2 many pupils attain the standards expected for their age.

Most pupils have good communication skills and they use these effectively in most lessons and group activities. In the Foundation Phase, many pupils speak readily in class and most can communicate their ideas and opinions well. They are keen to ask questions. Older pupils often provide extended answers to questions set by teachers. Most pupils have good listening skills and listen well to each other in whole-class sessions and in pairs and group work.

Many pupils in the Foundation Phase enjoy books and make good progress in their reading. They read with increasing accuracy and understanding. Pupils of average and below average ability are beginning to have a firmer grasp of phonics and are developing a range of appropriate strategies to work out unfamiliar words. They talk confidently about books in line with their age and ability. Most pupils in key stage 2 read a wide range of texts correctly and with appropriate expression. They speak confidently about stories and authors that they enjoy. Most pupils discuss the contents of books intelligently, are able to offer personal responses to what they read and are able to find information effectively.

Throughout the school, pupils' writing skills develop well. By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils write reasonably effectively and the more able pupils produce interesting pieces of extended writing. During key stage 2, most pupils produce written work of a good standard in a range of styles and contexts across the curriculum, for example in science, geography and history. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils in English lessons produce extended pieces of writing with a clear structure and many use interesting word choices to engage the reader.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils develop good numeracy skills, using numbers, measurement, shape and data handling appropriately. They can use these skills well to solve simple mathematical problems. By Year 2, most pupils are able to apply their numeracy skills well in using standardised and non-standardised units when weighing, using money and creating simple tables and graphs in science investigations.

In key stage 2, most pupils achieve a good level of numeracy according to their age and ability. Older pupils make reasonable estimates when using multiplication facts to calculate the fraction of a quantity. They measure angles to the nearest degree accurately. Across the key stage, pupils apply their numeracy skills to problem solving activities and use them at the same level in other subjects. Most pupils' work

is well organised and is presented neatly. This helps to ensure the accuracy of their calculations.

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning Welsh. Most pupils' skills are developing well in the Foundation Phase. They listen and respond enthusiastically to a range of simple instructions, greetings and questions in Welsh. They are developing an increasing vocabulary and give a range of appropriate basic answers to simple questions. In key stage 2, most pupils have a good understanding of Welsh and respond well during lessons. Most pupils can engage in simple Welsh conversations confidently and the more able use a range of sentence patterns and vocabulary effectively. Many pupils' reading skills are developing well and they write appropriately in extended sentences. This is evident in other subjects across the curriculum. For example, they are able to describe a famous character from the Victorian era.

Overall, pupil outcomes at the end of the Foundation Phase and at the end of key stage 2 fluctuate significantly from year to year.

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2013, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) in mathematical development placed the school in the top 25% of similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals). In language, literacy and communication and in personal and social skills, the school was in the lower 50% when compared with similar schools.

In 2013, attainment at the higher outcome than expected (outcome 6) in mathematical development and personal and social skills placed the school in the top 25% when compared with similar schools, and in the upper 50% for language, literacy and communication.

At the end of key stage 2 in 2013, the percentage of pupils who gained the expected level (level 4) placed the school in the lower 50% of similar schools in English and in the bottom 25% for mathematics and science. However, in the previous year, the performance of pupils placed it in the top 25% for each core subject.

In 2013, performance in English and mathematics at the higher level-than-expected (level 5) placed the school in the upper 50% of similar schools, but in the lower 50% for science.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and keeping fit. Their attitude towards physical exercise is very positive.

All pupils feel safe in school and are confident that adults will listen to them and respond appropriately when they face difficulties. They show a high level of care for each other and the school environment. Pupils demonstrate very good levels of behavior and self-discipline in lessons and around the school.

The school council is well established and is effective in representing the views of pupils and in influencing improvements to the life and work of the school. Members

of the school council are also working with the Attendance Support Officer on ways to encourage good attendance.

All pupils enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic to learn. Most pupils become confident learners and they are able to work effectively as individuals, in pairs or in groups, and to respond appropriately to a task. As they move through the school, they become more responsible and make decisions that have a positive effect on their learning. They have developed well as independent learners who are able to guide their own learning.

The school's overall attendance rate over the last four years has placed the school in the lower 50% when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. However, the data for the most recent academic year indicates that this low performance has clearly improved.

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

The school provides a stimulating variety of learning experiences. These capture the interest of all pupils and sustain their motivation to learn. A wide range of extra-curricular activities contribute effectively to the school's overall provision.

All teachers collaborate effectively in planning structured themes, which provide a rich context for pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy and to apply their learning in engaging activities across the curriculum. The school is in a good position to meet the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework. The provision to develop thinking and independent learning skills is well established and is evident in most lessons.

All adults have a positive attitude towards teaching Welsh, and planning for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills is good. Pupils have regular opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in Welsh lessons, and to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. The provision for developing pupils' awareness of their Welsh culture and heritage is limited.

The school provides numerous opportunities for promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of sustainability and global citizenship. This is a strong feature throughout the school. All pupils benefit from the work of the eco-committee, which promotes a very good awareness of sustainability issues. The school's international link with Rwanda has enhanced many pupils' awareness of specific global issues.

Teaching: Good

Teachers and other adults use a suitable range of teaching methods effectively. Teachers plan lessons carefully and set interesting tasks that engage nearly all pupils. They help pupils to recall their previous learning well and they question pupils briskly and purposefully to move their learning forward. All staff provide good levels of support to ensure that all pupils stay focused on their work.

Most teachers use resources imaginatively. For example, they use tablet computers well to support the development of pupils' communication skills. Teachers show good subject knowledge and convey successfully their enthusiasm for what they are teaching to their pupils.

In a few cases, where teaching has shortcomings, learning objectives are not always clear enough and teachers do not adapt the work sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

Most teachers mark pupils' work effectively. They identify clearly what a pupil has done well and indicate what they need to do to improve. Opportunities to involve pupils in assessing their own and others' learning occur regularly. Most pupils in key stage 2 know their literacy and numeracy targets and these have a good impact on the progress they make.

Teachers assess individual pupils' progress and the progress of specific groups of pupils appropriately. The process, however, lacks rigour and is not systematic enough to be fully effective. Teachers' use of assessment data to arrange improvement paths and additional support to meet the needs of pupils is suitable.

Parents and carers receive detailed information about their child's progress through annual reports and regular meetings.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community. Learning experiences and acts of worship successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to reflect on their decisions during class lessons and in collective worship.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. Topics studied through the themed curriculum encourage and promote pupils to eat healthily. Pupils improve their levels of fitness and health through a variety of physical activities during the day and a range of after school clubs.

The staff provide good personal support and individual direction to pupils and they use effective strategies to encourage good behavior. The school works purposefully with a large number of external agencies and support services to offer guidance, support and information to pupils and parents, as required.

The wide range of initiatives adopted by the school to promote attendance have not had enough time to make a noticeable impact on improving attendance levels overall.

The school caters well for pupils with additional learning needs. Teaching assistants provide effective and worthwhile support for pupils' targeted withdrawal programmes. These are helping pupils to fill gaps in their learning successfully. Individual education plans contain clear and measurable targets that address each pupil's needs appropriately. The teachers record pupils' progress against their targets regularly. Parents are involved fully in the process.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The school's ethos is inclusive and welcoming and this supports a positive attitude and engagement in learning by pupils in the classroom. Nearly all pupils participate fully in the life of the school, and the school recognises and celebrates well the contributions that the pupils make. There are worthwhile opportunities provided for pupils to appreciate diversity and to learn about the backgrounds of other members of the school community. Pupils feel valued and the friendly atmosphere between staff and pupils is a strong feature.

The school provides a good range of learning resources, including computers and interactive white boards that meet the needs and interests of all pupils effectively. The school building has been adapted creatively. For example, the film studio is impacting positively on the pupils' oracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The outdoor learning area for the Foundation Phase has been organised well to support pupils' learning and independence. All pupils are benefiting from recent improvements to a toilet block and a new kitchen. There are learning environments of high quality in both buildings that successfully promote learning.

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

The headteacher conveys a clear vision that focuses on delivering rich learning experiences for all pupils in an environment of high quality. This vision has been successfully shared with all staff.

The senior leadership team and other teaching staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Management meetings focus well on school improvement issues and staff take forward agreed actions well. However, the recording of agreed decisions and their communication through shared minutes are not systematic enough. This limits the impact of collaborative working. The staff monitor the performance of pupils regularly, but staff do not use information from the tracking of pupil progress strategically enough to raise standards effectively.

The school takes good account of local and national priorities. It has introduced appropriate initiatives, for example, in developing the Foundation Phase and planning to improve standards by engaging with the national framework for literacy and numeracy.

The governing body is firmly committed to the school and members maintain their knowledge by visits to classes, links with curriculum leaders and regular reports from the headteacher. They have a secure understanding of the school's performance relative to that of other schools, and the school's strengths and areas for

development. The governors' challenge and support the school as a critical friend appropriately.

Improving quality: Good

There is an effective programme of school self-evaluation, which takes account of the outcomes of questionnaires completed by pupils and parents and observation visits by governors. The school gathers a suitable range of evidence through analysis of data, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' books. The final self-evaluation report contains evaluative comments that identify issues included in the school improvement plan.

The school improvement plan has specific actions, realistic timescales, and clear success criteria, and it identifies staff who are responsible for achieving them. The implementation of the plan is having a positive effect on provision and standards at the school. However, not all staff are aware of the links between the self-evaluation process and the priorities in the school improvement plan.

The school has a successful track record of making improvements that have a positive impact on teaching and learning. For example, the school has raised the attainment of pupils in the higher-than-expected levels in numeracy and literacy. It has also significantly transformed its indoor and outdoor learning environments to support creative teaching approaches in the Foundation Phase. The promotion and integration of new technology in key stage 2 have improved nearly all pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum.

Overall, the school has made good progress in addressing recommendations from the school's last Estyn inspection. However, approaches to improve levels of pupil attendance have not resulted in improved attendance rates when compared with those of other similar schools.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a wide range of partners to plan its provision. The school has a very effective 'open door' policy where parents can discuss issues or concerns with the headteacher and other members of staff quickly and easily.

The friends of the school, following successful fundraising events, have contributed towards substantial enhancements in the provision, for example, the purchasing of major equipment for the Foundation Phase and creating a film studio in the key stage 2 building.

The school has good links with a range of agencies and organisations, including the local authority and the community. Engagement with the local police service and particularly the police community support officer provides valuable learning experiences in both phases of the school. Links with a local faith-based organisation provide additional sporting expertise as well as enriching the school's religious education curriculum. There is a close relationship between the school and the private pre-school playgroup housed in the school. The children settle into the nursery class very successfully as a result.

The school works well with its cluster of primary schools to produce a portfolio of moderated and standardised samples of pupils' work. There are well-established transition arrangements with the local community college to where most pupils transfer. These ensure that pupils are confident to move on to the next stage in their education.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its resources well. There are sufficient qualified and experienced staff to deliver the curriculum. The school deploys teaching assistants efficiently and they contribute very positively to pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Teachers and their support staff operate well as a learning community. They share and develop their curriculum planning and approaches to Foundation Phase teaching well. Most staff have participated in collaborative teaching programmes with neighbouring schools relating to numeracy, literacy and assessment.

The school has appropriate performance management processes. Teachers' improvement targets link clearly to school needs. All teachers receive appropriate time for planning, preparation and assessment.

The headteacher and members of the governing body have thorough arrangements in place for managing the budget, and expenditure links well with the school's objectives, targets and plans. Senior managers and governors plan expenditure carefully for refurbishment projects and other on-going school improvements.

In view of the quality of provision, the standards pupils achieve and their progress overall, the school gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In 2013, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) at the end of the Foundation Phase was above the family of similar schools average in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development and personal and social skills. However, it was below the family average in the Foundation Phase indicator.

When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, pupils' performance placed the school in the top 25% for mathematical development. In language, literacy and communication, personal and social skills and the Foundation Phase indicator, the school was in the lower 50%.

The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher-than-expected level improved in 2013, and was above the family average for mathematical development and personal and social skills but below in literacy, language and communication. Compared to schools with similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school was in the top 25% for mathematical development and personal and social skills and in the upper 50% for language, literacy and communication.

The relative performance of girls and boys is not consistent in the Foundation Phase. Generally, boys tend to do better than the family average for boys. In key stage 2, girls perform better than boys at the higher-than-expected levels.

In 2013, the percentage of pupils who gained the expected level (level 4) at the end of key stage 2, was below the average for the family in English, mathematics, science and the core subject indicator.

When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, the proportion of pupils who achieved level 4 placed the school in the lower 50% in English but in the bottom 25% for mathematics, science and the core subject indicator.

The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher-than-expected level (level 5) in English and mathematics was above the family average, but below the average in science. The school's performance placed it in the upper 50% for English and mathematics and the lower 50% for science when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals. However, in the previous year, the performance of pupils placed it in the top 25% for each core subject.

There are no obvious trends of performance in pupils entitled to free school meals in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. Pupils with additional learning needs generally make a good progress in line with their age and ability.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Primary Questionnaire (Overall)

denotes the benchmark - this is a total of all responses since September 2010.

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Agree Cytuno	Disagree Anghytuno	
I feel safe in my school.	64	64 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n teimlo'n ddiogel yn fy ysgol.
		98%	2%	
The school deals well with any bullying.	64	63 98%	1 2%	Mae'r ysgol yn delio'n dda ag unrhyw fwlio.
		92%	8%	
I know who to talk to if I am worried or upset.	64	64 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod pwy i siarad ag ef/â hi os ydw i'n poeni neu'n gofidio.
		96%	4%	
The school teaches me how to keep healthy	64	63 98%	1 2%	Mae'r ysgol yn fy nysgu i sut i aros yn iach.
		98%	2%	
There are lots of chances at school for me to get regular exercise.	64	63 98%	1 2%	Mae llawer o gyfleoedd yn yr ysgol i mi gael ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		96%	4%	
I am doing well at school	64	62 97%	2 3%	Rwy'n gwneud yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		96%	4%	
The teachers and other adults in the school help me to learn and make progress.	64	64 100%	0 0%	Mae'r athrawon a'r oedolion eraill yn yr ysgol yn fy helpu i ddysgu a gwneud cynnydd.
		99%	1%	
I know what to do and who to ask if I find my work hard.	64	64 100%	0 0%	Rwy'n gwybod beth i'w wneud a gyda phwy i siarad os ydw i'n gweld fy ngwaith yn anodd.
		98%	2%	
My homework helps me to understand and improve my work in school.	64	58 91%	6 9%	Mae fy ngwaith cartref yn helpu i mi ddeall a gwella fy ngwaith yn yr ysgol.
		91%	9%	
I have enough books, equipment, and computers to do my work.	64	64 100%	0 0%	Mae gen i ddigon o lyfrau, offer a chyfrifiaduron i wneud fy ngwaith.
		95%	5%	
Other children behave well and I can get my work done.	64	55 86%	9 14%	Mae plant eraill yn ymddwyn yn dda ac rwy'n gallu gwneud fy ngwaith.
		78%	22%	
Nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time	64	64 100%	0 0%	Mae bron pob un o'r plant yn ymddwyn yn dda amser chwarae ac amser cinio.
		84%	16%	

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Eleri Hurley	Reporting Inspector
Gregory Owens	Team Inspector
Catherine Jenkins	Lay Inspector
Andrew Brasington	Peer Inspector
Stuart Scammell	Enwebai

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.