



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Castle Caereinion C.I.W.
Castle Caereinion
Welshpool
Powys
SY21 9AL**

Date of inspection: November 2016

by

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

Summary

A majority of pupils make suitable progress in many curriculum areas. Their speaking, listening and numeracy skills are often strong, but their reading skills do not progress well enough in the Foundation Phase and their writing has many weak features throughout the school. There are strengths, but too many weaknesses in pupils' learning in Welsh and ICT. All pupils enjoy coming to school. They demonstrate good behaviour in class and have a positive attitude to learning and to school.

The quality of teaching at the school is strong, but pupils do not always receive enough challenge in their work, particularly those that are more able, and assessment and the planning of the curriculum has weak features.

The headteacher works conscientiously with staff in the limited time that she is at the school. However, the rate of improvement is slow. The governing body is supportive of the school, but does not challenge the school to improve enough.

In light of these findings, Estyn is placing the school in the category of 'Estyn Review'. The school will draw up an action plan, which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Placing a school in Estyn review

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Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' reading skills in the Foundation Phase, and the quality of pupils' writing across the school
- R2 Further develop pupils' skills in Welsh and information and communication technology (ICT)
- R3 Develop more robust and effective assessment processes
- R4 Improve the governing body's ability to hold the school to account
- R5 Implement more robust and systematic processes for evaluating the work of the school and ensure the rigorous implementation of improvement priorities

Main findings

1: Standards

Adequate, needs improvement

A majority of pupils make suitable progress in many areas of the curriculum. However, a notable minority, and particularly the more able, do not always achieve as well as they could.

In the Foundation Phase, many pupils speak clearly to other pupils and to adults. They are happy to discuss their learning and do so confidently. For example, they can explain well how they are searching for the Gruffalo. At the end of key stage 2, most pupils have effective speaking and listening skills and use these purposefully in their lessons when explaining their thoughts and ideas.

In the Foundation Phase, a majority of pupils develop their reading skills appropriately. However, a notable minority do not identify letters and sounds confidently and do not read common words well enough. In key stage 2, most pupils have effective reading skills. They are able to discuss the content of texts they have read maturely. They read texts, including non-fiction texts, effectively and are able to identify specific words and phrases that add particular meaning to the writing well.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils write creatively and can explain their ideas using a sequence of linked sentences competently. For example, they write recounts of bible stories appropriately. As they move through key stage 2, many pupils continue to develop their writing skills suitably and can write competently in a range of styles. However, most pupils do not use a wide enough range of vocabulary choices. More able pupils also do not use a wide enough variety of different sentence structures. Throughout the school, too many pupils spell familiar words incorrectly and do not punctuate their work well enough. Many pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work is also limited. Most pupils' writing in other areas of the curriculum shows similar strengths and areas for improvement as in their specific English work.

In the Foundation Phase, many pupils have competent number skills. They are able to add multiples of ten to two-digit numbers confidently. They use money accurately to pay for items. However, a few pupils have weak knowledge of basic number bonds. Many pupils in key stage 2 have effective mathematics skills. They are able to use multiplication tables well to solve problems using money. They have a clear understanding of equivalent fractions and can compare fractions accurately. They apply their numeracy skills competently across the curriculum.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils can recall a few words in Welsh suitably, such as the words for colours, numbers and types of weather. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have a satisfactory vocabulary and can use simple sentences competently, for example when expressing what foods they like. Throughout the school, many pupils' Welsh reading skills are weak. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils are able to use their reading skills to pronounce simple Welsh words, but their understanding of these is limited. When writing in Welsh, many pupils in key stage 2 are developing a beneficial understanding of simple sentence structures and can

write efficiently in a limited range of styles, for example when writing a script that shows people ordering and paying for food. However, in both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2, nearly all pupils need too much support to write in Welsh.

Most pupils demonstrate suitable ICT skills. In the Foundation Phase, they are able to use a satisfactory range of software applications to practise their number skills and record their learning, for example by taking photographs or by drawing images on a tablet computer. In key stage 2, most pupils use word processing and desktop publishing programmes to record their learning efficiently. Pupils have developed simple branching databases, for example to categorise dinosaurs, but most pupils at the end of key stage 2 have a limited understanding of a few important areas of ICT. For example, most do not understand spreadsheets well enough, and too many are not able to send and receive electronic mail confidently.

Over recent years, the school has often had relatively small numbers of pupils in the year groups at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. This can notably affect the school's benchmarked performance in comparison with that of similar schools.

At the end of the Foundation Phase, pupils' performance, as measured by teacher assessment, at the expected outcome has improved over the last four years when compared with levels in similar schools and it is now in the top 25%. Over a similar period, performance at the higher outcome has placed the school mostly in the lower 50% or bottom 25% of similar schools.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils' performance, as measured by teacher assessment, at the expected level in English, mathematics and science, has placed the school mostly in the top 25% of similar schools over the last four years. At the higher level, performance in English has tended to place the school in the top 25% and around or slightly above the average in mathematics and science.

Girls as a group tend to perform better than boys do at the end of the Foundation Phase and key stage 2, especially in literacy. Due to very small numbers, no reliable comparison between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers is possible.

In a minority of cases, the teacher assessment of pupils' outcomes at the end of Foundation Phase and key stage 2 is overgenerous.

2: Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Good

All pupils enjoy coming to school and are confident when in the school's environment. They feel safe and nearly all display a supportive and caring attitude to each other. All pupils have a clear understanding of staff they can approach for help with their work or when they have other concerns. They respond well to adult guidance and support.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate good behaviour in class and have a positive attitude to learning and to school. They engage fully in lessons and most sustain concentration well. Most pupils respond positively when presented with problems and challenges, and work through them diligently. The willingness of pupils to support each other when working together is a strength of the school. Most pupils interact well in

groups, and older pupils understand how this helps them to develop their own learning and to complete group activities. Pupils move between tasks sensibly and efficiently, and settle in lessons quickly.

Nearly all pupils know how to keep healthy and safe. For example, they organise and run a fruit tuckshop each day and know how fruit and vegetables are an essential part of a healthy diet. Nearly all pupils take part regularly in physical activities and enjoy representing the school at local sports events. Most pupils have a beneficial understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. Older pupils speak well about the need to protect their identity on line and of taking care about whom they contact.

Pupils' attendance rates place the school consistently in the top 25% when compared with similar schools.

3: Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate, needs improvement
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Overall, the quality of teaching at the school is currently good. All teachers plan learning activities that engage most pupils well and ensure that lessons proceed at a good pace. In these lessons, many pupils make progress in line with their ability and the teaching is successful in engaging most pupils' interest. In all classes, teachers monitor the ongoing learning of groups and individuals in lessons carefully and they give them useful oral feedback. As a result, pupils are able to improve or amend their work during the lesson competently. All teachers ask a wide range of open questions that help to further most pupils' learning and enable pupils to explain their thinking purposefully. All staff have strong working relationships with pupils. Learning support assistants engage with pupils effectively.

Throughout the school, teachers plan learning that is at a suitable level for many pupils. They communicate effectively to ensure continuity in pupils' learning through the week. However, the challenge they provide for all pupils is not always strong enough, particularly for more able pupils. For example, teachers in the Foundation Phase do not always plan enhanced or continuous learning activities that stimulate pupils to learn effectively indoors and outdoors and a few pupils spend too much time without sufficient challenge.

The school is currently working to improve the way teachers and pupils assess work to improve teaching and learning. Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 are beginning to identify whether they have completed all elements of a task effectively. However, throughout the school, pupils do not have strong enough opportunities to assess the quality of their own or other pupils' learning. This limits how well pupils identify shortcomings in their own work or how they can improve. In a minority of cases, teacher assessment of pupils is inaccurate and often over generous, particularly at the higher levels, including the teacher assessment of pupils at the end of Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

Long and medium term planning for the Foundation Phase identifies skills in all areas of learning that teachers may develop with pupils. However, in practice there is not a consistently strong focus on the learning areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. A minority of teachers do not plan and implement a wide enough range of independent learning activities in which

Foundation Phase pupils can engage, both indoor and outdoor, when not working with an adult.

Long and medium term planning within key stage 2 is effective. It ensures that teachers are able to plan for and deliver learning in all subjects and meets the needs of most learners. The curriculum provides a stimulating range of learning experiences for most pupils that reinforces and builds on their prior learning, and helps ensure all engage well in their learning.

Across the school, teachers have appropriate overarching plans to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers plan worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum, but less so their numeracy skills. There is limited planning to support the effective development of pupils' Welsh and ICT skills.

4: Care, support and guidance

Good

The school provides effectively for pupils identified as having additional learning needs and they make strong progress towards their individual goals as a result. There are efficient systems for identifying and tracking the progress of all pupils, including those in need of support, such as through teacher observation and a broad range of standardised assessments. Leaders use this system well to provide support quickly to ensure individuals are able to access the curriculum successfully, for example through extra adult support in class for reading.

The school has effective processes to ensure that it develop pupils' social and emotional understanding well. All pupils attend regular sessions with a member of the support staff to develop their social and emotional skills. This helps pupils to work in a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Staff communicate well with parents and inform them about their child's progress effectively through annual reports. The school gives parents useful information about events and projects and this helps parents to understand and to support the work their children are doing in school effectively. For example, an internet safety evening for parents helped support the school's drive to improve pupils' safety online.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities within the curriculum to discuss the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. Pupils take part in planning healthy lunches and grow fruits and vegetables in the Foundation Phase garden. Pupils joined a project to grow vegetables from seeds that had been on-board the International Space Station. Nearly all pupils enjoy eating fruit, prepared and provided by the older pupils, from the school tuck shop at break time.

Pupils contribute well to making decisions about school life. This results in pupils having a sense of ownership of their school and helps them to develop an understanding of the importance of citizenship and making decisions as a group. They make suggestions or raise concerns with school council representatives, which results in actions to improve the school. For example, at pupils' request, leaders have introduced new signs in the playground to improve pupils' safety.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to cultivate their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Visitors from the church contribute effectively to collective worship, and visits to the church at important times, such as Christmas, help pupils to learn effectively about the customs and festivals of Christianity and other religions. The school supports and links with a wide range of local and community groups and individuals, for example, the local bowling club. It works diligently to stimulate and develop pupils' creativity through its curriculum and wider activities. For example, a local artist gives pupils the opportunity to use their creative skills to support and learn about the dramatic arts by designing stage scenery.

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

5: Leadership and management

Adequate, needs improvement

The headteacher that oversees the school works conscientiously on leadership and management in the limited time that she is at the school each week. She has no formal contract with the school. She receives good support from the staff who work well together to ensure that the school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. However, the school is improving at a relatively slow rate. For example, until recently, there were few effective records of staff meetings and this made it difficult to monitor the progress of agreed actions, such as those to improve the quality of teaching. The school now has more effective systems, but they are at an early stage of development.

Members of the governing body are enthusiastic in their support of the school. They meet regularly and work diligently to direct the work of the school, monitor finances and agree relevant policies. However, they do not challenge the school robustly enough about pupil progress or the quality of provision in their role as a critical friend.

The school's self-evaluation processes identify suitable strengths and most areas for improvement, such as the need to develop pupils' ICT skills. However, the school's monitoring activities are not systematic enough and do not evaluate pupils' progress over time well enough. As a result, leaders do not always identify accurately enough a few important areas for improvement, such as weaknesses in the accuracy of teacher assessment. The current school improvement plan has appropriate strategic targets, but the previous plans have not led to sufficient improvement. The school has not addressed successfully the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

The school's processes to manage and oversee the professional development of staff are effective. The headteacher manages teachers' performance efficiently and organises a purposeful range of opportunities to develop staff expertise that link suitably to school and national priorities. For example, a useful partnership with the local secondary school has resulted in the improved teaching of science at key stage 2 and better investigative work by pupils.

The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, manages the school budget effectively. They target finances well to support the priorities in the school's improvement plan. The headteacher deploys staff efficiently. For example, a

teaching assistant undertakes emotional literacy sessions with all pupils on a weekly basis. This helps promote strong levels of pupil wellbeing.

About the school

Castle Caereinion Church in Wales Primary School is in the village of Castle Caereinion near Welshpool in Powys.

There are 38 pupils on roll aged from 4 to 11, all of whom attend full-time at the school. The school has two mixed-age classes, one for Foundation Phase pupils and one for key stage 2 pupils. There are four part-time teachers at the school. Two share responsibility for teaching in the Foundation Phase class and two share responsibility for the key stage 2 class.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is around 3%, which is well below the national average of 19%. However, the school currently has no pupils eligible for free school meals. The school identifies about 13% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is well below the national average of 25%. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

Nearly all pupils are of white British ethnicity. A very few pupils speak Welsh at home and a very few are learning English as an additional language. No pupil is in the care of the local authority.

The headteacher of another local school took responsibility for Castle Caereinion in January 2013 and spends the equivalent of two days each week at the school. Estyn last inspected the school in November 2009.

Appendix 1: Summary table of inspection areas

Standards	Adequate, needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate, needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate, needs improvement

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate, needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory, needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

Appendix 2: Performance data

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Number of pupils on roll	44
Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) - 3 year average	2.8
FSM band	1 (FSM<=8%)

Foundation Phase

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of pupils in Year 2 cohort	4	9	6	7
Achieving the Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) (%)	0.0	88.9	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	4	3	1	1
Language, literacy and communication skills - English (LCE)				
Number of pupils in cohort	4	9	6	7
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	75.0	88.9	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	4	4	1	1
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	0.0	33.3	33.3	42.9
Benchmark quartile	4	3	4	3
Language, literacy and communication skills - Welsh (LCW)				
Number of pupils in cohort	*	*	*	*
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
Mathematical development (MDT)				
Number of pupils in cohort	4	9	6	7
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	50.0	88.9	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	4	4	1	1
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	0.0	33.3	50.0	42.9
Benchmark quartile	4	3	2	3
Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity (PSD)				
Number of pupils in cohort	4	9	6	7
Achieving outcome 5+ (%)	0.0	88.9	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	4	4	1	1
Achieving outcome 6+ (%)	0.0	88.9	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	4	1	1	1

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving outcome 5 or above in PSD, LCE/LCW, and MDT in combination.

* This item may disclose information on individuals, or it is not sufficiently robust for publication, not applicable or is otherwise unavailable.

The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

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FSM band	1 (FSM<=8%)

Key stage 2

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of pupils in Year 6 cohort	6	5	5	6
Achieving the core subject indicator (CSI) (%)	83.3	80.0	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	3	4	1	1
English				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	5	5	6
Achieving level 4+ (%)	100.0	80.0	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	1	4	1	1
Achieving level 5+ (%)	66.7	60.0	80.0	66.7
Benchmark quartile	1	1	1	1
Welsh first language				
Number of pupils in cohort	*	*	*	*
Achieving level 4+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
Achieving level 5+ (%)	*	*	*	*
Benchmark quartile	*	*	*	*
Mathematics				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	5	5	6
Achieving level 4+ (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	1	1	1	1
Achieving level 5+ (%)	66.7	40.0	60.0	83.3
Benchmark quartile	1	3	2	1
Science				
Number of pupils in cohort	6	5	5	6
Achieving level 4+ (%)	83.3	80.0	100.0	100.0
Benchmark quartile	4	4	1	1
Achieving level 5+ (%)	66.7	20.0	100.0	50.0
Benchmark quartile	1	4	1	2

The core subject indicator (CSI) represents the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination.

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The benchmark quartile compares the performance of one school against others who have similar levels of pupils with free school meals (FSM). FSM is used as a proxy of social deprivation in schools. This allows a comparison of the performance of a school against others who are in the same FSM category, and who might therefore have a similar intake of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

A school in benchmark quartile 1 is in the highest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are higher than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds. A school in benchmark quartile 4 is in the lowest performing 25% of schools with similar levels of free school meals to this school. Therefore, the school's attainment levels are lower than many other schools with similar levels of pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/index.html?lang=eng>

Copies of the report

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

We used this inspection to pilot developments to the common inspection framework, the inspection process and the inspection report format. We will review these arrangements and make any changes required before introducing them nationally in September 2017.

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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