



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: significant improvement**

**Penyreglyn Primary School
Baglan Street
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Date of visit: December 2016

by

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

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The monitoring team

Mrs Jane McCarthy	Reporting Inspector
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Outcome of monitoring

Penyreglyn Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in September 2015.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve the standards of pupils' reading and writing

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Pupils' standards in reading and writing have improved since the core inspection. Given the weak knowledge and skills of many pupils when they start school, they make strong progress as they move through the school. By the end of both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2, most pupils are achieving at the level expected for their age. However, too few pupils are achieving at higher than expected levels compared with similar schools.

Pupils in the Foundation Phase develop an appropriate knowledge of letters and sounds and use this effectively to help them read unfamiliar words. In Year 2, the more able pupils read well aloud, for example changing their voices when characters talk. They make sensible predictions about what may happen next when talking about stories. As they move through the school, pupils develop a clear understanding of the features of fiction and non-fiction texts, particularly through guided reading sessions. Older pupils can select evidence within stories, accounts and poems to support their views about a character or an event well. The accuracy of the reading of more able pupils is often good. However, more able readers at the end of key stage 2 do not read widely enough for pleasure or have a suitable range of reading choices to stretch them to read at a high enough level.

Pupils write using a suitable range of genres as they move through the school. At the end of the Foundation Phase, pupils write simple sentences well and are beginning to use a variety of interesting vocabulary. A few more able writers can sustain their writing well, using purposeful sentence starters and a good range of connectives. At the end of key stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the features of texts and they apply this knowledge well in their writing, for example when adding flashbacks within a narrative. The majority use an appropriate range of vocabulary and structure their writing effectively into paragraphs. They use talk well to prepare them for writing tasks, for example when turning direct speech into indirect speech. The spelling of older pupils is not always as secure as it could be. While they spell most words well, too many spell common words inaccurately.

Recommendation 2: Improve the standards of pupils' Welsh

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Most pupils ask and answer a wide range of questions with confidence and understanding. They are keen to use these with adults and visitors to the school. They take part enthusiastically in daily Welsh sessions that help them to speak and listen using Welsh in an enjoyable way in practical situations. In addition, they develop their reading and writing skills through regular Welsh lessons. As a result, standards in Welsh have improved since the core inspection. For example, in Year 2, more able pupils read familiar texts accurately and with good pronunciation. In Year 6, many pupils read articles in magazines showing a good understanding of the text. However, throughout the school, a minority of pupils are unable to apply their reading skills in unfamiliar contexts, for example when reading new books. By Year 6, pupils write well for a range of purposes using a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary appropriate to the task, for example postcards from a holiday.

Teachers make good use of the Welsh scheme of work to plan learning activities for pupils. They ensure that the Welsh language has a high profile in the school. For example, they use it in lessons and ensure that they include Welsh words and phrases in classroom displays.

Recommendation 3: Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has improved its procedures for promoting good attendance and punctuality. Leaders have employed a family engagement officer to liaise with families when absences occur without appropriate explanation. Regular newsletters for parents, and the school website, focus appropriately on attendance. Pupils respond well to suitable praise and recognition for high levels of attendance in weekly whole-school assemblies. The school has established a breakfast club, which about a third of pupils attend. This has helped to improve attendance and punctuality at the start of the school day. The school analyses its attendance data carefully to identify issues and trends.

The arrangements around punctuality are now robust and effective. Since September 2016, on average, there are only a couple of latecomers each day. This is a notable improvement on the situation at the time of the core inspection.

The attendance rate for last year placed the school in the bottom 25% when compared with similar schools. However, the overall attendance rate is now improving. At this point in the year, it is 95.2% compared with 93.4% for the same period last year. The proportion of persistent absence has declined sharply. However, there continue to be too many pupils who have relatively low rates of attendance overall. For example, 31 pupils still have attendance rates for the current term that are below 90%.

Recommendation 4: Develop procedures that ensure the full, progressive coverage of the National Curriculum and Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has improved its arrangements for planning its coverage of the National Curriculum and the Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks. Teachers have established clear long-term plans for the delivery of specific skills linked to a two-year cycle of topics. There is suitable medium-term planning in place to extend the guidance for staff further. Teachers' short-term planning has a sharper focus on skills and curriculum coverage, and includes an appropriate level of challenge in the work set for pupils of different abilities. There is effective monitoring of teachers' weekly planning by senior leaders. Teachers have established a coherent genre map to build pupils' writing skills as they move through the school. There are also detailed plans to ensure the coverage of numeracy skills and science.

Teachers have introduced a variety of new schemes and approaches that focus on the development of pupils' skills, for example, the group guided reading and the use of talk to improve pupils' writing skills. Overall, teachers use these plans and schemes well to improve the quality of provision for pupils' skills. Staff plan purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum, but the quality of pupils' work varies too much between classes and is not of a high enough standard overall.

Recommendation 5: Ensure that the national requirements for minimum teaching time and annual reports to parents are met in full

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has reorganised its timetable and it now meets the required teaching time in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

The annual reports for parents provide appropriate information on pupils' progress in each learning area in the Foundation Phase and in all National Curriculum subjects in key stage 2. The school issues the reports alongside appropriate information on pupils' attainment and their individual attendance rates. These arrangements ensure that the annual reports for parents meet statutory requirements.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that teachers challenge all pupils suitably and use classroom based assessment procedures, including formative marking, effectively

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Teachers' written feedback to pupils is now consistent across the school. They provide useful comments for pupils on what they have done well and what they need to improve. In addition, most teachers provide prompts and questions for pupils to encourage them to think further about the work they have done. For example in English, teachers ask pupils to add a simile to their written work or to provide additional detail to a description. Pupils respond to teachers' comments appropriately.

Leaders have provided training for all teachers to help them use classroom based assessment procedures more effectively. As a result, teachers use a wider range of strategies to help pupils understand how they can improve their learning. For example, in many classes, teachers set success criteria against which pupils can assess the progress they have made and see what they need to do next. Pupils use this well to discuss the quality of their work.

Throughout the school, most teachers use fewer worksheets and workbooks than at the time of the inspection. They provide work that matches better to the abilities of different groups of learners, particularly in mathematics lessons. In addition, there are improved opportunities for pupils to write freely and produce extended responses, for example in their science work. Teachers lead guided reading sessions that match appropriately to pupils' abilities. However, many teachers set independent reading tasks that do not provide sufficient challenge for pupils. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

Recommendation 7: Improve the effectiveness of the leadership, including the governing body

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school's governors have strengthened the senior leadership team with the appointment of a headteacher and a deputy headteacher. The deputy headteacher will take up her post from January 2017. The headteacher provides a clear strategic direction and as a result, the school has made generally strong progress against all the improvement priorities in its action plan. She ensures that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and has established high expectations of their work. However, the senior leadership team currently consists of too high a proportion of the school's staff.

There are improved performance management processes for teachers and support assistants. Objectives set for these link clearly to the school's priorities and focus appropriately on raising pupils' standards. Regular meetings for teachers have provided opportunities for professional development led by both school staff and external consultants. There is now a collaborative approach and a renewed commitment to school improvement from all staff.

The work of the governing body is now more effective. The school has appointed new governors, including to the positions of chair and vice-chair, and has a new clerk. There is a greater focus in governing body meetings on evaluating pupils' standards and checking the progress that the school makes against its action plan. Governors have a better understanding of pupils' attainment, including how this compares to similar schools. As a result, they challenge the school leadership more effectively. The committee structure has been refined and sub-committees meet regularly to focus on school improvement. For example, the finance sub-committee has taken decisions to improve the school's financial situation.

There are strong features in the development of leadership at the school since the core inspection but many of these are at an early stage of development and have yet to impact fully on improving important areas such as attendance.

Recommendation 8: Ensure that self-evaluation is based on a broad range of regular monitoring activities and that subsequent improvement plans have a measurable impact on pupils' standards

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Senior leaders have established a regular cycle of monitoring activities to evaluate the school's work and the progress pupils' make. These include lesson observations and analysis of a range of assessment data. Leaders use this information appropriately to help them to evaluate the progress the school is making against its priorities for improvement. The headteacher has improved the processes for evaluating the quality of teaching. She uses this information well to bring about improvements in practice across the school. For example, teachers' use of the Welsh language has improved following the headteacher's identification of this as a common issue. During the past year, the senior leadership team has met regularly to review progress against the recommendations from the core inspection. All staff have taken part in regular scrutiny of pupils' work and, as a result, have a better understanding of the standards pupils achieve. Leaders have generally evaluated the progress that the school has made accurately. However, they are too generous in evaluating the impact of these improvements on the quality of pupils' work.

Leaders have put in place processes to seek the views of parents and pupils on the work of the school and leaders have started to use these to bring about improvements. For example, following a recent parent survey, the headteacher has developed an action plan to improve communication between the school and the parents.

The school's current action plan focuses appropriately on addressing the recommendations from the core inspection. It contains appropriate actions and measureable targets that enable the school to monitor progress against these effectively. Senior leaders have identified accurately future priorities for improvement, for example, improving the outcomes of more able learners.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.