



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

**Trelewis Primary School
Treharris
Merthyr Tydfil
CF46 6AH**

Date of inspection: November 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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Context

Trelewis Primary School serves the village community of Trelewis in the Merthyr Tydfil local authority area in south-east Wales. Much of the area the school serves is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.

There are 205 pupils aged three to eleven years in the school. This includes 26 pupils in the nursery who attend on a full-time basis. Pupils are organised into a nursery class and seven mainstream classes. Nearly all pupils come from the local area.

Approximately 27% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the average for the local authority and Wales. A very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language. The school has identified 18% of pupils as having additional learning needs but no pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very few pupils are currently looked-after by the local authority. There have been no pupil exclusions in the last 12 months.

Since the last inspection in 2006, there have been a number of changes to the teaching staff in the school including the appointment of a new headteacher, who took up post in September 2012.

The individual school budget per pupil for Trelewis Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,247 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Merthyr Tydfil is £4,007 and the minimum is £3,165. Trelewis Primary School is 21st out of the 23 primary schools in Merthyr Tydfil 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 current performance of the school is good because:

- nearly all pupils make good progress from their starting points;
- the overall performance of pupils is considerably above the average for the family of schools;
- nearly all pupils behave well in classes and around the school;
- the level of care, support and guidance provided to pupils is good; and
- the curriculum is varied and interesting with literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology given a high priority.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the new headteacher has settled into her new role extremely well and she has a clear vision for the school;
- there is a highly effective leadership team in place;
- leaders have high expectations of what staff and pupils can achieve;
- there is a thorough process for self-evaluation and very good use of data;
- there are a number of very successful professional learning communities in place;
- there is a very clear focus on learning and teaching resulting in improved standards;
- governors provide good support and direction for the work of the school; and
- the school has a very good track record of making necessary improvements.

Recommendations

- R1 Continue to improve the performance of boys in the Foundation Phase and girls in key stage 2 at the higher levels
- R2 Disseminate best practice to ensure a consistently high standard of teaching across the school
- R3 Monitor the progress and impact of the recently introduced performance management strategy for support staff

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

In the Foundation Phase, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed. Most pupils respond well to adult questioning and listen carefully to instructions. Many are confident talkers and are inquisitive about what they learn. By the end of key stage 2, pupils generally speak confidently about a range of different subjects and express their thoughts and opinions well.

Most young pupils develop good reading skills, and have a good understanding of letter sounds and a keen interest in reading. Nearly all pupils use their knowledge about different sounds to help them break down unfamiliar words. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils enjoy reading and read fluently with good understanding.

Pupils generally write well in the Foundation Phase. Younger pupils often write freely in order to express themselves. By the end of the Foundation Phase, pupils write using good vocabulary and structure in a range of different contexts. Many more able pupils write independently using longer sentences and correct spelling. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' writing skills are generally good. Most write well in a good range of different genres and their writing skills are used effectively across the curriculum.

Pupils' numeracy skills develop well throughout the school and they use these skills appropriately in many different subjects across the curriculum. Pupils in key stage 2 apply their numeracy skills particularly well in science lessons.

Pupils' information and communication technology skills are highly developed across a range of subjects. Pupils' work in researching data about local history and their use of information and communication technology to improve their own learning are excellent. Standards achieved by the end of key stage 2 are exceptionally good.

Nearly all pupils make good progress in their learning and build on what they already know. More able pupils achieve well and those with additional learning needs also make very good progress. In the Foundation Phase, boys perform less well than girls in language skills, particularly at the higher outcome 6. This is reversed in key stage 2 where the performance of boys is generally above the performance of girls, particularly at the higher level 5. Pupils entitled to free school meals generally achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, other pupils of a similar age.

Pupils' spoken Welsh is developing well in the Foundation Phase. By the time pupils reach the end of key stage 2 they ask relevant questions, respond appropriately to a range of questions and translate sentences effectively. Older pupils read simple Welsh texts with a good degree of accuracy and understanding. Many pupils at the end of key stage 2 also write well.

In the Foundation Phase, nearly 90% of pupils in 2012 achieved the outcome indicator (the expected outcome in language, mathematical and personal and social development). This performance is the best in the family of schools (a group of schools with similar characteristics).

In key stage 2, pupils' performance has shown a significant upward trend over the last three years. In 2012, the overall performance of pupils was considerably above the average for the family of schools at both the expected level (level 4) and the higher level (level 5).

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils have a good understanding of how to develop a healthy lifestyle. They generally eat healthily and get plenty of exercise. Pupils show extremely positive attitudes towards everything they do; they relate well to each other and are very courteous and responsive to adults.

Attendance, at over 93% in the last academic year, is above that for similar schools and nearly all pupils arrive punctually in the mornings. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, at break times and as they move around the school. A very strong pupil support and mediation structure operates in the school. This helps pupils to feel very safe and they are confident that any instances of bullying are addressed promptly and effectively.

All pupils play a full and active part in school life and feel that adults value their opinions. This is especially notable in pupils' involvement in what they are taught.

Members of the school council and eco committee display mature and responsible attitudes. They represent pupils' opinions well by holding regular surgeries for their peers. They are involved in making decisions that bring positive changes to the school, for example by improving pupils' attendance and developing the playground. A few pupils are school ambassadors and they have promoted effectively the Rights of the Child within the school community. A technical team of pupils is highly skilled in evaluating computer software and they provide training to staff, parents and other pupils on its use and suitability. This represents an excellent feature of the school.

Many pupils develop very good social and life skills through the wide range of opportunities provided by the school. For example, pupils use Enterprise Week to develop their research, decision-making and analytical skills. These activities prepare older pupils very well for life outside school. During lessons, most pupils collaborate well with each other in paired and group work.

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

The school provides a wide range of interesting and challenging learning experiences that successfully engage pupils of all abilities. Teachers' planning ensures that all curriculum requirements are covered well and that most pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively through the school. Staff provide a wide

range of enrichment activities for pupils at lunch times and after school. These activities complement pupils' learning well and many pupils attend regularly. For example, pupils have opportunities to attend sporting clubs and to take part in storytelling, choir and art clubs.

The school's arrangements to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are very good. For example, a whole school approach to the development of phonics has improved pupils' standards of reading. In addition, an excellent school information and communication technology facility is exceptionally well used by pupils to research information, to undertake work across the curriculum and to do homework.

The school promotes the Welsh language very positively. Most staff use the Welsh language regularly and successfully with pupils in classrooms and around the school. Teachers use the school locality very well to enable pupils to develop a strong understanding of their Welsh heritage and culture. Visitors to the school also enrich pupils' learning. For example, a visit by the famous Welsh poet Myrddin Ap Dafydd stimulated pupils' interest in Welsh poetry.

Pupils participate in a wide range of activities to promote the importance of environmental sustainability and citizenship, with most of these being firmly embedded in the curriculum. As a result, many pupils are very aware of, and can discuss, for example, the possible impacts of global warming.

Teaching: Good

Overall, the quality of teaching in the school is good and staff generally have high expectations of all pupils.

Teachers and support staff use their up-to-date subject knowledge well to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. They plan effectively and use high quality resources to engage most pupils. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and provide pupils with challenging and stimulating learning experiences. Adults know pupils and their needs extremely well. They develop very positive relationships with pupils and ensure that nearly all make good progress. In the few lessons where teaching was judged as adequate, teachers did not always explain work clearly enough or match the work well enough to pupils of different abilities.

Teachers generally use a range of assessment procedures very effectively to monitor pupils' progress. For example, they use detailed tracking of pupils' work to develop appropriate intervention strategies to support pupils' skill development. In addition, teachers ensure that pupils are fully involved in their own assessments and the assessment of others. Consistent marking by teachers helps pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

The school has a well-established culture of standardising and moderating pupils' work. This enables teachers to assess pupils' work accurately, particularly at the end of the key stages.

The school keeps parents and carers well informed about their child's achievements, wellbeing and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There is very effective provision for promoting the health and wellbeing of pupils across the school. Successful arrangements are also in place to promote good behaviour and attendance. The school caters well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is a strength of the school. As a result, these pupils receive a very good range of effective support.

The additional learning needs co-ordinator organises support for pupils efficiently and a comprehensive school action plan provides clear direction for staff. As a result, they identify pupils' needs at an early stage and plan appropriate and often individualised support for the most vulnerable pupils. There is a clear link between the effective analysis of pupils' needs, appropriate support provided by the school and the good progress made by pupils with additional learning needs.

The school engages well with external agencies and specialists to meet the needs of pupils. Services such as police, health, educational psychologists and behaviour support workers attend the school regularly to work with pupils, parents and staff.

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

Learning environment: Good

This is an inclusive school where pupils' individual needs are identified and addressed very well. It is also the first school in the local authority to have gained a UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools scheme award. As a result, pupils are very aware of differences and the importance of equality of opportunity. This very good work is reinforced throughout the school by the addition of a relevant excerpt from the scheme on all wall displays. The school has effective provision to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not disadvantaged in any way.

The school is well maintained and classrooms are well furnished and resourced. The attractive and informative wall displays across the school provide an environment that is highly conducive to learning. There is a well-equipped computer suite with a number of other computers located in classroom areas. The outside areas of the school, particularly the forest school and the heritage wall, are notable features providing ideal locations for outdoor classrooms. Overall, the quality and quantity of learning resources are good.

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

The headteacher has very recently taken up post in the school. She is working very effectively with an excellent leadership team who together provide a clear vision for the school. This vision is communicated well to all stakeholders. The leadership team have high expectations of what pupils and staff can achieve and there is a clear

focus in the school on raising standards. This focus is emphasised through the very high priority given to literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and there is very good communication throughout the school. Performance management for teachers is working well and a strategy has recently been introduced for support staff.

Governors support the school well. They have a very good knowledge of the performance of pupils in Trelewis school and how this compares with the performance of pupils in other similar schools. They also know about the strengths of the school and the areas it needs to further develop through, for example a range of 'learning walks' that they undertake with school staff. Governors regularly challenge the school to bring about necessary improvements.

School leaders ensure that there is an appropriate focus on national and local priorities, for example improving literacy skills and pupils' wellbeing. The Rights Respecting School initiative is having an excellent impact on pupils' wellbeing and the school ethos.

Improving quality: Good

The school has a thorough process for identifying its strengths and areas for improvement. Staff use a wide range of first-hand evidence effectively and have produced an accurate self-evaluation report. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to give their views on school life and the views of parents and governors are also taken account of.

All staff have a very detailed understanding of the performance of individuals and groups of pupils, and they know how this compares with the performance of pupils in other similar schools. Leaders and managers use this data exceptionally well to monitor and challenge the school's performance.

The outcomes of the self-evaluation process are used to determine appropriate areas and challenging targets for school improvement with a clear focus on improving standards.

The school has responded extremely well to the recommendations of the last inspection and to all the minor shortcomings that were identified. This has resulted in improved standards in Welsh throughout the school and in the accurate assessment of pupils' performance.

The school is developing as a very strong learning community. There is very good teamwork and professional development activities are evaluated thoroughly. There are a number of highly effective professional learning communities in place such as those concerned with raising standards in reading, using sound and moving images to stimulate pupils' writing and the delivery of literacy through education for sustainable development and global citizenship. These have had a significant impact in improving pupils' literacy skills throughout the school.

Partnership working: Good

The school works very well with a wide range of partners and this enriches pupils' learning and wellbeing. For example, effective links with Cardiff City Football Club enhance the sporting opportunities for a talented pupil.

There are strong links with parents and recent improvements in communication have enhanced these. School staff keep all stakeholders very well informed about school life through the highly effective, interactive, web-based facility.

The school has very good links with outside agencies. The school's 'getting to know you' sessions for nursery parents involve a number of outside agencies such as behaviour support workers and health representatives. These sessions enable parents new to the school to understand fully the support networks available. This is an outstanding example of partnership liaison. The school's very good work with the community has been acknowledged through the recent award of Investors in Families.

Successful transition arrangements exist with the local high school and there are good links with the cluster of primary schools. Cluster schools work together well to improve the standardisation and moderation of teacher assessments. There are also good arrangements in place for the schools to share data through an effective pupil tracking system.

Resource management: Good

Teachers and support staff have a very good range of skills and expertise that they use to deliver the curriculum effectively. The school deploys staff efficiently and their clearly defined roles enable them to perform successfully. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with additional needs and, more generally, to groups of pupils in all classes.

The school uses staff expertise to best advantage. For instance, a member of the leadership team has been highly successful in developing the information and communication technology competency of colleagues to assist with assessment procedures.

There are sound arrangements for planning, preparation and assessment time and these provide pupils with good continuity in their learning.

School leaders manage available funds efficiently. They ensure that spending decisions are focused to help the school achieve its priorities identified in its development plan. Pupils benefit from a considerable variety of interesting learning resources, and from stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments.

In view of the good outcomes achieved by nearly all pupils, the good quality of care, support and guidance provided, and the efficient management of funds, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In the Foundation Phase, nearly 90% of pupils in 2012 achieved the outcome indicator (the expected outcome in language, mathematical and personal and social development). Pupils' performance in all areas was above the local authority and all-Wales averages and overall, was the best performance in the family of schools (a group of schools with similar characteristics).

In language, literacy and communication skills and mathematical development, pupils' performance at the expected outcome (outcome 5) is around 10 percentage points above the family average. At the higher outcome (outcome 6) pupils' performance is 17 percentage points above the family average and is the best performance in the family. In personal and social development, all pupils achieved the expected outcome and this represented the best performance in the family.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance has shown a significant upward trend over the last three years. This year, nearly 92% of pupils achieved the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science, a 10 percentage point increase since last year. The overall performance of pupils is considerably above the averages for the local authority and Wales and, when compared with that of other similar schools, represents the best performance in the family. However, the school has only recently been in the top quarter when compared with schools with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Pupils' performance at the higher level 5 has improved over the last three years and in English, mathematics and science is significantly better than the performance of pupils in other similar schools.

In the Foundation Phase, boys perform less well than girls in language skills, particularly at the higher outcome 6. This is reversed in key stage 2 where the performance of boys is generally above the performance of girls, particularly at the higher level 5. Pupils entitled to free school meals generally achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, other pupils of a similar age.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

Ninety-eight pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire fully.

All pupils think that teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress and all know whom to talk to if they find their work hard. In addition, nearly all pupils know who to talk to if they are worried or upset. As a result, nearly all pupils say that they feel safe in school and all feel that they are doing well.

All pupils feel the school teaches them how to keep healthy and nearly all feel that they get regular exercise. Nearly all pupils feel they have enough books and equipment and that homework helps them to improve their work in school.

Nearly all pupils feel that the school deals well with bullying. Most pupils feel that children behave well in class and they can get their work done without interference. However, a few feel that children do not always behave well at break times.

All of these views are better than the views of pupils in other schools across Wales. Significantly more pupils in Trelewis Primary School feel that children behave well in class and they can get their work done.

Parent questionnaires

Thirty-nine parents completed the questionnaire and all of these are satisfied with the school and feel that it is well run.

All parents state that their children were helped to settle into school when they first started. All also feel that their children like school and are happy and safe there. All parents feel that teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard. As a result, nearly all feel their children are making good progress. All parents feel that their children are becoming more mature, taking on responsibilities, and that they are encouraged to be healthy. Many parents feel that there is a good range of activities in school and all feel that homework given is appropriate. All parents state that their children are treated fairly and receive enough additional support with their individual learning needs. All parents also state that pupils are well prepared to move on to their next school.

Nearly all parents state that school staff are approachable if they have concerns or questions and many feel they are well informed about their children's progress. All parents feel that pupils behave well in school. Many parents are clear about what to do if they need to raise issues with the school or to make a complaint.

Many of these views are slightly better than the views of parents in other schools across Wales. However, parents in Trelewis Primary School are generally less positive about being well informed about their children's progress, the school's procedures for dealing with concerns or complaints and the range of activities and trips available for pupils.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mike Maguire	Reporting Inspector
Helen Morgan-Rees	Team Inspector
Richard Lloyd	Team Inspector
Edward Tipper	Lay Inspector
Donna Caswell	Peer Inspector
Sian Shankland	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