



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
Cae`r Felin Community School
Pencader
Carmarthenshire
SA39 9AA**

Date of inspection: May 2011

School Number: 6692387

Inspection Number: 1887

by

Wil Williams

Reporting Inspector under contract to Estyn

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

Cae`r Felin Community Primary School is located in the village of Pencader between Llandysul and Carmarthen. The school was opened as a community school in September 2003 following re-organisation of primary education in the area. The school serves the village of Pencader and the nearby villages of Alltwalis, Llanfihangel ar Arth and Gwyddgrug. The school accommodation consists of four classrooms, a food hall and a multi-purpose hall.

There are 90 full time pupils on roll that includes 6 children of nursery age. The school is organised into four classes of mixed age. Around 20 per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the spoken language.

According to the school, the pupils come from a social background that is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Around 13 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is slightly lower than local and national averages. No pupil is cared for by the local authority (LA) or is learning English as an additional language.

Approximately a quarter of the pupils have additional learning needs (ALN). This is slightly higher than county and national percentages. Two per cent of these pupils have a statement of SEN.

In 2010-2011, the individual school budget per pupil for Cae`r Felin Community School is £3298, which compares with a maximum of £17415 and a minimum of £3014 for primary schools in Carmarthenshire. The school has the 90th highest budget per pupil out of the 114 primary schools in Carmarthenshire.

The present head teacher has been in post since January 2011. There have been no significant changes to the nature of the school since the last inspection in April 2005.

Summary

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

Current performance

The present performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils achieve good standards;
- the quality of teaching is good with some excellent teaching;
- a wide range of rich learning experiences are provided for each pupil; and
- the skilful leadership of the head teacher and the governing body gives a clear strategic direction to the work of the school.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the head teacher has recognised the school's strengths and development needs and has put improvements in place;
- thorough self-evaluation arrangements lead to the raising of standards;
- staff work closely as a team and are willing to try new initiatives and different ways of working; and
- the school works effectively with a wide number of partners to improve pupils' standards and wellbeing.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the school needs to:

- R1 improve reading and writing skills in Welsh at key stage 2;
- R2 increase the percentages of pupils who achieve Levels 3 and 5: and
- R3 place a clearer focus on raising standards in the School Improvement Plan.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Results of the baseline assessment of children on entry to the school show that they encompass a wide range of ability in the key skills. Most pupils make significant progress during their early years at the school and by the end of the Reception Class they achieve the expected outcomes for their age and ability.

Most of the Foundation Phase children and Year 2 (Y2) pupils make significant progress in their Welsh language and literacy skills. They speak fluently and use their reading and writing skills with increased ability.

In KS2, many pupils communicate orally with confidence in Welsh and English across the learning areas. Although many pupils read and write with ease in the two languages, there are shortcomings in the reading and writing skills of some pupils.

Across the school, nearly all pupils use their numeracy and information communication and technology (ICT) skills successfully for a number of purposes such as collecting information and presenting data. Challenging activities in the classroom ensure that many pupils develop good problem solving skills.

Pupils of all ages make good progress in learning. Nearly all recall previous learning easily and acquire new information, understanding and skills confidently.

Considering the linguistic background and the context of the school, many pupils make good progress in the Welsh language.

During the last three years, pupils' performance at the end of both key stages in Welsh, mathematics and science as well as English at the end of key stage 2 (KS2) has, on the whole, compared well with local and national performance. The percentage achieving the core subject indicator (CSI), that is, the expected level in the three core subjects has also been comparative to local and national figures. Performance at the end of both key stages has been similar to the majority of schools facing the same challenges.

Over the same period, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 at the end of key stage 1 (KS1) and Level 5 at the end of KS2 is lower than local and national percentages.

The percentage of KS1 pupils attaining Level 2 or higher in mathematics and science in 2010 is higher than local and national results. They were also better than most schools facing the same challenges. However, the results for Welsh were much lower than this benchmark.

In 2010, the performance of KS2 pupils in Welsh, English, mathematics and science was significantly lower than local and national benchmarks and also lower than most of the schools facing the same challenges. The school attributes this to the comparatively small size of the group and to the high percentage of ALN pupils within it.

In 2010, the percentage of CA1 pupils attaining Level 2 or higher in the three core subjects were among the top 50 per cent of schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. The performance of KS2 pupils were among the lowest 25 per cent of similar schools.

There is no significant difference in 2010 between the percentage of girls and boys achieving the expected levels in the core subjects.

Nearly all pupils including those entitled to free school meals, the less able or pupils with ALN make good progress through the Foundation Phase and key stages 1 and 2.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. Nearly all feel safe in the school environment and are free from any physical or verbal abuse.

Pupils of all ages have a secure understanding of how they can become healthy and they appreciate that healthy foods and regular exercise has a positive effect on their wellbeing and development.

Pupils social skills and life skills are of a high standard. Standards of behaviour in every classroom is commendable and pupils show respect and care for each other. Many are very active and enthusiastic learners who work together harmoniously and keep diligently on task over extended periods. From a young age, the pupils are very confident to make choices about their learning and they address problem solving

tasks competently. Most make good progress in their ability to improve their learning.

Pupils have a strong commitment to the school and to the staff and as they mature, they are willing to take on extra responsibilities. The school council performs its` duties conscientiously and effectively and play a leading role in the life and work of the school.

Over the last four years, the school`s attendance rates have been either similar to or slightly lower than national rates.

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

The rich range of learning experiences provided successfully meets the needs of the full range of pupils, employers and community. Most of the classroom activities reinforce the learning in a number of interesting contexts relative to the age and ability of the pupils. The practice of actively including the pupils themselves in the planning is an obvious strength within the school. The extensive provision for ensuring that pupils of all ages develop their thinking skills and acquire communication, numeracy and ICT skills is embedded consistently well across the curriculum.

The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is central to the school`s programme of work and imaginative use is made of the local area and its` people to provide stimulating experiences and learning activities. The curriculum, as well as a wide range of extracurricular activities that are provided, helps pupils to develop a number of personal and social key skills very effectively.

Provision for promoting pupils` understanding and experiences of global citizenship is comprehensive. Respecting multi-culturalism, promoting anti racism and developing fairness and equal opportunities are strong features of the school culture. School strategies, as well as the Eco Council`s programme, contribute significantly towards raising pupils` awareness of the importance of sustainable development and protecting the environment.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good and includes some examples of excellent teaching at the top end of the Foundation Phase and Year 2.

Teachers in all classes use a wide range of teaching strategies in a skilful way and deliver lessons in a lively manner and with much enthusiasm. The activities that are provided are challenging and offer worthwhile opportunities for pupils to practice and develop their enquiry skills. Through purposeful intervention and skilful questioning, teachers and practitioners succeed well in extending pupils` knowledge and understanding and in developing their learning skills. There is consistent

encouragement for pupils to evaluate their learning, to express an opinion and to suggest improvements.

The ways in which children at the top end of the Foundation Phase and Y2 are encouraged to experiment with new experiences, make decisions and lead their learning, are excellent features.

The school's assessment arrangements are thorough and comprehensive and the systems allow teachers to monitor and track pupils regularly. The school works effectively with the cluster of local schools to standardise and moderate teacher assessments.

Assessment for learning strategies are an obvious strength and are firmly embedded in the school's teaching and assessment methods. Teachers consistently encourage pupils to evaluate their own work as well as the work of their peers and to note what they need to do to improve. Assessment information is used frequently to guide future planning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

There are detailed care policies and arrangements for ensuring the emotional and physical health and safety of pupils as well as encouraging their involvement in their school and the wider community. These arrangements contribute significantly to pupils' development and support their learning well. The learning experiences promote pupils' personal, social and cultural development very effectively. The collective worship sessions, as well as the provision for promoting pupils' spiritual and moral development are of a very high standard.

The quality of provision for pupils' health and safety and the support offered to every individual is consistently good. The promotion of healthy eating habits is a high priority in all classes and the comprehensive physical education programme contributes significantly to increasing pupils' fitness. The school has appropriate policies and has procedures for safeguarding.

The provision for pupils with ALN is good. Pupils' needs are identified early and by means of regular assessments, a close eye is kept on progress and appropriate, achievable targets are set. Pupils and parents have an active role in all processes.

The provision for more able and talented pupils is secure in all classes and the exchange strategies for English literacy leads to good progress in learning and standards.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a happy and inclusive community, where pupils have equal access to all educational and social provision. A clear emphasis is placed on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity and creating an ethos that fosters care and tolerance. An ample supply of good quality and relevant resources is well matched to the full age and ability range. The accommodation is of good quality and the school uses every space purposefully for the wellbeing of pupils. The outside area for the Foundation Phase and Year 2 is a worthwhile and interesting resource that offers a variety of experiences for the children.

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

The skilful leadership of the head teacher and the governing body communicates a clear vision and gives a strategic direction to the work of the school. In a relatively short time, the head teacher has succeeded in recognising the main strengths and developmental needs of the school and has put improvements in place. The school has clear strategic aims and objectives and these are shared with staff, governors and parents. The teaching staff and support staff work closely as a team and are willing to try new initiatives and different ways of working. All members of staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities very conscientiously. By means of thorough performance management arrangements, staff training and development needs, as well as school needs, are effectively recognised and met.

The school has addressed a number of national and local priorities and these have had a positive effect on learning outcomes. The Foundation Phase provision, as well as the implementation of assessment for learning strategies, has contributed significantly to the quality of pupils` learning.

Governors undertake their roles in a very responsible way. They have a good understanding of the way the school performs and this has been strengthened by a number of visits and observations alongside staff. They effectively challenge the school as critical friends. The governing body immediately addresses any concerns or complaints.

Improving quality: Good

By implementing comprehensive self-evaluation arrangements, leaders have a realistic picture of the school`s strengths and weaknesses. A range of monitoring strategies, including data analysis and lesson observations are used to measure progress and to note areas for improvement. By using questionnaires and other informal methods, the school provides numerous opportunities for pupils and parents to express their perspective and raise matters that are important to them.

The SIP notes priorities for improvement but there is insufficient clear focus on how to raise standards. Staff meet regularly and have input into what is needed to be done.

An effective professional community exists within the school that enables staff to share and develop their professional knowledge for the pupils` benefit. The school regularly works closely and shares` practice with a number of other schools within the LA.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a wide number of partners to improve pupils` standards and wellbeing. These include parents, other local schools and the

community. There are strong links with the LA and the school is often used as an example of good teaching and learning practice. School staff work well with staff from other schools in the area to provide joint in-service training. The school has worked effectively with outside agencies to introduce programmes that help pupils and their families with basic skills. These productive partnerships contribute significantly towards ensuring joint quality and to widen the range of opportunities available to pupils.

Resource management: Good

Staffing and financial resources are managed and used effectively to support and improve learning. The teachers and learning assistants have good levels of knowledge and expertise to teach the curriculum effectively. The school has responded well to the requirements in the national agreement "Raising Standards and Tackling Workload". School results are good with nearly all pupils working to their full potential. This ensures good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Around 20 per cent of parents completed the questionnaire and expressed positive views about the school. All were generally satisfied with the education saying that their children are happy in the school, are treated fairly and with respect by staff. Nearly all parents believe that their child is making good progress and is well prepared for moving on to the next school. A small number of parents feel that homework does not build well on what their children learn in school. All parents say that the school is well run.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Every child in KS2 completed the questionnaire and expressed very positive views about the school. Every single one said that they feel safe in the school and that they do well in their work. They believe that homework helps them to improve their work and that they have enough equipment and computers available for them. There is a unanimous view that that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that there are lots of chances for them to get regular exercise. According to the majority of children, other children behave well at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Wil Williams	Reporting Inspector
Hazel Hughes	Team Inspector
Deris Williams	Lay Inspector
Kevin Williams	Peer Inspector
Martin Griffiths	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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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' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 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	R	Y1	Y2	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:

Key stage 1	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