



*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**

**Bute Cottage Nursery School  
Bute Lane  
Off Grove Place  
Penarth  
Vale of Glamorgan  
CF64 2ET**

**Date of inspection: October 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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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

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**Publication date: 03/12/2013**

## Context

Bute Cottage Nursery School, opened in 1974, is near the centre of Penarth. It provides nursery education for three and four-year-olds, who are admitted on a part-time basis at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. The maximum time children spend in the school is five terms.

The school has the capacity to accommodate 96 children. Currently there are 79 on roll, 52 of whom were new to the school in September 2013.

Around 18% of the children are on the school's additional learning needs register, which is an increase on previous years. No child has a statement of special educational needs and none is looked after by the local authority. Nearly all children are from English-speaking homes and only a very few are from an ethnic minority background. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language.

The school was last inspected in November 2007. The current headteacher has been in post since January 2013.

The 2013-2014 individual school budget per pupil for Bute Cottage Nursery School is £5,409, which compares to a national average of £5,715 for all maintained nursery schools in Wales.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The school's performance is good because:

- most children make good progress in line with their age and ability and achieve well in the seven areas of learning, although the most able do not always reach their full potential;
- all children develop Welsh oral skills very effectively;
- all children have a positive attitude to learning, behave very well and develop very good self-esteem; and
- teaching is consistently good.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the school's self-evaluation processes are thorough and robust;
- the new headteacher has successfully acquired a good oversight of the school's strengths and areas for development;
- governors are very supportive of the school and are kept well informed, although they are relatively uninvolved in determining its strategic direction and monitoring its progress; and
- the school has excellent, innovative and well-established partnerships with parents.

## Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that the most able children are effectively challenged so that they meet their full potential
- R2 Develop the role of the governing body, so that governors are more involved in determining the strategic direction of the school and monitoring its progress

### **What happens next?**

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

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### Standards: Good

Most children enter the school with average to above average basic skills and nearly all make good progress in line with their age and ability. By the time they leave, most children, including those with additional learning needs, are achieving well in the seven areas of learning and attaining standards expected of them, although the most able do not always reach their full potential.

Most children attain a good standard of oracy in their group activities and in the daily life of the school. They speak clearly and intelligently about their work in a range of situations. They have a very varied vocabulary, including words and idioms relevant to their areas of activity, for example in the construction area and in the sustainable classroom, 'y bwthyn bach pinc'.

The early reading skills of most children develop effectively through appropriate activities. Most can identify initial letters of words successfully with a minority recognising an increasing number of familiar words. A few can identify words in books and displays across the school. Their knowledge of the characteristics of books is strong.

Children develop good numeracy skills and most can count to ten and match the relevant word to the correct symbol. They apply their information and communication technology (ICT) abilities appropriately to enhance their fine motor skills and to record their work, for example in art.

Children develop Welsh oral skills very effectively. They fully participate in the school's well-established Welsh ethos and celebrate it enthusiastically. They achieve well in lessons, listening appropriately and responding independently in a variety of different situations, such as singing during circle time.

### Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all children have a secure understanding of how to keep healthy. They engage readily in physical activity and understand the changes exercise makes to their bodies. They feel safe in school

All children enjoy school and are well motivated. They work together successfully to achieve effective outcomes. They are eager to participate in tasks and display pride and confidence in their work. They have a positive attitude to learning and develop very good self-esteem.

Nearly all children relate very well to one another and adults. They are considerate and courteous. Their behaviour is exemplary.

Attendance for 2012-2013 was around 93%, which is above average for a nursery school and considerably better than at the time of the previous inspection. Nearly all children arrive punctually.

All children readily make choices. They reflect on their learning successfully and make appropriate decisions about their activities. They take on relevant responsibilities with enthusiasm.

Through visits and projects, nearly all children acquire a good range of personal and social skills which prepare them well for life outside school.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

The school provides a curriculum that fully meets the needs of its young children. Teachers and learning support assistants group children appropriately, which ensures that most individuals make good progress.

Whole-school planning supports clear development and progression in key skills across the curriculum. Teachers offer varied activities for children to develop their early speaking, listening and reading skills.

The school provides good investigative experiences for children to follow their own lines of enquiry and to decide on the direction of their own learning under the guidance of key workers. It also offers lunch time clubs periodically, which extend children's knowledge and understanding.

Provision for the Welsh language and the Welsh dimension is good. Learning experiences are enriched considerably by regular visits away from the site to places of local and Welsh interest. This develops children's personal, social and community skills very effectively and enriches their understanding of life beyond the school and home.

The school makes good provision for sustainable development and global citizenship and has achieved the platinum eco flag. The principle of sustainability is an integral part of the curriculum, with the result that children begin to understand the importance of their environment and how to look after it. The wider world is celebrated through a programme of festivals and charity fundraising.

### **Teaching: Good**

Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together to lead children's learning. All are designated as key workers and have high expectations and good up-to-date knowledge of the Foundation Phase.

Key workers prepare and effectively organise stimulating and engaging tasks to match most children's experiences and abilities. They encourage most individuals to achieve their potential and use continual praise to motivate them to succeed. However, they do not provide sufficient focused opportunities for higher ability children to develop, in particular, early writing skills across the curriculum.

Key workers use skilful questioning techniques and intervene at appropriate times to promote children's understanding. They conduct sessions at a good pace and use incidental Welsh particularly well.

The school has very effective processes in place to observe, assess and track children's progress. Key workers set children relevant individual targets based on their skills development and learning potential.

The school is introducing basic assessment for learning strategies to help children understand how they might improve.

The school successfully keeps parents well informed of their child's progress through termly reports and consultations. It also produces detailed end of year reports containing samples of work and photographic evidence. These are of excellent quality.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

All staff know the children very well and have a very caring approach to their learning and wellbeing. They establish excellent relationships with them.

The school makes appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking through its curriculum, specific projects and daily routines. It takes good account of Welsh Government directives.

The school successfully fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the learning experiences it offers. The environment is supportive and well ordered.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. The level of security is good and all necessary health and safety procedures are in place. There are arrangements to follow-up unexplained absences, but not always on the first day.

The early identification and monitoring of children's additional learning needs, and in particular their social and emotional needs, are undertaken thoroughly. Staff monitor progress against targets for nearly all groups of children carefully.

Individual education plans for children on school action plus are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure learning needs are met. However, children recorded as being on school action do not have individual plans and parents are not formally involved in reviewing their progress.



There is effective liaison with a range of agencies to provide additional personal and specialist support as required.

**Learning environment: Good**

The school has an inclusive family ethos, in which every child has equal access to the curriculum and all aspects of school life. Children feel valued and respected regardless of their gender, ethnicity or background. Diversity is celebrated and instances of discrimination or oppressive behaviour are very rare. The school is wheelchair accessible.

Classrooms contain attractive displays and are bright and tidy, creating a friendly and welcoming learning environment. The internal accommodation is well maintained and has recently been beneficially extended. However, the outside cladding on the original building is in a poor state of repair and requires urgent attention.

The school has successfully developed its extensive grounds to create a stimulating and rich outdoor learning environment, including a recently constructed sustainable classroom. This provision is a strength of the school.

There is a good range of resources, which are well used to support children's learning, especially for those with additional learning needs. The provision for ICT is particularly well developed.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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**Leadership: Good**

The governing body and staff have a shared vision for the school, based on appropriate aims and values.

The new headteacher has successfully acquired a good oversight of the school's strengths and areas for development in the short time she has been in post. She is keen to move the school forward, while maintaining the existing good practice. All parents agree that the school is well run.

The senior leadership team comprises the new headteacher and the long-serving assistant headteacher, who has a range of responsibilities. They work closely together and now meet formally on a regular basis. This is helping to build staff relationships and to create greater consensus on the school's future direction.

Staff form a cohesive team. They share their expertise and work together well. All have designated roles and each teacher has responsibility for one or more areas of learning, which they monitor and evaluate effectively. This leads to relevant improvement plans.

Governors are very supportive of the school and are kept well informed. All have a curriculum area of interest and visit the school when they can. However, they are relatively uninvolved in determining the strategic direction of the school and monitoring its progress.

The school meets all legal requirements and responds well to national and local priorities. For example, it is beginning to take account of the national literacy and numeracy strategy and has implemented the Foundation Phase very successfully. There is a rolling programme of policy review.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The school has thorough and robust self-evaluation processes, based on a planned schedule of activities. It effectively gathers appropriate first-hand evidence from a range of sources.

The headteacher and curriculum leaders monitor standards regularly and the involvement of children, parents and the community enables them to make an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Curriculum leaders have started to produce end-of-year action plans for their area of learning, based on classroom observations, children's achievements and planning evaluations. These make a beneficial contribution to the school improvement plan. Good use is made of key worker assessment data to decide on children's performance and progress and to set development targets.

The school improvement plan and self-evaluation report are comprehensive and effective documents, containing relevant targets to take the school forward. Staff contribute to their compilation and staff meeting agendas have an appropriate focus on improvement planning. Governors, however, have little input until the final draft documents are produced.

The school ensures appropriate resources are allocated to priority areas. It has addressed all the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school has an excellent, innovative and well-established partnership with parents, which has a positive effect on the standards children achieve. The highly effective communication channels between the school and parents considerably enhance children's wellbeing. All parents express extremely positive views about the school and they value the approachability of staff.

Effective liaison with pre-school settings and the receiving primary schools ensures that parents are well informed about induction and transfer arrangements. The school's range of partnerships with other schools, further education institutions and the local authority make an effective contribution to children's learning and wellbeing.

The school is an integral part of the local community. Links with local businesses and organisations are varied and impact on the development of children's social understanding and key skills. They help to foster a sense of belonging and respect for the local environment.

The school is developing procedures to share good practice within the school and between schools. It is beginning to take a lead role in establishing effective joint working practices with other local nursery schools.

**Resource management: Good**

The school is generously staffed with well-qualified and experienced teachers and learning support assistants, all of whom play an important role in children's learning. Good use is made of their expertise to deliver the Foundation Phase successfully.

Staff attend relevant courses regularly to keep abreast of developments in nursery education in line with the school improvement plan and their performance management objectives. Beneficial in-house training also occurs regularly, often in association with the other two local nursery schools, leading to the sharing and implementation of best practice.

All staff are involved in performance management procedures, including the caretaker and clerk. They have relevant targets linked to the school improvement plan and their professional development needs.

The school makes appropriate arrangements to meet the requirements of the national workload agreement. All key workers have the same planning, preparation and assessment time whether they are full or part-time. This is a generous allocation.

The school manages its resources and accommodation very well. It also oversees its finances appropriately and good controls are in place. It carried over a small budget surplus last year, although the amount spent on children's resources reduced due to unexpected building costs related to the new extension. Money is also currently having to be saved to replace the external cladding.

Due to its good outcomes and the quality of its provision, the school provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### **Commentary on performance data**

There is no official performance data for nursery schools to comment on. The school has produced its own data outcomes. These are in 1.1 standards above.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

##### Primary Questionnaire (Overall)

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

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

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

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Cytuno'n gryf Strongly Agree	Cytuno Agree	Anghytuno Disagree	Anghytuno'n gryf Strongly disagree	Ddim yn gwybod Don't know	
Overall I am satisfied with the school.	37	34 92%	3 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Rwy'n fodlon â'r ysgol yn gyffredinol.
		63%	33%	3%	1%		
My child likes this school.	37	34 92%	3 8%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhentyn yn hoffi'r ysgol hon.
		72%	26%	1%	0%		
My child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school.	37	32 86%	5 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Cafodd fy mhentyn gymorth i ymgartrefu'n dda pan ddechreuodd yn yr ysgol.
		72%	26%	1%	0%		
My child is making good progress at school.	36	22 61%	8 22%	0 0%	0 0%	6	Mae fy mhentyn yn gwneud cynnydd da yn yr ysgol.
		61%	34%	3%	0%		
Pupils behave well in school.	36	24 67%	6 17%	0 0%	0 0%	6	Mae disgyblion yn ymddwyn yn dda yn yr ysgol.
		45%	46%	4%	1%		
Teaching is good.	36	29 81%	3 8%	0 0%	0 0%	4	Mae'r addysgu yn dda.
		60%	35%	2%	0%		
Staff expect my child to work hard and do his or her best.	36	23 64%	11 31%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae'r staff yn disgwyl i fy mhentyn weithio'n galed ac i wneud ei orau.
		63%	34%	1%	0%		
The homework that is given builds well on what my child learns in school.	26	12 46%	4 15%	0 0%	0 0%	10	Mae'r gwaith cartref sy'n cael ei roi yn adeiladu'n dda ar yr hyn mae fy mhentyn yn ei ddysgu yn yr ysgol.
		47%	40%	6%	1%		
Staff treat all children fairly and with respect.	37	29 78%	6 16%	0 0%	0 0%	2	Mae'r staff yn trin pob plentyn yn deg a gyda pharch.
		58%	34%	4%	1%		

	Number of responses Nifer o ymatebion	Cytuno'n gryf Strongly Agree	Cytuno Agree	Anghytuno Disagree	Anghytuno'n gryf Strongly disagree	Ddim yn gwybod Don't know	
My child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.	35	26 74%	9 26%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Caiff fy mhlentyn ei annog i fod yn iach ac i wneud ymarfer corff yn rheolaidd.
		59%	36%	2%	0%		
My child is safe at school.	37	33 89%	4 11%	0 0%	0 0%	0	Mae fy mhlentyn yn ddiogel yn yr ysgol.
		66%	31%	1%	0%		
My child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs'.	29	14 48%	4 14%	0 0%	0 0%	11	Mae fy mhlentyn yn cael cymorth ychwanegol priodol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw anghenion unigol penodol.
		50%	35%	4%	1%		
I am kept well informed about my child's progress.	36	23 64%	8 22%	0 0%	0 0%	5	Rwy'n cael gwybodaeth gyson am gynnydd fy mhlentyn.
		49%	41%	8%	2%		
I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.	37	30 81%	6 16%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Rwy'n teimlo'n esmwyth ynglŷn â gofyn cwestiwn i'r ysgol, gwneud awgrymiadau neu nodi problem.
		62%	31%	4%	2%		
I understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.	37	22 59%	9 24%	0 0%	0 0%	6	Rwy'n deall trefn yr ysgol ar gyfer delio â chwynion.
		44%	39%	7%	2%		
The school helps my child to become more mature and take on responsibility.	34	24 71%	7 21%	0 0%	0 0%	3	Mae'r ysgol yn helpu fy mhlentyn i ddod yn fwy aeddfed ac i ysgwyddo cyfrifoldeb.
		55%	39%	2%	0%		
My child is well prepared for moving on to the next school or college or work.	35	19 54%	7 20%	0 0%	0 0%	9	Mae fy mhlentyn wedi'i baratoi'n dda ar gyfer symud ymlaen i'r ysgol nesaf neu goleg neu waith.
		42%	34%	4%	1%		
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits.	35	23 66%	6 17%	0 0%	0 0%	6	Mae amrywiaeth dda o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys teithiau neu ymweliadau.
		53%	38%	5%	1%		
The school is well run.	36	27 75%	8 22%	0 0%	0 0%	1	Mae'r ysgol yn cael ei rhedeg yn dda.
		61%	32%	3%	1%		

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

David Peter Ellis	Reporting Inspector
David Kenneth Davies	Team Inspector
Alwena Morgan	Lay Inspector
Amanda Stanford	Peer Inspector
Joanna Bryan	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://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.