



*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**

**Ysgol Y Llan, Whitford V.A.C.I.W. Primary School  
Whitford  
Holywell  
Flintshire  
CH8 9AN**

**Date of inspection: March 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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## Context

Ysgol Y Llan Voluntary Aided Primary School is in Whitford in Flintshire. Nearly all pupils live locally with a very few coming from the surrounding area. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds. The area has both privately owned and rented homes. Around 8% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well below local and national averages but has risen slowly for the last four years.

There are currently 112 pupils on roll including 12 in the nursery class. There are four classes taught by three full time teachers and four part time teachers. They are assisted by three full time and four part time learning support staff. The school admits pupils to the nursery class at the age of three.

The school currently has no pupils who are 'looked after' by the local authority. The school identifies that around 10% of pupils have additional learning needs, but no pupil has a statement of special educational need. English is the main home language of most pupils. No pupils currently use Welsh as their first language. Very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background or receive support for English as an additional language. No pupils were excluded within the last year.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2005.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Y Llan Voluntary Aided Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,234 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Flintshire is £13,748 and the minimum is £2,758. Ysgol Y Llan Voluntary Aided Primary School is 35th out of the 73 primary schools in Flintshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## 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 current performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils make good progress and achieve well;
- teachers and support staff work very well together to provide interesting learning experiences for pupils;
- pupils have high standards of wellbeing; and
- the provision of care, support and guidance given to pupils is a strength of the school.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- leaders and managers have a clear focus for school improvement;
- self-evaluation procedures are effective;
- improvement initiatives are suitably prioritised;
- staff work together well to bring about a successful track-record of improvements; and
- there is a good range of partnerships that improve outcomes for pupils.

## Recommendations

R1 Improve standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work

R2 For all activities, set clear success criteria that consistently challenge all pupils

R3 Provide pupils with more detailed feedback so they know how to improve their work

R4 Be more rigorous in monitoring the impact of initiatives

### 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 pupils enter the school with the skills expected from pupils of a similar age. In lessons and over time, most pupils make good progress and attain well.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils develop their numeracy skills successfully in mathematics lessons. For instance, many pupils can add and subtract correctly using tens and units, double or halve numbers accurately, recognise common flat and solid shapes or complete a bar chart properly. They use these skills well to solve simple mathematical problems in other areas of learning across the curriculum. For example, pupils paint and weave patterns, sort, match and compare groups of animals and make pictograms of their favourite pet.

In key stage 2, standards in mathematics lessons are good and more able pupils achieve highly. Most pupils use a range of methods of calculation correctly for number problems of increasing difficulty. Many have a sound understanding of the rules of probability and rotational symmetry. More able pupils use percentages well and interpret information appropriately from line graphs. However, a majority of pupils in key stage 2 do not present their work neatly and, in a few cases, this leads to mistakes in their understanding of place value or recording of data. More able pupils do not apply consistently the numeracy skills they acquire in mathematics lessons at the same level in other subjects, for example in science.

Most pupils have high standards of speaking and listening. Pupils in the early years' class listen closely to staff, respond to questions enthusiastically and sing rhymes and songs with joy and accuracy in both English and Welsh. By the end of the Foundation Phase, they talk clearly and confidently to adults and other children. Almost all key stage 2 pupils are attentive in lessons. They speak well when giving presentations and discuss texts and ideas maturely.

Many pupils in the Foundation Phase enjoy books and make good progress with their reading. Most use a range of picture and text clues well to help them understand what they read. They make appropriate use of punctuation when reading aloud and talk about books confidently.

Most pupils in key stage 2 read well for their age and ability. They talk confidently about stories and authors they enjoy. Many use what they know about a book to discuss how a character in a story might act or what may happen next. By the end of year 6, most pupils can skim a text quickly to gain its meaning. A minority are able to use the index page in a reference book effectively.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, most younger pupils have good awareness of the names and sounds of letters and use these effectively to write unfamiliar words and develop their everyday spelling. They write neatly and for a range of purposes. Most pupils in key stage 2 are able writers. A few write very well using a powerful

and expressive vocabulary. Most write at length and for a variety of purposes and audiences successfully. They have a good grasp of parts of speech and write clearly and imaginatively. Other than in English, pupils do not always present their written work neatly enough.

Most pupils have good information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In particular, they make skilful use of 'voting handsets' in lessons to develop their knowledge and understanding of different subjects.

Most pupils who have extra support for their learning make good progress, particularly in their reading. More able pupils generally achieve well.

Pupils enjoy learning Welsh. They make very good progress in the early years, and, overall, their use of Welsh language is developing well. The majority of pupils show increasing confidence with their writing. Many older pupils hold simple conversations and answer straightforward questions appropriately. They read clearly with a sound understanding of what they read. However, their pronunciation skills are less well developed.

Due to the small number of pupils, the results of pupil assessments have to be treated with care because one pupil's results can have a significant impact on school performance.

In 2012, in comparison with similar schools (ie schools whose pupils receive a similar percentage of free school meals), pupils achieved well in their English and their personal, social and cultural development at the end of the Foundation Phase. Outcomes for mathematics and for more able pupils were in the lower half of those for similar schools. Compared with the family of schools, pupils performed at the expected level except in their personal, social and cultural development where they were ranked highest in the family.

Results for the expected level 4 at the end of key stage 2 in 2012 were comparable with those of similar schools and the results place them around the middle of the family of schools. In the previous two years, the school had achieved consistently higher outcomes than similar schools and other schools in its family. For the higher level 5, the school's results are rising and are slightly above the family.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Many pupils have a good attitude to keeping healthy. They enjoy active pursuits regularly, including a range of outdoor activities at a residential centre in key stage 2.

Pupils behave well. They are considerate to each other and to adults. Nearly all show pride in their school and their achievements, enjoy their work and concentrate well in class. Most pupils work together effectively in pairs or groups in many lessons. Staff deal promptly with very occasional incidents of bad behaviour.

The school council works well. It is involved successfully in projects to improve the life and work of the school, for example by increasing the range of activities available to pupils at breaktimes and buying hymn books for Whitford Church. Members fulfil their duties responsibly and maturely and keep other pupils informed well. Pupils

have been involved successfully in planting bulbs in the community and attending services in church.

Attendance is consistently high at around 96%, which places the school in the top 25% of similar schools. Most pupils are punctual.

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

The school provides an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum which builds systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, skills and understanding. Staff plan a range of effective learning experiences that largely meet pupils' needs successfully. The school makes good use of small groups to support pupils who need extra help with their learning. Extra-curricular activities are well attended and provide pupils with worthwhile opportunities to take part in sporting and cultural events.

The school plans well for the development of pupils' literacy and ICT skills. Provision for numeracy is effective in the Foundation Phase, but does not consistently match the mathematical skills of more able pupils in key stage 2.

All staff promote the use of the Welsh language actively and effectively. They encourage pupils to learn about the history and culture of Wales successfully. Pupils benefit from visits to Whitford Church, Mostyn Hall and Chirk Castle and by studying Welsh artists and folk tales.

The school promotes pupils' awareness of sustainable development very well. It encourages pupils' involvement in energy conservation and regeneration, and recycling strongly. There is limited provision for pupils to learn effectively about the wider world.

**Teaching: Good**

Staff know their pupils and their needs well. They use an effective range of questioning techniques and develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding well. Teachers generally plan interesting learning experiences to motivate and engage most pupils effectively. Teachers and other adults work together very successfully. Support staff contribute highly to the quality of provision and the progress pupils make. Teachers use a wide variety of resources to enhance pupils' learning experiences well. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not have a clear enough idea of what they want pupils to achieve or do not provide the appropriate levels of challenge for more able pupils.

Teachers offer useful oral feedback to pupils during lessons. There are good examples of constructive written comments given to pupils on how to improve their work, but this is not consistently applied by staff.

Teachers track pupils' progress effectively across the school. As a result, teachers and other adults plan lessons appropriately to meet pupils' learning needs and provide effective help for pupils who need additional support. End of key stage assessments are accurate and moderated appropriately. Reports to parents are informative.

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

The provision for the care, support and guidance of pupils is a strong feature of the school.

There is good provision to make sure pupils are safe and to promote their health and wellbeing successfully. Staff give good opportunities to nurture pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and these impact on pupils' wellbeing successfully. The school offers a well balanced programme of support for pupils' personal and social education through for example, visits by the vicar and police.

Staff provide good support for pupils with additional learning needs enabling them to make good progress. Effective procedures for supporting pupils with a statement of educational need are well established.

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

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is a close-knit and welcoming community where everyone shows kindness and respect for each other. The calm atmosphere supports pupils' learning well. Clear policies and procedures ensure equal opportunities for all and promote equality and social diversity.

The school buildings and site are safe, secure and well maintained. They provide a colourful, welcoming and stimulating learning environment for pupils. The outside areas, including those for the Foundation Phase, are extensive and well equipped. There is a good range of resources available that are well matched to pupils' needs.

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

Leaders and managers put the pupils' learning and wellbeing firmly at the heart of all they do. The headteacher knows the school well and communicates the school aims, objectives and values to all interested parties effectively. The headteacher receives good support from the newly-formed senior management team. They analyse and interpret data well and use this information appropriately to identify the school's strengths and shortcomings clearly and to set targets for improvement. Subject leaders fulfil their role well. All staff work together successfully to deliver school policies.

Leaders and managers provide suitable challenge to everyone. There are effective systems for performance management and to support new members of staff. However, there is no rigorous method of appraisal for non-teaching staff.

The governing body undertakes its roles and responsibilities conscientiously. It is well informed about the school's provision and performance. Members carry out their statutory responsibilities effectively and make a good contribution to the running and development of the school.



The school has introduced effective policies and initiatives to meet national and local priorities such as raising pupils' standards of speaking and listening and reading.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The school has thorough self-evaluation processes and procedures. These allow everyone to have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders make effective use of this information to prioritise and to plan improvements.

The school improvement plan focuses well on pupil outcomes. Actions have suitable timescales and resources allocated to them. Staff training is planned effectively and links clearly to school targets. Overall, the school has a successful track-record of improvement. Although leaders monitor the implementation of the plan on a termly basis, they do not always check consistently enough how well staff have introduced specific initiatives in their classrooms.

Involvement with networks of teachers in other schools has led to improvements in the quality of teachers' planning of science investigations.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school has a range of effective partnerships that impact well on provision and standards. Strong links with the Whitford Church support pupils' spiritual development well. The school communicates and liaises very well with parents. The Parent and Friends Association regularly raises additional funds for the school. These have been used effectively to improve ICT resources which have helped to raise pupils' achievements in this subject.

As well as reducing the school's energy costs, pupils' involvement with the reforestation project gives them valuable opportunities to extend their knowledge of sustainability. Links with secondary schools and the cluster of primary schools are suitable. The school share joint art projects with them and performances are held in the local theatre. This has a positive impact on improving standards in pupils' creative development. There are also good transition links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the end of key stage 2.

### **Resource management: Good**

The school has sufficient qualified teachers and support staff to meet the learning needs of pupils and deploys them effectively. Governors monitor the school's finances closely. They have appropriate plans to use the school's current surplus to reduce class size and to increase the level of help for pupils who need extra support with their learning.

Changes to the Foundation Phase classrooms have helped to improve standards and to make better use of available resources. The school makes very good use of all available space.

In view of the strong progress made by pupils and the effective provision and leadership, the school provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Due to the small number of pupils, the results of pupil assessments have to be treated with care because one pupil's results can have a significant impact on school performance.

In 2012, pupil outcomes in the end of Foundation Phase assessments were in the top 25% of those for similar schools (ie schools that have a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals) for personal, social and cultural development and in the upper 50% for language, literacy and communication. They were in the lowest 25% of those for similar schools for mathematical development. They were in the lower 50% for the Foundation Phase indicator (the percentage of pupils who achieve the expected outcome 5 in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development and personal, social and cultural development in combination). For the higher outcome 6, the school was in the lower 50% of similar schools for all areas.

For the expected outcome 5 at the end of the Foundation Phase, results place the school around the middle of its family, except for personal, social and cultural development where it is ranked first. For the higher outcome 6, results are consistently in the lower half of the family.

In 2012, pupil outcomes for the expected level 4 in key stage 2 were slightly lower than in previous years. The school was in the upper 50% of similar schools for English and the core subject indicator, but in the lower 50% of schools for mathematics and science. For the level 5, pupil outcomes were in the top 25% for science and in the upper 50% for mathematics and English.

Results for the expected level 4 were, until 2012, around the middle of the family. In the previous two years the school achieved consistently higher outcomes than other schools in the family. At level 5, the school's results are rising and are slightly above the family average.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parents/carer questionnaire

Thirty-one parents or carers responded to the questionnaire.

Most parents are satisfied with the school and think that:

- their child likes school and is making good progress;
- teaching is good;
- their child is safe in school;
- pupils behave well in school;
- pupils have appropriate additional support if necessary;
- the school helps their child to be more mature and take on responsibility;
- the school helps children to settle in well; and
- there is a good range of trips or visits.

A few parents or carers do not believe that:

- they are kept well informed about their child's progress
- homework builds well on what pupils learn in school;
- their child is well prepared for moving on to high school; or
- staff treat all pupils equally and with respect.

In most cases, other than those relating to behaviour and respect where they are slightly more negative, the parents' responses are broadly similar to those of other primary schools across Wales.

#### Response to pupils' questionnaire

Forty-eight pupils responded to the questionnaire.

Most pupils think that:

- they feel safe in school;
- the school teaches them how to be healthy;
- they know whom to talk to if worried or upset;
- teachers help them to make progress;
- they know whom to ask if they find their work difficult;
- they are doing well in school;
- there are enough books and equipment available for them to do their work; and
- pupils behave well at breaktime and lunchtimes.

A few pupils were concerned that they did not have enough opportunities for exercise.

The views of pupils are similar to most pupils in other schools in Wales except in relation to opportunities for exercise where their views are slightly more negative.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Richard Hawkley	Reporting Inspector
Lowri Evans	Team Inspector
James Jones	Lay Inspector
Susan Palmer	Peer Inspector
Kath Royles	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.