



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

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

**St Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School
Letton Way
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF10 4AB**

Date of visit: April 2016

by

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

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The monitoring team

Jonathan Wright	Reporting Inspector
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Outcome of monitoring

St Cuthbert's RC Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in March 2015.

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

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher-than-expected levels at the end of both Foundation Phase and key stage 2

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has raised its expectations of what pupils can achieve and there is now a clear focus on pupils' standards.

Teachers have established a number of effective strategies to improve the performance of all pupils. These include better planning, more timely and accurate assessments of progress and greater challenge in literacy and numeracy for older, more able pupils. The headteacher meets regularly with individual teachers to discuss and monitor pupils' progress and standards. This is beginning to be successful in ensuring that they maintain appropriate challenge for all pupils.

Teachers set clear learning objectives and relevant targets for pupils to achieve. They encourage them to develop useful self-assessment strategies and to respond thoughtfully to their marking. In the majority of cases, this is effective in helping pupils to have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve.

As a result of these strategies, many pupils' standards of achievement have improved in both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. Teachers' most recent assessments and the work in pupils' books indicate that an increasing number now achieve the higher outcome 6 by the end of the Foundation Phase and the higher level 5 at the end of key stage 2.

In Year 2, just over a third of pupils now produce work at the higher outcome in mathematics and a half produce this quality of work in literacy. Very few pupils achieved at this level at the time of the core inspection.

In Year 6, almost a third of pupils now work at the higher level 5. This represents a considerable improvement since 2015, when around a quarter of pupils achieved level 5 in English and mathematics and no pupils achieved this level in science.

Overall, the school's actions have had a positive impact on the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels in both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. However, it is too early to draw a conclusion about the final outcomes of teacher assessments for Year 2 and Year 6 for the current academic year.

Recommendation 2: Improve pupils' standards in Welsh

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has implemented a new scheme of work and provided targeted training for all staff. This has had a positive impact on the standards achieved by many pupils and they now make good progress in the development of their Welsh language skills as they move through the school. Many are beginning to apply these skills successfully as part of other lessons and in the daily life of the school. The use of a Welsh language 'helper of the day' is beneficial in encouraging pupils to learn and use simple phrases. However, pupils do not yet use the Welsh language sufficiently independently and without prompting around the school.

Many pupils in Year 2 ask and answer simple questions about themselves, how they are feeling and the weather. When prompted, a few extend their sentences to provide appropriate reasons for their answers. Many pupils read simple texts accurately with good pronunciation and expression. They demonstrate a good understanding of what they read and ask and answer questions about their texts accurately.

Most pupils in Year 6 talk effectively about where they live, their home life and their likes and dislikes. Many talk well about events in the past tense and a few extend their sentences to provide reasons and further explanations. They read Welsh texts with familiar phrases with confidence and fluency.

Teachers provide pupils with useful opportunities to write at length. Pupils in the Foundation Phase write simple sentences to describe themselves and the weather in different parts of the United Kingdom. In Year 6, many pupils use a good range of vocabulary to write dialogues and recounts of their weekend activities. A few more able pupils combine familiar language patterns to write more complex sentences.

Recommendation 3: Improve the provision for ICT

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school's new scheme of work, coupled with effective training for all staff, has been successful in improving many pupils' ICT skills. This new curriculum builds systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills and helps to ensure pupils make good progress. Teachers track the improvement of pupils' skills well and plan useful opportunities for their development in a range of subjects.

The school has invested effectively in a variety of suitable, new resources, including laptop computers and hand held devices. This has been successful in improving provision and raising standards for most pupils.

Many pupils now demonstrate effective ICT skills and an ability to apply these to support their learning across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 use a collage app to create posters to identify the location of a lost snail as part of their literacy lesson. In Year 6, pupils combine their skills in the use of a variety of apps and programs to create imaginative and powerful multimedia presentations. The

school's well-attended ICT club allows pupils the opportunities to improve their skills further and to extend them to include elements of programming.

The use of spreadsheets and databases is a particular strength. For example, pupils in key stage 2 use these effectively to record, analyse and present the results of an experiment about how sneezing can spread germs. They create and interrogate databases about pupils' favourite singers and have a good understanding of the practical uses of database programs.

Recommendation 4: Provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about the life and culture of Wales

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about the life and history of Wales. Teachers are beginning to incorporate these well into activities across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 write about the features of Cardiff Bay when learning how to use grid references and pupils in Year 4 create timelines to describe the history of Caerphilly Castle. Year 6 pupils look at the impact of the Blitz on Swansea during the Second World War, identify the 'seven wonders of Wales' and write persuasive texts to encourage tourists to visit them.

Displays about Wales are prominent throughout the school and are successful in supporting the school's Welsh ethos and promoting pupils' appreciation of what it means to be Welsh. The school's participation in Cardiff's St David's Day parade provided a useful opportunity for pupils to celebrate their Welsh identity.

Many pupils now talk appropriately about what is special about Wales, its features, traditions and history. They describe the importance of the Welsh language and recognise its place amongst the wide variety of languages spoken in their community. However, the school does not always fully exploit opportunities to develop pupils' appreciation of the culture of Wales, for example its myths, legends and traditions.

Recommendation 5: Improve the effectiveness of the governing body

Satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendation

Governors are supportive of the school and are now more engaged in its work. Very recently, a new chair of governors has been appointed.

Governors now fulfil their statutory duties. For example, they have produced an annual report for parents and ensure that other essential policies meet requirements.

The school provides good opportunities for governors to improve their knowledge of its work, through learning walks with a focus on Welsh and ICT developments and observations of leadership team meetings, for example. In addition, the training and support provided by the consultant headteacher and consultant governor is helping to improve their knowledge and effectiveness. However, as yet, not all members of the governing body have attended the full range of training and monitoring activities

provided.

Individual governors have responsibility for monitoring the progress of the school in addressing the inspection recommendations. Very recently, as part of this role, governors have prepared relevant and challenging questions for school leaders. They then interviewed leaders about the school's progress and the standards that pupils achieve. This robust process has the potential to improve significantly the role of governors in challenging and scrutinising the work of the school.

Overall, the work of governors is improving and they are beginning to challenge the school effectively. However, many of the developments are very recent and it is too early to judge their full impact.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that self-evaluation links directly with school improvement planning

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has established an appropriate monitoring, evaluation and review cycle. A timetable of activities identifies the evidence that the school gathers at different times throughout the year.

Senior leaders collect a good range of first-hand evidence regularly. This includes the analysis of pupils' performance and progress, scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations, listening to learners and seeking the views of other stakeholders. The school also makes good use of observations and reviews undertaken by local consortium staff. The information collected is contained in a detailed and accurate self-evaluation report. The school uses this effectively to judge its progress against the inspection recommendations.

Through this improved self-evaluation process, staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas it needs to further improve. As a result, there is now a clear link between self-evaluation and school improvement planning.

However, although the school has made significant progress in this area, it is too early to assess whether this is having a sustained, positive enough impact on pupils' standards.

Recommendations

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