



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

**Abermorddu C.P. School
Cymau Lane
Caergwrie
Wrexham
LL12 9DH**

Date of inspection: May 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:

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

Abermorddu Community Primary School serves a semi-rural community based around the village of Abermorddu in Flintshire. The school's catchment area is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The annual intake covers the full ability range.

During the inspection, there were 235 pupils between three and 11 years of age on roll. Almost all pupils come from English-speaking homes. Very few pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. Currently, 11% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is lower than the local authority and national averages. The school has identified 10% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is lower than the average for Wales. Very few pupils are from a minority ethnic background.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2006. In addition to the headteacher there are nine full-time teachers and one part-time teacher. The school was last inspected in June 2007.

The individual school budget for Abermorddu Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £2,911 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Flintshire is £13,748 and the minimum is £2,758. Abermorddu Primary School is 61st out of 73 primary schools in Flintshire 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:

- most pupils make good progress and achieve well during their time at the school;
- pupils across the school behave very well, are courteous and have a good attitude towards learning;
- rich learning experiences and good quality teaching ensure that pupils are motivated and engaged;
- the school is a happy, inclusive community that promotes positive attitudes to equality and diversity; and
- the good quality of care, support and guidance provided to pupils impacts well on their standards and wellbeing.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision that focuses on improving pupils' wellbeing and standards;
- all members of staff are clear about their roles, work effectively as a team and are fully involved in school improvement activities;
- self-evaluation procedures identify areas of development accurately; and
- positive partnership arrangements contribute well to the standards and wellbeing of pupils.

Recommendations

- R1 Provide more opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to use their Welsh language skills outside of formal lessons
- R2 Ensure consistency in assessment for learning in order to ensure that pupils are more aware of what needs to be done to improve their own work
- R3 Ensure that the governing body is more effectively involved in self-evaluation
- R4 Extend opportunities for teachers to become involved in professional learning communities and to share good practice beyond the local area

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

The majority of pupils enter the school with skills that are lower than normally expected for pupils of a similar age. During their time in school, most pupils, including those with additional learning needs and pupils that are more able, make good progress and achieve well.

In lessons, most pupils recall previous learning well and they use this information effectively in order to acquire new information and skills. Most pupils apply their communication, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills well in a range of subjects. Most show good knowledge and understanding of what they have learnt. Throughout the school, most pupils speak confidently in a wide range of situations to staff, visitors and each other. They listen very well and respect the views of others. Most sustain their concentration well and contribute effectively to class discussion.

Standards of reading are good. Nearly all pupils have a positive attitude to reading. All pupils in the Foundation Phase show an interest in the books they read and most read with increasing fluency, accuracy and understanding. Nearly all use a range of strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words well. In key stage 2, most pupils read a wide range of texts with fluency, accuracy and good expression. They talk readily about books and authors they like or dislike and have a good understanding of characters and storylines. Many are increasingly able to skim a passage to gain its meaning and gather information. They apply their reading skills well in different subjects and can locate and find information effectively.

Nearly all pupils in the Foundation Phase make good progress with their early writing skills. By the end of Year 2, nearly all use their literacy skills very effectively across the curriculum, particularly within class topic books. They write in full sentences with appropriate punctuation. Most pupils in key stage 2 write well using a range of sentence structures and interesting vocabulary. They write confidently and accurately in a variety of forms and their writing is often thoughtful and imaginative. Most pupils consolidate and extend their writing skills well to produce good quality extended pieces of writing across the curriculum, particularly in their history and in their studies of the local area. However, presentation and handwriting skills are inconsistent and often do not reflect the good quality of the content.

Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress in line with their ability. A range of support programmes for literacy and numeracy are effective in raising the standards achieved by targeted pupils.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase make good progress in gaining skills in the Welsh language. Many make good use of their developing bilingual skills to support their learning in other lessons. Most pupils in key stage 2 achieve well in their structured lessons. Most listen and respond appropriately to greetings and general

instructions in other lessons. Their ability to read simple Welsh books is developing well. Many write short pieces well using familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns. Few pupils use Welsh independently outside these lessons.

In 2012, the percentage of Foundation Phase pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) in language, literacy and communications skills was close to the Wales average but below the average for the family of schools. In mathematical development and in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity the percentage who achieved the expected outcomes was above the family and Wales averages. The proportion of more able pupils who achieved a higher outcome (outcome 6) was higher than the family and Wales averages in mathematical development. It was lower than family and Wales averages in language, literacy and communication skills and in personal and social skills. In comparison with that of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school's performance was in the upper 50% for mathematical development but in the lower 50% in language, literacy and communication skills and personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. As this is the first year for publishing Foundation Phase data, there is no trend data available.

In 2012, the percentage of key stage 2 pupils who achieved the expected level (level 4) and the percentage of more able pupils who achieved the higher level (level 5) in the English, mathematics and science were below the averages for the family of schools and Wales. Over the previous four years, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level and the percentage of more able pupils who achieved the higher level in all three subjects were consistently above the Welsh average and close to or above the average for the family of schools. The school's performance placed it in the upper 50% of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free meals in three of the previous four years. However, the school's performance placed it in the lowest 25% in 2012.

There is no consistent pattern in the relative performance of boys and girls over the past four years. In English, whilst there was no significant difference at the expected level, girls generally performed better than boys at the higher level. Generally, pupils who are entitled to free school meals do as well as pupils not entitled to free school meals at key stage 2.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils are happy, well cared for and supported. They are confident that staff treat any concerns seriously and act upon them quickly and fairly. They have positive attitudes to healthy living and eating a healthy diet although they do not always make healthy choices at break times. They are aware of the importance of an active lifestyle.

Nearly all pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They co-operate effectively with one another in their lessons and activities. Most work well independently and under the direction of adults. Increasing involvement in assessment, agreeing success criteria and setting personal targets, is helping pupils to gain an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.

Nearly all pupils get on well together and standards of behaviour are high. Pupils of all ages play together happily at break time and lunchtime. They are polite and courteous to visitors.

Attendance figures over the past four years have been consistently higher than Wales averages. Figures generally compare well with those of similar schools, although attendance in 2011-2012 was slightly below the family of schools' average. Nearly all pupils arrive at school punctually.

The school council and eco committee are well established and are very clear about their roles. They make a valuable contribution to decision-making in the school. Members take their responsibilities seriously.

More able pupils' involvement with the Abermorveg initiative, an innovative scheme to set up a small business around the school allotment, develops their business and entrepreneurial skills very effectively.

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

The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers all Foundation Phase, National Curriculum and religious education requirements. Teachers' planning is detailed and thorough and ensures rich learning experiences both within and outside the school. Teachers use the school's immediate locality to engage the interests and meet the needs of pupils of all ages very effectively.

Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to apply their communication, numeracy and ICT skills in different contexts, through a cross-curricular approach. This also encourages pupils to develop their research and practical skills well and extends their knowledge across the curriculum.

Provision for the Welsh dimension, to promote pupils' understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales, is good. Provision for Welsh language development in the Foundation Phase successfully promotes pupils' use of language in a variety of context. Provision in structured lessons in key stage 2 is good; however, it does not successfully promote pupils' independent use of their bilingual skills.

Teachers promote pupils' awareness of sustainability and energy conservation effectively. Teachers also provide good quality learning experiences, which develop pupils' understanding of life in other countries. A good example of this is the well-developed partnership with two schools in France.

Teaching: Good

Teachers and other adults have developed very positive working relationships with pupils that foster learning effectively. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Additional adults contribute successfully to the learning and wellbeing of the individual and groups of pupils they support.

In nearly all lessons, teachers plan and prepare activities that build well on pupils' previous learning and meet the needs of all pupils. Teacher presentations are enthusiastic and engage all pupils fully. They use a range of teaching approaches successfully, which ensures that pupils are motivated and make good progress in their learning. Skilful questioning extends pupils' learning effectively. In the very few lessons where teaching is less effective, objectives are unclear, learning lacks pace and tasks do not always challenge pupils, particularly the more able, enough.

Generally, teachers use assessment for learning strategies effectively. They give pupils positive oral feedback during lessons. They mark pupils' work thoroughly and their comments are supportive. In the best examples, marking helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers increasingly include pupils in the process of setting targets for improvement. However, the practice of linking marking to pupil targets is not consistently used. As a result, it is not always clear to pupils what they must do to improve their work.

Teachers make effective use of standardised assessments to measure individual pupil progress. They use this information well to target additional support. The school has worked successfully with other local schools to strengthen teachers' understanding of levels of attainment. End of year reports inform parents clearly about their child's progress and achievement.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The high level of care and good relationships between staff and pupils contribute well to pupils' wellbeing. Effective arrangements exist to encourage pupils to be healthy and for ensuring that they enjoy regular opportunities to participate in a range of physical activities. Learning experiences promote pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. All staff promote effective, age appropriate strategies to encourage good behaviour consistently. The school encourages pupils to work well with each other and to show respect, care and concern for others.

The school makes good use of specialist services and this ensures that pupils have access to professional support when necessary. A good example of this is the police liaison officer's valuable contribution to the delivery of the personal, social and emotional programme of study, and internet safety.

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

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. Teachers identify pupils' learning difficulties early and provide effective and timely support. Support staff make a very positive contribution to these pupils' learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly. They also ensure that pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their individual targets. Teachers keep parents well informed of their child's progress.

Learning environment: Good

The school's ethos reflects its mission statement 'Happy to learn, and learning to be happy' very successfully. Staff promote a strong sense of care, inclusion and belonging in all aspects of school life. They put pupils' progress and wellbeing firmly at the centre of their work and ensure that pupils of all ages, cultures and backgrounds have equal access to all activities. The school promotes successfully positive attitudes to equality and diversity through classroom practice, curricular themes and links with the local community and other countries.

Accommodation is of good quality and is sufficient for the number of pupils. It is well maintained and provides an environment that promotes learning effectively. Classrooms are well equipped with good quality resources that match pupils' needs appropriately. The wall displays create an interesting learning environment for pupils.

The interesting outdoor space is a very valuable learning resource. Pupils make good use of this area for a range of activities such as gardening and physical activity.

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

The headteacher has a vision that focuses clearly on pupils' wellbeing and on improving standards. He provides a purposeful direction, has high expectations of all staff, and promotes successfully a positive culture of school improvement. Teachers and parents are committed to the school's aims and objectives and promote its values effectively. This contributes effectively to creating an ethos in which pupils feel valued and a shared commitment towards raising standards. The senior leadership team and staff have an active role in monitoring all aspects of school life. This has a positive impact on improving the quality of provision and the standards pupils achieve.

The headteacher ensures that governors have up-to-date information about the school's performance and the issues that affect it. Regular monitoring of the school development plan, in addition to meetings with curriculum co-ordinators, ensures that most governors have an appropriate understanding of the school's priorities for improvement. However, few governors contribute effectively to self-evaluation processes.

The school responds well to national and local priorities such as the School Effectiveness Framework. Teachers have implemented the Foundation Phase successfully and the initiatives put in place to improve literacy are raising pupils' standards effectively.

Improving quality: Good

The headteacher has established a rigorous approach to self-evaluation and overseen the establishment of a culture of honest review to which all members of staff contribute well. Staff use a wide range of sources, which includes performance

data, outcomes of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work to evaluate the school's performance well. They regularly seek the views of a parents and pupils.

The self-evaluation procedures identify areas of development accurately. Senior leaders use this information effectively to determine priorities in the school development plan. The plan is a collaborative effort involving all teaching staff and provides a clear direction for the school's development.

Members of staff have good opportunities for professional development, according to their specific responsibilities and their professional development needs. This has had a positive effect on teaching and learning and on successfully implementing new initiatives.

Teachers are increasingly sharing good practice with other teachers and adults within the school. Teachers have also established productive networks with other local primary schools that have had a positive impact on teaching and learning in science and in promoting pupils' Welsh language skills in the Foundation Phase. Teachers have very few opportunities to become involved in professional learning communities and to share good practice beyond the local area.

Partnership working: Good

Staff have developed strong partnerships with parents, the community and other schools, which extend pupils' learning experiences effectively. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the regular information that they receive about the school's activities and their children's progress. Links with local and national organisations, for example The Welsh National Opera Company, have a positive influence on the quality of pupils' experiences. Pupils benefit greatly from the valuable partnership the school has with two schools in France.

The close links between the school and the on-site pre-school setting ensure a smooth transfer for pupils to the Foundation Phase. Strong links with the receiving secondary school ease pupils' transition well from one key stage to the next and ensure continuity and progression in learning. There are effective arrangements for moderating pupils' work at the end of both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2.

The school collaborates closely with its cluster of schools to plan, share experiences and exchange good practices. This has led to improvements in pupils' standards and to the development of new approaches, particularly in literacy and science.

Resource management: Good

School leaders manage and deploy staffing and financial resources effectively to support learning. The school has an appropriate number of teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum effectively. There are good arrangements for staff development and for providing preparation, planning and assessment time for teachers. There are plentiful resources that are in good condition and meet the needs of pupils well.

The school manages its finances well and ensures appropriate resources to meet the needs and priorities identified in the school development plan.

Most pupils make good progress and achieve well during their time in school, therefore the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The baseline assessment of pupils in the reception class shows that the majority of pupils enter the school with skills that are lower than normally expected for pupils of a similar age.

In 2012, the percentage of Foundation Phase pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) or higher in language, literacy and communications skills was close to the Wales average but below the family average. In mathematical development and in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity the percentage who achieved the expected outcomes was above the family and Wales averages. The school's performance in comparison with that of schools with similar levels of entitlement to free school meals was in the upper 50% in mathematical development. The school's performance in language, literacy and communication skills and personal and social development placed it in the lower 50% of similar schools.

The proportion of more able pupils who achieved a higher outcome (outcome 6) was higher than the family and Wales averages in mathematical development. It was lower than family and Wales averages in language, literacy and communication skills and in personal and social skills. In comparison with that of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school's performance at the higher outcome was in the upper 50% for mathematical development but in the lower 50% in language, literacy and communication skills and personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

There was no significant difference in the relative achievements of boys and girls in the Foundation Phase in 2012 at the expected outcome. Girls achieved significantly better than boys at the higher outcome in language, literacy and communication and in personal and social development.

As this is the first year for publishing Foundation Phase data, there is no trend data available.

In 2012, the percentage of key stage 2 pupils who achieved the expected level (level 4) in the English, mathematics and science was below the family and Wales averages. Over the previous four years, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in all three subjects was consistently above the Welsh average and close to or above the average for the family of schools. The school's performance in 2012 placed it among the lowest 25% of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. In three of the previous four years, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected levels in English, mathematics and science in combination placed the school in the upper 50% of similar schools.

In 2012, the percentage of more able pupils who achieved the higher level (level 5) in all three core subjects was below the averages for the family of schools and Wales. The school's performance at this level placed it in the lower 50% of schools with

similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. Over the previous four years, the school's performance at the higher level in English and mathematics placed it consistently in the upper 50%. Performance in science placed it in the upper 50% in two of those years.

There is no consistent pattern in the relative performance of boys and girls in key stage 2 over the past four years. In English, whilst there is no significant difference at the expected level, girls generally performed better than boys at the higher level. Generally pupils who are entitled to free school meals do as well as pupils not entitled to free school meals at key stage 2.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty parents or carers completed the questionnaire. Their satisfaction levels are higher than the average for other primary schools in Wales.

All parents say that their child likes school and nearly all are confident that they are safe there. All agree that their child was helped to settle when they joined the school. All say that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. Nearly all agree that the school encourages their child to eat healthily and take regular exercise. All say that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem. All who responded understand what to do if they wish to make a complaint. All agree that their child is making good progress and almost all feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress. Almost all believe that behaviour is good. All who responded think that the school is well run.

All parents or carers think teaching is good and are happy that teachers expect pupils to do their best. All believe that teachers help their child to become more mature and take on responsibility and all who responded say that children are well prepared for the move to the secondary school. All parents or carers who responded agree that the homework given builds well on what their child learns in school. All who responded are confident that their child receives enough additional support for their additional learning needs. Almost all believe that there is a good range of activities including trips and visits.

Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and five pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Responses to all questions were above the averages for other primary schools in Wales.

All pupils say that they feel safe in school and almost all agree that the school deals well with bullying. All agree that they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset or are finding their work difficult. Nearly all say that the school helps them to

be healthy. All agree that the school provides them with plenty of opportunities to be physically active.

Almost all pupils feel that they are doing well at school. All agree that teachers and support staff help them to learn and make progress. All agree that there are enough resources to enable them to learn effectively and think that homework helps them to improve on their work in school. Almost all agree that all children behave well in lessons and during lunch and break times.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Edward Goronwy Morris	Reporting Inspector
William Edward Williams	Team Inspector
Peter Duncan Haworth	Lay Inspector
Mari Rhiannon Gaskell	Peer Inspector
Ian Roberts	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (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.