



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

**Cwmpadarn C.P. School
Penygraig
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
SY23 3SG**

Date of inspection: March 2012

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

Ysgol Cwmpadarn is situated in the village of Llanbadarn near Aberystwyth. It serves the village itself and the surrounding area. Pupils come from a range of different backgrounds and about 20% of them live within a 'Communities First' area. Approximately 26% are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is much higher than the local and national averages. No child is in local authority care.

Pupil numbers have diminished substantially since the previous inspection, which was undertaken in May 2006. At present, there are 72 pupils between four and 11 years of age in the school and they are organised into three mixed-age classes. About 4% of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds but no pupil is learning English as an additional language. Approximately 15% of pupils speak Welsh at home.

The pupils encompass a full range of ability and their attainment varies when they begin in the school. About 27% of pupils have additional learning needs, a figure that is higher than the county and national percentages. A small number of pupils have a statutory statement of special educational needs.

The individual school budget for Ysgol Gynradd Cwmpadarn in 2011-2012 is £3,502 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in primary schools in Ceredigion is £8,706 and the minimum is £2,987. Ysgol Gynradd Cwmpadarn is 39th of the 60 primary schools in Ceredigion local authority in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Due to sickness of the headteacher, an acting headteacher was in charge during the inspection.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school's current performance is good because:

- standards of literacy are generally good and most pupils make strong progress throughout the school;
- achievement and progress in learning are generally good;
- pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well;
- the quality of teaching is generally good; and
- the school provides good value for money.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- leaders have a clear vision for developing the school;
- governors play a prominent role in identifying priorities and planning improvements;
- effective self-evaluation processes and strategic planning are a regular feature of the life of the school;
- all members of staff work together closely as a team and are willing to try new initiatives; and
- the school is developing as a strong learning community.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the school needs to:

- R1 increase the percentage of pupils who reach higher levels at the end of both key stages;
- R2 improve the quality in the intervention programmes for pupils with low literacy skills; and
- R3 provide better opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments on their work.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan which shows how it will address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

The literacy skills of most pupils are good. In the Foundation Phase, almost all pupils are making good progress in their ability to use their oral, literacy and communication skills in different formal and informal contexts. Almost everyone expresses their ideas clearly orally and, by Year 2, they read confidently and accurately and write to a good standard. In general, they spell common words correctly.

In key stage 2, most pupils listen well and convey their opinions and ideas confidently. They read aloud meaningfully and with appropriate intonation and, by Year 5, most pupils discuss their books intelligently. Many pupils write well in various forms and for different purposes. Spelling mistakes are apparent in the written work of a few pupils.

Across the age range, most pupils make good progress when acquiring literacy and communication skills in Welsh. By the end of the Foundation Phase and into key stage 2, they use Welsh with increasing confidence and accuracy in a variety of different contexts. In 2011, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level in Welsh second language at the end of key stage 2 compared very favourably with the performance of similar schools.

At the end of the previous academic year, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was similar to the national benchmarks and those of similar schools. In three of the past five years, the performance of pupils at the end of both key stages in the three subjects has generally placed the school in the upper 50% of schools that have a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. However, the percentages of pupils who reached the higher levels (levels 3 and 5) were lower than the family of schools and national averages. There is no pattern of relative underperforming by boys or girls in either key stage.

In general, achievement and progress in learning are good throughout the school. In learning sessions and in their work books, the standards and progress of many of the pupils are consistent and appropriate to their age and ability and they complete their tasks successfully. A few pupils who have additional learning needs, and higher ability pupils, do not always achieve at a level that is in line with their ability. Most pupils work together effectively with their peers.

Wellbeing: Good

Almost all pupils feels safe in the school environment and are free of any physical and verbal abuse. Behaviour is good in every class with pupils showing respect and consideration towards each other and towards adults.

In most lessons, pupils of every age are diligent and enthusiastic and face new challenges and learning confidently. They work together well and remain busy on a task for an extended period. Pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep fit and they appreciate opportunities to have healthy foods and to develop their fitness.

As they mature, most pupils enjoy and benefit from a variety of experiences and opportunities to undertake responsibilities, including the school council and the eco group. The council has an active role in the life of the school and members enjoy the opportunities that they have to influence and make decisions.

Attendance levels are consistently good and during the past five years they have been consistently higher than the levels for Wales and similar schools.

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

In general, the range of learning experiences that is provided meets pupils' requirements. In the Foundation Phase, the breadth of interesting learning experiences enable children to make good progress towards meeting the necessary learning outcomes. The outside area is used purposefully to provide rich learning experiences for pupils. The planning in key stage 2 builds effectively on pupils' knowledge and understanding and ensures progression and continuity in their learning.

The opportunities for pupils to develop skills, particularly literacy skills, are planned carefully throughout the school. However, the intervention programmes that are provided for pupils with low literacy skills are not tailored adequately for the learning needs of individuals and, as a result, these pupils do not make the expected progress.

The provision for the Welsh language and the Welsh dimension is good and enables the majority of pupils to make appropriate progress. The curriculum, together with the wide range of extra-curricular activities, helps pupils to develop a number of key personal and social skills effectively.

The provision for promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of sustainability and global citizenship is good. Respecting multi-culturalism, promoting anti-racist attitudes and developing fairness and equal opportunities are strong elements of the school's culture.

Teaching: Good

In general, teaching is good and teachers plan lessons carefully and prepare them thoroughly. They have good subject knowledge and there are close relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers and assistants work together well and behaviour is managed effectively. There are clear objectives for many of the sessions and a suitable pace to teaching. Teachers use a good range of resources and teaching strategies imaginatively in order to engender interest and to ensure

pupils' participation. However, in a few lessons, the activities do not always ensure a suitable level of challenge for pupils of all ranges of ability.

Teachers provide regular oral feedback to direct pupils to identify the next stages in their learning. Books are marked regularly and, mainly in the language books, useful comments are provided on how to improve. However, it is not a consistent practice to provide opportunities for pupils to give attention to implementing those specific improvements. Pupils across the school have good opportunities to reflect on their learning and they know well what their personal targets are.

There are clear and efficient systems in place to track and keep information on pupils' progress. Standardised tests are used purposefully and there are suitable arrangements to record progress according to teachers' assessments. Assessment for learning strategies are developing well throughout the school and strengthen pupils' ability to evaluate their own work. The quality of reports to parents and carers on their child's progress is good and appropriate opportunities are provided for parents to respond to them.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Provision for pupils' health and wellbeing is good. A warm and welcoming environment is provided for pupils and members of staff ensure that the needs of every pupil are met. There are appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and, through physical activities and after-school clubs, they have a variety of opportunities to increase their levels of fitness and health. The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

The school promotes good attendance regularly and ensures that pupils and parents are aware of its expectations.

Through a wide range of experiences, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully.

Useful information about the life of the school is available for pupils and parents. This includes the school prospectus, website, regular newsletters and the governors' annual report.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is suitable. The needs of these pupils are identified at an early stage and appropriate individual education plans are produced for every pupil. The plans are reviewed on a regular basis in consultation with the parents and appropriate specialist agencies.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a happy and caring community, in which pupils have equal access to a range of educational and social provision. Clear emphasis is placed on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity and on creating an ethos that nurtures care and tolerance. There is a supply of high-quality resources that are appropriate for the whole range of ages and ability. The building is of good quality and the school

makes use of every available space for the benefit of all pupils. The external area includes a garden and the school pagoda, and this is a valuable and interesting resource that provides a variety of stimulating experiences.

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

Leadership: Good

Leaders have a clear vision for developing the school and they succeed in co-ordinating the efforts of governors, members of staff and parents effectively. All of the stakeholders are committed to the aims and objectives of the school and promote behaviours and values. This contributes positively to creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel that they are appreciated. There are clear policies that focus on pupils' needs and staff and governors understand and implement them conscientiously.

Teaching and support staff work together closely as a team and are very willing to try new initiatives and different methods of working. They fulfil their roles and responsibilities very conscientiously. Through thorough performance management systems, staff training and development needs, as well as the needs of the school, are identified and implemented effectively.

The governing body plays a prominent role in identifying priorities and planning improvements. Through self-evaluation, members have a good understanding of the way in which the school is performing and this is reinforced further through a number of visits and joint observations with members of staff. The governing body challenges the school as a critical friend effectively and addresses any concerns or complaints immediately.

The willingness of the school to incorporate a number of national and local priorities in its programme of work has led to improvements in provision and pupils' learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing thinking and problem-solving skills and the philosophy and working methods of the Foundation Phase have been established very firmly in the youngest pupils' class.

Improving quality: Good

The self-evaluation and strategic planning processes are a regular part of the life and work of the school with staff continually endeavouring to improve on previous performance. The school makes effective use of the variety of indicators including evidence from other agencies, such as the local authority's advisory service, when reaching a judgement on current performance.

Performance data is used effectively to monitor progress and to plan for raising standards. The school seeks the opinions of pupils and parents/carers regularly and gives careful consideration to any suggestions that are made. This process ensures increasing improvement. The school's self-evaluation report conveys a true picture of the current situation and clearly indicates those areas that require further development. The self-evaluation process leads to relevant development plans that

are implemented conscientiously and monitored against clear targets and specific success criteria. This leads to continuous improvement in standards and quality.

The school is developing as a strong learning community and has established a culture of close collaboration with a number of other schools in the local area and beyond. The effect of these networks and professional learning communities has promoted improvements in a number of areas. These improvements include improving literacy standards amongst boys, and they have been a key factor in developing and sharing good practice.

Partnership working: Good

The school operates in a strategic manner with a large number of partners to improve pupils' standards and wellbeing. These include parents, other local and world-wide schools, the community and initial teacher training institutions. There are very productive links with the local authority. The very strong transition arrangements between the local Cylch Meithrin and the school ensure that the nursery children settle in quickly to the life of the school and that there is progression and continuity in their learning. The school also works closely with the cluster of local primary schools and with local secondary schools in order to moderate teachers' assessments. The comprehensive transition arrangements with the local secondary school prepare the older pupils well for the next step in their education.

Resource management: Good

Members of staff are supported by a comprehensive programme of continuous professional development which enables them to acquire knowledge and new skills and to develop good practice in learning and teaching. Staffing and resources are managed and used effectively to support and improve learning. The school uses teaching staff and support staff well by taking full advantage of their time and expertise to deal with all aspects of the curriculum. The effects of resources on teaching and learning are reviewed regularly and future needs are planned.

There are systematic and appropriate budgeting arrangements in place and expenditure decisions are linked well to the priorities for pupils' improvement and wellbeing.

The school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In key stage 1, during three of the past five years, the percentage of pupils who have reached level 2 (the expected level in English, mathematics and science for seven-year-old children) has been mainly in the lower 50% when compared with local and national benchmarks and with the relative performance of similar schools. However, the mathematics and science results primarily have been in the higher 50% of those for schools that are in the same family.

The results of key stage 2 pupils in three of the past five years have been positive, with the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above (the expected level) in the higher 50% when compared with local and national benchmarks and with the relative performance of similar schools. In the past two years the science results have been in the highest 25% of those for schools that are in the same family.

The proportion of pupils who achieved level 2 or above at the end of key stage 1 in 2011 in mathematics and science compared favourably with the national benchmarks and with the results of most of the schools in the same family of schools. The English results were marginally below national benchmarks. The proportion of more able pupils who reached level 3 or above in English and particularly in science was below the average for the family of schools. The proportion who reached level 3 in mathematics was similar to the national benchmarks and the family of schools average.

In 2011, the proportion of pupils who achieved level 4 or above at the end of key stage 2 in English, mathematics and science was very similar to the national benchmarks and the family of schools average. The proportion of pupils who reached level 5 or above in any of the subjects was slightly below the national benchmarks and the averages for the family of schools.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The pre-inspection questionnaire was completed by 23 parents, about one third of the families in the school. Almost all the questionnaires expressed complete satisfaction with the school with parents stating that:

- their children were given good support to settle in when they began in the school and that they enjoy school;
- pupils are well behaved, children are expected to work hard and members of staff respect each individual;
- their children are encouraged to be healthy and they are safe whilst in school;
- the school helps their children to become more mature and they are well prepared for moving to the next school; and
- the teaching is good and the school is well run.

A few parents state their child does make good progress and that they do not understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires

The majority of the 34 questionnaires completed by pupils expressed positive attitudes towards the school. Every child stated that:

- they feel safe in the school, there are many opportunities for them to have regular physical exercise, and they receive help from teachers and parents to learn and to make progress; and
- their homework helps them to make progress.

Almost half the pupils state that other children do not behave well and that this affects their ability to do their work.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Wil Williams	Reporting Inspector
Trebor Roberts	Team Inspector
Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Elfed Williams	Peer Inspector
Alwyn Ward	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	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

National Curriculum

Expected National Curriculum levels

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

Core subject indicator in all key stages

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.