



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

**Maesybryn Primary School
Lancaster Drive
Crownhill Estate
Llantwit Fardre
Pontypridd
CF38 2NS**

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:

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.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh)

© Crown Copyright 2013: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 10/05/2013

Context

Maesybryn Primary School is a large community primary school in Llantwit Fardre: a large village between Llantrisant and Pontypridd, in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

The school has 394 pupils aged three to 11 years on roll, including 53 who attend the nursery. There are 15 classes in the school and around half of these are mixed age classes. The school has two nursery classes. There are also two support classes for pupils from across the local authority, one for Foundation Phase pupils with communication disorders and the other for key stage 2 pupils with complex needs.

Pupils come from areas that are neither economically advantaged nor disadvantaged. About 9% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is much lower than the average for Wales (21%).

The school has identified about 17% of its pupils as having additional learning needs. This is well below the average for Wales (22%). A very few pupils have a statement of special educational need.

Nearly all pupils are of white British ethnicity. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language. No pupil speaks Welsh at home.

The school was last inspected in 2007. The headteacher was appointed in 2009 and the deputy headteacher in 2008.

The individual school budget per pupil for Maesybryn Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,083 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £6,197 and the minimum is £2,561. Maesybryn Primary School is 85th out of the 113 primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

Maesybryn Primary School's current performance is good because:

- almost all make good progress in their learning;
- nearly all pupils are confident speakers and enthusiastic learners and enjoy school life;
- nearly all pupils demonstrate high levels of wellbeing;
- behaviour is very good;
- the overall quality of teaching is good;
- there are very good relationships between staff and pupils; and
- the learning environment is of a very high quality.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement in Maesybryn Primary School are good because:

- the headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have a clear, shared vision and sense of direction for the school;
- self-evaluation procedures identify areas for development accurately;
- governors support and challenge the school effectively;
- data is used effectively to identify areas for improvement in pupils' learning; and
- the school manages its resources efficiently.

Recommendations

R1 Improve standards in writing at the higher than the expected levels across the school

R2 Improve standards in Welsh second language in key stage 2

R3 Improve the consistency in standards of presentation and handwriting in key stage 2

R4 Raise the level of challenge and expectation for more able pupils

R5 Ensure consistency in assessment for learning practices across the school

What happens next?

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

Main findings

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

Standards: Good

The baseline assessment of pupils on entry to the school shows that most pupils have knowledge, understanding and skills that are in line with the expected level for their age.

Almost all pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Most have literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills that are appropriate for their age at the end of both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. Nearly all pupils with additional learning needs, including those in the learning resource classes, make very good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Most pupils recognised as more able make good progress, although a few pupils do not reach their full potential.

Nearly all pupils speak confidently and fluently in a wide range of situations to staff, to visitors and to each other. They respond well to questions and work well with each other during discussions and tasks. Nearly all pupils listen well and respect the views of others. They sustain their concentration for appropriate lengths of time in lessons.

Pupils' reading skills are developing well throughout the school. In the Foundation Phase, nearly all pupils read in line with their age and ability. They can answer simple questions accurately about the books they read. In key stage 2, many pupils read aloud confidently and with expression. They can select suitable texts from a variety of sources to enhance their knowledge across the curriculum.

The writing skills of most pupils develop well as they move through the school. By the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils can write short texts independently in a variety of genres. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils have a wide vocabulary and can write extended pieces of imaginative and interesting work in a variety of contexts across the curriculum. However, standards of handwriting and presentation skills in pupils' books are inconsistent in key stage 2.

Standards in Welsh language are good in the Foundation Phase. Most pupils' speaking and listening skills are developing well and their pronunciation is good. Pupils read with developing confidence and understanding. They write simple sentences accurately and they enjoy singing Welsh songs. However, by the end of key stage 2 many pupils do not speak, read or write confidently or at length in Welsh.

In 2012, teacher assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase suggest that the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in language, literacy and communication and personal development skills is around or slightly below the average for the family of schools, but above the national averages. Pupil outcomes for the development of personal development skills are above the average for the family of schools and national averages. The proportion of pupils gaining the

higher-than-expected outcome (outcome 6) is inconsistent; the school is above the family average for personal development skills, slightly below the average for mathematical skills and below for language, literacy and communication skills.

Compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the performance of pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase places the school in the upper 50% for the Foundation Phase outcome indicator and in the lower 50% for language, literacy and communication, mathematical skills and personal development.

In key stage 2, the proportion of pupils who attain the expected level (level 4) or above in English, mathematics and science when combined (the core subject indicator) is below the family of schools average. The proportion of pupils who attain the expected level in English, mathematics and science is below the family average. The proportion gaining the higher-than-expected level (level 5) is below the family average in English, mathematics and science.

Compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the performance of pupils places the school in the lower 50% for English mathematics and science.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils' wellbeing is a strength of the school. Nearly all pupils are keen to learn and enjoy school life. They feel safe and are confident to approach a member of staff, if they are anxious. They feel that their opinions are valued and listened to. Most pupils have a good attitude to keeping fit and eating healthily. They support the work of the school in promoting healthy eating.

Standards of behaviour are very high. Nearly all pupils are courteous and polite and show consideration towards each other, especially to younger pupils and those with differing needs. They listen well and are confident making contributions in lessons. They work well independently and collaboratively in groups or pairs. Pupils are articulate and confident learners.

Members of the school council and eco council are developing appropriate decision-making skills by contributing to the development of the school environment. They make practical suggestions to improve playground equipment and are developing appropriate financial skills by managing their own budget.

Nearly all pupils enjoy school and the overall rate of attendance is just below the average when compared with that of similar schools but at just over 94% is above the local and national average. Nearly all pupils arrive on time for school.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
---	-------------

Learning experiences: Good

Teachers' planning is consistently good throughout the school. The school has comprehensive schemes of work, which ensure that the curriculum is well balanced

and engages pupils. All teachers plan a range of interesting learning experiences. Joint planning impacts positively on pupil standards. In the Foundation Phase pupils contribute to the planning process effectively, although this process is less developed in key stage 2. The wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities enhance the curriculum for all pupils.

The curriculum meets the needs of specific groups of pupils well. However, expectations and levels of challenge are inconsistent across the school. Provision for developing pupils' skills across the curriculum is good and features in teachers' planning. Nearly all staff develop pupils' oracy, reading, writing, numeracy, ICT and thinking skills across the curriculum well. The learning experiences given to pupils in the learning resource classes are good. The school offers good opportunities for pupils from learning resource classes to integrate into mainstream lessons and activities.

Provision for Welsh is generally good, especially in the Foundation Phase. Most members of staff use Welsh regularly and integrate the language successfully into a range of learning activities. However, staff in key stage 2 do not offer sufficient challenge in their planning to improve pupils' confidence in using Welsh extendedly.

The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of Cwricwlwm Cymreig effectively through history topics and studying Welsh artists and personalities. The school uses colourful Welsh displays to promote the culture of Wales. Nearly all displays around the school are bilingual. The school arranges a successful Eisteddfod on St. David's day and pupils compete regularly at Urdd Eisteddfodau.

The school's curriculum promotes education for sustainable development, environmental education and global citizenship well. The school promotes global citizenship effectively through its strong links with a school in Uganda and fair-trade activities.

Teaching: Good

The overall quality of teaching is good. All teachers ensure that almost all pupils are engaged and make progress in their learning. They use a suitable range of approaches to enthuse pupils. Teachers share lesson objectives with their pupils well. All staff ensure that behaviour is very good and this creates a culture for effective learning. The school deploys additional adults effectively.

Most teachers ensure that activities meet the needs of the full range of abilities in their classes. However, in a few lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently, particularly the more able, or create a culture of high expectation. This results in a minority of pupils making slower than expected progress during these sessions.

Staff use a good variety of resources, including ICT and the outdoor environment, to enhance pupils' learning experiences effectively.

Most teachers give good oral feedback to pupils about their work, although the quality of comments in books and advice about how to improve pupils' written work is

inconsistent. Staff do not implement assessment for learning techniques consistently throughout the school, particularly in key stage 2.

The school has robust moderation systems, which ensure that assessments are accurate. All teachers track pupils' progress effectively across the school using comprehensive assessment records. These records provide valuable information about pupil progress in all subjects and areas of learning. Teachers use this information effectively to inform their planning and to track individual and group performance.

The school's reports to parents are clear and informative. These reports provide information about pupil progress and generally include accurate descriptions. Nearly all parents feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress through these reports and regular parents' evenings.

Care, support and guidance: Good

All teachers provide successful learning experiences which promote positive moral and social values, such as perseverance and respect amongst pupils. The school places a strong emphasis on teaching pupils about values and this develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness effectively. Provision for pupils' social and emotional needs is good and pupils feel safe and well cared for. Through its curriculum and extra-curricular activities, the school promotes the benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle successfully.

The school has effective arrangements in place to monitor attendance levels and to promote positive behaviour. It engages effectively with a range of appropriate external agencies to support pupils' learning needs and development.

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

Support for pupils with additional learning needs is good in all classes. Staff identify and monitor additional learning needs well. The school offers good care, support and guidance for all pupils, including those with communication difficulties and more complex needs. Staff improve pupils' communication skills effectively. The school has well-developed plans for addressing individual pupils' needs in learning, behaviour and play.

Learning environment: Good

The school has a positive ethos that clearly values all pupils and promotes equality of opportunity. The equality and diversity plan ensures that the school building and curriculum are fully accessible. The school takes positive steps to discourage harassment and discrimination. All pupils have access to the full range of the school's provision.

The school is a happy and inclusive environment where all pupils feel safe. The school promotes personal and emotional development effectively. As a result, nearly all pupils are confident, respect one another and feel valued.

The school ensures that pupils have enough books, computers and other equipment to do their work. Accommodation is generally suitable for the numbers of pupils and the activities planned. However, space is limited in certain areas of the school and the school hall is too small for whole school events. Displays are of high quality. They celebrate pupils' achievements and aid learning well. The school has developed its outdoor learning environment successfully. The gardening areas, school pond and outdoor trail are attractive areas that enhance pupils' learning experiences effectively and have had a positive impact on pupil outcomes. The buildings and grounds are well maintained, clean and welcoming.

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

Good

Leadership: Good

The headteacher provides effective leadership and has high expectations for the school. The senior management team, staff and governing body have developed a shared vision successfully. The school has well-defined leadership roles, with clear structures and systems to support staff. Regular senior management meetings, staff meetings and sound performance management processes for all staff contribute well to improvements in teaching and learning. Good relations between staff and the smooth running of day-to-day administration have a positive effect on the whole learning environment.

Under the leadership of an effective chair and vice chair, governors support the school well. They undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and have a strong interest in the day-to-day life of the school, for example by participating in school council meetings. The governors know about the performance of pupils and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are generally aware of how pupils' performance compares with the performance of pupils in other similar schools. This knowledge, together with visits to school and meetings with subject co-ordinators, helps them to become more effective critical friends.

The school pays appropriate attention to addressing local and national priorities. For example, the introduction of guided reading and the full implementation of the Foundation Phase have contributed to raising standards.

Improving quality: Good

The school has thorough and well-established systems for self-evaluation. It uses a good range of first-hand evidence to make judgements about its standards and provision. This evidence includes an accurate analysis of pupil outcomes, regular observations of teaching staff, scrutiny of pupils' work and gathering the views of governors, parents and pupils.

The outcomes of the comprehensive self-evaluation process provide the school with an accurate assessment of its strengths and areas for development. The school uses these areas for development to determine appropriate priorities for school improvement. The school improvement plan includes a broad range of suitable actions, identifies staff responsible for their delivery and has realistic timescales and clear success criteria. Implementation of the plan is having a positive impact on provision and standards in the school.

The school is developing as an effective learning community. It has established a number of professional learning communities that have helped to improve standards, for example with more able and talented pupils. Staff collaborate well with other schools in their cluster and this has led to more accurate assessment of pupils at the end of key stage 2.

Partnership working: Good

The school has effective links with a wide range of partners. These partnerships have a positive effect on pupils' achievement and wellbeing. The school keeps parents very well informed through regular newsletters and the school blog. The good partnership between the school and the parent teacher association supports pupils well. There are very effective partnerships between the school and other essential agencies in the community including health, social services and welfare groups. Good links in the community are having an impact on school provision as well as ensuring the safety and security of pupils around the school.

The school has very good joint working practices, including transfer arrangements between pre-school, secondary and special schools. These arrangements help to prepare pupils well for the next stage of learning. Links with the local authority are strong in terms of joint planning for pupils' wellbeing and progress in mainstream and learning resource classes. The school's partnership working with the local cluster of schools is effective in promoting pupils' learning.

Resource management: Good

Resource management is a strong feature of the school. Governors and senior leaders manage school finances well and ensure that the school's priorities receive appropriate funding. The school deploys teaching and support staff effectively to ensure good coverage of the curriculum. Arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment are good. Teaching resources are renewed and updated in line with development plans.

The school offers good value for money in terms of standards achieved by pupils and its efficient use of funds.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Most pupils enter the nursery with skills that are around the average for the local authority. Almost all pupils make good progress by the time they leave the school.

In the Foundation Phase in 2012, most pupils achieved outcome 5 (the expected level) in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. Many pupils achieved outcome 5 in language, literacy and communication skills and mathematical development. Outcomes were generally below the average for other schools in the same family. In outcome 6 (the higher than expected outcome), personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity performance was significantly higher than the family average.

At both outcome 5 and at the higher level, girls do better than boys in language, literacy and communication skills and in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. Girls do significantly better than boys at the higher level, especially in language, literacy and communication skills.

When compared with performance levels in similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), performance at the expected level was in the upper 50% for the Foundation Phase indicator and in the lower 50% for each of the three areas of learning. Performance at the higher level was in the upper 50% for two of the three areas of learning and in the lower 50% for language, literacy and communication skills.

In key stage 2, the school's performance in English, mathematics and science at the expected level 4 has been generally below the family average for the last five years. Boys' performance is better than girls' in English, mathematics and science. At the higher than expected level 5, girls' performance is better than boys' performance in English and science. Performance has fluctuated over the last five years but was below the family average in 2012.

When compared with that of similar schools, performance over the last three years at the expected and higher levels has regularly been in the lower 50% for English, mathematics and science.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

One hundred and twenty six pupils in key stage 2 completed the learner questionnaire.

Nearly all pupils:

- feel safe in school;
- believe that the teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress;
- know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- believe that the school teaches them how to keep healthy;
- believe that there are lots of chances at school for them to get regular exercise; and
- believe that they are doing well at school.

Most pupils:

- know what to do and whom to ask if they find their work hard;
- believe that the school deals well with any bullying;
- believe that any homework set helps them understand and improve their work in school; and
- believe that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Many pupils:

- believe that nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time; and
- believe that other children behave well and that they can get on with their work.

Pupils' views are slightly less positive overall than the views of pupils in other schools across Wales.

Parent questionnaires

Thirty-two parents or carers completed the questionnaire.

All parents or carers say that:

- their child likes school;
- their child was helped to settle when they started;
- their child feel safe in school;
- the school helps their child to become more mature and take on responsibilities; and
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise.

Nearly all parents or carers say that:

- teaching is good;
- they are generally satisfied with the school;
- staff expect their child to work hard and do his or her best;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect; and
- there are a good range of activities.

Most parents or carers say that:

- the school is well run;
- pupils behave well in school;
- they are well informed about their child's progress;
- they are comfortable approaching the school; and
- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Many parents or carers say that:

- homework builds well on what their child learns in school; and
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to their needs.

The views of these parents and carers are generally better or similar to the responses from all primary schools inspected in Wales. Overall, parents in Maesybryn Primary School expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Ann Jones	Reporting Inspector
Peter Roach	Team Inspector
Colette Gribble	Team Inspector
Deirdre Emberson	Lay Inspector
Kevin Phelps	Peer Inspector
Simon 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.