



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

**Nantmel C.I.W. School
Nantmel
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 6EL**

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.

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

© Crown Copyright 2012: 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.

Context

Nantmel Church in Wales School is a voluntary controlled school. It is in a rural setting between Llandrindod Wells and Rhayader. The school serves families from the local area and from further afield who want their children to attend a school with an Anglican ethos.

There are 38 pupils on roll who are taught in two mixed-ability classes.

For the last three years, the school has had an acting headteacher. A permanent headteacher was appointed in January 2012.

Children come to school full-time in the reception class in the term of their fourth birthday.

Less than 8% of children are eligible for free school meals, which is below both the local authority and national average. The school considers just over 31% of pupils to have additional learning needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Three pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority.

All pupils are from Welsh or British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. Just over 10% of pupils are from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds. No pupil was permanently or temporarily excluded in the last school year.

The individual school budget per pupil for Nantmel Church in Wales School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,765 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Powys is £14,685 and the minimum is £3,005. Nantmel Church in Wales School is 44th out of the 101 primary schools in Powys 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 school's current performance is good because:

- the achievement in pupils' learning and progress in lessons across the school is good;
- the standard of pupils' wellbeing is high;
- the quality of most teaching is good;
- learners' involvement in decision-making is well developed;
- pupils with additional learning needs are making good progress; and
- the pupils are extremely polite, work together effectively and behave well.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher provides good leadership and a clear direction for the school;
- the governing body is knowledgeable and well informed about the performance of pupils and the life and work of the school; and
- leaders have highlighted priorities and set targets for improvement that are clearly linked to the outcomes of self-evaluation.

Recommendations

In order to improve school needs to

- R1 improve the performance of more able pupils by challenging them more appropriately in all learning activities;
- R2 improve the provision for Welsh language development in key stage 2;
- R4 ensure that teachers' marking is consistently good and helps pupils improve their work; and
- R5 refine targets in the school improvement plan to enable leaders to measure more clearly the progress the school makes.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most pupils enter Nantmel Church in Wales School with above average social skills. The level of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills on entry to school has risen over recent years from below the local authority average to slightly above.

At the end of Foundation Phase, many pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science in relation to their starting points. Statutory teacher assessments in 2011 show that outcomes for pupils at the expected level (level 2) are above those of similar schools for English, mathematics and science. However, pupil attainment at the higher level (level 3) in key stage 1 is below that of similar schools.

Many pupils reach the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science at the end of key stage 2. Statutory teacher assessments for mathematics and science show that the school's performance is above the family of schools average. Performance in English at the expected level is more varied and weaker overall. Pupil outcomes at the higher level (level 5) in key stage 2 in 2011 are good in English and science but weaker in mathematics.

Nearly all pupils with additional learning needs make good progress against their individual targets. Those entitled to free school meals make good progress.

Most pupils recall previous learning well and make appropriate progress in new learning. However, in a minority of lessons across the both key stages, more able pupils do not make enough progress in developing their thinking and learning skills.

Nearly all pupils listen well to members of staff and to other pupils. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently with a suitably wide vocabulary. Many older pupils express themselves maturely to a variety of audiences.

Most pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic readers and have reading skills appropriate to their age and ability. In the Foundation Phase, they make good progress in acquiring their early reading skills. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read competently for their age and stage of development, and use their reading skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum.

Most pupils' written work across the school shows clear progression as they write well for an increasing variety of purposes. The majority of Year 2 pupils write in sentences, using a good range of punctuation correctly. Nearly all pupils develop good phonic awareness and make sensible attempts at spelling familiar words. At the end of key stage 2, many pupils use a wide vocabulary to write extensively in a range of forms. They structure their writing well and show an awareness of the need to capture the interest of the reader.

Pupils throughout the school make appropriate progress in developing their information and communication technology skills. They demonstrate good use of multimedia presentational skills and research skills. However, progress in the use of databases and spreadsheets is limited.

Foundation Phase pupils achieve good standards in Welsh. They count to ten correctly, can name colours, feelings and weather types, and respond appropriately to simple instructions and commands. The most confident Foundation Phase pupils are beginning to use Welsh spontaneously in the classroom. Most key stage 2 pupils make appropriate progress in Welsh. They speak clearly, using accurate pronunciation, and demonstrate understanding of Welsh through their responses. The majority of pupils write simple sentences independently, following a learnt pattern.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils feel safe in school and know where to turn with any concerns. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and an active lifestyle. They like school and are motivated to learn.

Behaviour is very good throughout school and nearly all pupils are interested and attentive in class. Pupils show respect, care and concern for each other. They are courteous and considerate to their peers, adults and visitors.

From an early age, pupils are able to contribute ideas that influence what and how they learn. Many pupils talk with confidence about the decisions they have made within the classroom and in the wider school community.

Working relationships between staff and pupils within the school are strong. Nearly all children make good progress in developing social and life skills and work well with others both in school and in the wider community. They are proud to help each other in their learning activities.

Attendance figures for 2010-2011 were slightly below those of similar schools, but overall figures have improved recently showing an upward trend.

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

Learning experiences: Adequate

Learning experiences engage pupils successfully in purposeful activities, which cover the Foundation Phase and National Curriculum requirements.

Planned activities in the Foundation Phase are stimulating and help pupils to learn independently. The curriculum in key stage 2 provides most pupils with a wide range of learning experiences. However, teachers do not plan enough opportunities or adapt their lessons enough to challenge pupils and to extend their learning throughout the school.

The learning experiences build systematically on pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills as pupils move through the school. Teachers' planning gives sufficient attention to the development of pupils' literacy, communication, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and staff provide suitable opportunities for most pupils to develop their skills across all subjects.

Throughout the school, pupils have many opportunities to work in pairs and collaborate as part of a group, which contributes well to the development of their independent learning skills.

Welsh language development in lessons is effective. However, provision within key stage 2 to enable pupils to develop their Welsh language skills is not as strong. The use of incidental Welsh by teachers and support staff is developing well. The school effectively promotes the cultural, historical, and linguistic characteristics of Wales through a study of authors, music and history.

There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, which are available for all children within the school.

The school has limited provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship, although it uses its links with the local community well to develop pupils' understanding of these concepts.

Teaching: Good

All teachers have up-to-date subject knowledge and share clear learning objectives with pupils in nearly all lessons. Teachers and support staff use a good range of teaching strategies to engage and to motivate pupils' learning. Teaching support assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.

In most lessons, teachers plan work that motivates pupils of all abilities effectively to work independently and to assess their own learning against set objectives. In nearly all lessons, teachers' explanations are clear and pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking through effective questioning. All teachers are good language role models for pupils. In a few of lessons there is a lack of pace and, as a result, opportunities for extension and challenge are missed.

The use of assessment for learning strategies within the Foundation Phase is very good and is developing well in key stage 2. Pupils review their own work and that of others successfully.

Teachers give pupils good verbal feedback during lessons, but the quality of marking in books varies. Marking is effective in many lessons, where it identifies areas for development well and pupils understand clearly what they need to do to improve their work. In the remainder of lessons, the marking is less informative and helpful.

The school tracks pupil progress thoroughly. As a result, teachers have a good understanding of pupils' progress. The school uses this information effectively to identify and to support pupils at risk of under achieving. Reports to parents are informative and show what pupils need to do to improve in the core subjects.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The caring ethos is a strength of the school.

There is a well-planned personal and social education programme, which promotes pupils' health and wellbeing well. All pupils are encouraged to get involved in a range of appropriate extra-curricular activities that contribute positively to pupils' health and wellbeing.

The various pupil committees within school provide very good opportunities to develop pupils' decision-making and problem solving skills.

The school works successfully with specialist services, such as health and social services, and this helps pupils to achieve well. Pupils with additional learning needs receive good support, which enables them to succeed at an appropriate level. Staff regularly review pupils' progress and update individual educational plans according to the needs of the pupil. They keep parents well informed and fully involved in their child's progress.

The school has procedures and has an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school is welcoming to pupils, parents and all members of the local community. It has a very caring ethos where all pupils are valued and receive equal access to all areas of the school's provision. The school promotes tolerance and respect for others through a range of activities, encouraging all pupils to treat others fairly.

There is a good range of learning resources throughout the school. Attractive displays in the classrooms and shared learning areas throughout school support pupils' learning and celebrate pupils' achievements. The school building is well maintained, providing a clean and pleasant learning environment.

There is plenty of space for outdoor play and learning. Areas such as the nature trail and vegetable valley provide good opportunities for learning and promote pupils' independence well.

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

Leadership: Good

Following a prolonged period of uncertainty about its future, the school now has a strong and enthusiastic leadership team. In a short space of time the headteacher has established a strong sense of teamwork, where all staff and governors share a forward vision and direction for the school. The school has clear aims and objectives that all leaders and managers support.

The headteacher keeps the governing body well informed and they have a firm understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There are good informal arrangements for governors to visit school and to meet teachers. They fulfil their role as critical friends and challenge staff to seek further improvements.

The school is responding well to national priorities. It has successfully established the Foundation Phase, and has made good progress in developing pupils' thinking skills and improving standards in literacy.

Improving quality: Good

All governors and staff contribute to the process of self-evaluation and planning for improvement. They base evaluations securely on a range of first-hand evidence, including observation of teaching and learning. The school listens and responds to the opinions of pupils, parents and members of the community. There is a clear link between the self-evaluation report and the school improvement plan.

The improvement plan focuses clearly on improving pupil performance, although targets for improvement are not precise enough to measure the progress the school makes. The school has a useful three-year overview of areas for improvement.

The school takes a leading role in well-established learning communities where local schools work jointly towards raising standards in literacy and in the Foundation Phase.

Arrangements for performance management of teachers and support staff are effective. They have led to staff receiving appropriate opportunities to increase their contributions to raising standards in literacy.

Partnership working: Good

Partnerships with parents are very effective. There are good links with the local toddler group and the induction arrangements help pupils settle into school very quickly. There are very good links with the local secondary school that enable pupils to make a smooth transition. Strong links with community organisations, such as the Nantmel Show and the Women's Institute, contribute to pupils' social skills.

The school has very close links with other primary schools, for example in relation to the joint standardisation of teachers' assessments of pupils' work, and the local cluster of schools shares resources and training, for example in First Aid.

The school works very closely with local authority agencies. Social and health services contribute strongly to pupils' wellbeing.

Resource management: Good

The school deploys staff and resources efficiently. Staff make best use of their expertise and experience. Good performance management arrangements enable staff to identify ways in which they can develop their skills. The staff training programme supports the school development plan well.

The school makes good use of the building and grounds. There are enough resources to support the curriculum. They are in good condition and staff and pupils use them well.

The headteacher and governors monitor expenditure carefully and link spending closely to school development priorities. In view of the recent progress made in improving provision and standards of attainment, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The number of pupils in each year group at Nantmel Church in Wales School is very small and varies considerably from year to year, so data needs to be treated cautiously.

In both key stages, Nantmel Church in Wales School performs well compared to its family of schools (those schools which face similar challenges) as its position is first and second within the key stage group. It regularly performs better than others at the expected levels but less so at the higher levels.

The results of teacher assessment over the last three years show consistently good pupil performance at the expected level at the end of both key stages 1 and 2 in mathematics and science. Results in English are more varied. At the end of key stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in English has been above the average for other schools in the family in two out of the five past years. At the end of key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in English has been above the average for other schools in the family in three out of the five past years.

Many pupils enter the school with above average social skills. The level of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills on entry to school has risen over recent years from below the local authority average to slightly above. By the age of seven, at the end of key stage 1, many pupils have made good progress. Most attain the expected level (level 2), in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Results at the higher level (level 3) in English fluctuate considerably from year to year, moving between the bottom 25% and the upper 50% of results for schools with similar levels of free school meals. Results at the higher level (level 3) in mathematics and science do not compare well to those of the family of schools.

By the age of 11, at the end of key stage 2, most pupils reach the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science. Outcomes at this level compare well in relation to with national, local and family benchmarks. Performance in mathematics and science has been consistently within the top 25% over the past three years. Performance in English has fluctuated between the lower 50% and the upper 50% over the past three years.

Attainment at the higher level (level 5) in English and science has also improved and is now above the family average.

At key stage 1, boys generally perform as well as girls at the expected level in the core subject indicator.

At key stage 2, girls achieved better than boys in three of the last five years at the expected level, but boys achieved better than girls at the higher level. The school has small cohorts and, as a result, the gender difference is not a significant issue in the overall picture.

Pupils entitled to free school meals generally perform as well as or even better than pupils not entitled to free school meals throughout the school.

School assessment data indicates that pupils identified with additional learning needs, or those who are accessing additional support, make good progress in relation to their starting points.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twelve parents responded to the questionnaire.

All parents say that their child likes school and was helped to settle in well when they started school.

All parents say that the staff treat children fairly and equally. They also feel that the school encourages their child to be healthy and take regular exercise.

Nearly all parents say that they were overall satisfied with the school; they feel that the school was well run and that teaching was good.

A third of responses say that they do not understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints. However, nearly all parents say that they feel comfortable approaching the school with a question, problem or suggestion.

Most parents felt that they were kept well informed about their child's progress and that there was a good range of activities including trips and visits.

Nearly all parents say that they are happy with the range of sporting activities available for pupils.

Responses to learner questionnaires

There were twenty-two responses from learners in key stage 2.

Overall, learner responses to the questionnaires were positive and in line with or above national benchmarks in terms of their level of satisfaction with aspects of the school. All pupils say that they feel safe in school and that the school deals with bullying well. All pupils say that there are lots of chances for exercise, that school teaches them to be healthy and that the teachers and adults in school help them to learn and make progress.

Pupils' responses to statements on behaviour were less favourable. Only about a third of pupils who responded feel that other children behave well, allowing them to get their work done. This is below the national benchmark.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Sarah Hurst	Reporting Inspector
Christopher Dolby	Team Inspector
Julie Ann Price	Lay Inspector
Glyn Williams	Peer Inspector
Lisa Williams	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.