



*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**

**Trowbridge Primary School  
Brynbara Way  
Trowbridge  
Cardiff  
CF3 1SX**

**Date of inspection: February 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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	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

Trowbridge Primary School is situated in the Rumney district on the eastern suburbs of the City of Cardiff. The school was established in September 2010 from the amalgamation of the former Trowbridge Infant and Trowbridge Junior schools. The school is located on the site of the former junior school and has been extensively refurbished and re-modelled to accommodate Foundation Phase pupils. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

The school serves an economically and socially deprived area and is in a designated Communities First neighbourhood. Nearly half of its pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well above the local authority and all-Wales averages. The rate of pupil mobility is high.

Currently there are 215 pupils on roll between the ages of three and 11 years. Children are accepted into the nursery on a part-time basis in the September immediately following their third birthday. Pupils are organised into eight classes according to age, four in key stage 1 including a nursery and reception unit, and four in key stage 2.

The majority of pupils come from homes where English is spoken as a first language. Approximately 10% of pupils come from Gypsy and Traveller families. Around 10% of pupils come from an ethnic minority background. No pupil speaks Welsh at home.

Thirty-two per cent of pupils are identified as having additional learning needs and four pupils have statements of special educational needs. This is well above the all-Wales average of 20%.

The individual school budget per pupil for Trowbridge Primary school in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £4,377 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Cardiff is £19,708 and the minimum is £2,828. Trowbridge is 14th out of the 101 primary schools in Cardiff in terms of its budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of Trowbridge Primary School is adequate because:

- the majority of pupils in key stage 2 make satisfactory progress in literacy;
- the school is a friendly, welcoming environment where all pupils are respected and treated fairly; and
- the school provides an appropriate range of learning experiences.

However:

- the majority of pupils do not achieve the expected outcomes for their age by the end of the Foundation Phase;
- teaching and assessment are judged as adequate overall;
- the school's provision for developing skills across the curriculum is at an early stage of development; and
- attendance rates, though improving since September 2011, are below the average for similar schools.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement of Trowbridge Primary School are adequate because:

- the headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear vision for the school;
- senior leaders have responded well to the challenge of amalgamating the two schools;
- the governing body receives secure leadership from the chair and vice-chair; and
- the school has responded well to national and local priorities, such as eco schools and healthy school initiatives.

However:

- the self-evaluation report is too descriptive;
- targets within the school improvement plan are not linked well enough to pupil progress; and
- areas previously identified as needing improvement have not been addressed well enough.

## Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 improve standards in literacy, numeracy and Welsh and address the underachievement of boys across the school;
- R2 continue to improve attendance and punctuality;
- R3 ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good across the school; and
- R4 improve self-evaluation and ensure that targets in the school improvement plan are linked to pupil progress.

### What happens next?

Trowbridge Primary School will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Progress in addressing the recommendations will be monitored by Estyn

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

**Adequate**

#### **Standards: Adequate**

The majority of pupils start the school with levels of skills that are lower than the local authority average. The majority of pupils do not achieve the expected outcomes for their age by the end of the Foundation Phase.

In the Foundation Phase, the majority of pupils listen well and are respectful of each other. Most answer questions appropriately and engage well with their peers. Their oral skills are satisfactory when discussing their work. However, a minority do not speak well and sometimes lack confidence when talking to others.

Most pupils make satisfactory progress in their reading skills, and develop an appropriate knowledge and understanding of initial sounds and blends, according to their age and ability. Standards of reading in the Foundation Phase are generally satisfactory, although a minority are unable to use a range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words.

In the lower Foundation Phase, most pupils use rhyming words in their writing and are aware of most phonemes. They write simple instructions, and a few pupils use appropriate punctuation when recording their work. They make appropriate progress in letter formation and in developing their handwriting

In key stage 2, most pupils listen well and have a clear understanding of their work. Many pupils answer questions well and speak clearly when discussing their work with peers. A few speak hesitantly and quietly when questioned.

Standards of reading in key stage 2 are satisfactory overall. Most pupils read regularly in school and many show an appropriate understanding and interest in their work. They take account of punctuation marks when reading and can recall the main elements of a story successfully. However, a minority of pupils, many of whom are boys, are hesitant readers. They do not always demonstrate an understanding of the text they read. As a result their reading lacks intonation and expression.

The majority of pupils in key stage 2 make satisfactory progress in developing their writing skills. Most pupils write for different purposes to good effect. However, even among more able pupils there are weaknesses in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Pupils with additional learning needs read and spell high frequency words accurately. They practise their writing successfully and apply their skills through producing small books. They develop good phonemic skills according to their ability and aptitude.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. Throughout the school, pupils work well together in groups and many use their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills appropriately across a range of subjects. They show interest and perseverance to remain on task and often enjoy their work.

In 2011, in key stage 1, the performance of pupils is relatively low in English, mathematics and science when compared to the performance of pupils in schools with similar percentages of free school meals. When comparing the results for the combination of reading, writing and mathematics, the school's performance is below the family of schools and all-Wales averages. Pupils' performance above the expected level (level 3) is lower than the family, local authority and all-Wales averages in English, mathematics and science.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils' performance in English and the core subject indicator places the school in the top quarter of schools with similar percentages of free school meals. The performance of pupils in mathematics and science places the school in the top half of similar schools.

When comparing the results for the combination of reading, writing and mathematics, the school's performance is above the family of schools and all-Wales averages. Pupils' performance above the expected level (level 5) is better than the family, local authority and all-Wales averages in English, mathematics and science.

In 2011, there was a difference between boys' and girls' achievement across the school, with more girls attaining the higher level in all three core subjects.

Outcomes of teacher assessment show that the percentage of pupils who attain the expected level in Welsh is lower than the family of schools and all-Wales averages. Standards in both Welsh oral and written work are satisfactory at best across the school.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards exercise and healthy eating. They take part enthusiastically in a good range of physical activities and actively support the healthy schools initiative. All pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils enjoy school and are well motivated. They have positive attitudes to learning and appreciate the activities on offer. They feel valued and supported by all staff in the school.

Most pupils behave very well throughout the school day. They are polite, courteous and respectful. The school has appropriate links with the community. These links contribute to improving pupils' social skills.

Members of the school council and eco committee are actively involved in making decisions. They represent the views of other pupils well. Pupils enjoy the variety of extra-curricular activities and experiences on offer. Their understanding of sustainable development is good, though their knowledge of global citizenship is less secure.

Although pupils' attendance has recently improved, at 89%, it is still weak when compared to that of other similar schools. A few pupils do not arrive punctually.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>
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<b>Adequate</b>
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**Learning experiences: Adequate**

The school provides an appropriate range of learning experiences, through a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Teachers and learning assistants plan an appropriate range of subject based knowledge and skills in most classes. These include visits to places of interest and an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities.

Where planning and organisation is most effective, activities engage and motivate most pupils. Planning and provision for pupils with additional learning needs in literacy and mathematics are of a high standard. However, in a majority of classes, learning experiences do not always provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able pupils.

Lesson plans make appropriate reference to the development of literacy skills. However, the school does not ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply skills such as numeracy and information and communication technology effectively across the curriculum.

Pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about Welsh culture and traditions and Welsh second language is taught in every class, although the use of Welsh by pupils and staff on a daily basis is limited.

There is good provision for education for sustainable development. There have been some successful partnerships with organisations such as the African Mothers Foundation, but overall the provision for global citizenship is less well developed.

**Teaching: Adequate**

The range and quality of teaching and assessment processes vary too much across the school.

Teachers are good role models for pupils and manage their classrooms effectively. Many of the teaching assistants support teaching and learning well. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and in key stage 2 set and share clear learning objectives for pupils at the start of lessons. Where teaching is good or better, the work is characterised by thorough lesson planning, high expectations, effective use of resources, skilful diagnostic questioning of pupils by the teacher to test their understanding, and good use of success criteria for pupils to evaluate their work.

In a minority of lessons, planning is weak, insufficient consideration is given to addressing boys' underachievement, pupils are not provided with an appropriate level of challenge, and the pace of learning is too slow. In around half of lessons, teaching does not provide pupils with enough opportunities for collaborative work or for the development of thinking skills. The use of success criteria to support pupils' understanding across the school is not well developed.



Staff provide helpful oral feedback to pupils and mark their work regularly. However, the quality of marking overall lacks sufficient rigour to consistently enable pupils to know how well they are doing, or provide guidance on what they need to do to improve. Across the school, there is little use of peer assessment and too much variation in the use and accuracy of assessments. Reports to parents are informative and comply with statutory requirements.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school promotes successfully pupils' health and wellbeing. There are good strategies in place to enable pupils to learn about a healthy lifestyle through the curriculum and extra- curricular activities.

Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. The school provides a calm environment for all pupils. The new behaviour plan works well overall and any bullying is investigated and resolved. Strategies to promote good attendance, though at an early stage, are having a positive effect. Registration complies with statutory requirements.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. The headteacher is the designated person for the process and a nominated governor provides support. All staff have received training and understand how to apply the guidelines. The school makes good use of specialist agencies when necessary.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. The school has effective procedures for identifying pupils in need of additional support. Pupils' individual educational plans are detailed and include realistic targets. There are also appropriate opportunities for parents to take part in the process of reviewing the plans.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is a friendly, welcoming environment where all pupils are respected and treated fairly. The school promotes equal opportunities and all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Pupils have positive attitudes to diversity. The school makes good use of a number of schemes to encourage pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and values as well as those of others.

Extensive refurbishment of the accommodation and stimulating classroom displays provide an attractive learning environment for all pupils. The new Foundation Phase provides satisfactory accommodation overall, though classrooms are small for the number of pupils and aspects of the outdoor area are incomplete.

The school has a range of good new learning resources, such as reading books, science equipment and computers, and these are used well by pupils and staff. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing the grounds following amalgamation and has appropriate plans for further improvements.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>
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<b>Adequate</b>
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**Leadership: Good**

The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher have responded well to the challenge of amalgamating two schools and have addressed many challenges successfully. They have a clear vision for the school and have communicated this well to governors, parents and staff. The headteacher provides effective leadership and receives good support from the senior leadership team. Leaders and managers have developed an effective learning environment for pupils.

The headteacher and senior leaders work across the school to support colleagues and develop a team ethos with staff. Specific responsibilities are shared amongst the teachers and assistants and all make a good contribution to school development. They support each other effectively.

The school has responded well to national and local priorities such as eco schools and healthy school initiatives. It has started to address weaknesses in pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy with the support of the local authority.

Roles and responsibilities are well defined and all staff have relevant job descriptions. There is an effective system in place to support performance management. Members of staff have good opportunities for professional development, linked to their specific responsibilities and personal objectives.

The governing body is well informed about the school and the performance of pupils. The school receives secure leadership from the governors who work very closely and constructively with the headteacher and senior leadership team. They share a common commitment to ensure good provision for all pupils. They act well as a critical and supportive friend of the school and they fulfil their statutory duties appropriately.

**Improving quality: Adequate**

The school has a sound process for self-evaluation. Leaders use an appropriate range of evidence and successfully involve stakeholders such as governors, members of staff and pupils. Observations of teaching and learning are generally helpful in evaluating standards and provision but the outcomes of these activities do not provide sufficient guidance to staff about how to improve. The self-evaluation report is detailed and provides a useful insight into school life. However, it is not always evaluative or self-critical enough.

The process of self-evaluation is linked appropriately to the school improvement plan. Detailed action plans have been produced to address issues that have been highlighted through self-evaluation. However, targets within the plan are not clear enough or linked well enough to pupil progress. Implementation of the plans is in the early stages and, as a result, it is too early to measure its impact on improving standards or provision.

The school has addressed about half of the recommendations from the previous inspection reports for the former infant and junior schools. The steps taken have had a positive effect on pupils' standards of achievement. However, pupils' attendance, their standards in Welsh and inconsistencies in assessment remain as areas in need of improvement.

The school has recently established a professional learning community to improve standards in Welsh, but this has yet to have an impact on standards. There are appropriate networks of collaboration with other schools and partners. These have a beneficial effect on provision.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Following the recent amalgamation, the school is being proactive in establishing new partnerships with parents, governors, the local authority, social services and local schools.

The school communicates well with parents through regular newsletters and is using a number of imaginative ideas to encourage parents to participate in school events such as a fund raising quiz evening. The parent teacher association has made a very good contribution to school life, particularly by raising large amounts of money for school resources and charities. The school has informative and well-designed prospectuses both for the main primary and the nursery school although some statutory information on arrangements for looked-after children is missing.

The school has good links with the local authority and teacher training providers. Outside agencies are engaged effectively to provide targeted support for pupils with additional learning needs. Transition arrangements with local secondary schools are good. There are no links as yet with local parent/toddler groups.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

The school manages its resources well and has enough staff to deliver the curriculum and to support pupils. Teaching and support staff are deployed appropriately and use the available resources to good effect. The school complies with the statutory requirements on teachers' workload and planning, preparation and assessment time. However, mentoring support for newly qualified teachers is not in place.

The school is well resourced and the accommodation is of high quality. Most teachers generally use the space within their classrooms well. Spending priorities and training programmes link closely with the school's improvement plan and are reviewed by the governing body to ensure best value. Through close consultation with the local authority finance officer, the school has addressed a historical deficit from the previous Infant and Junior schools and now has a healthy budget. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards. The school provides adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Estyn compares schools against two main data sets; their free-school-meal group and their family of schools.

**Free-school-meal groups** – the results of every school in Wales are compared to those of schools who have similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. There are five bands: (1) up to and including 8%; (2) over 8% and up to and including 16%; (3) over 16% and up to and including 24%; (4) over 24% and up to and including 32%; and (5) above 32%.

Within each of the bands, schools are placed in quartiles in order to judge their performance.

Trowbridge is in the fifth band in relation to the proportion of its pupils entitled to free school meals.

Many pupils enter the school with skills that are below the expected level.

In 2011, in key stage 1, the performance in English of pupils at level 2, the expected level at seven years old, placed the school in the top half when compared to schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, but performance levels were lower than the local authority and all-Wales averages. Attainment in science and the core subject indicator was not as good and placed the school in the lower half of schools with a similar percentage of free school meals. Attainment in mathematics placed the school in the lowest quarter.

In key stage 1, the school's results were above the family average, but below the local authority and all-Wales averages in oracy and writing. Pupils' performance in reading was below all three. Pupils' performance above the expected level (level 3) was lower than the family, local authority and all-Wales averages in English, mathematics and science. There has been a downward trend over three years in results in every core subject and the core subject indicator.

In key stage 2, the performance of pupils at level 4, the expected level at 11 years old, in English and the core subject indicator placed the school in the top quarter of schools with similar percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals. Pupils' performance was similar to local authority and all-Wales averages. The performance of pupils in mathematics and science placed the school in the top half of schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, and was similar to local authority and all-Wales averages.

In key stage 2, the school's results were better than or similar to the family, local authority and all-Wales averages in oracy, reading and writing. Pupils' performance above the expected level (level 5) was better than the family, local authority and all-Wales averages in English, mathematics and science.

In 2011, there is a difference between boys' and girls' achievement, with more girls attaining the higher level in all three core subjects in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.

In key stage 2, the percentage of pupils who attained the expected level in Welsh second language, level 4+, was 43%. This was lower than the family of schools and Wales averages of 59% and 51% respectively.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Learner questionnaires**

The majority of pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and say that teachers and other adults help them make progress. Most know what to do and whom to ask if they find the work hard and whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. Most consider that they are doing well in school and that the school teaches them how to keep healthy. Most also believe that there are lots of chances to get regular exercise. The majority believe that there are enough books, equipment and computers to do their work. A minority do not believe that homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school. Approximately a third of pupils do not believe that other children behave well and think that this stops them from getting on with their work. A similar number do not believe that nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunchtime. However, the great majority of pupils believe that the school deals well with bullying.

#### **Parents questionnaire**

There is no commentary on the parent questionnaire due to the small number of responses received (fewer than 10).

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Gareth Wyn Jones	Reporting Inspector
Lowri Haf Evans	Team Inspector
Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Jonathon Davies	Peer Inspector
Paul 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](http://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.