



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

**Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn
Ffordd Dyffryn
Llandudno
Conwy
LL30 2LZ**

Date of inspection: October 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:

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Context

Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn is on the west side of the town of Llandudno in Conwy. The school serves the neighbouring area, although a small minority of pupils come from other areas of the town.

There are 135 pupils on the school roll, including 15 nursery children who attend in the afternoon only. The school describes its catchment area as economically disadvantaged. About 39% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is much higher than the average for primary schools in Wales.

The school has identified about 32% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is much higher than the average for primary schools in Wales. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There is a referral unit for Foundation Phase pupils with behavioural problems in the school. Currently, there are seven pupils within the unit. The majority of these pupils come from outside the school's catchment area.

The home language of nearly all pupils is English. As from November 2012, the school teaches 25% of lessons at key stage 2 through the medium of Welsh.

The school's last inspection was in December 2006. Currently, the school has an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £4,757 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Conwy is £13,941 and the minimum is £2,935. Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn is 17th out of the 61 primary schools in Conwy in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the school is unsatisfactory because:

- most pupils do not achieve high enough standards when compared with pupils in other, similar schools;
- the performance of boys is significantly lower than that of girls;
- the provision for the development of pupils' skills as they move through the school is ineffective; and
- the limited range of learning experiences does not cover adequately the required range of the National Curriculum and religious education.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are unsatisfactory because:

- although the acting headteacher has quickly initiated improvements in a few aspects of the school's work, the current senior leadership team has been in post for too short a time to have set and sustained a strategic vision for the school;
- senior leaders and governors have not addressed the low standards attained by pupils;
- the processes for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are not rigorous enough;
- there is insufficient evidence that schemes of work and teachers' plans will ensure that pupils develop their key skills effectively as they move through the school;
- governors do not hold the school to account robustly enough and do not fully understand their statutory duties; and
- the school has not met all the recommendations of the last inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- R2 Improve planning for the progressive development of pupils' key skills across the curriculum.
- R3 Improve the provision for supporting pupils with additional learning needs in mainstream classes.
- R4 Provide a clear strategic direction for the work of the school that promotes high expectations of all.
- R5 Improve the effectiveness of the governing body.
- R6 Implement a rigorous system of self-evaluation and improvement planning that uses first-hand evidence of standards and the quality of provision.

What happens next?

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion, that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress on a termly basis.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Unsatisfactory

Standards: Unsatisfactory

The majority of pupils enter the school with skills that are below those expected for children of their age. Outcomes at the end of the Foundation Phase are significantly below those achieved by schools across Wales that face similar levels of challenge. The underachievement is most marked in the area of literacy language and communication.

In the lessons observed and in their work, most pupils make limited progress in developing the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. In the Foundation Phase, pupils use information and communication technology competently for word processing, but the work of pupils in key stage 2 shows little progression. Pupils' problem-solving skills develop well in the Foundation Phase.

In key stage 2, most pupils have good oracy skills. They are good listeners and speak clearly and confidently. The majority read fluently and accurately, although test results indicate that too many pupils in key stage 2 have reading abilities that are significantly below those expected for their age.

At the end of key stage 2, the performance of pupils is weaker than in other similar schools. Although overall attainment has fluctuated, the school has consistently performed less well than other schools in English, mathematics and science, and in the core subject indicator. Attainment in most areas is among the lowest in its family of schools, and since 2008, there has been no clear trend of improvement in any of these measures.

Most pupils' numeracy skills develop appropriately as they progress through the school, although a majority in lower key stage 2 do not have rapid recall of tables and are hesitant when performing simple mental calculations. Many pupils do not apply their numeracy skills adequately in subjects other than mathematics. Pupils in key stage 2 do not develop problem solving skills well.

Pupils' attitudes to Wales and learning Welsh are generally positive. The bilingual and Welsh language skills of many pupils are developing appropriately. Many pupils are able to write appropriately for their age and ability. Many older pupils are able to read with expression and to hold a simple conversation in Welsh using the vocabulary and sentence structures they have previously learned.

Throughout the school, boys perform less well than girls. The difference between their performance is greatest at the higher level (level 5), which boys rarely attain. Many pupils with additional learning needs in mainstream classes do not make appropriate progress. In the past two years, pupils who are entitled to free school meals performed significantly less well than other pupils.

Scrutiny of work in pupils' books indicates that the majority of pupils present their work neatly. However, they do not develop well enough the skills required to write for a range of purposes and for different audiences. There is little evidence of pupils developing the technique of drafting, proof-reading and improving their work as a result. Most pupils in Year 6, including the more able, do not spell words correctly. Most older pupils in key stage 2 do not produce extended pieces of writing enough.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Nearly all pupils are happy and believe that their school is a safe place where they can approach staff if they have any worries. They say that incidents of bullying are very rare. Attendance is good and compares well with that of other schools, but there are a few pupils who do not attend regularly. Pupils understand the importance of healthy food and exercise.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase make appropriate choices about their own learning and choose from a range of stimulating experiences. Although key stage 2 pupils generally work well together and are keen to learn, many have not yet developed the skills needed to improve their own learning.

Nearly all pupils in the referral unit make very good progress in managing their own behaviour. However, although behaviour is generally good across the school, five pupils have been excluded for a total of 12 days over the past year. This does not compare well with the situation in similar schools.

The school council is enthusiastic, but depends on staff to function effectively. It organises fundraising events for charity and contributes to additional resources, such as the climbing wall in the playground.

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

Planning in the Foundation Phase is adequate and engages pupils well. However, planning for the progressive development of skills is not fully developed. The learning experiences provided at key stage 2 do not cover the required range of the National Curriculum and religious education adequately and planning for the development of pupils' key skills is weak.

Learning activities do not always meet the differing needs of all pupils, particularly those with additional learning needs and those who are more able. There are limited opportunities for pupils to apply the key skills of numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology across the curriculum during key stage 2.

Provision for Welsh language development is appropriate. Teachers use Welsh incidentally in most lessons, and promote pupils' understanding of the history, geography, culture and music of Wales effectively.

The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities that includes folk dancing and a choir. Competition in the Urdd Eisteddfod enables pupils to enhance their use of Welsh outside the classroom.

The school has a good provision for recycling and is developing pupils' skills in growing vegetables well. Pupils learn about other cultures as part of their work in geography and information and communication technology, but the provision to develop pupils' understanding of global citizenship, for example through contact or collaborative projects with schools outside the UK, is limited.

Teaching: Adequate

Almost all teachers and support staff use both English and Welsh well in their lessons. Teachers use appropriate strategies to encourage pupils' good behaviour. They praise pupils effectively to improve their confidence.

In most lessons where teaching is most effective, teachers have good relationships with pupils. They plan lessons and organise their classes effectively, make good use of support staff, share learning objectives with pupils and have high expectations of behaviour and learning. In a minority of lessons, teaching is less effective; teachers do not plan their lessons sufficiently well. They have low expectations of pupils.

Most teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, but do not always note clearly what pupils need to do to improve. Older pupils have individual targets to improve their work. However, when asked, not all remember what these are, and therefore they do not have a positive impact on standards. During the lessons observed, many teachers plan appropriately to provide all pupils with activities that match their ability. However, this is not always evident in pupils' previous work.

Teachers assess and track the progress of individuals and groups regularly. Most involve pupils appropriately in assessing the quality of their work in many lessons. However, this practice varies too much between classes. Reports to parents are clear and informative.

Care, support and guidance: Adequate

Arrangements for developing pupils' social, moral and cultural awareness are good. Pupils participate in daily acts of collective worship, which contribute well to their spiritual development. Outside agencies, such as social services and medical staff, work well with parents and staff to meet pupils' needs. The school actively promotes healthy living and mutual respect.

Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. There are appropriate policies and procedures for preventing bullying and harassment.

Provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the referral unit in the Foundation Phase is very good. All staff in this class understand the pupils' needs very well. They are skilled in providing effective support that closely matches the needs of pupils. This enables individuals to make good progress, modify their behaviour and return to mainstream classes over an appropriate period.

Support for pupils with additional learning needs in mainstream classes is inadequate. The school identifies pupils who are not attaining in line with

expectations through teacher assessments and standardised tests. However, there are not enough appropriate interventions in place to support these learners and to help them to catch up. The few that are in place do not address pupils' specific needs well enough. As a result, many learners do not achieve make enough progress.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community that treats all pupils fairly. Senior leaders have created a renewed sense of purpose and team spirit and all staff and pupils feel valued. There are sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum and to cater for the wide range of pupils' needs. The spacious accommodation provides a stimulating learning environment with colourful and relevant wall displays. The referral unit provides a stimulating environment where pupils feel secure and which is conducive to learning. The school is secure and well maintained. Pupils have helped to develop a sensory garden that enhances the outside learning area and is beginning to have a positive impact on areas of the curriculum such as knowledge and understanding of the world.

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

The recently-appointed acting headteacher, with the support of the acting deputy headteacher, is beginning to provide the school with a sense of common purpose and direction. Together, they have implemented a few relevant initiatives that have had a positive effect on staff morale. However, leaders and managers have not yet addressed the low standards attained by pupils.

Governors support the school, but they have no formal links with teachers, classes or curriculum subjects. They receive regular reports on pupils' performance, but they do not analyse data well enough or challenge leaders appropriately to raise pupils' attainment. The governing body's involvement in evaluating the quality of the school's life and work and how it compares with similar schools is limited, and it provides weak strategic direction for the school. The governing body does not hold the school to account robustly enough and it does not fulfil its statutory duties.

Leaders and managers have implemented a few initiatives well, such as the Foundation Phase and the breakfast club. Teachers are only recently developing a coherent approach to the curriculum in key stage 2 that considers the development of pupils' key skills and thinking skills. The school has not fully addressed national initiatives, such as the School Effectiveness Framework.

Improving quality: Unsatisfactory

Since the last inspection, planning for improvement has been weak. The school has not evaluated its strengths and areas for development regularly and systematically. Self-evaluation procedures are not rigorous enough. As a result, they have had very little impact on improving outcomes for pupils or on setting the school's priorities for improvement.

The self-evaluation processes recently introduced by the acting headteacher identified that the level of pupil attainment is too low. However, when considering other aspects of the school's life and work, the review describes the provision too much without evaluating its impact and effectiveness. Leaders and managers do not use enough first-hand evidence to evaluate how well the school is doing, such as observing teaching and monitoring pupils' work. Self-evaluation of subjects by teachers is recent and has not led to plans for improvement at this stage.

School development plans are not specific enough and they lack measurable criteria for judging their success. The plans indicate sources of funding to support the achievement of the targets, but leaders do not review progress towards them regularly enough. The school has not effectively addressed the recommendations from the last inspection report.

The school has made only limited progress in establishing networks of professional practice. There are useful partnerships with a range of local primary schools and a few teachers have recently visited other schools to observe good practice in literacy.

Partnership working: Adequate

The school liaises well with a wide range of helpful partners, including social services, bereavement counsellors and the local youth club. There are useful community partnerships, and pupils benefit from working with a local housing association in developing the outdoor areas. While the recent introduction of learning logs has improved the communication between school and homes, the school's partnership with parents is underdeveloped overall.

The partnership with the local comprehensive school ensures the smooth transition of pupils to the next stage in their education and confirms the reliability of teachers' assessments at the end of key stage 2.

The local authority supports the school with regard to financial matters. However, partnership with the local authority in securing school improvement has not resulted in improved standards.

Resource management: Unsatisfactory

The school has an appropriate number of teachers and assistants for the number of pupils on roll. Most are deployed effectively, although support for pupils with additional learning needs in mainstream classes is not arranged efficiently.

Arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time helps to give pupils' specialist music and drama provision. The acting headteacher has restored the school's performance management systems, with targets focused on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Until recently, the school has not identified the developmental needs of staff appropriately. Consequently, many members of staff do not have relevant, up-to-date skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil their roles fully.

There is an adequate supply of resources for pupils, which are used well to promote learning. Spending remains within budget. However, governors do not fully understand their statutory role in relation to financial management and the appointment of staff. The link between spending and the priorities identified in the school development plan is not clear.

Because of the relatively low standards achieved and the significant weaknesses in the school's provision, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In the Foundation Phase in 2011, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcome (outcome 5) in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development and personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity, and the Foundation Phase Indicator was significantly lower than the average for schools across Conwy and Wales. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher-than-expected outcome (outcome 6), although below the average in other schools across Wales, is closer to that average. The school's performance is the second lowest in its family of schools, which is a group of schools deemed to be facing similar challenges. In comparison with schools having a similar proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, the school has consistently performed less well, being in the lowest 25% of schools. Boys perform significantly less well than girls in most areas of learning, although, at the higher-than-expected outcome (outcome 6), boys achieve better than girls.

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012, the overall percentage of pupils who achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) is significantly lower than the average for similar schools in literacy, language and communication, mathematical development and personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity. At the higher-than-expected outcome (outcome 6), boys achieved better than girls in mathematical development.

The school's results at the end of key stage 2 do not compare well with those of schools in its family, within Conwy and across Wales. Although there have been small fluctuations since 2007-2008, the school has been consistently in the lowest 25% of similar schools in English, mathematics and science, and in the core subject indicator (attaining at least the expected level 4 in all three subjects). When compared with other schools in its family, in the local authority and in Wales, the school's performance is consistently well below average in English, mathematics and science. There is no trend of improvement. There is a consistent pattern of girls' attainment being significantly higher than boys'. At the higher-than-expected level (level 5), the school as a whole fares significantly less well in all English, mathematics and science than comparable schools. The attainment gap between girls and boys widens at the higher level (level 5), with boys consistently not attaining above level 4.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to learner questionnaires

Sixty-four pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire.

Nearly all pupils state that they feel safe in school and nearly all know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. They say that the school deals well with any bullying. All pupils state that the school teaches them how to keep healthy, with nearly all saying that they have many chances to get regular exercise.

Most pupils say they are doing well at school and that teachers and other adults help them to make progress. They know whom to ask for help if they find work hard. Nearly all pupils believe that their homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school. Nearly all agree that they have enough, books, computers and other equipment to do their work.

Most children say that other children behave well at playtime and lunchtime and many say that other children behave well and allow them to get their work done.

The views of pupils are broadly in line with those of other pupils in other primary schools in Wales.

Responses to parent questionnaires

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

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Sarah Morgan	Reporting Inspector
Huw Watkins	Team Inspector
Chris Dolby	Team Inspector
Susan Owen	Lay Inspector
Helen Morgan- Rees	Peer Inspector
Ruth Threadgold	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.