



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

**Trallwng Infants School
Bonvilston Road
Trallwng
Pontypridd
CF37 4RD**

Date of inspection: June 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.

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Context

Trallwng Infants School is a community school for children aged three to seven. It serves an urban community on the outskirts of Pontypridd. The school considers the area to be neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

Around 24% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is slightly above the average for Wales.

There are 141 pupils on roll, including 61 pupils in the nursery. The majority of pupils start school the day after their third birthday. There are five classes, including the nursery. The school considers that 17% of pupils have additional learning needs, including a few pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The home language of nearly all pupils is English. No pupils have Welsh as a home language. A very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The school was last inspected in May 2007. The headteacher was appointed in January 2007.

The individual school budget per pupil for Trallwng Infant School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,700 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £6,197 and the minimum is £2,561. Trallwng Infants School is 45th 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

The school's current performance is good because:

- pupils' reading and writing skills are generally good across the school;
- standards of wellbeing are good;
- the learning environment is very inclusive and caring;
- the overall quality of teaching is good; and
- close and effective links exist between the school and its local community.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the leadership team has successfully conveyed a vision for a high quality learning community;
- the governing body has a good understanding of its role and acts as a critical friend;
- pupils are happy and keen to learn;
- there is good quality school development planning; and
- there is highly effective teamwork focused on improving all aspects of the school.

Recommendations

- R1 Raise standards in pupils' reading of Welsh and improve their ability to speak Welsh independently
- R2 Ensure that teachers challenge pupils more effectively by adapting the work to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able
- R3 Ensure that all teachers use assessment data more effectively to set targets for pupils and to demonstrate pupil progress more clearly
- R4 Develop further the senior management team in order to drive forward school improvement

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

On entry to the school, a majority of pupils have skills that are around the expected level for their age. By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils achieve good standards, but more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

Speaking and listening skills across the school are very good. Most pupils speak confidently and listen carefully both to their teachers and to other pupils. Many older pupils talk with confidence about their work and matters of interest. Many pupils can accurately recall their prior learning and respond enthusiastically to teachers' questioning.

Pupils' reading skills are generally good across the school. Younger pupils enjoy looking at books and most show an enthusiasm for stories and are beginning to understand that written symbols have sounds and meaning. By the end of the Foundation Phase, more able pupils read a range of texts fluently and with good expression, using a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words. Most pupils who receive targeted support make good progress and make significant improvements in their reading skills.

Pupils' writing skills are generally good. Many pupils are developing into confident writers and can write coherently for a range of purposes. More able pupils demonstrate good extended writing skills. However, opportunities for extended writing are less well developed overall, as over reliance on worksheets inhibits creativity.

Younger pupils experiment confidently with mark making and produce pieces of emergent writing. Older pupils use a range of appropriate vocabulary to develop their writing skills and many spell simple words correctly, using basic punctuation accurately. Overall, most pupils' work is neat and well presented with accurate spelling, or phonetically plausible alternatives. Many pupils write clearly, with well-formed letters and legible handwriting.

Information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop appropriately. Many pupils across the school can process and present information well in a variety of ways. Numeracy skills are developing well and pupils use them appropriately to support their work across a range of areas.

Pupils' attitudes to Wales and to learning Welsh are very positive. The Welsh language skills of the majority of pupils are limited overall. Many pupils hold simple conversations in Welsh and answer straightforward questions appropriately within structured situations. However, they do not respond readily to simple questions, or use Welsh on a voluntary basis outside lessons. Pupils' reading skills in Welsh are less well developed. Older pupils' writing skills in Welsh are well developed. Nearly all pupils' awareness of Welsh culture and heritage is good.

In 2012, teacher assessments at the end of Foundation Phase show that the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected outcome (outcome 5) was below family averages for language, literacy and communication skills and mathematical development, but above for personal and social development. The proportion of pupils that achieved the higher than expected outcome (outcome 6) was just below the family average for language, literacy and communication, but above for mathematical development and personal and social development.

When compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, pupils' performance in literacy and communication and mathematical development placed the school in the bottom 25% of schools.

Using standardised test results and other assessment data, the school can demonstrate that most pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy.

Wellbeing: Good

Most pupils are highly engaged and interested, and show strong levels of motivation in their learning. All pupils feel safe and secure and can turn to friends or any member of staff for help and support. Nearly all pupils behave well, and are polite and supportive of each other. The school is a happy and orderly community. All pupils have positive attitudes to keeping healthy and they understand the importance of eating a healthy diet and taking exercise. Most pupils engage enthusiastically with a good range of school activities, including after-school clubs, which enhance their personal and social skills.

Many pupils throughout school are responsible for making decisions about their learning and there are effective strategies in place to raise the self-esteem of pupils. The school council gives the pupils a strong voice and their decisions have a worthwhile impact upon the school, for example in improving the quality of the outdoor learning environment. The members of the school council are proud of their school, run their meetings effectively and take their roles seriously.

Until recently there was a downward trend in attendance. However, this has largely been due to illness that affected a significant proportion of pupils and due to a small minority of pupils with sporadic attendance. Recent initiatives to raise attendance are proving effective and the attendance figure has risen to 94.7% for 2012, with a similar figure predicted for 2013. Nearly all pupils understand that it is important to be punctual.

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

The school meets the needs of most learners effectively. Teachers plan a comprehensive range of stimulating learning experiences for pupils, which engage their interest. Teachers collaborate well to plan lessons that build well upon pupils' prior learning. However, teachers' short-term plans do not always show how they intend to adapt the work in class for pupils of different abilities, especially more able

pupils. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is a strong feature of the school.

The school plans comprehensively for the development of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils' information and communication technology skills are developing suitably.

Provision for the promotion of Welsh heritage and culture is effective. Good use is made of educational visits and visitors to develop pupils' understanding of Welsh history and culture further.

The school promotes pupils' awareness of sustainable development well through the work of its eco committee. For example, the school gardening club grows and sells its own produce. The provision for global citizenship is less well developed, although the school has recently forged links with a school in Uganda. Most pupils are provided with a strong understanding and appreciation of their individual rights and responsibilities.

Teaching: Good

Teachers have a comprehensive understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum and explain new concepts to pupils clearly. Teachers work together as teams to plan lessons effectively and identify clearly the skills they want pupils to learn. They evaluate their lessons regularly and this helps the planning of interesting and well directed learning experiences that meet the needs of most pupils. The close working relationships between teachers and other practitioners is a strength of the school. Most staff provide good levels of support to ensure that most pupils stay focused and on task. In the few lessons where teaching has shortcomings, teacher expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are not always high enough, and as a result tasks do not challenge these pupils well enough.

Most staff manage pupils' behaviour very effectively and the pace in many lessons is good. Most teaching provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills and to learn independently. In a minority of lessons, a few pupils do not remain sufficiently focused on their tasks.

Teachers use assessment for learning strategies appropriately across the school. As a result, many pupils understand what they need to do in order to improve. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and in a few examples offer pupils constructive comments on their work. Teachers' understanding of levels of achievement is inconsistent across the school. The system for gathering and moderating pupils' work is at an early stage of development.

Reports to parents are of a very good quality. They include appropriate comments and clearly identify the next steps for pupils to make in their learning.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The wellbeing of pupils is a high priority and the school is a very caring community, where all pupils feel valued. The school promotes healthy living effectively through

its healthy snacks and after-school sports and gardening clubs. Assemblies and a wide range of visits and visitors help to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The school has beneficial links with a number of specialist services and outside agencies that improve pupils' wellbeing successfully and give high quality support for identified pupils. Early intervention results in strong support for pupils with additional learning needs and enables them to make appropriate progress in their learning.

Parents value the induction programmes for pupils coming up to their third birthday and these enable pupils to make a confident start to their time in school.

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

Learning environment: Good

The school is a fully inclusive and caring community, and ensures that all pupils receive equal access to all areas of provision. It promotes respect for diversity and racial equality successfully through classroom activities, personal and social education programmes and religious education. For example, visits and visitors from other faiths are a regular feature of school life.

The school encourages pupils to participate fully in the life of the school, and there is a sense of collective ownership and participation in decision making between pupils and adults.

The school's physical environment, both indoors and outdoors, is of a good quality and promotes and enhances learning. The outdoor spaces, while limited, are well maintained, bright and stimulating. Displays effectively contribute to the learning environment. All areas of the school are clean and well maintained. There is a good selection of appropriate resources around the school.

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

The headteacher provides effective leadership and there is a clear vision for the school that all staff and governors share and which provides a strong sense of purpose.

Teachers and other practitioners work together effectively to enable most pupils to enjoy their learning, develop independently and make good progress. The appointment of the deputy headteacher and subsequent development of a new senior management team has enabled leaders to begin to focus specifically on important developments, such as improving methods and programmes for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. This is having a positive impact on raising standards.

Governors support the school very well. Individual governors are linked to specific areas of learning and skills or initiatives. This, along with frequent visits, gives them

a clear understanding about the life and work of the school. Governors participate in training and new governors are mentored by others. They are making sound progress in developing their understanding of school performance data. This enables them to challenge leaders and managers and to act as a critical friend.

The school is making good progress in taking forward national priorities, such as the Foundation Phase and assessment for learning, which are having a positive impact on raising standards.

Improving quality: Good

The school's self-evaluation report identifies areas for improvement successfully. It uses analysis of pupils' assessments and first-hand evidence, such as lesson observations and parent questionnaires, to inform the self-evaluation process and to identify priorities for improvement. Curriculum leaders review their areas of responsibility in order to contribute appropriately to self-evaluation.

The outcomes of self-evaluation relate well to national and school priorities and link closely to the school improvement plan. This is a detailed document that is generally a useful tool for improvement. However, elements within it are often too descriptive and do not focus strongly enough on the impact on outcomes for pupils.

The senior management team review progress on the implementation of the school development plan termly and report in detail to governors. They communicate progress well to all staff. The school improvement plan has led to effective improvements, such as in assessment for learning, raising attendance and improving outcomes in pupils' oracy and reading skills. However, the plan does not focus enough on teacher assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase and other test results when setting targets or demonstrating pupil progress.

The school takes part appropriately in networks of professional practice. For example, engagement with a network of special needs co-ordinators has ensured the implementation of good practice in provision for children with additional or special needs.

Partnership working: Good

The school works well in partnership with other local providers, particularly to ensure smooth transition arrangements for pupils. It participates effectively in the local cluster of schools, for example joining with them in introducing a valuable shared assessment system.

The school has linked with partner schools in a national physical education programme, resulting in high quality training opportunities for staff and valuable changes in whole-school teaching and assessment techniques. The school has also liaised with three schools from its family to improve approaches to teaching and learning.

Partnerships with parents are very positive and communication and parent participation in opportunities to support pupils' learning are well received and

supported. There is an active parent teacher association that raises significant funds. These have assisted in the creation of an outdoor learning environment of good quality.

The school links well with its community. Local businesses and other organisations have helped to deliver learning experiences as well as serving as venues for educational visits. There are effective partnerships with a local university and the school provides appropriate placements for trainee teachers.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its finances well. It links its spending closely to priorities for school improvement. This has resulted in the effective deployment of teaching and support staff and the development of indoor and outdoor environments of good quality. These support the delivery of the Foundation Phase well.

The performance of teachers and additional practitioners is well managed in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines. Individual performance targets relate to the school's needs and to individual staff requirements. Newly-qualified teachers receive appropriate support. There are good arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time.

In view of the good progress made by many pupils and the high level of care, support and guidance provided, the school gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In 2012, when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected outcome placed the school in the bottom 25% for language, literacy and communication skills, and mathematical development, and in the top 25% for personal and social development. Overall, the school performed below the averages for the local authority, the family of schools and Wales.

The performance of more able pupils achieving outcome 6 in language, literacy and communication skills placed the school in the lower 50%. The performance of more able pupils placed it in the higher 50% for mathematical development and for personal and social development.

The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected outcome was below family average for language, literacy and communication skills and mathematical development, but above for personal and social development. The proportion of pupils that gained the higher outcome was just below the family average for language, literacy and communication, but above for mathematical development and personal and social development.

At outcome 5, girls as a group performed better than boys in language literacy and communication skills and in mathematical development. More able girls also significantly outperformed the boys in language, literacy and communication skills. However, more able girls performed only slightly better than boys in mathematical development.

Pupils who are not entitled to free schools meals performed significantly better than those entitled to free school meals.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

No pupils completed the questionnaire as this is not a requirement for infant schools.

There were 35 responses to the parents' questionnaire.

All parents feel that:

- their child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school;
- staff expect their child to work hard and to do his or her best;
- their child likes school;
- their child is making good progress;
- pupils behave well in school;
- teaching is good;
- staff treat children fairly and with respect;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- the school helps their child to be more mature and to take responsibility;
- they are satisfied with the school overall;
- their child is safe in school;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;
- they are kept well informed about their child's progress;
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits; and
- the school is well run.

Most parents feel that:

- the homework that is given builds well on what their child learns at school;
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school or college or work;
and
- they understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Parents' views are generally more favourable than the views of parents in other schools across Wales.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Susan Davies	Reporting Inspector
Gregory Owens	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Tamasine Croston	Peer Inspector
Sarah Little	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.