



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

**Cradoc C.P. School
Cradoc
Brecon
Powys
LD3 9LR**

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:

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

Cradoc County Primary School caters for pupils between three and 11 years of age, and is located in a rural area two miles outside of Brecon. Very few pupils live within walking distance of the school.

There are currently 114 pupils on roll who are taught in four mixed-ability classes. There is also a class for three-year-old children on the school site, funded by the local authority, but this setting is not part of the inspection.

The present headteacher was appointed to the school in January 2010. There are five teachers (including the headteacher) at the school, four full-time and one part time.

Children come to school full-time in the reception class in the term of their fourth birthday. A few children leave the school each year to follow their parents who are members of the Armed Forces.

English is the home language of nearly all pupils. There are five pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language. No pupil speaks Welsh as their first language. Just over 4% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below both the local authority and national average. Three pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority. The school identifies just over 15% of pupils as having additional learning needs. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

The individual school budget per pupil for Cradoc Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,274 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Powys is £14,685 and the minimum is £3,005. Cradoc Primary School is 86th 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:

- most pupils make good progress and achieve well;
- the standard of pupils' wellbeing is good;
- standards of teaching are generally good across the school; and
- assessment procedures are highly effective and enable pupils to receive the support they need.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- there has been a general upward trend in the standards achieved by pupils over the past three years;
- the headteacher provides effective leadership and a clear direction for the school;
- improvement priorities are identified well through the self-evaluation process;
- the school makes very good use of a wide range of data to improve pupil performance; and
- the school has successfully addressed recommendations from the last inspection and has a good track record of implementing improvement.

Recommendations

In order to improve school needs to:

R1 improve pupils' confidence in using spoken Welsh;

R2 improve the provision in the Foundation Phase;

R3 ensure that all learning activities challenge more able pupils appropriately; and

R4 improve classroom monitoring systems so that they clearly identify areas for improvement.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Most pupils enter school with above average skills in literacy and numeracy and most have good social skills.

Overall, most pupils achieve well and make good progress. End of key stage results show that many pupils attain more highly than pupils in similar schools in Wales and in the local authority. Work in pupils' books confirms that, by the age of 11, most pupils reach the expected level in English, mathematics and science. Attainment at the higher level 5 at the end of key stage 2 in English, mathematics and science compares well with that of other similar schools.

In lessons, pupils' progress and achievement are generally good. Many can recall previous learning well and can apply their skills and knowledge appropriately to new situations. Most pupils' independent learning skills are developing well and they are able to identify what they need to do in order to improve their own learning.

Most pupils listen well to members of staff and to other pupils. Younger pupils speak clearly and with confidence. They contribute well to class discussions and use a wide range of vocabulary to express themselves. Many older pupils are confident speakers. They communicate in an articulate manner for a variety of audiences and use an extensive vocabulary to express themselves maturely.

Progress in reading is good. Most pupils in the Foundation Phase enjoy reading and use a wide range of effective strategies that enable them to read with appropriate fluency and understanding. They show an awareness of characters and plot and will talk readily about books they like or dislike. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a secure knowledge of letter sounds and patterns. In key stage 2, most pupils read fluently and with good expression. They use their reading skills well to enhance and research their own learning. Nearly all pupils apply their reading skills well in different subjects.

Pupils' writing skills are good overall. Older pupils in the Foundation Phase write confidently for a wide range of purposes. Many spell simple words correctly and are starting to use punctuation accurately. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils use paragraphs and descriptive language well to write poems, stories and reports. They apply their writing skills well across the full range of subjects.

Most pupils use their information and communication technology skills well across all subject areas.

Pupils with additional learning needs achieve very well in relation to their abilities. All pupils who receive support with their learning progress quickly.

Most pupils make sound progress in Welsh. Standards of work in pupils' Welsh books and end of key stage assessments are good. Pupils demonstrate good understanding of commands, instructions and the incidental Welsh used by staff. However, in the lessons observed and around the school, pupils do not use Welsh independently and with confidence.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know whom to talk to if they feel worried or upset. They have a good understanding of the importance of having a healthy lifestyle and eat healthily while in school. Most pupils join in well with a good range of sporting activities both in lessons and as part of their extra-curricular activities.

Nearly all pupils behave well in class and are enthusiastic about their learning. They work well in pairs and groups, showing respect for the views of others as they contribute to discussions and share ideas. Most pupils in key stage 2 and many younger pupils understand how to improve their own learning and can identify their own next steps. They successfully evaluate their own progress and that of their peers.

Pupils' involvement in planning is developing throughout the school through the use of topic webs and 'wonder walls', but is limited overall.

The school council and eco committee are well established. Members feel that their suggestions and decisions are valued and acted upon. Over a period of time both committees have made a positive contribution to the life of the school, such as the development of the school grounds and changes to the school meals. Recently, members of the school council played an active role in reviewing curriculum subjects within school.

Pupils' personal, social and life skills are developing well. They readily take on responsibility, for example reading prayers in assembly and monitoring the playground resources.

Pupil attendance at 94% shows a slight fall over the past three years. However, it still remains in line with the average for Wales, and the number of unauthorised absences in school has decreased over recent years. Overall, punctuality is good.

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

The school provides a broad range of learning experiences that are often stimulating and help to generate pupils' interest in learning. A strong feature of the school is the emphasis placed on the promotion of skills in lessons and the good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their use of particular skills. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are mostly developed in a systematic way as they progress from the Foundation Phase through to key stage 2. Regular monitoring and evaluation of skills inform strategic planning. The school plans effectively for the development of pupils' communication, numeracy and information and communication technology

skills across all areas of learning. However, the use of the outdoor learning environment for children in the Foundation Phase does not focus enough on developing pupils' independent learning skills.

The school has a comprehensive and stimulating range of extra-curricular activities that many pupils attend, for example the mathematics club, 'news crew' and a variety of sporting clubs.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship is a prominent feature of the school. It successfully promotes recycling, energy conservation and healthy eating. It makes good provision for pupils to take responsibility for the environment. Pupils use the school's grounds to grow a variety of vegetables and to encourage wildlife. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these projects, which they have undertaken through effective partnerships with parents and the community.

The provision for the Welsh dimension is good and the school provides a relevant range of opportunities for pupils to learn about Welsh culture and customs. This includes pupils taking part in a Welsh themed week, visits to places of interest such as Cosmeston Medieval Village, Brecon Cathedral and Caerphilly Castle, and studying the work of contemporary Welsh artists. However, the provision for Welsh second language skills does not always challenge pupils to extend their learning in Welsh enough.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good overall. The close working relationship between staff and pupils enhances learning and leads to pupils to achieve well. Teachers have a well-developed understanding of the curriculum, explain new concepts clearly and motivate pupils effectively. Teachers use open questions well to develop pupils' thinking skills. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. The pace in most lessons is good and teaching provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills and to learn independently. In a few lessons, there is a lack of pace and teachers do not challenge pupils well enough to make progress.

Teachers work together as teams to plan lessons effectively. Their short-term planning identifies clearly the skills they want pupils to learn in subjects, and their medium-term planning is thorough. Teachers evaluate their lessons regularly and this helps them to plan relevant activities to meet the needs of the pupils.

The school has clear, efficient systems for assessing pupils' work and tracking their progress. Teachers use this information well to inform future planning and to meet the needs of learners.

Assessment for learning is developing well across the school and there are elements of very good practice, especially in key stage 2. All teachers ensure that pupils are fully aware of learning objectives and success criteria. Pupils know their learning targets, assess their work and that of their peers thoughtfully, and understand what they need to do to improve. At key stage 2, the marking of pupils' books is particularly detailed and constructive.

Annual reports to parents provide suitable information about pupil progress and show clearly what pupils need to do next to improve their work.

Support staff work effectively across the school to provide pupils with appropriate support and guidance.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy and inclusive community that nurtures values such as respect and equality. There are effective arrangements to promote pupils' health and wellbeing, for example through the school's curriculum and many extra-curricular activities. Learning experiences promote pupils' personal, moral, social and cultural development well. Collective worship contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual development.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

The school has developed many beneficial relationships with outside agencies and liaises well with specialist agencies, such as the police, health, speech and language and social services. These partnerships impact positively on pupils' wellbeing. The school provides well-planned, targeted support and guidance for pupils with additional learning needs. Teachers assess their progress regularly and they use the information effectively to provide further support, as required. The school manages the support for pupils with additional learning needs well through the efficient deployment of support staff.

Throughout the school, pupils' individual education plans contain appropriate targets and teachers review these plans regularly, often with parental and pupil involvement.

Learning environment: Good

The school is an inclusive community, where pupils receive equal access to all areas of the provision. There is a clear emphasis on recognising, respecting and celebrating diversity throughout the school.

The school provides a colourful and engaging learning environment for its pupils and is well resourced. The accommodation is appropriate and the school uses the indoor spaces well. The grounds are extensive and very well developed, offering worthwhile opportunities for sport, leisure and ecology. There is an appropriate level of information and communication technology resources throughout the school, including interactive whiteboards in each teaching area.

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

The headteacher and governing body promote a clear vision and aims that are well understood by staff and parents.

The headteacher provides purposeful and effective strategic direction to the school's work. He sets out clear expectations, which he communicates well through regular meetings and briefings, and ensures that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities. This has led to greater consistency in teaching and assessment. The teaching staff support the headteacher effectively. They all have specific management responsibilities that they undertake well and they have a strong commitment to improving standards.

The governing body provides effective oversight of all areas of the school's work. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through their analysis of performance data, involvement in regular subject area reviews and responsibilities for specific areas of the school's work. Governors contribute appropriately to the annual self-evaluation report and in determining the priorities included in the school improvement plan. They play an active role in the life of the school.

Performance management arrangements for all staff are appropriate and have contributed to improved standards. These arrangements involve regular lesson observations and lead to the identification of measurable targets that take account of pupils' progress. These targets relate well to the school's strategic priorities and to the professional development of staff. However, lesson observations do not identify areas for development clearly enough.

Leaders and managers take appropriate note of national priorities, such as the implementation of the Foundation Phase. The work of professional learning communities within the school is contributing well to identifying and promoting good practice in teaching and assessment. Staff promote well specific initiatives such as healthy schools and the eco-schools programmes.

Improving quality: Good

There is a strong commitment throughout the school to promoting improvement.

There are well-designed self-evaluation arrangements that take account of the views of all stakeholders, including governors, staff, parents and pupils.

Self-evaluation focuses appropriately on the standards pupils achieve through a realistic analysis of performance data and the outcomes of regular subject reviews. There has been good progress in improving evaluation and review systems. However, the use of peer observation and the monitoring of classes by subject leaders are more limited.

The school's self-evaluation report is detailed and evaluative and contains a range of evidence to support its judgements. It covers all areas of the school's work and identifies clearly the school's strengths and areas for development.

The priorities in the school improvement plan link well with the findings of the school's self-evaluation. The plan sets out specific actions to address the priorities and there are clear, measurable success criteria that relate directly to pupil outcomes. The plan identifies appropriately the responsible staff, resources and time required for each action point. Staff review progress against targets regularly.

The school is developing well as a professional learning community. Staff work together well and show a strong commitment to improving teaching and learning through sharing good practice. The school has worked well with other schools to implement the Foundation Phase and to develop more effective assessment strategies. The introduction of a new pupil tracking system has improved staff understanding of skills progression and the tracking of pupil progress against subject skills. This is helping staff to plan more effectively to improve pupils' skills, for example in spelling.

Partnership working: Good

The school has strong relationships with the local community. Several community groups use the school's facilities regularly. There is effective liaison and communication with parents that ensures they take an active part in the life and work of the school. Parents are very supportive, for example through the parents' association, which has raised considerable funds to improve facilities and the learning environment.

The school consults with parents regularly as part of the formal self-evaluation process and parents are encouraged to make suggestions to improve provision. A particularly useful outcome has been the production of the 'Help your child with mathematics' document, which is provided for all parents. It explains learning strategies and provides advice to help parents to support their children's mathematical development.

There is also close liaison with cluster partners, for example as part of formal and informal learning communities and to support transition to the local secondary school.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its resources well. The headteacher works closely with the bursar to ensure spending focuses on the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The school takes appropriate steps to minimise waste and to work with partners to obtain better value when, for example, buying information and communication technology software or accessing professional development training. The governing body maintains careful oversight of the school's accounts.

Staff are well qualified and effectively deployed. The school allocates funds for professional development appropriately as a result of performance management reviews and priorities identified in whole-school and subject development plans.

The school makes effective use of its resources to achieve good academic and social outcomes for its pupils and provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

The number of pupils in each year group at Cradoc Primary School is small and varies considerably from year to year so data needs to be treated cautiously.

The results of teacher assessment over the last three years show a general upward trend in pupil performance at the end of both key stages 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science and in the core subject indicator. Despite the general upward trend, outcomes at the end of key stage 1 in 2011 do not compare favourably with those of other schools in the family due to the small number of children in each year group.

Many pupils enter the school with above average skills in literacy and numeracy and most have good social skills. 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) fluctuate considerably from year to year, moving between the bottom 50% and the top 25% of results for schools with similar levels of free school meals.

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 has risen from the lower 25% to the upper 25% over the past three years. Performance in English has risen from the lower 25% to the upper 50% over the past three years.

Attainment at the higher level (level 5) in English, mathematics 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 English and in the core subject indicator.

At key stage 2, girls achieved better than boys in three of the last four years, but the gap between boys and girls has decreased over the past four years. The gender gap is smaller than the family, the local authority and all-Wales averages. The school has relatively 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

Thirty-eight parents completed the questionnaire.

All parents:

- are satisfied with the school;
- feel that their child makes good progress;
- think their child is safe at school, well supported and encouraged to keep healthy;
- believe that their child is expected to do his/her best;
- feel they are kept well informed;
- say that their child likes school;
- feel that their child was helped to settle in well;
- consider that staff treat all pupils fairly and with respect;
- think that pupils are well behaved;
- believe that there is a good range of activities provided; and
- feel comfortable about approaching the school with any suggestions or problems.

Nearly all parents:

- think that homework is appropriate;
- think that pupils are being well prepared for moving on to the next stage of their education; and
- understand the procedures for dealing with complaints.

Responses to learner questionnaires:

Fifty-three pupils in key stage two completed the questionnaire. Overall, pupil responses to the majority of questions were in line with or above national benchmarks.

All pupils:

- say that they feel safe in school; and
- think that they are helped to learn and to make progress.

Nearly all pupils:

- feel that they are doing well at school;
- think that they learn to keep healthy; and
- believe that the school deals well with any bullying.

Most pupils:

- say that they know who to ask if they find work hard;
- consider that homework helps them to improve;
- say that they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset.
- believe that they have plenty of opportunities for regular exercise; and
- think that they have enough books and equipment.

When answering the questions on behaviour, pupil responses were below the national benchmark data.

- Only 84% of pupils feel that other pupils behave well at playtimes and lunch time; compared to a national figure of 86%; and
- only 70% of pupils think that pupils behave well and that they can get their work done compared to a national figure of 77%.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Sarah Hurst	Reporting Inspector
John Thomas	Team Inspector
Julie Price	Lay Inspector
Sue Davies	Peer Inspector
Darren Jones	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.