



*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**  
**Clase Primary School**  
**Rheidol Avenue**  
**Clase**  
**Swansea**  
**SA6 7JX**

**Date of inspection: 8 - 10 March 2011**

**by**

**Dr. P. David Ellis**

**Reporting Inspector, under contract to Estyn**

**for**

**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

Clase Primary School was built in 1954/55 as separate infant and junior schools, which were amalgamated in 1998. It is situated three miles north of the city of Swansea and one mile from the town of Morriston. The school caters for 199 pupils including 34 part-time nursery children, taught in nursery, reception and four mixed age mainstream classes and four specialist teaching facilities (STF) for pupils with autism and moderate learning difficulties. The number on roll has declined over recent years, but rose in September 2010.

The school is located within a large housing estate, which is a Communities First area. Nearly all pupils live in the neighbourhood, although most in the STFs come from further afield. Around 57% are entitled to receive free school meals, which is well above the national and local authority (LA) averages. Approximately 65% are identified as requiring special educational needs (SEN), which is also well above the national average; 36 pupils have a statement, 30 of whom are in the STFs. About 3% come from an ethnic minority background, most of whom receive support for English as an additional language. Around 1% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is their first language. Four are looked after by the LA.

The school was last inspected in March 2005. There have been considerable changes in staffing over the last two years. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in February 2009 and a new headteacher in September 2010, following the retirement of the previous post holder. Two other teachers retired in 2010 and another one was made redundant. During the inspection the nursery was taught by a long-term supply teacher.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Clase Primary School is £5744 which compares with a maximum of £5744 and a minimum of £2550 for primary schools in Swansea. The school has the highest budget per pupil out of the 89 primary schools in Swansea. However, if the four STFs are excluded from the figures, the budget per pupil is £3868, which is the 71<sup>st</sup> highest in Swansea.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- there is clear evidence of value added achievement, especially by the end of key stage 2 (KS2), when pupil attainment overall is within the best 25% of similar schools;
- most pupils are well motivated, enjoy school, have a positive attitude to learning and behave well;
- the school cares for its pupils very well and provides an effective range of enriching and engaging learning experiences;
- teaching is good in nearly all lessons and relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent; and
- provision for pupils with SEN is a particular strength of the school and elements in the STF classes are excellent.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- there is trend of improving standards, particularly in KS2;
- new initiatives are having a significant impact on standards, for example in reading;
- the new headteacher has established a very positive ethos, an agenda for improvement and good working relationships with all staff, resulting in many positive changes, which are directly affecting policy and practice;
- the revised management structure, based on team work and distributed leadership, is beginning to take the school forward effectively; and
- a reflective learning community is being established by means of a range of comprehensive self-evaluation activities that involve all stakeholders and provide a clear direction for the school.

## Recommendations

In order to build on its current improvements, the schools needs to:

- R1 continue to raise achievement, especially by the end of KS1 and in relation to the performance of boys;
- R2 improve standards in writing across the curriculum, particularly with regard to handwriting, presentation and the range of writing for different purposes;
- R3 further develop independent and collaborative learning strategies and assessment procedures with particular attention to self and peer assessment, marking and reporting to parents;
- R4 continue to develop distributed leadership arrangements and management roles across the school;
- R5 raise levels of attendance; and
- R6 work with the LA to address the identified shortcomings in the building.

### ***What happens next?***

Clase Primary School will create an action plan which shows how it will address these recommendations.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>
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<b>Good</b>
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### **Standards: Good**

The school's assessment results at the end of both KS1 and KS2 need to be treated with some caution as ability levels on entry are generally low, cohorts are relatively small and vary in composition and the free school meals and SEN percentages, which include four STFs, are very high at 57% and 65% respectively.

The school's results for 2010 at level 2 or above in KS1 are below the cluster, family, LA and Wales averages in the core subject indicator (CSI) and all three core subjects. In English at the higher level 3 pupils' performance is similar to the cluster, LA and Wales and better than the family. In mathematics and science at level 3 it is better than all four comparators. Although results vary over the last four years, there are indications of improvement in KS1, especially at level 3.

The school's results for 2010 at level 4 or above in KS2 are above the cluster and family averages in the CSI and about the same as the LA and Wales. In English and mathematics they are better than the cluster and family averages, but slightly below the LA and Wales. In science they are below all four comparators. Similarly, at the

A report on Clase Primary School  
March 2011

higher level 5 pupils' performance in English and mathematics is mixed in comparison to the cluster, family, LA and Wales, although in science it is better than all four comparators. There is a trend of sustained improvement in KS2 over the last four years in all three core subjects at level 4 or above and at level 5.

The 2010 results in KS1 place the school in the lower 50% of similar schools in English, science and the CSI and in the lowest 25% for mathematics, although each subject improves a quartile if the pupils in the STF are extracted. In KS2 the results place the school in the highest 25% for English and the CSI and in the higher 50% for mathematics and science, although mathematics is also in the highest 25% if the pupils in the STF are extracted.

There is clear evidence that, especially in KS2, most pupils, whatever their ability or background, make good value added progress through the school. Many reach their expected levels in all three subjects by the end of KS2 with around a quarter exceeding their targets. Boys enter the school with lower abilities on average and consistently perform less well than girls throughout the school, although the gap is less marked at the higher level 5 in KS2.

Most pupils listen well, although a few are inattentive. Speaking skills overall are adequate, but a minority have limited abilities. Standards in reading are improving and are now good overall across the school. However, there are a number of shortcomings in writing across the curriculum, particularly in handwriting, presentation and the range of writing for different purposes.

Progress in numeracy in KS1 is variable, but pupils generally progress well in their mathematical skills in KS2 and by Year 6 a few display advanced abilities. Standards in Welsh are good overall in both key stages and skills in information communications technology (ICT), thinking, problem-solving and decision-making are beginning to develop well.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Most pupils are well motivated, enjoy school and actively participate in the wide range of activities on offer. They have a positive attitude to learning and a few are beginning to develop their understanding of how they learn and what they need to do to improve. However, their involvement in planning their own work and self-initiated learning is at an early stage of development.

Many pupils have a secure understanding of what they need to do to keep themselves safe. Behaviour is generally good with most pupils responding well to various initiatives the school has introduced.

Nearly all pupils have a positive attitude to keeping healthy and understand the strategies the school has implemented. They take part enthusiastically in a good range of physical activities.

Most pupils have a good understanding of moral and social development and show respect for others. They play an active part in decision making and their views are sought and taken into account. Members of the very effective school council understand the processes and procedures necessary to ensure democracy.

A report on Clase Primary School  
March 2011

Attendance remains unsatisfactory with levels in 2009/10 averaging 88%, which reflects a decline over the last few years and which is well below the national and LA averages and the percentage for similar schools. However, if the STFs are excluded, the figure is 2% higher and during the current term attendance has averaged around 90%. Unauthorised absences have risen from 9.5% to 12.0% since 2007/08.

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

All pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum, based on an effective range of enriching and engaging learning experiences with stimulating and challenging activities. A particularly good feature is the range of provision for pupils in the STFs for autism to ensure they have extensive opportunities to develop life skills.

Effective organisation of classes and groups across the school takes good account of pupils' abilities. Small intervention groups also ensure effective access for all pupils to an appropriate curriculum.

Staff teams work together effectively to plan interesting activities at an appropriate level ensuring coverage of the Foundation Phase, National Curriculum and religious education requirements.

Planning across the school is thorough and identifies clear aims and objectives. It ensures that teaching builds on existing knowledge and that there is consistent progression.

The planning and provision for key skills is good throughout the school. Skills ladders are differentiated in order to meet individual needs and teachers meet regularly to monitor the consistency of the provision.

Provision in the Foundation Phase is good, based on stimulating first-hand learning experiences, which are well matched to pupils' stages of development and interests. Opportunities for pupils to make choices and continuous access to the outdoor learning environment are particularly good features of the provision.

Pupils' learning is further enriched by a broad range of out-of-school learning and extra-curricular activities. These complement the school curriculum and effectively promote pupils' self-esteem and social skills.

Links with local churches, community groups and businesses help pupils understand the part they play in the community and provide them with good role models.

The provision for Welsh language development is good and teachers are well supported by the Athrawes Fro. There is a strong Welsh ethos in the school and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is incorporated effectively into several areas of learning, which ensures pupils are aware and proud of their culture and heritage.

A report on Clase Primary School  
March 2011

Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about sustainability and the importance of conserving resources and recycling. A dedicated eco committee works hard to improve the environment.

**Teaching: Good**

Teaching is good in nearly all lessons, which are well prepared and effectively organised with clear learning intentions. Teachers have high expectations and sound background knowledge and good practice is beginning to be shared.

Independent and collaborative learning strategies are being developed across the school, resulting in pupils learning to think for themselves and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers develop excellent relationships with pupils and establish a positive learning environment, using praise and encouragement and effective questioning techniques. Appropriate attention is given to matching tasks to pupils' ability levels, although the more able are at times under-challenged.

Teachers generally conduct lessons at a good pace and use a range of resources effectively. They manage behaviour well in lessons and use a variety of approaches.

Since the last inspection the school has developed more effective assessment and recording procedures. Pupils' progress is effectively recorded and tracked and assessment results are thoroughly analysed and used for target setting purposes. Statutory requirements are met.

Procedures for self and peer assessment are at an early stage of development. A range of assessment for learning strategies are beginning to be used by teachers in most classes, especially in KS2. Pupils are set targets in literacy and numeracy and they are becoming involved in setting their own personal targets.

Although all work is marked and there is a marking policy, the quality and quantity of feedback to pupils is variable

Reports to parents are detailed and comprehensive, covering all the appropriate areas, but they are insufficiently personalised. Consultation evenings are held three times a year, as well as coffee mornings, when parents can see their children's work and learn alongside them in the classroom.

**Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school is a well ordered community where adults and pupils show each other concern and respect. Regard for pupils' wellbeing is a particular strength and this is especially evident in the four STF classes where elements of the provision are excellent.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding and there are effective arrangements in place for staff and pupils who may need medical intervention; security is appropriate.



A report on Clase Primary School  
March 2011

Provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good; however, strategies for the development of their spirituality are relatively underdeveloped.

The school offers a good range of policies, procedures and initiatives to promote healthy living and good behaviour and which deter any type of bullying or anti-social conduct; a system of rewards and sanctions is in place. The restorative practice initiative and work carried out by a national charity are examples of good practice. The provision for sex and relationships education is excellent.

Recently introduced policies and procedures to improve attendance and punctuality are starting to have an effect. Parents are made aware of their responsibilities to ensure that their children come to school daily and on time.

Provision for pupils with SEN is a strength and all receive appropriate support. Progress is effectively tracked and intervention strategies, particularly in the STFs, are quickly implemented and effective.

The school uses child-friendly individual education plans, which are regularly evaluated and updated. Parents are well informed and fully involved with their child's progress and there are particularly good home-school links for those in the STF classes. Support for those on the more able and talented register is less well developed.

Support is provided by a wide variety of specialist external agencies and liaison with them is good. Initiatives for developing effective practice are beginning to be disseminated to other schools in the LA.

### **Learning environment: Adequate**

The school is a very inclusive community, based on an ethos of equality of opportunity. The curriculum is fully accessible to all pupils, who are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school.

Ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity is recognised, valued and celebrated. Any instances of discrimination are dealt with effectively. The school has a Disability Equality Scheme and a well-considered accessibility plan.

Although the accommodation is spacious for the number on roll, it is at present unsatisfactory. Externally the buildings are in a poor state of repair and the playground surfaces have many potholes and the drainage is inadequate in wet weather. Nursery and reception have secure play areas, but the tarmac is in a poor state.

Much work has already been undertaken since the start of the current academic year to make the school a safer place and to improve its appearance internally. The decoration is adequate with some good displays. Toilets are appropriate, although the ventilation in a few is poor.

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

The headteacher has achieved a great deal since her appointment in September 2010. She has established a very positive ethos, an agenda for improvement and good working relationships with staff. She has initiated many positive changes, which are directly affecting policy and practice.

The deputy headteacher is very supportive and proactive and the senior leadership team has been reconstituted and is now working effectively and collaboratively, although its membership is excessively large. It meets regularly to discuss the strategic direction and improvement of the school.

There is good team work in the school and staff meetings are held weekly. Distributed leadership is being developed and staff now have a growing understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Curriculum leaders are in place for all subjects and perform their duties efficiently and diligently.

Performance management procedures are in the process of revision, led by the headteacher and her deputy. Appraisals are planned to be undertaken with all teachers by the end of the school year and reviews for support staff are to be introduced.

The governing body (GB) has recently been involved in a collaborative review with the LA to clarify members' roles and responsibilities. Most governors are very supportive and well informed; they attend training and are involved in learning walks around the school.

The full GB meets at least once a term and appropriate sub-committees are in place. Policies are reviewed on a rolling programme basis, although they are not signed or dated. Good attention is given to national and local priorities and all statutory requirements are met, although there are a few minor omissions in the GB's annual report to parents.

**Improving quality: Good**

The new headteacher has begun to establish a reflective learning community by using a range of comprehensive self-evaluation activities involving all stakeholders. Data are analysed thoroughly and used effectively to inform quantitative targets in the school development plan (SDP).

The information gained from the self-evaluation process informs the SDP, which is a manageable plan that sets clear priorities together with well-considered strategies; its progress is reviewed termly.

The school's self-evaluation report is based upon a thorough review of standards and provision by the headteacher and all members of staff and incorporates the views of pupils, parents and governors. It identifies clearly the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

A report on Clase Primary School  
March 2011

All subject leaders monitor standards and provision by sampling pupils' work, listening to learners and reviewing planning; the headteacher has observed in every classroom.

There is a developing culture of sharing expertise. All teachers are involved in professional learning communities both within the school, the local cluster and the LA and links are being explored with the family of schools across Wales.

Except in relation to attendance, there is recent evidence of good progress since the last inspection.

**Partnership working: Good**

The school is involved with a wide range of partnerships, which provide assistance for both pupils and staff. This is particularly evident in relation to the LA and other external services.

Parents are highly committed to projects that provide support for their children. They help to celebrate the school's achievements and support on-going issues that need to be addressed. Most are happy with the school's homework arrangements and feel they can approach the school for advice and guidance when required.

A transition plan is in place with appropriate arrangements for pupils to visit the receiving comprehensive schools and there are good links with local employment services. Teachers have begun to moderate and standardise work in the core subjects in association with other local cluster schools.

**Resource management: Good**

The school has been through a period of considerable change recently with regard to staffing and finances, due particularly to falling rolls.

There is a full complement of staff appropriate for the current number of pupils registered. They are well qualified and appropriately experienced and all are effectively deployed.

Staff undertake a wide range of professional development activities and these are now linked more closely to the needs of the school, the SDP and performance management objectives.

Planning, preparation and assessment time is currently covered through sports coaches provided by the LA, a drama specialist and a support teacher. Statutory requirements for the workload agreement are fully met.

Resources and facilities are generally well managed within the limitations of the building, although some stock cupboards and rarely used rooms remain cluttered and untidy. A deficit budget has currently been set, but the school expects this to be resolved by the end of the financial year.

Overall, the school gives good value for money because of the results it is now producing in light of its intake and current financial constraints.

## Appendix 1

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Sixty-two parents completed the questionnaire, of whom a few added written comments, nearly all of which were positive. Almost all parents responded positively to every question. Except for one or two who did not know, all parents are satisfied with the school and feel it is well run. All agree their child likes school, feels safe, receives appropriate support and makes good progress and they think the teaching is good and that staff expect pupils to do their best and to work hard. All also think that homework is useful, that the school promotes healthy living and encourages pupils to take on responsibilities. In addition, all feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress and feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns. Nearly all feel their child settled in well at the start of school, that pupils behave well, that staff treat pupils fairly and with respect, that there is a good range of activities and that pupils are well prepared for secondary education. A very few were unsure about the school's complaints procedure.

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

All KS2 pupils completed the questionnaire. All state that they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset and nearly all are of the opinion that they feel safe, have enough resources and equipment, learn to be healthy and get regular exercise. Nearly all think they do well, know what to do and are helped to learn and to make progress and they feel the school deals well with any incidents of bullying. A very few are not sure homework helps them to improve their work and a few expressed concerns about behaviour, particularly in the playground. The responses by boys and girls were almost identical.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Dr. P. David Ellis	Reporting Inspector
Mrs. Branwen Llewelyn Jones	Team Inspector
Mrs. Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector
Mrs. Gillian Cheverton	Peer Inspector
Mrs. Sharon Hope	School Nominee

A report on Clase Primary School  
March 2011

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### 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' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 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	R	Y1	Y2	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:

Key stage 1	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