



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

**Solva C.P. School
Solva
Pembrokeshire
SA62 6TS**

Date of inspection: September 2011

by

Mr Peter Mathias

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:

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:

Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW

or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2011: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Context

Solva County Primary School is situated in the coastal village of the same name in Pembrokeshire, which is the local authority (LA).

Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. About 65% are from areas of social housing within the village. Pupils on entry to the nursery have a full range of basic skills and maturity. Overall, standards in these skills on entry are below those usually expected and found amongst pupils of this age. There are 80% full-time equivalent pupils on roll, of whom seven attend the nursery on an afternoon only basis.

Currently 6% of pupils are recorded as receiving free school meals which is a low figure compared to the local and national averages. About 22% of pupils are considered to have some degree of additional learning needs (ALN). This is above local and national averages. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs (SEN).

No pupil has English as an additional language and all pupils have English as the language of the home. No pupil was excluded in the previous school year. One pupil is looked after by the LA.

The school was last inspected in the autumn term 2005 when the current headteacher was newly appointed.

During the inspection, three permanent learning support assistants were absent, two due to ill-health and one who was on maternity leave. Their places were taken by temporary assistants.

The 2010/2011 individual school budget per pupil for Solva County Primary School is £3,497, which compares with a maximum of £5,769 and a minimum of £2,995 for primary schools in Pembrokeshire. The school has the 33rd highest budget per pupil out of the 65 primary schools in Pembrokeshire.

Summary

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

Current performance

The school is good because:

- the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level at the end of key stage 2 is very high and above all schools in the family of schools ;
- the results of pupils in the national teacher assessments for seven year olds is very high;
- provision and support for pupils with ALN is of a high quality;
- the school is well led;
- nearly all pupils behave well; and
- the quality of teaching is consistently good.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement are good because:

- standards have improved significantly over the last four years;
- the headteacher and staff are focused on raising standards;
- self-evaluation is accurate and effective;
- progress in developing the Welsh language and the Foundation Phase has been good;
- there is a strong commitment to continual professional development; and
- the governing body reviews progress rigorously and consistently holds the headteacher to account.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the school needs to:

- R1 continue to improve the quality of pupils' reading and the reading materials available to do this;
- R2 extend the school's arrangements for developing pupils' abilities to assess their own learning; and
- R3 strengthen pupils' understanding of their roles as citizens of the world.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
---	-------------

Standards: Good

By the end of key stage 2 many pupils speak clearly and effectively in discussions. In the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2 most use their communication and numeracy skills well. However, in reading, although many read accurately, they lack expression or enthusiasm. In writing, they write well for a good range of purposes.

In numeracy standards are good in the Foundation Phase and pupils make good progress in learning how to count and to recognise regular shapes. In key stage 2 nearly all build successfully on their problem-solving and mathematical abilities.

Standards in information and communications technology are good across the school and pupils apply and extend their skills regularly and make good progress.

Standards in speaking and writing in Welsh are good; nearly all pupils make good progress.

Over recent years standards in key stage 1 and key stage 2 have improved significantly. Performance at the end of key stage 1 is now well above local and national averages. When the results of English, mathematics and science are combined, the school is currently first in its family and well above similar schools at key stage 1.

At key stage 2 the picture is more complex. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 5 is above local and national averages and first in the family in English, mathematics and science. The results of those pupils with ALN who took these assessments in 2011 were below local and national averages. However, they make good progress. Nonetheless, the overall results at the expected level 4 were below local, national and family averages as well as those schools considered to be similar. There has been no consistent pattern of difference in the achievement of boys and girls at the end of key stage 1 or key stage 2.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils display a keen interest in learning and are fully involved in school activities. They design their work for the term in partnership with staff and are well aware of their targets.

Staff support pupils well and make them feel safe at the school. Pupils in turn are proud of their healthy school and display a positive attitude at all times.

Attendance levels for the past academic year were 93%, which is around the national average. The majority of pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and at the start of lessons.

Nearly all pupils behave well and are keen to take part in discussions. They relate well with teachers and other adult helpers. They have good social skills and show a genuine care for each other.

Pupils are involved in a wide range of community activities. The school council meets regularly and takes its responsibilities seriously.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
---	-------------

Learning experiences: Good

The school provides an effective range of enriching and engaging learning experiences through stimulating and challenging activities. All pupils, including those with ALN, enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum and have good access to it.

Planning is thorough and identifies clear objectives and opportunities for the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills . It is focused on pupils’ interests and ensures that teaching builds on existing knowledge.

Teachers carefully plan activities together at an appropriately challenging level for all pupils. In the Foundation Phase planning is matched to pupils stage of development, the way in which they learn and Foundation Phase principles.

Provision for the Welsh language is good. It is used regularly by adults in lessons and nearly all pupils enjoy speaking it. There is a strong Welsh ethos and pupils are proud of their culture and heritage.

Effective use is made of external visitors and educational visits to enhance the curriculum.

Provision for pupils to be aware of the need to protect the environment and to conserve resources is good, but all have a limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities as citizens of the world.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school; this is a strength. Teaching in the Foundation Phase is closely related to the principles underpinning the organisation of education for pupils of these ages. All are encouraged to be inquisitive and to learn from first-hand experiences. As a result of the carefully planned and constructive activities, which all practitioners create, all pupils find their learning fun and are eager to learn more.

Teachers in key stage 2 have high expectations of their pupils, ensuring that their lessons have good pace and purpose. They clearly establish the objectives they wish to cover and the skills pupils should use to learn more. In the best lessons they encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning. However, this practice is not consistently developed across the key stage.

In all lessons teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and often stimulate pupils' imaginations by the expressive way in which topics are introduced and discussed. Across the school teachers take up opportunities regularly to extend pupils' use of Welsh.

There are very good relationships between all adults and pupils and as a result all pupils respond confidently and regularly, because they know that their views are important.

Teachers keep clear records on each pupil's progress. They plan very systematically and track the skills pupils learn and the progress they make. Teachers carefully complete records, which highlight strengths, areas of concern and the support offered to pupils. Effective use is made of standardised tests and teacher assessment to set individual learning targets and to plan future learning objectives for pupils.

Through careful planning and regular monitoring, pupils with ALN make good progress and are fully engaged with their learning.

Pupils are beginning to be involved in setting their own targets, but assessment for learning strategies are under-used. Written comments do not identify what pupils need to do to improve their work clearly enough.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is an inclusive, caring and well-ordered community, where adults and pupils show concern and respect for one another.

There are positive arrangements in place to support the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of pupils and to encourage their involvement in all school activities, as well as in the local community. This enhances their personal development and self-confidence.

Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. There is a daily act of collective worship which meets legal requirements. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on, and take responsibility for, their own actions and to develop independence. They foster concepts of fairness, honesty and respect for truth to help pupils make a valuable contribution to society. They raise awareness of other cultures.

. The school is well supported by a wide variety of external agencies which enhance pupils' development. The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

The school has a clear and well-managed system for identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with ALN. Early identification provides these pupils with timely support that is specific to their individual needs. The SEN co-ordinator, and support

teacher , as well as teachers and support staff, use a wide range of appropriate programmes to help pupils. Individual education plans are used well to ensure that these pupils make good progress.

Learning environment: Good

There is a culture of mutual care and support in the school and an ethos of inclusion and respect for oneself and others.

The school takes good account of pupils' diverse backgrounds and strives to meet each individual's needs by challenging stereotypes and showing commitment to equal opportunities. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers make every effort to overcome social disadvantage.

The school offers a welcoming environment. A good range of appropriate resources are used effectively to maximise the provision within the school and outdoors for all pupils.

The school building is maintained to a good standard and is in a good condition. However, the school hall is small and, as a result, opportunities for physical education are limited.

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

Leadership: Good

The headteacher provides a purposeful and pragmatic lead to all staff and has achieved much in addressing the numerous recommendations of the last inspection. To do this she has successfully developed a strong and rigorous focus on what the school needs to do to raise standards, which is now having a significant impact.

There is a clear commitment from all teachers to work together and to develop their own professional skills further. They discharge their many responsibilities well and are fully involved in evaluating teaching and learning in their subjects.

Arrangements for appraisal and performance management of all staff ensure that their professional development needs are met effectively.

The school gives careful attention to national and local priorities. The Foundation Phase has been introduced successfully and extended to include those pupils in Y2. There has been very good progress in developing pupils' Welsh language skills. However, there has been only limited success in developing pupils' skills in evaluating their own learning.

The governing body is well led and closely involved in determining the school's needs. The chair is knowledgeable about educational issues and is a regular visitor to the school, working closely with the headteacher. Governors play a full part in determining the strategic needs and direction for the school. Their role in holding the headteacher constructively to account is well established.

Improving quality: Good

The school has an effective self-evaluation process, which involves all staff, governors, parents and pupils. A wide range of relevant evidence is used to evaluate standards and provision. This includes scrutinising pupils' work, reviewing teachers' planning, observing lessons and listening to learners. The systematic and well-planned process enables staff and governors to review all aspects of the school's work over a reasonable period of time and has led to improvements in standards.

The school development plan is a detailed document, which sets out the school's priorities as identified through the self-evaluation process. The plan identifies the costs, allocation of responsibilities, success criteria and staff training requirements needed to secure improvement.

The school is developing well as a learning community. There is a culture of collaboration between staff to agree planning procedures and to share best practice. Links have been established within the local cluster group to support improvements in reading.

Partnership working: Good

All staff work together well as an effective internal learning community. The school also collaborates well with a range of partners, including other schools. These partnerships have significant benefits in terms of improving standards and wellbeing for all pupils. There is good communication and a high level of trust between partners, including parents.

The school is at the heart of the community and pupils benefit from contributing to and receiving its strong support.

Transfer arrangements with the secondary school are sound and . there are strong and mutually beneficial links with other local schools, for example to agree standards

Resource management: Good

The school is appropriately staffed to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively. All staff are appropriately qualified and learning assistants are invariably well deployed and play an active role in promoting successful learning.

Teachers are deployed well to make optimum use of their expertise, time and experience. The time set aside for teachers to prepare, organise, plan and assess is well managed and effective.

Although the school is generally well resourced, reading materials are dated and restricted in range. This has an adverse impact on the quality of pupils' reading.

The school has appropriate systems to ensure that the financial resources of the school are well managed.

Bearing in mind the standards pupils attain, the progress they make and the quality of education provided, the school gives good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In key stage 1 over the last four years the percentage of pupils attaining level 2 (the expected level in English, mathematics and science at seven years of age) have improved considerably from a low point in 2008 to a position where they are now above local and national averages. The school in 2011 was equal first in the family of schools across Wales to which the school belongs in all three subjects and when these subjects were combined. All pupils make good progress from their often low starting points when they begin school. Results at the higher level 3 were also higher and above local, national and all but one of the family of schools.

Results at key stage 2 over the same period are more complex. From a low point in 2008 results at level 4 (the expected level in English, mathematics and science at eleven years of age) had improved significantly, but remained below local and national averages and low in comparison to the family of schools. In 2011, however, results at the higher level 5 are well above local and national averages and place the school first in its family in English, mathematics and science and when these results are combined. This is because in the relatively small group of pupils who were assessed all reached the higher level other than a minority of pupils who were identified as having significant learning difficulties. Although the latter did not reach the expected level, they made good progress.

The inspection evidence, collected through classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, supports the accuracy of these assessments.

In 2011, when compared to schools considered to have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, in key stage 1 the results are very high. In key stage 2, because of the low results at level 4 and the high results at level 5, the school is placed below most of similar schools. Currently the school is placed in a different group of schools (below 8% of pupils entitled to free school meals) than it was previously where the banding was above 8% and including 16%.

Over the last four years, the performance of boys compared to girls has fluctuated and there is no consistent pattern in these comparisons at key stage 1 or at key stage 2 in English, mathematics and science.

There is insufficient data relating to the relative performance of those pupils in receipt of free school meals.. Those with some degree of ALN make good progress.

Overall, the trend of improvement is positive.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty-four parents completed the questionnaire. Overall, they had very positive views of the school. All agreed and many strongly agreed with all of the questions.

All were satisfied with the school. All thought that their children liked school, were helped to settle in when they began, achieved well and were making good progress.

All parents thought that pupils behaved well, teaching was good and staff had high expectations of their children. They believed that homework set helped their children build on their learning in school. Staff treated their children fairly and they thought that they were encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise.

All parents felt that their children were safe in school and received additional support for their needs. They were well informed about their children's progress and were comfortable about approaching the school if they had any questions, suggestions or problems. They understood the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

All parents thought that the school helped their children to be mature and to take on responsibilities. They believed that their children were well prepared for moving on to the next phase of their education, that there was a good range of activities including trips and visits. They thought that the school was well run.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Forty pupils responded to the questionnaire. All felt safe at school and thought that their teachers and other adults in the school helped them to learn and to make progress. They all knew what to do and who to ask for help if they found their work hard. All felt that they had enough books, equipment and computers to do their work. Most pupils thought that the school deals with bullying well, teaches them to be healthy and that there were many chances at school to get regular exercise. Most believed that they were doing well at school and nearly all thought that all pupils behaved well at playtimes and at lunchtimes.

Many pupils knew who to talk to if they were worried or upset and thought that their homework helped them to understand and to improve their work. They thought that other pupils allowed them to get on with their work.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mr Peter Mathias	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Branwen Lewelyn Jones	Team Inspector
Mrs Deris Williams	Lay Inspector
Mr Phillip Brookman	Peer Inspector
Mrs Dilwen Smith	School Nominee