



**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Ysgol y Waun
Lloyds Lane
Chirk
Wrexham
LL14 5NH**

Date of visit: July 2015

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

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The monitoring team

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Outcome of monitoring

Ysgol y Waun is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in February 2014.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise the standards achieved by more able pupils

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

All teachers take part in a robust assessment and tracking process to analyse pupil progress accurately. This information contributes to useful reports that track pupils' individual progress. At termly pupil progress meetings, teachers discuss all pupils' individual development and organise effective and flexible intervention support and challenge for more able pupils as necessary. The process has a clear impact on raising standards of pupils' work.

In the Foundation Phase, from an early age, most pupils work independently and show an increasing understanding of how successful their work is, and how to improve it. Nearly all more able pupils work effectively as independent learners, and offer constructive ideas about how to improve their own learning.

More able pupils produce extended pieces of writing of high quality from a very young age and understand the different purposes of writing well. For example, more able reception pupils recount stories they have read or heard fully and accurately, spelling most familiar words correctly and varying sentence patterns effectively. By the end of the Foundation Phase, all more able pupils regularly write extensively and to a very good standard in a range of forms across the learning areas. They write correctly and neatly, showing a strong awareness of structure.

From a young age, nearly all more able pupils count reliably in tens, add 10 to numbers up to 1,000 and subtract from numbers up to 100. Throughout the Foundation Phase, pupils take part in suitably challenging problem-solving activities every day. For example, as part of a work on the theme of insects, more able reception age pupils make reasonably accurate estimates of the number of different types of insects in a habitat, count the correct number and work out the difference. They record the information clearly on paper. As part of a project on artists, more able Year 2 pupils completed a tally chart of favourite artists, and transferred the information into a correctly labelled, hand-drawn bar chart.

In key stage 2, staff support and challenge more able pupils effectively in English and mathematics ability groups. These pupils contribute constructively to the planning of their own learning, and understand how well they are achieving against specific success criteria.

More able pupils at the top of key stage 2 produce extended pieces of writing of a high standard across different subject areas. They show a good grasp of different forms of writing and use their understanding of language skilfully to vary their sentences to enrich their work. These pupils' creative written work is particularly strong. They vary sentence patterns and use adjectives and adverbs to good effect to create atmosphere. This is an excellent feature of the school's work.

In mathematics, more able pupils receive intervention support and practise their skills regularly in small group situations. These pupils use their numeracy skills very effectively to solve challenging problems and undertake meaningful investigations at a level appropriate to their ability. Examples include working out the cost of organising a visit to a museum, using a scale map to plan and work out the distances of a journey around different provinces in China, and collecting data to create line graphs on a computer that compare rainfall of different countries and the height of mountains across the Far East.

The school's new schemes of work and teachers' short-term planning include good provision for more able pupils. Focused daily input ensures that challenging work for more able pupils results in high standards across the school.

Analysis of this year's performance data indicates that pupils of higher ability have improved significantly on previous performance in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages.

Recommendation 2: Improve pupils' numeracy, ICT skills and Welsh across the curriculum in both key stages

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Most pupils make good progress in developing numeracy skills through activities in different subject areas, such as science and topic work. For example, most Year 6 pupils know how to convert miles to kilometres and use tally and pie charts to represent the information they have researched. In science, most Year 3 pupils use and interpret tables and charts successfully as part of an investigation into small animals and their habitats and understand simple grid references in their geography work. Most Year 2 pupils develop good numerical skills in a range of subjects across the curriculum, such as using tally charts and bar graphs to record the outcomes of different research activities.

Pupils make good use of extra-curricular time, including breakfast club, to take part successfully in extension activities in numerical reasoning. Pupils in key stage 2 also tackle numerical problems in a short session at the beginning of the school day.

To support developments in information and communication technology (ICT), the school has invested in tablet computers and appropriate software applications that all teachers put to effective use to support pupils' learning. 'E-cadets', including the 'minie's' in the Foundation Phase, champion ICT across the school and help other pupils and parents to understand internet safety.

Most Foundation Phase pupils make good progress in developing their ICT skills through a range of packages. For example, they develop their creative skills when making simple pictures, greetings cards, and illustrated stories.

Nearly all key stage 2 pupils use ICT confidently for a range of purposes, including creating videos in Welsh, undertaking research for their topic work, and presenting work. Progression in ICT is good and, by the end of key stage 2, most pupils use recognised presentation, publishing and data handling packages competently on tablet computers, laptops and in the ICT suite. These successfully support and illustrate pupils' work across a range of subjects. For example, most pupils in Year 6 have successfully created information leaflets about mountains in China and created pie charts from data collected about the use of the local leisure centre.

Pupils' use of the Welsh language continues to develop well throughout the school in designated Welsh lessons. Most pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of basic phrases and structures and they use these well in written Welsh. In language lessons, most pupils listen carefully and understand spoken Welsh. For example, Year 3 pupils understand a video about the Celtic hill fort at Castell Henllys in Pembrokeshire. Most pupils reply to their teachers and others in simple Welsh in structured sessions.

In the lower Foundation Phase, pupils' Welsh language is developing very well. They count easily in Welsh, they know and understand a good range of vocabulary, and sing and recite nursery rhymes and simple songs confidently. However, throughout the school, many pupils do not yet use their Welsh regularly in the wider context of school life.

Teachers have developed a comprehensive scheme of work for the teaching of Welsh at the school. The scheme is detailed and ensures progression. However, it is too early to measure its impact on pupils' standards.

Recommendation 3: Create a whole school identity with consistent policies and practice across the two sites

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school continues to build effectively on the work already undertaken to develop a whole school ethos and identity, and staff work well together to address the recommendations.

Whole school staff meetings are planned well and focus appropriately on whole school issues. Senior leaders use these meetings effectively to consult on policies, and enable staff to share good practice and to provide appropriate whole school training, such as the development of new schemes of work. Staff meetings enable all staff to scrutinise the work of more able and talented pupils and to identify issues for improvement as part of the self-evaluation process.

There is good provision for subject leaders to meet together to plan and develop their areas of work. Pupil performance meetings ensure that teachers gain an in-depth understanding of pupils' needs, and this has impacted significantly on pupil outcomes. Staff share ideas and plan how best to meet individual pupils' needs effectively.

Well-focused monthly meetings, led by a senior member of staff, enable teaching assistants to play a full part in the whole school team. A programme for teaching assistants to shadow their peers in the other key stage enables them to have a valuable insight into the different approaches in the key stages.

The school has made steady progress in promoting a positive image as a 3 to 11 school in the community.

Recommendation 4: Improve standards of behaviour, particularly in key stage 2

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school behaviour policy has been reviewed and agreed by all stakeholders. Staff and pupils have implemented agreed rules, rewards and sanctions successfully. The behaviour council, consisting of key stage 2 pupils, monitors the implementation of behaviour guidelines well. Lunchtime staff have received training on the management of pupils' behaviour and how they can organise and encourage play activities among pupils. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour during lunchtimes.

A number of other developments have contributed effectively to improvements in pupils' behaviour throughout the school. The arrangements for receiving pupils in the morning are successful in ensuring that they arrive at school in a very orderly and calm manner. The refurbishment of cloakrooms in the junior building has improved the area where behaviour was poor. The use of pupils as monitors during times of extensive pupil movement in corridors also ensures that nearly all pupils behave well.

In the Foundation Phase, teachers regularly remind pupils about sitting, speaking and listening in lessons appropriately. Most pupils respond well to these prompts. In key stage 2, pupils' behaviour continues to be good in nearly all lessons observed and around the school. The school monitors standards of pupil behaviour well.

Recommendation 5: Improve planning and teaching, especially in key stage 2

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

There has been good progress in improving the quality of planning and teaching across the school. During this visit, inspectors judged teaching to be good in nearly all instances, with a few examples of excellent practice.

Short-term planning is consistently good across the school. Very detailed lesson plans include learning objectives, success criteria, provision of work for pupils of different abilities and opportunities to teach ICT and Welsh. Teachers evaluate their

lessons well and, as a result, they plan effectively for the next steps in pupils' learning.

The revised mid-term planning for the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 provides a comprehensive framework for curriculum delivery. Teachers identify good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy, ICT and Welsh skills across the curriculum. These plans ensure that teachers use effective questioning to challenge nearly all pupils to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills successfully. During this term, the introduction of this approach to curriculum planning is having a positive impact on standards. Teachers use the new mid-term plans well to develop pupils' numeracy skills successfully in other areas of the curriculum. For example, the topic work based on China has developed pupils' ability to use numeracy skills effectively to calculate changes in the country's population over time. However, it is too early to measure the full impact of these new plans on pupil outcomes across the school over time.

The school has introduced a suitable framework to ensure coverage and progression of ICT skills.

Teachers receive appropriate planning, preparation and assessment time and, where possible, particular year group teachers receive their non-contact entitlement at the same time. This helps staff to plan and assess together effectively.

Nearly all teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to evaluate their progress against specific success criteria. This approach is consistent throughout the school. As a result, most pupils are aware of their targets and they review progress against these regularly. This is helping pupils to identify what they need to do next to improve their work.

Recommendation 6: Use self-evaluation more effectively to identify the main priorities for improving standards and monitor and evaluate progress against these

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Over recent months, the culture of self-evaluation has become embedded across the school. Staff and leaders use a suitable range of strategies effectively to identify strengths and areas for development. These include lesson observations, book scrutiny and learning walks. The school seeks the views of pupils and parents and it uses the outcomes to make relevant changes. For example, the school has produced a relevant homework policy after consulting parents about the homework given to pupils.

The school has introduced regular pupil performance meetings, which include all teaching staff. They undertake regular scrutiny of pupils' work and use the outcomes to identify issues that contribute to raising standards. All teachers are now involved in the scrutiny process and, as a result, they have a greater awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The headteacher analyses the outcomes of lesson observations and provides staff and governors with clear feedback on the good features and areas for development. She also provides a few

personal targets for all staff, which need to be addressed before the next round of monitoring. This is in addition to the school's performance management policy.

As a result of these processes, the school's self-evaluation report is based firmly on first-hand evidence and provides a useful and evaluative summary of the school's priorities. It clearly identifies a realistic number of areas for improvement.

Senior leaders evaluate progress against the targets for improvement successfully. In many cases, evaluations are evaluative and focus well on the outcomes of strategies for improving provision and pupils' standards.

The school has been successful in appointing new governors who have backgrounds and experience that enable them to challenge and supporting the school well. The chair of governors has a very clear understanding of the school's progress and the next steps required. He ensures that there is a clear focus on improving pupils' outcomes and the quality of provision and he is supporting the governing body well to develop further as an effective critical friend. Governors visit the school regularly to undertake learning walks and meet with subject leaders. They record their observations and evaluations well, and use them to provide feedback on progress to the other governors. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff also provide regular good quality reports on progress against the school's improvement plans to the governing body.

Recommendation 7: Address the deficiencies in safeguarding arrangements

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has made very good progress in addressing safeguarding and health and safety issues identified at the time of the inspection. Security measures are now fully in place to provide secure access to the Foundation Phase site.

School ICT systems now have additional firewalls and all staff have received training and advice on internet safety. Selected pupils have been trained as 'e-cadets'. They engage with other pupils throughout the school in completing internet safety challenges and enhancing pupils' understanding of safe internet working.

The school has increased the number of toilets available for pupils during lunch and play times and pupils now have access to water during lesson times.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.