



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
Hendre Junior School
St Cenydd Road
Trecenydd
Caerphilly
CF83 2RP

Date of inspection: February 2011

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

Hendre Junior School is situated on the outskirts of Caerphilly adjacent to St Cenydd Comprehensive School.

The 193 pupils aged 7-11 come from a wide area. The school notes that the majority of pupils come from backgrounds that are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged; around 30% are registered as being entitled to free school meals. The intake represents the full range of ability with approximately 31% identified as requiring support for additional learning needs (ALN) and eight with a statement of special educational needs (SEN). No pupils are from a home where Welsh is the first language and 4% of pupils are from a minority ethnic background.

Four pupils receive their education in the Special Resource Base (SRB) for those with hearing impairment (HI). Each of these pupils has an individual timetable, with the majority of lessons taught in the SRB with some integration to mainstream classes, normally for art and physical education. In addition, two pupils with HI from mainstream Year 6 classes attend the SRB for additional support with English and mathematics.

The school was last inspected in February 2005. The present headteacher was appointed to her post in 1998.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Hendre Junior School is £3,349, which compares with a maximum of £6,296 and a minimum of £2,486 for primary schools in Caerphilly. The school has the 16th highest budget per pupil out of the 75 primary schools in Caerphilly.

Summary

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

Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- standards have consistently improved over the last four years and are above the average for its family;
- the school is an inclusive community;
- pupils behave very well and they enjoy learning;
- the school provides a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum; and
- the quality of teaching is good.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement of the school are good because:

- the school has a clear sense of direction and has established a culture that strives for improvement;
- the headteacher and senior management team provide effective leadership and have high expectations;
- well-established self-evaluation procedures are in place that focus appropriately on the standards pupils achieve;
- the governing body has a good understanding of how the school performs in comparison with similar schools; and
- the school has made good progress in implementing the recommendations of the previous inspection.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 improve the attainment of boys, particularly in oracy, writing and science;
- R2 increase the number of pupils attaining results above the expected levels for their age in all core subjects;
- R3 improve its links with parents; and
- R4 improve pupils' attendance.

What happens next?

Hendre Junior School will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The National Curriculum teacher assessment results in 2010 were good, with most pupils attaining the core subject indicator (CSI). The CSI represents the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level or above in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination. The CSI has consistently improved over the last four years and is now above the level for the family of schools and other comparators. Since 2007, there has been a significant improvement in standards of attainment in the three core subjects. Most pupils attain the levels expected at 11 years of age, and the school's performance is above the average of the family. However, the number of pupils attaining results at above the expected level (level 5+) has been below the average for the family for the last three years. Performance at this higher level is the lowest in the family of schools. When compared with schools with similar proportions of free school meals, the school is in the top 25% for the CSI and English and in the upper 50% for mathematics and science.

The achievement and progress of pupils in lessons is generally appropriate for their age and abilities and in relation to their starting points. Pupils with additional learning needs and those with hearing impairment in the SRB generally make good progress and achieve well in relation to their ability, prior achievement and special educational needs. Overall, boys do not achieve as well as girls particularly in oracy, writing and science. In 2010, about 40% fewer boys than girls achieved the expected level in English.

Most pupils listen attentively and the majority speak clearly in a wide range of situations including when working in pairs and during group discussions. They work together co-operatively and productively to respond to tasks and to questions posed by their teachers and other adults. Most pupils read competently for their age in a variety of contexts. Many older pupils read very fluently and with good expression and understanding. Pupils generally apply their communication skills effectively to tasks across the curriculum and, by the end of key stage 2, many pupils write well in a range of different genres.

Pupils' attitudes to learning Welsh are positive and almost all pupils make good progress in gaining skills in the language.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and diet. They are active and enjoy the range of activities on offer. They feel very safe in the school and are knowledgeable of how the school's anti bullying policy works. Older pupils have a good awareness of how to keep safe in their daily life, for example when using the internet. The behaviour of pupils is very good and they display pride and confidence in their work. However, pupils' attendance is a weakness. It has been consistently below 92% for the last four years.

The school is an inclusive community. Pupils show respect and concern for others. Nearly all pupils show empathy, tolerance and understanding for each other and for those less fortunate than themselves. Many pupils throughout the school use 'sign language' effectively to communicate with pupils who have hearing impairments. The majority of pupils can co-operate, solve problems, and use thinking skills effectively to support their learning. Most can work independently and produce good quality collaborative pieces of work, for example discussion books in Year 4 and Year 5.

Pupils in the SRB learn to read important 'social signs', and to apply literacy skills in real life, for example choosing appropriate greeting cards. They are polite, confident children who get on well with each other and with pupils in other classes.

Members of the school council are enthusiastic about their role. They consult well with fellow pupils and take matters forward appropriately. For example, they have recently been involved in initiatives to improve pupils' attendance through the introduction of a reward system. This incentive has yet to improve significantly on pupils' attendance rates. Many pupils have also developed life and entrepreneurial skills through activities led by the school council and eco-committee. These include fund raising activities and managing a budget allocated from the School Fund.

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

The school provides a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum through an effective topic approach. Many teachers provide innovative learning experiences that build on pupils' own understanding. The well-planned work in art and design technology builds effectively on pupils' skills and is fully integrated into the curriculum. Work to support the development of communication, numeracy and information, and communications technology (ICT) skills is also well planned. The well-organised curriculum and effective transition projects ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

The school makes very good provision for pupils with hearing impairment, both in the special resource base and in the mainstream classes. Work is skilfully planned and effectively delivered. As a result, pupils' individual learning needs are catered for effectively.

The school actively promotes sustainable development in both the curriculum and its daily routines. The recently established eco-committee is having a positive impact on sustainability in the school through, for example, identifying classes that create the least/most waste. There is good provision to enable pupils to develop an understanding of local and global issues. This work is developed effectively through a range of relevant topics that include such issues as the benefits of Fair trade and the employment of young children in other countries. There is an interesting programme of educational visits and a good range of extra-curricular activities that enhance pupils' learning. Extra-curricular sporting activities are a particularly strong and successful feature of school life.

Most staff use Welsh accurately and effectively in the classroom and around the school. Pupils have many interesting opportunities to learn about their locality and also about Wales, its history and culture. For example, recent work includes a study of mining and visits to local museums including Big Pit and St Fagans.

Teaching: Good

In all classes, teachers display very good subject knowledge and share clear learning objectives and success criteria with pupils. The majority of teachers use plenary sessions successfully to summarise what pupils have learnt and evaluate performance in relation to the lesson objective. A range of innovative teaching resources engage and stimulate pupils and challenge them to do their best. In all mainstream classes, and in the SRB, teachers and support staff foster very good working relationships with pupils and encourage active involvement. Work set is matched appropriately for pupils' needs and abilities; the pace of lessons is good and all teachers use open ended questions effectively. In all classes, teachers use a variety of appropriate strategies to enable pupils to access the curriculum in an imaginative and meaningful way, for example detective work in a topic lesson, posters to advertise a healthy sandwich and measuring the effect of exercise on health through the use of a contemporary interactive games console. Nearly all teachers manage challenging behaviour well and create an environment that is conducive to learning.

In all classes, a variety of assessment for learning strategies are used effectively to encourage and enhance pupil involvement in lessons. This is a strength of the teaching in the school. In every lesson, objectives are shared and success criteria identified. Marking and oral feedback is thorough; all teachers make positive, supportive comments to pupils and many make useful suggestions for further improvement. In all classes, peer assessment and evaluation of performance identify strengths and possible improvements. Occasionally this is of an exceptional standard, for example in Year 6 journalistic writing. All pupils write and review their own learning targets. There are comprehensive assessment procedures for pupils in mainstream classes and the SRB. Pupils' progress is tracked by all staff and information is cross referenced with the school's provision map to ensure that all pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) are identified and their needs addressed. Reports to parents and carers are clear and informative. Assessment procedures at the end of key stage 2 are robust.

Teaching of pupils with hearing impairment is consistently good and at times is excellent. Assessment of and for these pupils' learning is also consistently good.

Care, support and guidance: Good

A variety of experiences is provided to promote healthy living and pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing. Personal and social education and circle time sessions promote an anti-bullying ethos throughout the school. These arrangements, and the buddy scheme during break time, encourage pupils to be on the lookout for and to prevent any instances of bullying. The school has a well-attended breakfast club and a range of lunch time and after school clubs which meet the needs and interests of

the children. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle promotes pupils' wellbeing and is embedded in the school's values.

Pupils are actively encouraged to assess their work and think of ways to develop their learning. Circle time successfully promotes this ethos whilst developing pupils' collaborative skills. Good behaviour is promoted effectively through positive behaviour management.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Provision for pupils with ALN is very good. They are integrated fully into the life of the school. The school uses learning support assistants well in mainstream classes and the knowledgeable special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) liaises effectively with external agencies. Individual education plans are of good quality and suitable learning targets are identified and reviewed regularly by pupils, parents and staff. Groups of pupils who need help in their learning are tracked and their progress monitored in line with the Special Education Needs (SEN) Code of Practice. Standardised tests and teacher assessments are used to assess and record pupils' progress. The school's provision mapping is comprehensive and is skilfully used to evaluate the adequacy and usefulness of any agencies involved and resources used. The school provides good support for learners whose behaviour may impede their own learning or that of others.

The school has a clear and well-managed system for identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with SEN, including those with hearing impairment, both in the SRB and in the mainstream classes throughout the school. Teaching and support staff in the SRB work very effectively as a team, and make very good provision for their pupils.

Learning environment: Good

The school provides an inclusive and tolerant environment where children demonstrate a strong respect for each other. The school has appropriate policies promoting equality of opportunity and access. It promotes these well in its day-to-day practices.

The school buildings and grounds are well maintained and in good decorative order. The school has a variety of good quality resources which are well matched to pupils' needs and the activities offered. Pupils in the SRB benefit from specialised equipment and appropriate learning resources.

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

The school has a clear sense of direction and has established a culture that strives for improvement. The headteacher and senior management team (SMT) provide effective leadership and have high expectations. Weekly staff meetings and well-planned whole-school training sessions focus on the school's priorities for development. These activities help staff to develop a shared understanding of their

roles and responsibilities in relation to the school's strategies and plans. Data is analysed well and used effectively to monitor performance across the school. Performance management procedures are in place for the teaching and support staff. Targets for individual members of staff relate directly to school improvement priorities and individual development needs. These procedures support the effective delivery of the school's development plans.

The governing body has a good understanding of its role and supports the SMT as a critical friend. It has a good understanding of how the school performs in comparison with similar schools. It analyses relevant data appropriately and is aware of the issues arising from it. Members of the governing body liaise with staff and work as volunteers in the school. This raises their awareness of standards and helps them to understand organisational issues. The school has appropriate policies and procedures for dealing with complaints and these are published in school documentation.

School development planning takes account of local and national priorities and incorporates them in appropriate strategies. For example, staff training on the Foundation Phase has resulted in more effective preparation and provision for receiving children from the infant school. The School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) priorities are included in the School Development Plan and are highlighted within the annual monitoring cycle.

Improving quality: Good

The school has well-established self-evaluation procedures that focus appropriately pupils' standards. These procedures include thorough analysis of performance data, monitoring of the school's provision and reviewing all aspects of the school's work. All members of staff contribute effectively to these arrangements. Direct classroom monitoring is well established in the school's procedures and provides first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning. The views of pupils are taken into account and, where appropriate, the work draws on advice and guidance by the local authority and other agencies. The school accurately assesses its strengths and weaknesses. For example, the relative underperformance of boys and the percentage attaining above the level expected at 11 years of age (level 5+) have both been identified in the self-evaluation as areas for development and are being addressed in improvement plans.

Improvement plans also include a broad range of actions and identify members of staff with responsibility for their delivery. They also include clear success criteria and well-defined timescales for evaluation and completion. In general, the school has made good progress in implementing the recommendations of the previous inspection.

The establishment of professional learning communities (PLC) has contributed well to developing classroom practice. It has also, where relevant, contributed effectively to the development of leadership and management skills. The school's staff are actively engaging with PLCs both inside and outside school. The PLC for improving pupils' literacy skills has worked effectively with its partner infant school on strategies to improve standards. Design and technology and science projects delivered by other PLCs working in partnership with the school have enhanced staff expertise to support judgements on levels of achievement.

Partnership working: Good

The school has established a good range of partnerships with other schools, higher education institutions and local community groups. This extends the activities available to the pupils and has benefits for their standards and wellbeing.

Transition arrangements with the local infant school and secondary school are particularly effective and ensure continuity in pupils' learning and wellbeing. The school benefits from having access to the secondary school's facilities to support learning. For example, having access to the science facilities enriched pupils' experience of studying natural habitats within the school grounds. Effective links exist with an initial teacher training provider and with local colleges, and the school contributes regularly to the mentoring of trainees and to other practical aspects of training.

The school has good partnerships with a wide range of external organisations such as the police and voluntary agencies. It works effectively with agencies such as Communities First and Safe Routes to School and this benefits pupils and their families. However, the school has not yet developed a partnership that fully engages parents and carers in supporting their children's progress and achievement in the life and work of the school.

Resource management: Good

The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. Teaching and support staff are suitably qualified and are deployed effectively both in the main school and SRB. Teachers' time for preparation, planning and assessment (PPA) is covered by a very effective Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HTLA) whose expertise in art and design technology enables pupils to achieve high standards in these sessions. The school has an established Performance Management system where improvement targets are set, monitored and evaluated. This improves the quality of teaching.

Budgets are allocated and monitored effectively. The school gives good value for money in terms of pupils' outcomes and in its use of funding.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Only 8% of parent questionnaires were returned. Of these, all say that they are satisfied with the school and that it is well run. They note that their children like the school and nearly all feel that the children are safe there. All parents also say that they are well informed about the progress their children make at the school. Nearly all say that pupils are well behaved and that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. All of the parents feel that they are comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem, and that their child was helped to settle in well when they first started school.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and most know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. Most pupils say that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that there are lots of opportunities for them to get regular exercise. Most pupils feel that they are doing well at school and nearly all say that the teachers and other adults help them to learn and make progress. The majority of pupils say that other children behave well and that they can get their work done and many say that nearly all children behave well at playtime and lunch time and that the school deals well with any instances of bullying.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Iwan Roberts HMI	Reporting Inspector
Eleanor Davies HMI	Team Inspector
Mike Maguire HMI	Team Inspector
Sue Willan	Team Inspector
Julie Price	Lay Inspector
Karen Olds	Peer Inspector
Chris Thompson	School Nominee

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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