



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 Infants School
St Cenydd Road
Trecenydd
Caerphilly
CF83 2RP**

Date of inspection: May 2013

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 Infant School is situated on the outskirts of the large town of Caerphilly. The school provides for boys and girls from the age of three to seven years. There are 213 pupils on roll, including 68 who attend the nursery part-time. Pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds.

Twenty-two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is just above the average for Wales (21%). The school has identified about 17% of pupils as having additional learning needs, including a few pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The home language of nearly all pupils is English. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The school was last inspected in June 2007 and there have been a significant number of staff changes and long-term absences since then. The role of headteacher is currently carried out by a headteacher from a neighbouring school. The deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2013, but had been acting deputy headteacher since January 2012. The governing body has also had a number of recent changes.

The individual school budget per pupil for Hendre Infant School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £2,929 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Caerphilly is £4,640 and the minimum is £2,620. Hendre Infant School is 50th out of the 75 primary schools in Caerphilly in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Unsatisfactory

Current performance

The current performance at the school is adequate because:

- many pupils make steady progress;
- many pupils develop their speaking and listening and reading skills appropriately;
- many pupils behave well in classes and around the school; and
- many pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically.

However:

- many pupils only achieve adequate standards by the end the Foundation Phase;
- the quality of teaching varies too much across the school;
- the curriculum does not build well on what pupils already know and can do; and
- there is little internal moderation and standardisation of pupils' work to secure the accuracy of end of Foundation Phase teacher assessments.

Prospects for improvement

Although the temporary acting headteacher has successfully managed to create a shared vision, engage and motivate staff and improve pupils' wellbeing, the school's prospects for improvement are unsatisfactory. This is because:

- the school does not have a stable leadership team;
- high levels of staff absence and turnover have prevented the school from improving at an appropriate rate;
- a number of new initiatives are not yet fully or consistently embedded across the school;
- the school does not have a culture of robust self-evaluation and improvement planning; and
- the school has not responded fully to all the recommendations of the last inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve pupils' writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
- R2 Improve attendance
- R3 Ensure that learning experiences are progressive and meet the needs of all pupils
- R4 Improve the quality and consistency of teaching
- R5 Improve the quality, accuracy and use of assessment
- R6 Establish a stable leadership team that focuses consistently on improving pupils' standards

What happens next?

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion, that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress on a termly basis.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

On entry to the school, a majority of pupils have skills that are around the expected level for their age. By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils achieve adequate standards, but more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

Many pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well and many pupils use an increasing range of appropriate vocabulary and phrases related to their topic work.

Pupils' reading skills vary across the school. Younger pupils develop their understanding of phonics, and show an interest and enthusiasm in stories and books. By the end of the Foundation Phase, a few more able pupils read a range of texts fluently and accurately. Pupils of other ability levels generally develop appropriate strategies in order to read simple texts independently. Most pupils who receive targeted support make good progress in developing their reading skills, although a few still have reading ages significantly below their chronological age.

Pupils' writing skills do not develop well. Younger pupils experiment with mark making and produce pieces of emergent writing. In language, literacy and communication sessions, older pupils use a range of appropriate and interesting vocabulary. They spell simple words correctly and use basic punctuation accurately. Most pupils write clearly, with well-formed letters and legible handwriting. However, pupils' standards of writing skills across all areas of learning are inconsistent. The over reliance on worksheets and the restricted scope for developing extended writing prevents many pupils from expressing themselves imaginatively or in a creative manner.

Many pupils respond appropriately to greetings and basic instructions in Welsh. However, they do not respond readily to simple questions, or use Welsh on a voluntary basis. Older pupils read simple Welsh stories with enthusiasm and younger pupils are developing their ability to read familiar words in Welsh. The standard of most pupils' written work in Welsh is weak.

A few pupils use ICT to create and present information, but most do not make sufficient use of the limited ICT resources available, to enhance their learning. Pupils do not develop or use their numeracy skills well enough across all areas of learning.

Teacher assessments for pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 indicate that the school performed above family averages for language, literacy and communication skills, mathematical development and personal and social development. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, these areas of learning were in the top 25% of results. However, the standard of work seen during the inspection does not support previous assessment data.

Wellbeing: Adequate

Most pupils feel safe and happy at school. Most have a good understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy. They demonstrate this by their enthusiasm for fruit snacks in the morning, growing vegetables in their allotments and by undertaking a range of physical activities.

Attendance, at just over 92 % in 2011-2012, was below that of similar schools and has placed the school in the lowest 25% for the past two years. While many pupils arrive punctually in the mornings, a few are regularly late, particularly in nursery and reception. Many pupils enjoy school and participate in all activities with enthusiasm. Nearly all pupils are courteous to visitors. Pupils generally behave well around the school, but a few, particularly in classes where there have been many temporary teachers, disrupt lessons by behaving inappropriately. Where pupils have had the same teacher for a continuous period most have a good attitude to work and engage well in learning activities.

Members of the school council value being involved in decision-making, such as writing the new school rules and in zoning the playground. Many pupils do not use their thinking skills well enough to plan activities, develop their ideas or reflect on what they have done. Consequently, they are overly reliant on teacher direction.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Adequate
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Learning experiences: Unsatisfactory

The planning and provision for learning experiences are unsatisfactory overall. Due to the high turnover of teaching staff it has been difficult for the school to plan systematically or progressively. This has undermined the continuity of planning and provision from year to year and, in some instances, across parallel classes.

Literacy planning has a clear focus; however, planning to develop pupils' reading and writing skills across all areas of learning is underdeveloped. Opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy, ICT and thinking skills are at a very early stage of development.

The school successfully promotes the culture of Wales, through activities such as celebrating St David's Day and learning Welsh folk dances. However, the school's provision does not progressively develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills in Welsh.

The school is at an early stage of embedding education for sustainable development and global citizenship within its curriculum. However, it does act sustainably through activities such as recycling.

Teaching: Adequate

In around half of the classes, teaching is effective, lessons have a good pace and pupils are stimulated to learn. These teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use an effective range of teaching strategies. However, teachers do not adapt

their activities well enough to meet the needs of all pupils and, as a result, too many pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. In a few classes, teachers do not structure sessions well enough and pupils spend too much time on low-level activities. In many lessons, teachers make effective use of support staff to ensure that pupils remain focused on their work. In a majority of lessons, teachers share clear learning objectives with the pupils. Most teachers are good language role models but they do not make enough use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning. Many teachers manage pupils' behaviour positively. However, in a few classes, weak management of behaviour has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, the quality of feedback to pupils is inconsistent. In a few classes, teachers provide helpful oral and written comments that explain clearly how pupils could improve their work. The school has recently established a more formal process of assessing pupil outcomes, which teachers use to inform their future planning. It is too early to measure the impact of this tracking system. The tracking of progress for less able pupils in relation to their support programmes is good and ensures that they make appropriate progress. Reports to parents are of a good quality and informative, and meet statutory requirements. However, they do not always reflect accurately pupils' end of Foundation Phase outcomes.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school has good provision in place for the promotion of healthy living and ensuring pupils' wellbeing. As a result, most pupils understand the importance of being kind to each other and taking turns. The school is making a good contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Collective worship promotes pupils' spiritual development appropriately. All staff monitor and support pupils' wellbeing and use an effective framework for promoting personal and social education. The school site is a safe and secure environment. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is appropriate. A strong feature of this provision is the clear procedures for the early identification of needs. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress due to effective and targeted support programmes. The school involves parents and pupils appropriately in setting targets and reviewing progress in individual education plans. However, teachers do not always pay enough attention to targets in the individual education plans when planning their lessons. The school has strong links with a range of specialist agencies, which further help to support pupils' wellbeing and educational needs.

Learning environment: Adequate

The school has an inclusive ethos where pupils feel valued. All staff act as good role models for pupils by respecting others and displaying tolerance. Most staff generally deal with any incident of misbehaviour immediately and effectively. However, in a few lessons, staff do not intervene quickly enough to stop low-level disruptions and this impedes the learning of other pupils.

The school building is currently undergoing extensive refurbishment to provide a new all-purpose hall and improved classrooms. During the reconstruction, the teaching areas have had to be reorganised. However, staff have managed this disruption well. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' work and contribute to a bright and stimulating environment. The outside playground structures and garden areas are a particularly strong feature of the school. They create a wide range of outdoor learning opportunities for pupils. In most areas of learning, learning resources are generally appropriate. However, the lack of suitable ICT resources prevents pupils from developing appropriate ICT skills.

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

Lack of stability in the school's leadership team and significant staff changes have not allowed the school to focus sufficiently on improving pupil outcomes. Consequently, the school has not been successful in making and sustaining improvements. The strategic direction given by the current senior management team has started to help to ensure that all staff focus on the school's mission statement of "everyone aiming to achieve their very best".

Governors understand their responsibilities and are supportive of the school. However, dealing with many personnel matters have prevented them from developing their understanding of the school and the needs of its pupils. They are now beginning to have a clearer understanding of the school's performance. Governors make increasing use of pertinent questioning. This has enabled them to address important issues that have come to their attention, such as how to address finance and health and safety issues. It is too early to evaluate the impact of their actions.

Performance management procedures link appropriately to school development planning. However, until very recently, the school development plan had too many targets and teachers did not know where to focus their efforts. Until very recently, the school has not focused appropriately on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and on working towards the full implementation of the Foundation Phase.

Improving quality: Unsatisfactory

The self-evaluation report provides an honest picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Since the arrival of the acting headteacher there has been a greater focus on self-evaluation, ensuring that those with additional responsibilities contribute to the process. However, the school does not have a long standing culture of self-evaluation. There is a limited range of evidence available for self-evaluation purposes. Prior to September 2012, no senior staff had observed lessons or held formal discussions regarding pupils' work with teachers. The school has only recently started to co-ordinate self-evaluation activities effectively. The self-evaluation process does not do enough to gather and consider the views of parents and pupils. The school has recently re-evaluated the systems used to collate and record data in order to track pupil progress and identify areas for improvement. It is too early to evaluate the impact of this on improving standards and provision.

The school has not responded fully to all of the recommendations of the last inspection.

Until very recently, the school development plan had too many actions for the year. The acting headteacher has appropriately narrowed the focus to concentrate on improving pupils' standards of literacy and numeracy and improving the learning environment. The school has recently been involved in a professional network with another infant school to help promote literacy skills. This resulted in the production of a school newspaper.

Partnership working: Adequate

The school is currently developing improved links with partners in order to enhance communication and to keep parents better informed about standards and new initiatives. The school is approachable and has an open door policy for parents to discuss any concern they may have. Newsletters and consultation evenings keep parents informed of activities and enable them to understand how well their children are progressing. The school provides good support and advice to parents on how to listen to their children read at home.

The new joint planning partnership with the junior school has produced moderated samples of work in literacy. This is helping to raise teacher expectations and improve pupils' standards. The school provides placements for students from the local comprehensive schools and from the local college. Their expertise has helped to support a variety of physical development activities, such as football.

The close working partnerships with a range of educational services enables the school to ensure that specific support and resources are available when appropriate. Productive links with the community police officers and other organisations enrich pupils' learning experiences. There are good links with a neighbouring pre-school playgroup and parents are invited to visit the school before enrolling their children. There are good links with the nearby junior school to support a smooth transition.

Resource management: Unsatisfactory

The school has a deficit budget but the management team are working appropriately with the governing body and local authority finance officers to improve budget planning. A suitable budget recovery plan is now in place. Insufficient investment has reduced the availability of important resources, such as ICT equipment. However, the staff manage the limited resources available to them adequately.

Due to a significant turnover of staff, the school has not always been able to have enough experienced teaching and support staff, with the full range of knowledge and expertise, to cover all aspects of the curriculum. This has inhibited continuity and progression in the planning of skills across the curriculum. Very recently, all teachers have been given time for planning and preparation. This is beginning to have an impact on joint-planning between parallel year groups. Opportunities for joint assessment and moderation of work are less well developed.

Despite standards generally being adequate, the school has a high proportion of important shortcomings. As a result, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

There are very few established, systematic procedures to support accurate teacher assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase. The findings of the inspection team do not support the assessments made in 2012.

At the expected outcome (outcome 5), assessments for pupils at the end of the Foundation Phase, in 2012, placed the school in the highest 25% when compared to similar schools in all assessed areas of learning. The school's reported performance was above family, local and Wales averages. The proportion of more able pupils achieving the higher outcome (outcome 6) in language, literacy and communication skills, mathematical development and personal and social development was above family averages and placed the school in the higher 50% for language, literacy and communication and the highest 25% for mathematical development and personal and social skills.

Girls outperformed boys at the expected level in language literacy and communication skills and mathematical development. The performance of more able pupils in language, literacy and communication was very similar. However, more able boys performed significantly better than girls in mathematical development. Pupils who are not entitled to free schools meals performed better than those who entitled to free school meals.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

No pupils completed the questionnaire as this is not a requirement for infant schools.

There were 37 responses to the parent and carer questionnaire.

All parents or carers feel that:

- their child was helped to settle in well when he or she started at the school; and
- staff expect their child to work hard and to do his or her best.

Most parents or carers think that:

- their child likes school;
- their child is making good progress;
- pupils behave well in school;
- teaching is good;
- the homework that is given builds well on what their child learns at school;
- staff treat children fairly and with respect;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- the school helps their child to be more mature and to take responsibility; and
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school.

Many parents or carers feel:

- satisfied with the school overall;
- that their child is safe in school;
- that their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;
- that they are kept well informed about their child's progress; and
- that they understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

A majority of parents or carers think that:

- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits; and
- the school is well run.

Parents' views are generally in line with the views of parents in other schools across Wales. However, their views are less positive with regards to how the school keeps them informed, and with regards to how well the school is run.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Susan Davies	Reporting Inspector
William Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
Edward Tipper	Lay Inspector
Eurig Towns	Peer Inspector
Jane Mather-Thomas	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language;
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language;
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.