



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

Report of visit

Level of follow-up: Significant improvement

**Hendy C.P. Mixed School
Iscoed Road,
Hendy,
Pontardulais,
Carmarthenshire,
SA4 0XD**

Date of visit: January 2014

by

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

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The monitoring team

Dyfrig Ellis	Reporting Inspector
Iolo Dafydd	Team Inspector

Outcome of the visit

Ysgol yr Hendy is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in February 2012.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for Education and Training in Wales is removing Ysgol yr Hendy from the list of schools which require significant improvement.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Immediately address discrepancies in school safeguarding and performance management procedures to meet statutory requirements

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has developed sound procedures and policies in relation to safeguarding and protecting children. All staff and governors at the school have received recognised training and are fully aware of the processes that should be followed. A useful handbook has been distributed, and children are given appropriate opportunities to voice their concerns through 'blychau becsu' in all classrooms.

During the headteacher's long-term absence since the core inspection, the senior management team has undertaken many of the school's management duties effectively. Sound performance management arrangements are in place for them, which include appropriate managerial objectives. The procedure for managing teachers' performance has been established and is implemented appropriately, and members of the senior management team are responsible for specific teachers. Classroom assistants are also part of the formal performance management process.

Recommendation 2: Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

During the period of significant instability since the core inspection, the school's senior management team, with the support of the local authority and under the leadership of an advisory headteacher, has established firm procedures to strengthen leadership and management arrangements. Since September 2013, the senior management team, which includes two assistant headteachers and a member of staff with a specific teaching and learning responsibility, operates with increasing confidence within the new management structure. Within a very short period of time, its work is beginning to have a positive effect on teaching and learning across the school.

Recently, the senior management team has succeeded in ensuring the commitment of all stakeholders to improving provision and raising standards. Both assistant headteachers set clear objectives and targets in order to ensure the school's further development, and all members of staff are aware of the school's priorities.

Individual teachers are responsible for specific areas of learning, and monitor provision and standards of work regularly and effectively.

Recommendation 3: Establish rigorous systems to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and improve school development planning and its monitoring

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has effective arrangements for collecting evidence for the self-evaluation process. Leaders and teachers give good attention to pupils' standards and performance data, and evaluate it appropriately to identify priorities for development. This includes establishing a sound monitoring programme, which focuses increasingly on class observations, performance data, standards and quality of provision. They also use a good range of other evidence, including the opinions of parents, pupils and members of staff, as a basis for analysing the school's development needs.

Monitoring reports are evaluative and rigorous and give balanced attention to learning observations, schemes of work, pupils' opinions, and standards of work in books. Recently, reports have identified specific areas for development and the majority of these are given suitable attention in the school development plan. However, there is a tendency for the current school self-evaluation report to be descriptive in places. Detailed outcomes of the school's monitoring systems on teaching and learning are not used probingly enough to identify what needs to be developed further.

The current school development plan is a clear document, which gives good attention to national and local priorities, and it is a useful tool for moving the school forward. Priorities are appropriate, and targets and outcomes are clear and measurable, in general.

The school has sound procedures in place to ensure that the school's staff and governors review the progress made against the development plan's objectives and priorities.

Recommendation 4: Develop the governing body's ability to hold the school to account

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The governing body is very supportive of the school, and governors undertake their responsibilities conscientiously, and do so in difficult circumstances. Since the inspection in February 2012, the governors have strengthened their role significantly. The chair and vice chair have a good understanding of the school's strengths and issues that need to be developed. Governors understand how well the school performs in comparison with similar schools, which leads to setting appropriate targets for improvement. In addition, the comprehensive reports on pupils' progress, which are provided by the senior management team, enable the governors to fulfil their role more effectively.

Recently, governors have begun to take part in 'learning walks', which have a specific focus based on priorities in the development plan. Reports resulting from these visits show an increasing understanding of the school's standards and provision.

With this increased knowledge and understanding, and the support of the local authority, the governors are now challenging the school's leadership more probingly. They have ensured that their statutory responsibilities, which were not operational during the core inspection, are now in place.

Recommendation 5: Ensure consistency in assessment for learning throughout the school in accordance with best practices observed

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has taken appropriate steps since the core inspection to ensure better consistency in the use of assessment methods, which help pupils to improve the quality of their work. The review by the school's assessment co-ordinator gives a detailed picture of assessment practices throughout the school and identifies clearly the areas which need to be developed further.

The majority of teachers share success criteria with pupils, and there are consistent opportunities for pupils to discuss their work regularly during lessons. Pupils' understanding of what leads to good work benefits from the frequent opportunities for them to assess their own work, and that of their peers, against specific criteria. Pupils know what their personal targets are for improving upon their achievements. In a few cases, these targets are not detailed enough.

In general, teachers implement the school's marking policy effectively. They mark pupils' written work carefully and note helpful written comments on how to improve the linguistic accuracy of their work. Pupils return to marked work frequently and are given suitable opportunities to improve their work by re-drafting it. However, a minority of teachers' written comments are too general to let pupils know specifically how to improve the content of their work.

Recommendation 6: Develop more opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Most pupils make good progress in their writing skills in both languages. The oldest pupils in the Foundation Phase produce increasingly extended pieces for different purposes and in a range of interesting contexts. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils write imaginatively and show a good awareness of the features of different forms in order to appeal to various audiences. A few of the more able pupils write with maturity and create work of a high standard.

Most pupils make appropriate use of their extended writing skills in their work in a range of other subjects. However, in a few cases, the overuse of worksheets continues to hinder pupils and their understanding. Teachers plan appropriately to ensure opportunities to write for an appropriate range of purposes. However, specific opportunities to write at length in other subjects are not included in schemes of work.

The school has developed effective systems for recording individual pupils' progress in both languages regularly in order to raise standards of writing further. Teachers keep detailed profiles and comprehensive portfolios of pupils' extended writing in order to keep an eye on progress and ensure consistency in their assessments.

Recommendation 7: Continue to develop provision for more able and talented pupils

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Many pupils of higher ability make appropriate progress in their work across the curriculum.

The practice of setting differentiated work for groups of different abilities is in operation in classes. However, schemes of work do not give consistent attention to identifying different tasks for pupils according to their level of ability.

A programme to develop talented writers in key stage 2 has had a very positive effect on the standards of many of these pupils. An appropriate procedure for producing individual education plans has been introduced for more able and talented pupils as part of the partnership with parents. These plans include an appropriate number of targets, although the targets are not specific enough in a minority of cases.

In assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 and 2013, results at the higher outcome compared very favourably with results in similar schools in 2012 and 2013. In key stage 2, there was a small increase in the percentage of higher levels in 2013; however, the school remains among the lower 50% in all subjects in comparison with similar schools across Wales.

Recommendation 8: Improve standards of cleanliness, interior decoration and furnishing throughout the school

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school, with the support of parents and the education authority, has invested significantly in new classroom furniture. The learning environment in all classes is attractive, with colourful and stimulating displays which respect pupils' work.

The school building and grounds are well maintained. Many classes and learning areas have been painted recently and are now in good condition. The outdoor area, including the Foundation Phase's vegetable garden, has been developed well and offers pupils a variety of rich experiences. There is an appropriate supply of relevant resources of a good quality for the areas of learning.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve upon this progress, the school should continue to work towards achieving the inspection recommendations which have not yet been addressed in full.