



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Hendreforgan Community Primary School
Hendreforgan
Gilfach Goch
RCT
CF39 8UH**

Date of inspection: July 2018

by

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

About Hendreforgan Community Primary School

Hendreforgan Community Primary School is a community school in Gilfach Goch, in the Ogwr Fach valley. It provides education for 211 pupils aged from 3 to 11 years old, including 24 children who attend the nursery class part-time. Pupils are organised into six classes. The school was last inspected in 2012. The headteacher was appointed in September 2016.

The three year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 28%. This figure is above the Welsh average of 19%. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language, and no pupils speak Welsh as their first language. The school identifies around 40% of pupils as having additional learning needs and a very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very few pupils are cared for by the local authority. Very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The recently established senior leadership team have succeeded in making significant improvements within a short period. The headteacher leads by example and is totally focused on ensuring high expectations for teaching, learning and behaviour by all staff and pupils. The team have shared their vision and values well with all stakeholders. The school has robust systems for evaluating its strengths and weaknesses that lead to a good understanding of what it needs to prioritise in order to improve.

Many pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning; they embrace the school's values passionately and are courteous and work diligently.

Despite low starting points, many pupils make sound progress in the school. The majority of pupils read well, and many write interestingly and at length for a good range of purposes. However, a few lessons lack pace and not enough pupils make sufficient progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and Welsh.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Good

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that all teachers convey sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve in all lessons
- R2 Ensure that skills in ICT and Welsh are developed systematically throughout the school
- R3 Improve standards in spelling, basic grammar and handwriting across the school
- R4 Improve outdoor provision in the upper foundation phase

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

Many pupils enter the school with basic skills below that expected for their age. Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs are making sound progress overall.

In the foundation phase, many pupils listen well to each other and to adults. Most have weak speaking skills when they enter school, but by the end of the foundation phase many are keen to speak to adults and converse confidently, politely and clearly. Many pupils' use of vocabulary is appropriate for their age and ability and the more able pupils in the foundation phase use wider vocabulary appropriately such as 'bizarre', 'flamboyant' and 'spectacular'. In key stage 2, many pupils listen carefully to instructions and contribute appropriately to discussions. However, a few pupils maintain short attention spans that inhibit their ability to concentrate for sustained periods and to enact on the teacher's instructions effectively. The majority of older pupils display appropriate communication skills.

Many pupils develop their reading skills well throughout the school. In the foundation phase, pupils learn the sounds that letters make well, and the majority use these appropriately to sound out new words. The more able pupils in the foundation phase read carefully and with expression, especially when reading dialogue. They can predict the next steps in their story books sensibly. The majority of pupils in key stage 2 read well and show interest in their books. The more able pupils in key stage 2 discuss different plots intelligently and are beginning to express thoughtful opinions about characters. For example, discussing the morality of a boy stealing a book of spells from his grandmother, whom he discovered was a witch. However, the reading ability of a minority of pupils in key stage 2 is still significantly below what is expected for their age and, although they read words correctly, they have limited in-depth knowledge of what they have read.

In the lower foundation phase, many pupils use their phonic knowledge well to write simple words and sentences effectively. For example, in the nursery class pupils write adjectives correctly to describe 'Supertato' the hero. By Year 2, the majority of pupils write appropriately for a range of purposes across the curriculum, with an increasing awareness of the reader such as a formal letter to a supermarket asking them not to build on the school's playing fields. In key stage 2, most pupils write at length in a number of forms. They have sound understanding of the structure of different genres and are using paragraphs effectively in their literacy work and across the curriculum. Many are using more adventurous vocabulary choices to create an effect, for example describing Henry VIII as "selfish, ungrateful and disrespectful" when writing Anne Boleyn's journal from the Tower of London. However, many pupils do not have a firm grasp of spelling patterns and punctuation, and this, coupled with untidy handwriting, too often hinders the quality of their work.

Pupils' Welsh skills are weak throughout the school. Most pupils in the foundation phase use and understand a few simple Welsh words and phrases. For example, they ask your name, enquire how you are and can name a number of colours, fruit and vegetables, and can count to 10. By key stage 2, many can ask a range of questions and others' opinions, although they have difficulty answering questions independently and at any length.

In the lower foundation phase, most pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. By the end of the foundation phase they work enthusiastically on their tasks. They develop good number skills and create and interpret simple graphs successfully, such as completing a tally chart of fruit brought in to school and creating a bar chart of the data. They use their mathematical skills well across the curriculum where appropriate, for example when populating a Venn diagram whilst comparing two versions of the Rapunzel story. In key stage 2, most develop a wide range of mathematical skills well. They use and apply these appropriately. A good example of this is their accurate drawing and interpretation of line graphs in science following an investigation into the volume of air and the length of time a flame will burn.

Pupils make limited progress in developing their ICT skills. In the foundation phase, pupils successfully move a programmable toy around a map with the help of an adult. They create simple graphs by adding data to a spreadsheet, access resources such as audio clips by using quick response codes, take photographs independently and record each other on video using green screen technology effectively. However, in key stage 2, these are not developed systematically and pupils' skills are limited to researching for information on the internet and producing elementary presentations.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Many pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and enjoy celebrating and discussing their work with adults. Nearly all pupils know, understand and embrace the school's values of "respect, understanding, learning, expectations, and safety". They also have a very clear understanding of the school's behaviour system. As a result, nearly all pupils are courteous and work diligently. However, the behaviour of a very few of the oldest pupils occasionally disrupts the learning of others. Most pupils feel safe and think the school deals well with bullying. Nearly all pupils like coming to school. They feel they can talk to an adult if they are upset or worried and believe the school expects them to work hard and do their best. Nearly all pupils understand the need to take regular exercise and the importance of eating and drinking healthily. They talk confidently about the need for a balanced diet. For example, pupils in the upper foundation phase know that eating fruit at playtimes helps keep you 'fit and strong'.

Most pupils have a strong understanding of how to stay safe online and give examples of precautions they should take when using the internet, such as not giving out personal details. Nearly all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 enjoy taking on the growing responsibility of their recently formed pupil voice groups. In particular, the Wellbeing Group is proud of its input into developing the school's behaviour reward system. Many pupils in the foundation phase make choices about what and how they are learning. However, older pupils do not develop their independence skills as well in their lessons. Nearly all pupils have a strong sense of fairness and tolerance of others.

Many pupils are well-motivated learners and engage purposefully with learning experiences. They show interest in their work and sustain concentration for appropriate lengths of time. All pupils enthuse about visits, which clearly have an impact on their learning. For example, a recent trip to Porthcawl beach gave them a rich experience of an environment that contrasted with their home surroundings.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Overall, the standard of teaching is adequate. Teachers have good working relationships with pupils and employ effective behaviour management strategies well that help pupils settle quickly in class. Learning support assistants engage well with the pupils and work effectively within and outside the classroom. They are particularly effective when delivering high quality, specific learning experiences to pupils for which they have received training.

Teachers plan interesting activities that engage many pupils well, for example, by dissecting a daisy picked in the school grounds and creating a display to name the main parts. Teachers are consistent in sharing the lesson's objectives and success criteria with pupils. They encourage pupils to recall previous knowledge in order to build on this prior learning effectively. Generally, teachers question pupils well, but there is inconsistency in the quality of the questioning from class to class.

Where teaching is at its best, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and engage all pupils effectively in improving their learning. However, the quality of teaching varies too much throughout the school. In a minority of lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and expectations are too low. This results in a few pupils who are not focused or interested in their work and therefore do not progress to the degree that they are capable.

Feedback to the pupils is simple and effective. Teachers are using the recently developed 'marking mat' consistently to ensure a whole school approach to providing quality feedback to pupils that allows them to move forward with their learning. As a result, pupils of all ages talk knowledgably about their work, what's good about it and what needs improving. They can point to subsequent work that has improved as a result of the marking. However, the feedback does not identify well enough the repeated elementary mistakes in spelling and punctuation. This results in the same errors being repeated by even the most able pupils.

The school's planned curriculum is varied and interesting and this has a positive impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to influence the direction of their learning. Useful curriculum maps help to ensure that stimulating topics, such as 'Blood Guts and Gore', provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their subject skills and to apply their literacy and numeracy skills effectively as they move through the school. Provision for the teaching of phonics in the foundation phase and of writing throughout the school, and for mathematical development, is robust and effective. A structured, consistent approach in these areas ensures that the needs of most pupils are met effectively. However, provision for developing pupils' skills in ICT and Welsh is underdeveloped.

In the lower foundation phase, staff plan well for the effective use of the well-resourced outdoor area to develop pupils' learning skills effectively. For example, staff prepare engaging activities that develop pupils' literacy, numeracy, creative and thinking skills well, as the pupils go on a mission to rescue vegetables from the 'Evil Pea'. In upper foundation phase, pupils have very few opportunities to engage in learning outdoors as the area is underdeveloped.

The school ensures that pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about their locality, and the history and culture of Wales through a good range of educational visits and visitors. Examples include a local Welsh artist who works with pupils to illustrate the school's values.

Care, support and guidance: Good

Leaders have focused on promoting the school's values well. Staff regularly refer to these values to remind pupils of expected behaviour. As a result, nearly all pupils subscribe to the school's ethos meaningfully. Staff give pupils helpful opportunities to communicate their emotions through regular 'check-ins' and the school's effective nurture provision.

Leaders provide effective support for those pupils with significantly weaker literacy skills. As a result, these pupils make good progress in their learning. Staff work well with a wide range of specialist services such as behaviour support and the educational psychologist and use their expertise to train staff effectively.

The school has a strong working relationship with parents and communicates with them well. Parent workshops help to develop this relationship and give parents useful advice about how they can support their children at home. For example, a recent well-attended workshop showed parents what a guided reading session is and how parents could explore the features of a non-fiction text with their child. The school holds worthwhile parent-council meetings, at which parents can raise concerns and discuss issues with staff.

Staff use a clear, robust system for tracking pupil attainment and monitoring their progress. Leaders have regular, valuable meetings with teachers to discuss each pupil's academic progress and their social and emotional development. They identify issues well and respond effectively through the provision of targeted support. The nurture provision is a strength of the school.

Staff hold worthwhile debriefing meetings at the end of each day in which pupil behaviour and other concerns are discussed and appropriate and prompt action is taken. The school's personal and social education lessons provide a purposeful cross-section of activities that relate to equality, diversity, harassment and bullying, which support the development of pupils' social skills well.

Leaders provide good opportunities for all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 to participate in its pupil voice groups, such as the Wellbeing or Teaching and Learning groups. Staff encourage pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the importance of making choices that will have a successful effect on their health, for example by encouraging foundation phase pupils to drink milk as it helps keep their bones healthy. The school has appropriate arrangements in place to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders monitor pupil attendance robustly. The school provides safe, secure and spacious accommodation with good open spaces. However, the outdoor learning environment in the upper foundation phase is underdeveloped. Support staff are well trained and work productively as a team. They have a strong sense of empathy and compassion towards pupils. Staff encourage pupils to engage well with the creative arts. For example, a recent transition activity gave pupils the opportunity to work in an opera workshop with singers and musicians.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher is a powerful role model who leads by example and communicates high expectations in all that he does. He focuses relentlessly on improving teaching and learning and ensures that effective training and support take place for all staff. For example, he leads training for teachers that results in purposeful, consistent lesson planning across the whole school. He promotes the school's inspirational vision and values very effectively. The staff and pupils relate strongly to these values and they are a significant factor in the positive ethos that pervades the school.

The headteacher is supported well by other senior leaders to form a strong team. The deputy headteacher drives important improvements in school. For example, she leads a successful family learning course that results in notable gains in confidence and academic performance for those pupils involved.

Leaders have robust systems for evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses that lead to a good understanding of what they need to prioritise in order to improve. Thorough, detailed school improvement plans address such issues effectively. For example, staff now follow consistent approaches to behaviour management that have significantly reduced exclusions and ensure that most pupils behave well. However, the self-evaluation process does not always focus with enough precision on what is needed to improve pupil performance. For example, whilst there are useful resources to improve pupils' ability to work out problems in mathematics, there is no analysis of why the pupils find this aspect of mathematics particularly difficult.

The governing body fulfil their statutory duties appropriately and monitor the finances of the school effectively. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and receive thorough, robust reports about the performance of the school and pupils. Many of the governors are new to the role and links to enable governors to obtain first-hand knowledge of what happens in the school are at an early stage of development. This limits the governors' ability to challenge the school about how well pupils are doing.

Senior leaders create a strong learning culture that involves all staff. Learning support assistants benefit from the development of important skills that have direct impact on the pupils' learning. For example, they have been trained in the use of effective programmes that develop pupils' emotional wellbeing successfully. Support staff appreciate this professional development and feel valued as a result. Senior leaders address issues of underperformance robustly and directly, where necessary.

Leaders place high priority on improving the learning environment. For example, the senior leader in the nursery and reception classes has created a vibrant learning environment that enthuses pupils and accelerates their learning. Leaders target funds sensibly to where they will provide the best value for money. For example, the pupil development grant pays for support staff, who meet the needs of targeted vulnerable pupils effectively.

Copies of the report

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

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses 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:

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