



*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**  
**Morrison Comprehensive School**

**Heol Maes Eglwys**  
**Morrison**  
**Swansea**  
**SA6 6NH**

**Date of inspection: November 2010**

**by**

**Peter Harris**

**Under contract to**

**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:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	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

Morrison Comprehensive School is an English-medium 11-18 comprehensive school of 1,119 students and pupils, including 221 in the sixth form. While there has been a fall in the total number of learners at the school since 2004 when the school was last inspected, numbers of students attending the sixth form have risen.

Nearly 18% of pupils are eligible for free school meals compared with the Welsh average of about 15% for secondary schools. No pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes.

The school's intake represents the full range of ability, but overall is just below average. Three percent of pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN). This figure matches the average for Wales as a whole.

The headteacher took up his post in April 2007. The present senior leadership team (SLT) is comprised of one deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and a business manager.

The school seeks to make its mission statement "Achievement for All" a reality in the lives of all learners.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Morrison Comprehensive School is £3861 which compares with a maximum of £5434 and a minimum of £3544 for secondary school in Swansea. The school has the 11<sup>th</sup> highest budget per pupil out of the 15 secondary schools in Swansea.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

Generally Morriston Comprehensive School is a good school. Standards in key stage 4 and in the sixth form are good. However, inspectors judged overall standards as adequate because important areas in key stage 3 require improvement.

### Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because of the:

- successful leadership of the headteacher and senior staff;
- record of improving standards of achievement, particularly in key stage 4; and
- robust systems to review progress and identify areas for improvement; and clear priorities for improvement that are supported by comprehensive plans with suitably allocated resources.

## Recommendations

In order to improve further the staff and Governors of Morriston Comprehensive School need to:

- R1 Improve standards in key stage 3, particularly in English;
- R2 Improve the quality of teaching in key stage 3;
- R3 Improve the provision for key skills and Welsh language development across the school;
- R4 Improve staffing arrangements in key stage 3;
- R5 Improve the provision for pupils with SEN in mainstream classes;
- R6 Continue to improve attendance;
- R7 Improve school reports to parents; and
- R8 Continue to work with the local authority to improve accommodation.

All these recommendations are reflected in current plans.

### **What happens next?**

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.

## Main findings

**Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?**

**Adequate**

### **Standards: Adequate**

In key stage three, results fall below national and family (1) averages in English, mathematics and the core subject indicator (CSI) (2). Results in science are below Welsh averages and slightly above those of the family of schools. When compared with similar schools in terms of FSM benchmarks, results in English and the CSI are in the bottom 25% while those in mathematics and science are broadly in line with the average. Apart from 2008, performance in the CSI has been below average for the last three years when compared with similar schools in terms of the FSM benchmarks. Similarly, apart from 2008, pupils' progress from the previous key stage has been significantly below average.

In key stage 4, performance on nearly all indicators has improved over the last three years. It is above the national average and that of the family of schools. In 2010, the percentage of pupils attaining the level 2 threshold including English and mathematics improved by almost seven percentage points from 2009. No pupil left school without a qualification. Over the past three years, performance on most indicators has been in the top 25% when compared with similar schools in terms of the FSM benchmarks. On the whole, pupils make very good progress over this key stage.

In the sixth form, learners' attainment at the level 3 threshold and on the wider points score is slightly above national averages. This represents a good level of achievement for these students.

In all key stages, girls attain higher standards than boys. The gap in relative performance is larger than average. Specific groups of pupils, including those entitled to free school meals, looked-after children and those with additional learning needs, make good progress in line with their abilities.

Pupils make limited progress in key stage 3 in acquiring the skills and knowledge needed to move on to the next stage of learning. In key stage 4, their progress is consistently good. Most pupils remain in full-time education at the end of key stage 4, either in the school or elsewhere. Over 70% go on to higher education after the sixth form. All pupils leaving school in summer 2010 entered further education, training or employment. These figures are better than national averages.

In key stage 3, pupils make satisfactory progress during lessons; in key stage 4 and in the sixth form, learners' progress is good. The majority of pupils remembers previous work and uses this well to learn new skills. In many subjects, pupils develop their thinking skills well and apply these effectively to solve problems. Most listen well to teachers and each other and this supports their progress in learning. The majority of pupils read and write well, and can express views clearly. In a few lessons pupils use their numeracy skills and ICT skills well. However these skills are underdeveloped across the curriculum.

Pupils are beginning to make acceptable progress in Welsh second language. In 2010, a majority of pupils gained a GCSE in Welsh second language from a full or short course. While throughout the school pupils are aware of their Welsh identity, they do not use Welsh independently or make sufficient use of their Welsh-language skills outside Welsh lessons.

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(1) Families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in deprived areas, from ethnic minority backgrounds, and having special education needs.

(2) The core subject indicator refers to the percentage of pupils who gain the expected level in Welsh or English, mathematics and science combined.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all pupils have a secure understanding of how to be healthy. They have positive attitudes to healthy eating. They exercise regularly and most engage readily in a wide range of activities that promote their physical fitness. Pupils feel safe.

On the whole, pupils are motivated to do well and willingly engage in activities within and outside the classroom.

Attendance rates over the last three years fall below the national average. Standards of behaviour across the school are consistently good.

Through the school council and other groups, pupils contribute effectively to many aspects of school life, particularly in relation to healthy eating and the school environment. Pupils have been influential in helping to develop a number of policies and contribute to the process of appointing members of staff. They are represented on the school's governing body as associate members. By various means such as regular questionnaires, pupils give their views on a wide range of issues concerning how and what they learn.

Pupils relate to each other in an exemplary way and have good social skills. They readily take on responsibilities and older pupils are well prepared for life and work outside school.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

While inspectors judged outcomes to be adequate they judged provision to be good because of the features indicated below.

The curriculum in key stage 3 is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements.

Over the last two years the curriculum in key stage 4 has broadened considerably. It meets the needs of learners very well. Enrichment courses extend achievements for the more able and a variety of successful vocational courses has greatly enhanced

experiences and opportunities for all learners. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) Learning Pathways (LP) 14-19.

Strong collaboration with a neighbouring school has widened the options available to sixth formers to their considerable benefit. Out-of-school hours learning experiences contribute very effectively to learners' achievements.

The school enables learners to develop skills necessary to access the wider curriculum; however, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that there is comprehensive progression in skill development is not secure. The accreditation of skill development is inconsistent.

In key stage 4, all learners follow the short or long course in Welsh second language. The policy for promoting Welsh language development and the Welsh dimension throughout the school is good, but provision has yet to impact fully on standards.

The school has been awarded the Green Flag for raising the learners' awareness of sustainable development. This is a notable feature of the school's work and activities.

Learners acquire a wide range of experiences and awareness of international cultures which successfully enhances their understanding of global issues.

### **Teaching: Good**

Teachers plan effective lessons that contain a good range of activities which motivate and inspire pupils. Many explain the purpose of the lesson carefully and question pupils skilfully to develop their understanding. Lessons proceed at a good pace. Working relationships in the classroom are very good and teachers challenge pupils to achieve their best.

In a few lessons, mainly in key stage 3, activities are overly directed by teachers, the pace is slow and they do not cater sufficiently for pupils of all abilities.

Many teachers mark pupils' work regularly and carefully. They provide pupils with good advice on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However this practice is inconsistent.

There are good arrangements to record pupils' achievements and progress against targets. Teachers use this information effectively to monitor pupils' progress and tackle any underachievement, especially in key stage 4.

The school reports to parents about their children's progress in a satisfactory way. All reports contain targets for improvement but they are of variable quality. Parents are encouraged to respond to the reports.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Healthy development and wellbeing are given a high priority at the school. The range of activities and provision is extensive and is a strength.



The school provides good care and support enhanced by a wide range of effective support services. Sixth formers provide worthwhile support for younger pupils.

The Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme is delivered effectively and supported by a wide range of specialist services. Good care and guidance support learners well on entry and as they move from one key stage to the next. Where required, learners receive appropriate impartial learning support.

The school successfully promotes the development of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school has an appropriate policy and has effective procedures for safeguarding.

Provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) is adequate. The school identifies specific targets which are clearly set out in individual education plans (IEP). Learners' attainments are tracked carefully and checked on a regular basis using appropriate data. Although learners' with SEN are identified accurately, there are insufficient formal arrangements to monitor the effectiveness of activities and tasks planned to meet their needs when they are in mainstream classes.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is a well-established inclusive community. Equal opportunities are promoted for all pupils. The school is very successful in developing tolerant attitudes and in promoting the prevention and elimination of oppressive behaviour.

The school's policies and PSE programme ensure an ethos of equality. The annual Diversity Day for pupils and the community is unique to the area and is exemplary.

The school building is in generally good decorative order. It is kept clean and tidy and the grounds are well maintained. While parts of the accommodation are unsatisfactory, plans to rebuild and refurbish are already in hand.

There are sufficient resources to support pupils' learning.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

While inspectors judged outcomes to be adequate they judged leadership and management to be good because of the features indicated below.

The headteacher and his SLT have clear priorities for the school and focussed plans to bring about improvements. The headteacher has successfully established a culture in which staff with management responsibilities make worthwhile contributions to the strategic development of the school. This distribution of leadership is a good feature of the school.

Performance management processes are robust. They identify effectively staff development needs and prioritise training in line with whole school strategic plans.

Leaders promote high expectations. This has a beneficial effect on teaching and standards across the school, particularly in key stage 4 and the sixth form. Pupils and staff benefit from a whole-school ethos of caring and support. This is a strong feature of the school. Governors are well-informed about the school's performance. They challenge and support the school in setting targets for continued improvement.

The school shows a high level of commitment to implementing most national and local priorities such as promoting healthy lifestyles, maintaining a wide choice for learners and promoting sustainable development and global citizenship.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The headteacher and senior managers have an accurate understanding of the performance of the school. They make good use of a comprehensive range of first-hand performance data to arrive at their conclusions. The cycle of monitoring, evaluation and review is well embedded in school procedures.

Subject leaders review the performance of their areas though the rigour of this process is more variable, especially in the extent to which they use lesson observation to judge standards.

Planning for improvement is of a high standard. It builds on the results of self-evaluation to set challenging short and medium term priorities. Plans allocate appropriate resources and clearly identify success criteria. Faculty and school development planning are suitably linked. There is a detailed plan to raise standards in key stage three.

Staff development needs are diagnosed carefully and are effective. The sharing of professional knowledge both within the school and with other schools and partners is good.

Generally the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school is adept at developing partnerships which demonstrate clearly its capacity to work with others to improve provision and raise standards. Positive links exist with neighbouring primary and secondary schools and transition arrangements between all phases are good.

Exceptionally strong links with the local community, including parents, produce considerable mutual benefit. The Family Learning Scheme is unique among Swansea secondary schools and is outstanding. A highly effective working partnership with Communities First has a significant impact on pupil development.

The school collaborates very well with all its partners and plans, manages and assures the quality of provision consistently.

**Resource management: Adequate**

Staff resources are managed appropriately to deliver the school's action plans. The curriculum is largely delivered by subject specialists; where teachers are required to teach outside their specialism, appropriate training and support are provided. The school meets statutory requirements regarding teacher workload. Ancillary staff make a very valuable contribution to the school.

The allocation of resources sufficiently supports priorities for improvement. The SLT and governing body are working effectively with the local authority to plan the 3-year recovery from a deficit budget.

The management of the school site and buildings is good. Maintenance and improvement are carefully planned and are carried out in line with overall priorities. The sharing of facilities with the leisure centre is well-managed and ensures enhanced provision for learners.

Shared teaching of post-16 groups with a neighbouring school and adjustments to the key stage four curriculum delivery effectively address the needs of learners. However, as a result of shared timetabling with other providers, there are too many split classes in key stage three.

The school's outcomes are good in key stage 4 and in the sixth form although the overall value for money is only adequate because of the standards of attainment in key stage 3.

## Appendix 1

### **Data report:**

The data report is available on the Estyn website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report:**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

One hundred and eighty-three parent questionnaires were completed, representing an adequate proportion of the total number of parents. Overall, they expressed positive views about the school. Nearly all say that the school expects their children to work hard and to do their best. Nearly all parents are satisfied with the school and say their children like being there. Most feel that their children are safe at school and that their children are making good progress, the teaching is good and that their children are well prepared for moving onto college or work. Most say that the school is well run and find it approachable if they have any questions or concerns. Many feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress.

#### **Responses to learner questionnaires**

Questionnaires were completed by around 25% of the pupils, who were selected at random. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school. Most feel they are doing well in school, that there are enough resources to enable them to learn well and they have many opportunities to get regular exercise. They say that teaching is good, and that they are encouraged to do things for themselves and to take on responsibility. Most feel the school helps them to be ready for the next stage of education, training or work. Many feel that the school deals well with bullying and that they have someone to talk to if they are worried. Many also say that they are treated with respect, and that they are helped to understand and respect people from different backgrounds. A majority of pupils feels that the school listens to their views and think behaviour is good.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Peter Harris	Reporting Inspector
Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
David Hughes	Team Inspector
Delyth Williams	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Sarah Logan	Peer Inspector
Sandra Joy	School Nominee

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## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

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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