



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

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Haverfordwest Junior V.C. School
Barn Street
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Pembrokeshire
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by

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

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Outcome of monitoring

Haverfordwest Junior VC school is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in February 2016.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Improve the standards of pupils' reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Throughout the school, many pupils read at an appropriate level for their age. The school's reading assessment analysis shows that nearly all pupils have made suitable progress in reading from the baseline assessments. Most pupils in Year 3 use a range of strategies to help them read. They have a good sight vocabulary and use letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. They connect new stories to those that they have read previously. For example, Year 6 pupils are able to link characters and events from a series of science fiction books. Across the school, many pupils now read fluently and with increasing expression and intonation. Most pupils have a good understanding of the books that they read and discuss the content in detail and with enthusiasm. They predict what might happen in a story and explain their reasons with reference to the text. Most pupils' research skills are developing appropriately. For example, they use search engines to find information on renewable energy as part of a non-fiction writing task in English. As a result, most pupils have a good understanding of how to summarise and present information effectively.

Many pupils write appropriately across the curriculum for a range of purposes. For example, pupils in Year 4 write well-structured diary entries to describe an encounter with 'The Iron Man' and Year 5 and Year 6 pupils write persuasive text to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of electric cars. Across the school, many pupils use a wider range of punctuation appropriately. By Year 6, most pupils use paragraphs and punctuation effectively to structure their work. The standard of pupils' handwriting has improved over the past year and most pupils now use a legible joined script. Nearly all show pride in the presentation of their work and use neat handwriting effectively, especially when writing their final drafts. Pupils' ability to spell words correctly is generally appropriate to their age, although a few pupils in all classes make errors when spelling common words and when using punctuation.

Many pupils make good progress with their numeracy skills and are beginning to apply their reasoning and problem solving skills across the curriculum more often. For example, Year 6 pupils use their knowledge and skills well when finding the mean, median and mode of data relating to their research into drag racing. They apply these skills effectively to record data on a spreadsheet from their science experiment, using formulae correctly to analyse the results. Teachers now plan more effectively for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in different contexts. For example, Year 3 pupils use their problem solving skills and knowledge of area effectively to draw full scale rectangles on the yard as part of their work on 'The Iron Man' novel.

Nearly all pupils develop a good range of effective ICT skills. Many pupils are able to apply their ICT skills independently in subjects across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 use their knowledge of spreadsheet formulae effectively to analyse data from a range of sources. Most are able to use databases appropriately for a range of purposes, for example pupils access a database to identify mini-beasts that have more than four legs. Nearly all pupils use a range of desktop publishing and presentation software effectively, for example to produce a pamphlet on Wales and to publish illustrated work on The Nativity. Most Year 5 pupils are able to use video recording apps to record their work, for example when discussing TV programmes in Welsh lessons. Nearly all are able to access the internet successfully to support their learning and they know how to stay safe online, for example by using passwords to protect their online accounts.

Recommendation 2: Improve the standards of pupils' Welsh language skills

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has adapted the local authority's Welsh language scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression of pupils' skills across the school effectively. Most staff model the use of the Welsh language well. They use Welsh regularly to greet pupils as they move around the school and give instructions and praise in lessons. Members of the 'Criw Cymraeg' encourage other pupils to use Welsh regularly across the school. They organise a very effective weekly assembly through the medium of Welsh to reward pupils for speaking the language throughout the week. For example, they reward pupils with a lunch at the top table where they serve the winners and converse with them through the medium of Welsh. The school has adopted the Siarter Iaith to help promote Welsh language and culture. As a result, nearly all pupils have a positive attitude towards learning the language and most are keen to use it around the school.

Most pupils use familiar Welsh phrases regularly. They greet each other and visitors in Welsh and use familiar words and sentence patterns well in a range of situations across the school. In Year 3, many pupils ask and answer simple questions appropriately, for example about the weather or their families. They also use their language skills well to give a class presentation about selling a house in the local area. By Year 6, many pupils use relevant phrases and sentences to talk about themselves, for example explaining what they like to do in their spare time.

Pupils are beginning to read and interpret Welsh texts appropriately. The recent introduction of regular guided reading sessions is having a positive effect on pupils' ability to read and understand a range of Welsh texts. As a result, many pupils are beginning to read and discuss the content of books with increasing confidence using familiar sentence patterns appropriately. This is also helping to improve their pronunciation of Welsh words and phrases. In Year 6, many pupils are able to read their work confidently and able to explain the content appropriately.

Most pupils use vocabulary banks and sentence patterns to support them to write appropriately for a range of purposes. In Year 3, most pupils are able to use a variety of sentence patterns appropriately to write a description of Dewi Sant and Year 5 pupils write effectively to express their views about various television programmes. The use of 'Captain America' as a writing mascot also helps to

promote the use of Welsh in the home and develop pupils' writing skills effectively as they record a diary of their weekend with the character. However, most pupils continue to rely on guidance and support from the teacher to complete their written work.

Recommendation 3: Improve pupils' attendance and behaviour

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The most recent verified attendance figures show an improvement in pupils' attendance. Attendance rates for 2016 were 94.1% compared with 93.4% in the previous year. This increase still places the school in the bottom 25% when compared with similar schools, however it is now closer to the group made up of the lower 50%. The attendance of boys is generally weaker than that of girls and the gap in the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not eligible is wider than the local authority and national averages. Unverified data for the previous academic year showed attendance at 94.6%, which demonstrates a continuing upward trend in pupils' attendance levels.

The school has appointed two pupils as attendance ambassadors who promote good attendance across the school. The pupils chosen for this role have improved their own rates of attendance and share their experiences of how they achieved this with other pupils. They promote good attendance within the school by giving out trophies and certificates in their weekly assemblies. Nearly all pupils understand the need to attend school regularly and are involved in activities that monitor attendance. For example, all pupils take part in a 'premier league' contest in which boys and girls compete to improve their attendance levels. The school's most recent data shows that this has had a particularly positive impact on boys' attendance.

The home-school liaison officer tracks the attendance of different groups of pupils effectively. She has raised expectations about acceptable levels of attendance and is now working with families of pupils whose attendance is below the school target of 95%. She is proactive in identifying the reasons for pupils' non-attendance at school and is creative in finding solutions to address these. For example, she has introduced ways to celebrate pupils' birthdays at school to try to prevent families from keeping pupils at home on these days. The school has been successful in reducing the number of pupils who arrive late in the morning by encouraging pupils to attend breakfast club.

Since the core inspection, pupils' behaviour has improved, with a marked reduction in exclusions during the last academic year. In addition, there have been no exclusions during the current academic year. All staff use the school's positive rewards scheme well to promote and consolidate good behaviour. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly environment. Nearly all pupils are very proud of their school and engage well in their learning. They show an interest in their work, concentrate well during lessons and persevere appropriately when completing tasks.

Recommendation 4: Develop curriculum planning that ensures the systematic coverage of the National Curriculum and of the National Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks as pupils move through the school

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has adapted its planning to ensure that teachers deliver all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Teachers have developed appropriate plans to deliver the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework. These ensure that pupils make good progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills as they move through the school. In addition, the school has purchased materials to help teachers plan exciting and engaging projects that enable pupils to use these skills in a range of purposeful contexts. Teachers have revised their plans to ensure that topic work consolidates and reinforces the work taught in mathematics and English lessons.

Teachers have adapted the school's approach to topic work to avoid delivering the same themes in all year groups at the same time. This has provided better opportunities for all pupils to access books and resources relevant to their learning. The school uses a range of external curriculum providers appropriately to enhance pupils learning experiences, for example to develop pupils' investigative skills in science and to teach coding in ICT. The school has also adopted a new scheme of work for science. Recent work in pupils' books shows an improvement in the quality and quantity of science. As a result, teachers now provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to record work and use their numeracy skills when undertaking science investigations.

Recommendation 5: Ensure that all teachers deliver lessons of at least good quality in all classes

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The acting headteacher and governing body have stabilised the school's teaching arrangements since the core inspection. All teachers at the school are now permanent members of staff. They work well together as a team and are committed to improving outcomes for pupils. Nearly all staff have good working relationships with pupils and have high expectations of what they can achieve.

Nearly all teachers use a suitable range of teaching strategies to support effective learning. For example, they plan activities that allow pupils to reflect about and build on previous learning effectively. Nearly all teachers now plan appropriately to ensure that tasks and learning experiences meet the needs of most pupils. However, pupils are not always provided with suitable opportunities to choose challenging tasks independently. Throughout the school, teachers use fewer worksheets that limit the amount pupils write and there are increased opportunities for pupils to record their work independently. Teachers model different genres of writing well and engage pupils effectively through purposeful questioning. As a result, most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills.

School leaders have reviewed the roles and responsibilities of teaching assistants within the school. There is now an appropriate number of staff to support teaching and learning. The acting headteacher has ensured that teaching assistants are well qualified for the roles that they undertake in school. As a result, they contribute well to pupils' learning and the progress that they make.

School leaders monitor the quality of teaching regularly and provide useful feedback to teachers about what they do well and the aspects of their teaching that they need to improve. Leaders use these monitoring activities to identify good practice that they share within the school.

Recommendation 6: Establish robust assessment and pupil tracking procedures that reflect accurately the standards that pupils achieve

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

All teachers use the school's electronic pupil tracking system well to record pupil progress. The school is currently developing a new system that will reduce duplication in this process and provide a more robust mechanism to set targets for pupils and to track their progress more effectively. As a result, teachers are now using this information purposefully in regular pupil progress meetings. This allows them to discuss the progress of individual and groups of pupils and to plan more effectively for their needs. However, this is at an early stage of development and is too early to measure its impact on pupils' standards.

Teachers work together effectively to moderate pupils' work from different year groups within the school and across the local cluster. As a result, teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' achievements. They also use information from tests effectively to identify areas for improvement at individual pupil level as well as whole class and school levels. For example, the outcomes of national numeracy tests led to the planning of activities to improve pupils' understanding of perimeter and area in Year 6.

Nearly all teachers use the new marking and assessment for learning strategy effectively. They give appropriate feedback to pupils about what they have done well and how they can improve their work. They provide pupils with useful opportunities to reflect on and respond to this feedback. Most pupils use teachers' comments well to make improvements to their work. Most teachers provide pupils with useful opportunities to assess their own progress and that of their peers. As a result, many pupils are developing a better understanding of what they need to do to improve their skills.

Nearly all teachers share lesson objectives and success criteria appropriately at the start of lessons using language appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. This provides pupils with a good understanding of how they can apply their skills in lessons and how to assess their own progress. Across the school, pupils are beginning to form their own appropriate success criteria for a given task.

Recommendation 7: Establish an effective leadership and staffing structure and implement robust performance management procedures with all staff

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

Since September 2015, the headteacher of the nearby infant school has taken leadership responsibility for the junior school in addition to her permanent post. This long-term arrangement has the backing of both governing bodies and the local authority. It has been crucial in ensuring stability of leadership and has led to improvements in provision and the raising of standards.

The acting headteacher carries out her role with rigour and determination. She is supported ably by the assistant headteacher who joined the school in January 2017. This appointment has further strengthened the leadership capacity within the school. As a result, the school has an effective senior leadership team with the capability to carry the school forward.

There have been many staff changes since the core inspection in February 2016. The school now has a stable staffing structure. This enables leaders to develop systems, processes and policies that address successfully the priorities of the school's post inspection action plan. All four classes now have permanent teachers. The school has undertaken a review of support staff and has rationalised these roles. All staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and this includes the leadership of literacy, numeracy, assessment and Welsh. Staff work well as a team to address the recommendations of the core inspection report. For example, they have collaborated to rejuvenate the curriculum and new themes have been introduced throughout the school that use science investigation at their heart. This has resulted in improved provision for science and there is evidence of an improvement in pupils' work in this subject.

The headteacher implements effective performance management procedures for all teachers and support staff. Objectives set from this process relate well to the school's priorities for improvement and link well to the standards that pupils achieve. These processes have a positive effect on outcomes for pupils. For example, as a result of a common objective to improve literacy and a focus on the progress that individual pupils make, overall standards in literacy have improved.

Recommendation 8: Ensure that all governors understand their roles and provide effective challenge to school leaders

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

There have been many changes to the school's governing body since the core inspection in February 2016. These include the election of a chair and the co-opting of an experienced governor from the local infant school. The appointment of new governors has strengthened the skills and expertise of members of the governing body and has helped to increase its overall effectiveness. Many governors have undertaken appropriate training with the local authority and other schools. Governors have developed a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are providing appropriate levels of challenge to senior leaders.

Governors take their role in monitoring progress against the school's post inspection action plan seriously. Individual governors have responsibility for the monitoring of progress towards each recommendation. Teachers attend governing body meetings regularly to provide reports on the progress made in their areas of responsibility.

Governors visit the school regularly to review the quality of provision and see the standards achieved by pupils. The monitoring activities undertaken by governors link clearly to the school's improvement priorities. They now record findings from these visits appropriately and provide details of these to the governing body's school improvement panel. This has a very positive effect on governors' understanding of the progress that the school is making and the areas that still require further

development. For example, a recent book scrutiny exercise enabled members of the governing body to discuss and challenge the school on pupils' literacy standards. This has strengthened further the governors' understanding of the school's work and progress against its improvement targets.

Recommendation 9: Ensure that self-evaluation is based on a broad range of first-hand evidence and that improvement actions have a measurable impact on pupils' standards and wellbeing

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Leaders and teachers use monitoring information well to provide an honest picture of the school's strengths and important areas that need improvement. The school has a purposeful and useful monitoring, evaluation and review cycle. This includes regular lesson observations, work scrutiny and the analysis of pupil performance data. In addition, staff gather first-hand evidence on the opinions of pupils through listening and engaging with all the influential and mature pupil voice groups. For example, the reading ambassadors recently recognised the need to improve the school's library provision to continue to raise reading standards. As a result, the school is acting on the pupils' request to decorate the library area and purchase a mix of new paper and electronic books.

Monitoring arrangements are a routine part of the school's work. The links between the outcomes of monitoring, improvements to provision and outcomes for pupils are developing appropriately. For example, leaders' ongoing scrutiny of pupils' written work and the impact of teacher feedback are leading to improvements in the quality of many pupils' handwriting and presentation across the school. However, the school recognises the need to develop further the skills and understanding of leaders, staff and governors to undertake effective and reliable self-evaluation. Work with the local authority has been beneficial in improving this and the school is developing the capability to make accurate judgements about its work without external support.

Overall, self-evaluation and monitoring activities are thorough and focused on whole school priorities. These have resulted in improvements in provision and standards since the core inspection. For example, scrutiny of end of key stage data and the self-evaluation of provision in science has led to an improvement in both planning and standards in the subject.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.