



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

A report on

**Gendros Primary School
Armine Road
Fforestfach
SA5 8DB**

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by

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

About Gendros Primary School

Gendros Primary School is in Fforestfach, in the city and county of Swansea. It has 308 pupils aged from 3 to 11, including forty-seven who attend the two Nursery classes on a part-time basis. There are four other single-age classes and five mixed-age classes.

The three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 26%, which is higher than the Wales average of 18%. The school has identified approximately 34% of pupils as having additional learning needs, which is higher than the Welsh average of around 21%. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity. Around 6% speak English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language. A very few pupils are in the care of the local authority.

The school was last inspected in March 2013. The headteacher has been in post since January 2011.

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 headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team and ensure that the school provides very helpful, individual support for pupils and families. There is a very caring and supportive ethos, where nearly all pupils are happy and feel they are valued. All pupils learn about their rights, which helps them to support each other and to feel safe in school. They show a strong understanding of respect and tolerance, based on their knowledge of the values that the school promotes. Nearly all pupils behave very well and are polite and welcoming to visitors.

Teachers provide interesting opportunities for pupils to relate their learning to real-life situations and this engages most pupils effectively in their tasks. As a result, most pupils make good progress with their learning as they move through the school.

Staff have useful opportunities to learn from each other and from other schools. They share good practice in teaching and learning regularly. This has brought about improvements in the curriculum and to the school environment. Classrooms are inviting with colourful displays of pupils' work and there are extensive outdoor areas to support pupils' physical development well.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that staff plan work that meets the needs of all pupils appropriately
- R2 Increase opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how and what they learn
- R3 Sharpen monitoring activities to evaluate the impact on pupil outcomes more clearly

What happens next

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

Main findings

Standards: Good

Most pupils start school with skills that are around the expected level for their age. During their time in the foundation phase, most pupils grow in confidence when speaking and most listen attentively to stories in English and Welsh. Most take turns in conversation and listen well to others' contributions. In key stage 2, most older pupils use their oracy skills successfully to ask detailed questions when they plan to present information and take on the role of a character from the second world war.

By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils make good progress with their reading skills and begin to talk about a few authors they know. Many use different strategies well to work out unfamiliar words. In key stage 2, most pupils read effectively to find key information, using skimming and scanning to identify the phrase or word they need. Many understand what they read very well, and discuss characters, settings and humour in the text confidently.

Nearly all pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. Younger pupils in foundation phase enjoy mark making and go on to attempt simple sentences. By the end of the foundation phase, most pupils produce short pieces of writing using their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt spellings appropriately. They begin to write imaginatively. For example, they produce simple poems based on their Autumn topic, using interesting vocabulary such as 'delicate' or 'colourful'. In key stage 2, most pupils develop into independent writers. They write for a suitable range of purposes. For example, they produce leaflets on 'how to be savvy with money' or write a biography on Martin Luther King. Most writing is reasonably accurate, but the quality of handwriting and presentation is variable.

As pupils progress through the foundation phase, they become confident at counting accurately. They begin to explain how they worked out their answers when doing simple calculations. Most pupils in Year 2 develop a good understanding of shape, money and measures. Most understand where to start measuring when using a ruler to measure an object. By the end of foundation phase, a few pupils work with independence when solving mathematical problems.

In key stage 2, most pupils make steady progress and by Year 4, nearly all work systematically and choose the operation they need when solving addition and subtraction problems. Most pupils use their numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, older pupils draw and interpret line graphs to compare their heart rates before and after taking exercise. Many are beginning to develop their own strategies to solve mathematical problems accurately.

Most pupils develop their information communication technology skills confidently as they move through the school. By Year 2, most pupils use a word processing programme successfully to share information. They use a simple database confidently to record the favourite superhero of members of the class and control the movement of a character in a race across the screen. In key stage 2, most pupils use word processing and desktop publishing programs to share information skilfully. For example, they create presentations to share the outcomes of their research on

Welsh castles and to create a storyboard to retell the story of Gelert. Most pupils create and use their own databases and spreadsheets successfully, for example to work out the cost of a healthy lunch box. Nearly all pupils know how to stay safe online.

Throughout the school, many pupils make good progress in developing their Welsh language skills. As part of their daily routines, most pupils in foundation phase sing simple Welsh rhymes and songs with enthusiasm. Many follow instructions well and respond to teachers' questions using a simple vocabulary. They use basic greetings and phrases confidently.

In key stage 2, many pupils are able to ask and respond to a variety of questions and give opinions in Welsh. By Year 6, many pupils use more complex language patterns. They extend their sentences successfully when explaining their likes and dislikes and discussing their hobbies. However, they do not choose to use the Welsh they know in the daily life of the school very often.

Many pupils write well in Welsh, for example to produce letters, dialogues and descriptions of themselves and other people. Most pupils in key stage 2 read simple Welsh texts confidently and show that they understand the meaning of the content. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils' writing skills in Welsh are progressing well.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel happy and safe in school and know who to go to if they are worried or have a problem. Nearly all have a clear understanding of how to keep safe online. For example, they know the importance of setting passwords and not sharing them with anyone and that they should not put their personal information on the internet.

Most pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and taking part in exercise. Many participate in a wide range of school clubs such as netball and football. Nearly all enjoy the daily morning yoga sessions that benefit them physically and contribute effectively to their general wellbeing.

The behaviour of nearly all pupils is very good. They are tolerant of each other, play well together and treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. Pupils of mixed ages cooperate effectively, for example, during the coding club and 'Cryw Cymraeg' meetings.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding about the United Nations convention on the rights of the child and take their commitment as a school that respects everyone's rights very seriously. The school's 'Rights Ambassadors' use their training in restorative practices to assist with any disagreements on the yard at playtimes effectively. Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes and behaviour towards others, and understand that they should treat everyone with respect. This is a particularly strong feature of the school, which pupils, staff and parents value.

Across the school, pupil leadership is developing well in areas such as the eco council and the 'Cryw Cymraeg'. Pupils in these groups take their roles and responsibilities seriously. Pupil groups influence some activities well. For example,

the eco committee has been instrumental in securing a grant to improve the pond on the school grounds to support pupils' outdoor learning. However, adults often direct too much of the work of the school council group.

Most pupils enjoy the learning opportunities offered to them and are eager to learn. Many have developed sufficient self-control and resilience to stay on task. For example, reception pupils persevered to re-enact the story of Goldilocks and the three bears in the role play area. In nearly all classes, pupils work together productively to make decisions, share their ideas and help one another to improve their work.

Over recent years, many pupils and parents have responded positively to the school's focus on improving attendance and they understand the importance of attending school regularly and on time.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The school delivers a broad curriculum that engages the interest of nearly all pupils successfully. Teachers are beginning to incorporate the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales and the areas of learning into their planning. As a result, many teachers are beginning to plan to provide relevant learning experiences for pupils to apply their skills within real-life situations. For example, they discuss and calculate how to share the cost of a meal in a restaurant and they research how much time an average person spends on their mobile phone during the course of the day.

Most teachers plan well for the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through a range of purposeful cross-curricular themes and topics. For example, pupils write a balanced argument as to whether children should have their own mobile phone. The school is developing its provision to meet the requirements of the digital competency framework well. As a result, pupils apply their ICT skills successfully in many learning areas. For example, they create simple animations to share the impact that humans are having on the animals living in the rainforest and they use a database to devise a card game based on their research.

In nearly all classes, staff build a positive working relationship with pupils and create a supportive environment where nearly all pupils are eager to learn. Most teachers recall pupils' previous learning successfully and, overall, ensure a purposeful pace to their lessons. They explain work effectively and question pupils skilfully in order to assess their understanding and to encourage them to think further. However, across the school, teachers do not always ensure that the learning activities provide all pupils with an appropriate level of challenge to meet their needs.

Teachers in the foundation phase plan interesting topic work and opportunities for pupils to use their skills creatively. They use the outdoor areas regularly to motivate pupils to learn through practical experiences. They create attractive areas for pupils to take part in role-play. For example, when learning about different homes, pupils enjoy being princes and princesses in the 'castle' area in the classroom.

Teachers enrich the curriculum effectively through a wide range of educational visits and by inviting visitors to the school to speak to pupils. For example, pupils visit Castell Henllys as part of their work on the Celts, and Year 6 pupils hear from a visitor about life in Swansea during the blitz, which successfully stimulates their engagement and interest in their project on the Second World War.

During lessons, most teachers provide useful feedback to help pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. They use praise effectively to motivate pupils, support their progress and encourage good behaviour. Teachers provide pupils with useful written feedback in a variety of ways. For example, older pupils value the opportunity to refine their work after looking at their 'learning ladders' which outline success criteria for tasks.

There is good provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills across the school, and teachers promote the culture of Wales well. Regular Welsh language lessons link successfully to pupils' life and experiences. For example, pupils write about themselves, their families and events taking place in the news, such as a royal wedding. The school uses a wide range of purposeful displays and notices to promote a Welsh ethos and the 'Criw Cymraeg' lead Welsh assemblies successfully.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school places beneficial emphasis on promoting positive values. It helps pupils to develop their understanding of important messages to distinguish between right and wrong. The school considers a different value each month in the assembly and collective worship sessions, which supports pupils' spiritual development, encourages them to show respect and tolerance towards others and to display consideration for everybody's rights. The school informs parents about the value of the month so that they can discuss it with their child at home.

The school has appropriate arrangements for healthy eating and drinking. There are also good arrangements to promote pupils' personal and social education. The school helps pupils to make healthy lifestyle choices. There are regular opportunities for pupils to take exercise and to choose to eat healthily, such as in the fruit tuck shop. Older pupils learn about Fairtrade and the effects of wealth and poverty on people's lives. Younger pupils have opportunities to grow their own vegetables in the school allotment, which they cook for themselves when they are ripe.

Regular visitors, such as the local police officer, help pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe online and in other ways. Useful opportunities for them to relax and take part in mindfulness sessions help pupils to manage their behaviour and emotions successfully. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of celebrating everyone as an individual and they show respect when learning about different religions and cultures. The school uses the local community well to enhance pupils' understanding. For example, there are valuable links with the local church and pupils participate in acts of worship with visitors from another church in Korea.

Most pupils have suitable opportunities to develop a good understanding of managing finances to improve their life skills and consider cost, saving and value for money. For example, they fundraise for local and national charities and use their mathematics skills well to work out which activity will raise the most money to buy a canopy for the school's outdoor area. They consider which airline offers the cheapest flights, taking into account a range of factors, such as the amount of luggage allowed.

The school supports parents and carers effectively to engage in their children's learning. For example, the termly 'Meet The Teacher' newsletter outlines how parents and carers can support their child with the topic covered. In addition, a series of "What's It All About?" sessions helps parents to understand whole school policies and practices. Teachers provide useful annual reports for parents that describe pupils' achievements and indicate targets for improvement. The school is imaginative in finding ways to engage parents in school life and offers valuable support when needed. The school works very effectively with a range of outside agencies to support pupils and families, which has proved successful in enabling them to be included fully in school life.

Leaders maintain comprehensive tracking systems to set pupil targets. The school is beginning to analyse this information appropriately to identify pupils who are not making as much progress as expected. For example, introducing progress meetings for pupils receiving literacy intervention in the foundation phase has reduced the number needing support in key stage 2.

There are interesting extra-curricular clubs to promote pupils' creative skills, including film club and art club. Pupils also use the local area to stimulate their creative work. The choir participates in the school and local eisteddfodau. Pupils often perform or show their work to parents in events, which include class assemblies. The school has developed useful links with the local theatre. The wide range of effective extra-curricular activities both after school and at lunchtime, enhance the curriculum further. These include reading, coding, homework and sports clubs.

There are purposeful opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility, such as when they join the school council or become 'Rights Ambassadors'. However, opportunities for pupils to influence school improvement or to make decisions on how and what they learn in their lessons are too limited.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher provides committed and supportive leadership for the school. Together with the senior leadership team and governors, he has a positive vision and clear aims for the school. He shares his strong sense of purpose with staff, pupils, parents and the community. Leaders have clear roles and responsibilities. The headteacher ensures that staff new to their leadership role receive strong support for monitoring and leading their areas of responsibility through working with advisers or leaders from other schools. There are many examples of this having a clear effect on their actions such as improving the teaching of writing, Welsh and science. However, the role of leaders in driving forward improvements, raising expectations and holding others to account is not yet fully developed.

Staff work as a strong team who know their pupils very well. All staff take part in evaluating the school's overall strengths and areas for development. There are also good arrangements to listen to the views of parents and pupils. Staff understand the school's priorities and their part in achieving them. For example, teachers have worked in groups of three to improve the teaching of literacy. They have agreed

consistent approaches to teaching reading in the foundation phase and set up 'speakers' corners' in key stage 2 classrooms to encourage pupils to develop their oracy skills. There is a suitable system to evaluate the school's performance to identify priorities for improvement. However, monitoring activities do not always evaluate the effect of strategies and actions on pupil outcomes clearly enough.

There are suitable arrangements to monitor and develop the performance of teachers and support staff and leaders take the views of staff into account when planning their professional development opportunities. There are regular staff meetings to share information and to include everyone in school improvement. At these meetings, subject co-ordinators and senior leaders advise others on ways forward with the school's priorities. Leaders make good use of support from the local authority and other advisers in evaluating provision and planning school developments. For example, teachers have worked successfully in their cluster group of schools to share expertise and to develop the science curriculum and the provision for pupils' personal and social development. Leaders ensure that nearly all teachers have opportunities to observe teaching in other schools, which has been beneficial in bringing about improvements. For example, one visit has helped staff to develop the indoor learning environment for foundation phase pupils successfully.

The governors make good use of the performance information that leaders and staff provide. They know the school's strengths and development priorities well and undertake learning walks in the school to confirm what they have heard about in meetings. They also take national priorities into account and have begun to consider how the school's curriculum is changing to get ready for new national developments. They are very supportive of the senior leadership team and the school community.

Leaders make effective use of the pupil development grant to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils. For example, the after school homework club provides valuable support to pupils and the 'Reading Eggs' club encourages them to read regularly, which has helped them to make good progress. The school evaluates the impact of initiatives to support vulnerable pupils well to ensure that they include opportunities that make a difference to those that need it most.

Senior leaders and governors manage the school's resources carefully. There are enough teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The learning environment is safe and welcoming with colourful displays of pupils' work. There are extensive outdoor areas for physical activities.

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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