



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

A report on

**Pentrehafod School
Pentremawr Road
Hafod
Swansea
SA1 2NN**

Date of inspection: December 2019

by

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

About Pentrehafod School

Pentrehafod School is an 11-16 English-medium mixed comprehensive school serving the eastern side of Swansea. The school's population has increased gradually over the last few years and there are currently 1,035 pupils on roll. This is similar to the time of the last inspection.

The school is a lead school in an initial teacher training education partnership.

Around 29% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is significantly above the national average of 16.4% for secondary schools in Wales. Around 34% of pupils are on the special educational needs register, of whom 5% have statements of special educational needs. Both of these figures are much higher than the national averages of approximately 23% and 2% respectively.

A very few pupils speak Welsh at home. Around 84% of pupils are from a White British ethnic background. Around 15% of learners speak English as an additional language.

The school has a special teaching facility catering for pupils with speech, language and communication needs.

The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher, who took up post in September 2016, a deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and a school business and finance director.

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

Leaders' vision of developing an ambitious school has led to an ethos of collaboration among staff who are committed to working together to improve the quality of provision for the benefit of pupils. The rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and high levels of care, support and guidance ensure that many make strong progress from their starting points and develop well as ambitious, capable learners.

Teachers know their pupils well and promote positive behaviours effectively. This helps them to develop strong working relationships with pupils and ensure that pupils are focused and engage well in their learning. Staff in the school's specialist teaching facility make a notable impact on the progress of pupils in their care.

The school works effectively with a wide range of partners to enhance its provision, to enrich curricular experiences for pupils and to support the most vulnerable. This work contributes valuably to enabling pupils to develop well as ethically informed citizens who aspire to achieve.

Leaders are committed to developing a culture of professional learning in which all staff feel valued for their contribution to pupils' outcomes and wellbeing. This encourages staff to take risks to innovate and improve their practice.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Strengthen the provision for the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum, particularly pupils' oracy, writing and ICT skills
- R2 Improve teaching and assessment in a minority of lessons
- R3 Ensure that self-evaluation and improvement planning processes focus appropriately on pupils' standards and skills

What happens next

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

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to tracking of wellbeing and academic standards, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Many pupils recall prior knowledge successfully and make strong progress in their learning. In particular, pupils in the school's specialist teaching facility make very strong progress. A few pupils make more limited progress. This is because they do not understand what is expected of them or lack concentration, or because expectations of what they are able to achieve are too low.

The majority of pupils contribute confidently and thoughtfully to class discussion. Where expectations are high, the majority of pupils provide clear extended responses to questions from their teachers and use subject specific terms accurately. Many pupils listen carefully to their teacher. However, a minority of pupils only provide brief and underdeveloped responses to questions and a few are reluctant to contribute to class discussion. A few pupils have weak listening skills and this affects how well they follow tasks set by teachers. Pupils in the specialist teaching facility contribute confidently to class discussion. Pupils respond willingly and knowledgeably to questions, for example when asked to identify interpersonal skills from a text source and explain the importance of the skill and consequence of not using it.

Most pupils identify key information from texts effectively. For example, in public services lessons, pupils extract and summarise key ideas effectively from a range of texts on hydration in order to create their own fact sheets. When analysing writers' intent, the majority of pupils are able to draw thoughtful inferences, for example to explore character. However, a minority of pupils do not infer securely enough to demonstrate a deep understanding of the texts that they read. Pupils in the specialist teaching facility make suitable progress in reading and their comprehension of reading materials is strong.

Many pupils write at appropriate length and organise their writing coherently. Although there are weaknesses in the quality of writing of younger pupils, over time their work improves steadily. Many pupils express their ideas clearly and logically in their written work. They use subject terminology effectively and write well for a suitable range of purposes. However, the writing of a minority of pupils lacks sufficient clarity, and they make frequent technical errors. A few lack the breadth of vocabulary to express their ideas fully and accurately, and the handwriting of a few pupils is poor.

Most pupils apply their mathematical skills suitably within mathematics lessons. However, a few pupils do not use the four operations of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing confidently. Many pupils demonstrate competent numeracy skills when they are provided with worthwhile opportunities in lessons other than mathematics. For example, in science, pupils calculate successfully how long a candle will burn for under certain conditions and, in physical education, pupils analyse accurately the effect of exercise at different intensities on their average heart rate. The majority of pupils apply their reasoning skills suitably, for example to explain the change in mass due to osmosis. Many pupils represent data appropriately in charts and graphs and interpret findings well.

When given the opportunity, many pupils develop basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills well in beneficial contexts outside of ICT lessons. For example, pupils use ICT competently to retrieve images, research, record and design. In a few subjects, many pupils develop their use of specialised software well, for example when designing objects. However, in general they do not develop their ICT skills well enough across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop their creative skills well, for example when writing their own pentatonic compositions in music, or by mastering the skill of weaving in photography. In physical education, nearly all pupils develop their creative thinking and physical skills well when using a box apparatus. They demonstrate their capability and ambition successfully when performing challenging movements such as sliding, rolling, vaulting and jumping. Pupils develop their thinking skills well when undertaking practical problem solving activities, such using different initiatives to avoid getting wet when practising life saving techniques in the pool.

More able pupils write confidently at length in Welsh, for example when writing a personal statement. In Welsh lessons, many pupils speak Welsh competently. However, a minority of pupils have difficulty with their pronunciation and lack the confidence to use new vocabulary. Around half of pupils achieve a level 2 pass in Welsh. When given the opportunity in form times, many pupils speak with sound pronunciation, for example when describing where and with whom they live. In general, pupils rarely use Welsh outside of Welsh lessons.

Prior to 2019, the school's performance at key stage 4 was generally in line with or above expectations. In 2019, outcomes are strong and above expectations in most indicators. The performance of pupils eligible for free school meals compares well to that of their counterparts in similar schools. Pupils with special educational needs make strong progress from their starting points. Nearly all pupils progress to education, training or employment after Year 11.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Many pupils are courteous and respectful to staff, peers and visitors. They are very proud of their school and its strong focus on respect, resilience and success. Many pupils demonstrate these values, for example in the way that they welcome visitors and go out of their way to be helpful. Furthermore, many pupils demonstrate empathy for those whose experiences differ from their own. For instance, pupils in Year 7 discuss sensitively the challenges of being a migrant.

Many pupils feel safe in school and are confident that staff deal well with most instances of poor behaviour. They know whom they can approach if they need help to deal with personal issues including the very few incidents of bullying.

Most pupils behave well in lessons. They are punctual and ready to engage in learning. They settle quickly and follow instructions readily. These pupils listen respectfully and attentively to their teachers and peers. In many lessons, most pupils maintain their concentration and work well in pairs and independently. However, a few pupils lack resilience and lose concentration too easily. A very few pupils are disruptive and disturb the learning of others. A few pupils are boisterous at lunch and break times.

Many pupils understand the importance of healthy eating, having sufficient sleep and taking part in physical exercise. These pupils enjoy the regular opportunities to take part in a range of valuable sporting activities offered in extra-curricular clubs such as the health and fitness boot camp. Most pupils understand well how to stay safe when online.

Many pupils take advantage of a wide range of leadership development roles, such as the school parliament, to make valuable contributions to the life of the school and local community. For example, they have worked with the leadership team to introduce a one-way system and contribute to the development of the new school buildings. Prefects organise a wide range of fundraising activities to raise money for a local centre for homeless people and contribute to the local foodbank. Many pupils are developing successfully as ethical and informed citizens. They demonstrate strong levels of respect for the beliefs of others. For example, pupils in key stage 4 debate maturely their thoughts on the arguments for and against euthanasia.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The teaching and learning experiences provided by the school have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. During their time at the school, many pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

Most teachers have positive working relationships with pupils and are supportive when pupils experience difficulties. Many teachers establish clear routines and are consistent in their application of these in their lessons. They carefully manage pupil behaviour by emphasising the importance of respect and communicating their expectations of how pupils should approach their work.

In a few lessons, the pace of learning is very strong. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and the teaching challenges pupils to produce their very best work. For example, in these lessons, teachers demonstrate a strong understanding of pupils' prior attainment, needs and abilities and adapt their approach sensitively. They use a wide range of effective teaching methods that build progressively on each other. They make explicit the quality of work they expect through demonstrations, sharing success criteria and the use of examples. They use questions highly effectively to deepen understanding and give sufficient thinking time for pupils to respond. These actions secure pupils' engagement and ensure their strong progress in learning.

Many teachers plan well. Their lessons are structured effectively to build learning continually and this helps pupils to make strong progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills. They plan engaging tasks and provide helpful resources to support learning. These teachers give clear explanations and demonstrate their expectations of what pupils should aspire to well to ensure that they make good progress. Learning support assistants provide effective and proactive support to pupils in lessons. However, how well teachers adapt learning tasks to meet individual pupils' needs is variable.

Many teachers plan suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their language skills and provide them with appropriate scaffolding and guidance. For example, these teachers show pupils how to structure their extended writing successfully for different

purposes. A minority of teachers do not have consistently high expectations of the quality of pupils' responses, particularly in relation to pupils' spoken responses and the quality of written work.

In a few lessons, the pace of learning is inappropriate. Sometimes this is because the teacher moves on too quickly before ensuring that pupils are ready for the next stage. At other times, teachers' explanations are overlong and this does not secure progress in learning. In a very few lessons, teachers' planning does not ensure positive engagement and pupils respond with behaviour that prevents learning taking place.

Many teachers use verbal feedback appropriately to help pupils understand tasks and encourage them to improve their responses. However, around half of teachers do not question pupils well enough in order to probe and extend their understanding. They are quick to accept brief, underdeveloped responses. A minority of teachers' written feedback is of variable quality as it does not explain what to improve or how to improve clearly enough. A minority do not consistently ensure that pupils respond to any further tasks set to improve their work.

The school plans its curriculum skilfully to meet the needs of nearly all pupils, including the most vulnerable. At key stage 3, a wide range of experiences are used to bring learning to life such as a project with a local construction company that teaches mathematics in a real-life context. At key stage 4, the school provides pupils with a valuable range of academic and vocational courses.

The school provides an extensive range of opportunities for pupils that enhance their learning experiences, including for the more able and talented. It uses partnerships such as those with universities, international businesses and local employers to raise the aspirations of pupils. For example, the work with a female manager from a local construction company provides an aspirational role model for girls and challenges gender preconceptions. There is a wide range of sporting, cultural, artistic and academic trips, including participation in science and technology events in partnership with a local university. There are also health and wellbeing activities that include visits from Olympians.

The school has effective provision for the development of pupils' skills across the curriculum, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Skills co-ordinators, working with departments, have developed useful strategies and resources to develop classroom practice and provision. For example, they have provided teaching tips, guidance on developing reading behaviours and how to help pupils improve their technical accuracy when writing. Overall, the provision for ICT is in an early stage of development.

The school works well with its cluster of partner primary schools to plan how skills are covered across phases to avoid duplication in schemes of learning. There are joint cluster planning days and a recent initiative has been their joint working to develop pupils' empathy through literacy activities.

The school has an effective range of strategies and initiatives to support pupils with weak skills. These approaches include targeted intervention programmes that help these pupils to make very good progress in reading and numeracy. However, the key stage 3 intervention work and mainstream provision do not focus well enough on improving spelling and grammar.

Provision for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills is beneficial. The school provides pupils with valuable opportunities to develop their appreciation of Welsh heritage and culture, for example through weekly presentations on Welsh people and phrases, celebrating 'Shwmae Su'mae' day, an annual Eisteddfod and residential visits to Llangrannog.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school is a welcoming and inclusive community. Pupils and staff recognise and celebrate the diversity present in the school and wider community. The care, support and guidance offered by the school have a notable impact on pupils' ambitions and the progress that they make.

The school makes effective use of the varied and rich sources of information it has on all its pupils. This information is used highly effectively to track pupils' progress and wellbeing regularly. Leaders use this information well to plan successful interventions to meet pupils' learning needs and particularly for those at risk of disaffection. This supports pupils very well to make consistently strong progress.

The school has a comprehensive range of support systems in place. These are bespoke to individual pupils' needs. For example, the school's 'PAWB' team works very effectively with identified pupils to maintain their engagement and commitment to school life. The school works successfully with external, specialist agencies to provide further support to the most vulnerable.

The school monitors attendance and behaviour robustly. Staff use a range of effective strategies to promote the value of coming to school regularly and behaving appropriately.

There are very strong relationships with partner primary schools and highly effective transition arrangements that help pupils to settle quickly at Pentrehafod. Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils from the school to work beneficially alongside those from primary schools to prepare them for the move from primary to secondary education. As a result, this helps those transferring from primary to settle quickly into their new school.

The school offers high quality opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies and external specialist speakers. Although, the personal and social education programme contributes very effectively to pupils' understanding of a range of topics such as homophobia, substance misuse and tolerance of other communities, a very few staff lack confidence in challenging the intolerant attitudes of a very few pupils. In addition, the extensive range of extra-curricular sporting activities and formal teaching make an important contribution to the school's sound arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

The school provides extensive careers support and guidance to pupils. This includes whole school assemblies, visiting speakers from local sixth forms, colleges and businesses, as well as individual careers interviews. The school works effectively with a wide range of partners to ensure that careers advice is bespoke to each individual pupil's needs. The school works particularly imaginatively with local and international businesses. These partnerships enhance pupils' learning experiences

highly successfully. For example, local midwives deliver lessons on the 'safe delivery of babies' and an international airline provides long term mentoring for pupils. This work has made a notable contribution to ensuring that nearly all pupils progress to education, training or employment when they leave the school.

The school hosts a well-established specialist teaching facility for pupils with speech, communication and language difficulties. Where appropriate, pupils learn alongside their mainstream peers. Staff in the facility know their pupils very well and provide high levels of support and guidance that are well matched to the needs of pupils. As a result, pupils make very strong progress in both their learning and wellbeing.

The school makes good use of available information to set meaningful targets for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans include very useful strategies for staff to follow. However, targets for improving pupils' independence, organisation and social skills are not always clear.

The school provides parents with valuable reports on their child's progress. Reports include an insightful assessment of pupils' attitudes to learning as well as their progress in subject specific skills. In addition, they contain useful advice for pupils and parents on how to make further progress.

The school produces a range of supportive resources that both parents and pupils can use to assist children in their learning. For example, the science department has created a website with revision materials to support older pupils as they prepare for examinations. In addition, there is a parent/carer information guide that provides high quality information and advice on a range of issues including the importance of aspirations, developing good habits in life, self-care for teenagers and the importance of relaxation.

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

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher and headship team work together successfully to communicate a clear vision. This vision is based on a culture of developing a literate, inclusive and ambitious community that has high expectations. They work relentlessly and with a shared sense of purpose and commitment to the school's values of 'Parch, Gwydnwch, Llwyddiant' – 'Respect. Resilience. Success'. This has effectively supported improvements in pupil outcomes, attendance and wellbeing.

The roles of the headship team have been revised recently, and these support the school's priorities well. There is a clear line management structure for senior leaders to support and challenge middle leaders. Their management meetings focus effectively on monitoring the progress and wellbeing of pupils as well as improving the quality of teaching.

Senior leaders have high expectations of all areas of the school's work and of all members of the learning community. Building on the strong relationships that exist between leaders at all levels, the headship team have developed a culture of professionalism and collaboration among staff. This is a key driver for continuous improvement and has contributed successfully to the positive morale of staff at all levels.

The school has successful arrangements to evaluate its work and plan for improvement. Leaders evaluate the school's work continuously and take every opportunity to reflect and develop further. Leaders use data and a wide range of first-hand evidence effectively to inform its priorities at whole school and departmental levels. For example, leaders use information from surveys of pupils on wellbeing effectively to plan for improvements. However, overall, self-evaluation processes do not always focus well enough on the impact of teaching and provision on the standards of pupils' skills in lessons and books.

Improvement planning within curriculum areas and at a whole-school level includes clear actions that identify how the school will plan for and monitor progress. As a result, middle leaders have a strong understanding of the school's priorities and the timetable for improvement. However, a few actions are not prioritised well enough and occasionally leaders move too quickly to new priorities before securing sufficient improvement in others.

Members of the governing body are supportive of the school and have a sound understanding of many of the school's strengths and areas for development.

The headteacher, governors, and the business manager keep a tight control of the school's finances and take robust action where necessary. Leaders and managers use the available finances efficiently to deliver the school's strategic priorities and to create an attractive environment for pupils and staff. The pupil development grant and the school's own funds are used effectively to maximise opportunities for vulnerable pupils to make good progress in their learning and to participate fully in the life of the school. The school has an appropriate number of qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum and to support pupils of all abilities.

Systems to manage the performance of staff are applied consistently and inform a well-considered programme of professional learning. As a lead school for Initial Teacher Education (ITE), leaders have developed a vibrant culture of learning for staff. Activities align closely to individual, departmental, school and national priorities. Most staff have been involved in school-to-school working and sharing and collaborating about effective practice to drive improvements as part of a self-improving system.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

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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