



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

A report on

**Fenton C.P
Portfield
Haverfordwest
Pembrokeshire
SA61 1BZ**

Date of inspection: December 2019

by

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

About Fenton C.P

Fenton Community Primary School is in Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire. There are 410 pupils on roll, including 44 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. There are 14 classes, two of which are mixed-age. In addition, there are two learning resource classes that cater for 24 pupils with complex needs.

The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is around 33%, which is well above the Wales average of 19%. The school identifies that 36% of pupils have special educational needs. This is well above the Wales average of 21%. A very few pupils come from an ethnic minority background or have English as an additional language. A very few speak Welsh at home.

The school's last Estyn inspection was in October 2012. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2018.

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 and staff of Fenton Primary School place pupil wellbeing at the heart of their work. Staff are supportive and caring, and this helps to make the school a welcoming and inclusive place where pupils can learn and try new things without fear of failure.

Overall, many teachers plan interesting learning experiences and activities so that pupils enjoy developing their skills, knowledge and understanding. As a result, most pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and a willingness to work together productively. Many pupils develop most of their skills appropriately, but their writing skills are not as good as they could be. A minority of pupils do not make strong enough progress and do not achieve well enough in relation to their starting points.

The headteacher has communicated a clear vision for the school and set high expectations for staff and pupils. She has established a new structure and approach to leadership, which has secured the commitment of most leaders and staff and led to recent improvements. However, the changes have yet to have a significant impact on raising standards and the quality of provision.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Develop the newly-allocated roles and responsibilities of leaders so that they all contribute fully and effectively to delivering the school's vision and its strategic priorities
- R2 Ensure that all pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points
- R3 Improve the quality of pupils' writing
- R4 Provide consistently good opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will review the school's progress.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

Many pupils begin school with skills and understanding appropriate to or below that expected for their age. As pupils move through the school, many achieve appropriate standards, but a minority do not make strong enough progress and do not achieve well enough in relation to their starting points. Nearly all pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes and in the learning resource classes make strong progress towards their personal goals.

Most foundation phase pupils listen carefully. Many explain their ideas well and a minority offer extended responses to questions. For example, in the castle role play area, Year 2 pupils describe how they are cooking food and explain that it is too hot to eat. In key stage 2, many pupils speak clearly and confidently. By Year 6, they explain their thoughts and ideas well, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate. For example, they outline imaginatively that they would like to develop a science den with fingerprint entry and lasers. However, a minority of pupils in key stage 2 do not always listen attentively in group discussions and tend to talk over one another.

As they progress through the foundation phase, many pupils develop a secure knowledge of letters and their associated sounds, and they use this to build simple words. By Year 2, a majority of pupils read simple texts fluently and accurately. More able pupils read longer, subject-specific words, such as 'battering ram', well. However, a minority do not always recognise common words readily enough. In upper key stage 2, many pupils read fiction and non-fiction texts independently for sustained periods. They understand how punctuation affects the meaning and reading of a sentence. For example, they recognise that exclamation marks mean that they should read with emphasis. More able pupils infer information skilfully from books, for instance, deducing a character's personality from the way they speak and act.

By Year 2, many pupils write simple text that makes sense to others, such as a description of a lost dragon. They discuss how to plan their writing, which enables them to create a sequence of sentences to express their ideas well. Many recognise and use a suitable range of writing genres, such as a letter, correctly. By Year 6, many pupils write suitably detailed accounts on a specific topic, for example when writing a letter to the Welsh Government about children's health issues. They edit and redraft their writing with increasing skill. More able pupils explain their ideas effectively, for example when writing a newspaper article on junk food. However, in both phases, few pupils use a wide enough range of interesting vocabulary or develop their ideas into longer written pieces well enough. A minority do not always spell or use relevant punctuation accurately enough. Most pupils apply their literacy skills to a similar standard across the curriculum, but in a limited range of contexts. Older pupils in the learning resource classes make good progress in writing simple stories, with a clear beginning, middle and end, using sentences demarcated with full stops.

Many foundation phase pupils use their mathematical skills purposefully in their play and learning activities. In Year 1, many identify the properties of 2D shapes accurately when creating a picture of a rocket. They estimate sensibly and measure

time correctly when timing a run around the field in minutes and seconds. They record information carefully and use it to create bar charts, for example when undertaking a traffic survey. By Year 6, many pupils have strong number skills and use them well in a limited range of contexts across the curriculum. For example, they double, halve, multiply and divide numbers confidently, and calculate percentages to work out the cost of items in a pre-Christmas sale.

Many pupils use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills well to enhance their learning in a range of contexts, including scanning QR codes carefully to support their research in Year 2. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils have effective ICT skills, and save and retrieve their work confidently. Most use the internet and databases competently to search for and analyse information across the curriculum, for example as part of their learning on the First World War.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to the Welsh language. Many foundation phase pupils greet one another and answer the register in Welsh. By Year 2 many answer simple personal questions well and use Welsh independently to ask for a drink or to go to the toilet. Pupils in the learning resource classes respond enthusiastically to Welsh action songs. Many key stage 2 pupils use an increasing range of Welsh phrases and sentences purposefully. A minority use the past tense well, for example to say where they have been and what they saw. A majority read simple texts appropriately, pronounce known words well and make sense of what they read.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know where to get help and support if they need it. They understand the need to be careful when using the internet and know what to do if they have any concerns. To support this, members of the digital leaders group promote the school's online safety strategies well. Nearly all pupils make sensible decisions about leading a healthy lifestyle. Pupils in the reception classes design healthy fruit kebabs and key stage 2 pupils run a healthy fruit tuckshop. Many pupils benefit from the school's wide range of extra-curricular physical activities that promote physical wellbeing and self-esteem well, including football and rugby clubs and sporting events in partnership with Pembrokeshire College. The whole school takes part in a healthy heart event for charity and pupils make pledges on ways they can improve their cardiovascular health.

Nearly all pupils show care and consideration for each other and are courteous and welcoming to adults and visitors. Overall, pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school is good, although a few tend to be overly boisterous when not closely supervised at informal times of the school day, such as during breakfast club. Nearly all pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning and take interest in their work. For example, pupils in Year 4 talk animatedly about their work on the Celts, and Year 5 pupils describe in detail their trench-crawling experience.

Most pupils sustain appropriate levels of concentration and engage well in their learning. They are developing resilience, and many use a range of self-help strategies to seek solutions to problems when they face difficulties. Many pupils are making good progress in developing their ability to work independently by working with teachers to devise and create independent tasks related to their topic.

Increasingly, pupils are responding positively to opportunities to improve their work, for example through yellow box marking, which identifies a specific aspect of work to

develop further. Pupils are beginning to take an active part in the life of the school through pupil voice groups, such as the school council, house captains, digital leaders and Criw Cymraeg. Members of the Criw Cymraeg meet regularly and have a key role in promoting the use of the Welsh language around the school. For example, they lead playground games, produce a section in the school's newsletter, and take a lead in the weekly Welsh assembly. This has been successful in raising the profile of the Welsh language across the school.

Attendance rates for the last three years have risen steadily and now compare favourably with those of similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

Nearly all teachers, including those in the learning resource classes, develop strong working relationships with pupils. Staff work together productively to plan a range of purposeful learning activities that motivate most pupils to take part enthusiastically. For example, in the foundation phase, teachers design lessons that require pupils to plan how to rescue their dragon from a castle and this helps to maintain pupils' enthusiasm over time. Many teachers use questioning techniques skilfully to extend pupils' learning and to build on what they can already do. Many plan learning at an appropriate level to ensure that they challenge many pupils well, but this practice is not secure enough in all classes. In many cases, support staff use their skills well to make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. However, occasionally, teachers do not provide enough guidance to the extra adults in their classes. This means that they are not always clear about what they need to do to secure the best outcomes for pupils.

Most teachers share the purpose of learning activities with pupils well. They are beginning to help pupils to understand what they need to do to be successful in their learning. In most classes, teachers' verbal feedback during lessons helps pupils to identify how they can improve their work as they do it, for example where to add punctuation to a sentence to help it make sense. Teachers are beginning to identify helpfully where pupils can enhance the work in their books. For example, they highlight with a yellow box aspects that pupils need to reconsider so that they know where to focus their efforts when editing their writing. Teachers are also developing appropriate opportunities for pupils to consider the quality of their own work and that of other pupils. However, many of these strategies are at an early stage of development, and are only beginning to have an impact on improving pupils' understanding of their strengths and where they need to improve.

Teachers generally plan a rich, balanced curriculum for pupils, ensuring that they have suitable experiences in all learning areas and subjects. Nearly all teachers build on pupils' previous skills, knowledge and understanding appropriately. They are beginning to prepare for curriculum reform by making links in their planning and delivery to the development of pupils as ambitious, confident, creative and healthy learners. Most foundation phase classes reflect appropriate pedagogy and principles and provide engaging and stimulating learning experiences for pupils. Occasionally, however, the purpose of activities, especially in the outdoor environment, is not always clear. An increased focus on practical and independent approaches in key stage 2, including 'missions' that pupils help to design, is making learning more interactive and engaging for older pupils.

The learning resource classes provide a nurturing environment that meets the individual needs of pupils well. Staff provide a wide range of learning experiences that supports pupils to develop their skills systematically and enables the integration of pupils in mainstream classes when appropriate.

The school has a suitable overview of the teaching of skills in the literacy and numeracy frameworks. For example, teachers ensure that pupils in Year 4 have purposeful opportunities to perform their soldier play scripts, and read increasingly complex texts in English and Welsh. The school has improved the provision for developing pupils' mathematical skills and, as a result, progress and standards, particularly in number, are good. Despite this, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to apply a sufficiently wide range of numeracy skills across the curriculum or to practise writing at length in a wide enough range of contexts.

Teachers have started to take account of the digital competency framework in their planning, and they provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in different contexts. For example, they give Year 6 pupils the opportunity to use green screen technology to support their character profiles in a literacy task. Opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills, particularly in oracy, are good. For example, they encourage Year 3 pupils to construct fluent sentences to describe their favourite film character in a Hollywood walk of fame competition.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The headteacher and staff at all levels have established a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos that permeates the life of the school. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' personal, emotional and social education. As a result, nearly all pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and are eager to participate in their activities.

The school gathers a range of information to track pupils' progress over time. However, this process does not always help teachers and leaders to consider the progress and development of individuals and specific groups of pupils enough, such as the more able and talented. The introduction of termly pupil progress meetings between class teachers and school leaders is proving more beneficial. These meetings encourage a more considered discussion about the progress of each pupil and they help teachers to consider carefully the next steps in pupils' learning and to identify appropriate support and challenge for all pupils in their class.

There is an appropriate range of successful provision to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs, including those in the learning resource classes. The school identifies pupils who need support at an early stage. The additional learning needs co-ordinator and learning resource class manager track and monitor their progress carefully against clear and specific targets in their individual education plans. Staff deliver a relevant range of intervention programmes skilfully and these help to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. The support provided through the school's nurture provision, as well as support from the learning resource class staff, enables specific pupils to become resilient in their learning, and improves their social and communication skills. These arrangements ensure that nearly all pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

There is a wide range of after-school clubs that offer sporting and musical activities. These help to develop pupils' physical and social skills well. Visits by local religious leaders and opportunities for pupils to work alongside local business, for example to recycle plastic to create furniture, enrich pupils' spiritual and social development purposefully.

The school provides increasing opportunities for pupils to make choices about their learning activities, for example when deciding to investigate soldiers' experiences in the trenches in the First World War. Older pupils in the learning resource classes identify what they have learned and are beginning to choose what they should do next. For example, they understand that riding a bike is a way of keeping healthy and decide that their next step might be to follow arrows on a bike path on the school yard to help them develop their ability to control the direction of the bike. The school has established a suitable range of leadership groups who are beginning to have an influence on the life of the school. For example, the Criw Cymraeg promotes the Welsh language very effectively through their creation of the Wal Graffiti on the school yard that gives pupils opportunities to practise their writing in Welsh in an informal situation.

The school fosters successful working relationships with outside agencies. For example, teachers make effective use of the local authority speech and language service to help them to set out clear and specific intervention programmes for pupils who need support.

The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about aspects of other cultures through studying various religions and by cooking and tasting food and flavours from other countries. These experiences contribute well towards preparing pupils to develop a better understanding of the wider world. The school provides worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their expressive and creative skills. These contribute well towards ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning experiences and have high levels of motivation and enthusiasm. A notable example is the pupils' art work linked to the poem 'Flanders Fields' where pupils have painted and created a collage of poppy fields using suitable images that reflect a suitably sombre atmosphere.

The school has effective arrangements for promoting fitness, healthy eating and drinking. For example, older pupils' work linked to World Heart Day involved comparing their heart rates before and after participation in activity. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school is ready to listen to suggestions from parents, for example when redesigning the format of school reports. As a result, the reports give a clear picture of pupil progress and targets for improvement. Staff in the learning resource classes work particularly closely with parents to support them in areas such as language and communication, and managing their children's behaviour in the community. For example, they arranged a family visit to a local theme park to model strategies to support parents in managing the behaviour of the pupils.

Leadership and management: Adequate and needs improvement

Since taking up her role in September 2018, the headteacher has established and shared a clear strategic vision for the school that focuses well on ensuring and

maintaining the wellbeing of staff and pupils. She has high professional expectations of herself and others, and her supportive and sensitive approach has secured the commitment of staff and governors in moving the school forward. Most members of the senior leadership team have responded positively to the changes that the headteacher has made to the staffing structure. They are eager to refresh their leadership skills and to develop their roles and responsibilities. Most are enthusiastic about the purposeful opportunities they now have to become an integral part of the school's future. Nevertheless, it is too early to judge the impact and effectiveness of these recent changes in bringing about improvement in relation to identified school priorities over time.

A comprehensive self-review of the work of the governing body in January 2019 helped governors to identify shortcomings in their work. As a result, they reconfigured the make-up and organisation of the governing body significantly. Most governors are now developing a sound appreciation of their roles and understand the need to challenge leaders in relation to the school's performance. The establishment of a school improvement committee that meets every term to consider progress towards identified priorities enables governors to keep abreast of developments and is helping them to improve their role as critical friends. Despite recent improvements, a few areas of the governing body's work, for example their responsibilities in relation to reviewing school policies, lack sufficient rigour.

In a relatively short period of time, the headteacher has gained a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Through monitoring lessons, scrutinising work with teachers and analysing performance data, she identified appropriate improvement priorities for the school in her first year. This academic year, although still led mainly by the headteacher, all school leaders and staff have contributed appropriately to establishing a useful school development plan. This provides appropriate direction for the school over time and builds appropriately on priorities from the previous development plan. It also gives suitable consideration to national priorities, including thinking about and planning for how the school might address the new Curriculum for Wales. However, elements of the school development plan are over-ambitious within the school's current context. Strategies are in place for senior leaders and governors to start making more practical contributions to monitoring the progress of school improvement targets, for example, by taking part in joint lesson observations in the coming year as they increase their skills in these areas.

There are increasingly relevant and useful opportunities for teaching and support staff to benefit from appropriate professional learning that relates closely to school improvement priorities and performance management targets. Teacher visits to quality improvement schools have helped them think about possible ways to approach their preparation for the new curriculum for Wales, while working with staff from other schools in the cluster to develop approaches to aspects of transition between Year 6 and Year 7. Increasingly, teachers within the school share good practice and expertise. For example, teachers who have taken part in a sabbatical to improve their Welsh language skills share their learning with colleagues in the same phase and this is having a marked impact on the quality of pupils' Welsh language skills.

Performance management processes are now in place for all staff and this supports developments in professional learning appropriately. Line management responsibilities are clear and the targets of individuals relate closely to class and school priorities. This helps maintain an appropriate focus on improving teaching and evaluating its impact on pupil outcomes.

Over the past year, the governing body finance committee and headteacher, supported by the local authority finance officer, have established appropriate procedures for managing and monitoring the school budget. Additional grants have helped them to make suitable progress in reducing the school's budget deficit this year. However, the school's current organisation leads to relatively high costs and this significantly reduces the school's capacity to fund school improvement priorities effectively. For instance, limitations in the outdoor environment and the condition of some areas and resources mean that not all foundation phase pupils have access to a wide range of purposeful outdoor activities every day.

Appropriate plans are in place for the use of the pupil development grant to support pupils to improve their attendance, to support their emotional and social development and to raise the standards they achieve overall. However, the school does not always target this grant specifically enough to ensure that all eligible pupils benefit from it.

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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