



A report on

**Cefn Hengoed Community School
Caldicot Road
Winch Wen
Swansea
SA1 7HX**

Date of inspection: December 2011

by

Mr Gwyn Thomas

Under Contract for

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

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

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

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Context

Cefn Hengoed Community School is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school maintained by Swansea Unitary Authority. The school serves communities which are situated on the east side of Swansea.

The school accepts pupils of all abilities. There are 658 pupils on the school's roll compared with 741 during the previous inspection in October 2005. Around 73% of the school roll is situated in the most deprived 30% of areas in Swansea. Pupils' transfers in and out of school of 8.5% are high.

The school has 44.2 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 16.4 full-time equivalent clerical and administrative support staff.

In 2010-11, 36% of pupils were entitled to free school meals. This figure is well above the national average of 17.4%.

Five-point-eight per cent of the pupils have statements of special educational needs. This is above the national average. There are 20.5% of compulsory school age pupils on the special educational needs register. This figure is slightly above the national average of 20.2%.

Nearly all pupils come from English speaking homes. Three per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The headteacher took up her post in September 2007. Two members of staff who held senior positions within the school became deputy headteachers in September 2011.

There are major building developments taking place on the school site. By September 2012, staff and pupils will move into a new purpose built school.

The school's mission statement is, "If you believe it, you can achieve it". The school aims to ensure education of the highest standard, so that pupils develop into responsible and mature individuals and can become full and active members of a free society.

The individual school budget per pupil for Cefn Hengoed Community School in 2011-2012 is £4262 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the secondary schools in Swansea is £7713 and the minimum is £3215. Cefn Hengoed Community School is fifth out of the 15 secondary schools in Swansea in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Excellent

Current performance

This is a good school because:

- overall standards of attainment are good and improving;
- pupils' skills are good or better and continuing to improve;
- pupils' behaviour is exemplary;
- the ethos is outstandingly strong;
- care, support and guidance is excellent and contributes effectively to pupils' outcomes and wellbeing; and
- leadership and management is particularly effective.

Prospects for improvement

The school has excellent prospects for improvement because of the:

- outstanding leadership of the headteacher and leadership team;
- exemplary support from staff at all levels;
- particularly successful improvement in standards over the last two years;
- culture of high expectations prevalent throughout the school;
- well-established and rigorous systems to review progress and identify areas for improvement; and
- clear priorities for improvements that are supported by suitable plans and allocated resources.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the staff and governors of Cefn Hengoed Community School need to:

R1 continue to improve the current good standards which are evident in both key stages; and

R2 continue to build on the good progress already achieved by pupils in their skills' development.

These recommendations feature in the school development plan.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address these recommendations.

The school will be invited to prepare a written case study describing two of the excellent features identified in the report.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

At key stage 3, the school's performance over a three-year period has improved steadily. When compared with similar schools in 2011, performance in all key indicators is above the average. Performance in most non-core subjects has improved appreciably.

In 2011, the school's performance in the core subject indicator which includes English, mathematics and science combined is well above the performance of similar schools. Performance in mathematics is also well above. The performance of English and science is above that of similar schools.

Pupils' progress in 2011 from the previous key stage is very good in the core subject indicator and mathematics. It is adequate in English and science.

In key stage 4, the school's performance has improved appreciably over the last three years. It is well above the average when compared with similar schools for the last two years. Results in nearly all indicators are rising. Results in English are variable.

Performance in those indicators that include English and mathematics has been very good compared with that of similar schools over the last two years. Performance in the indicator which includes all externally approved qualifications at age 16 has been well above that of similar schools for the last two years. When compared with their performance in the previous key stage, pupils have made very good progress in two of the last three years.

In 2011, all pupils left school with a recognised qualification and a high proportion continued to full-time education. About 4% are not in education, employment and training.

Overall, girls outperform boys in both key stages. However, contrary to national trends in 2011 in key stage 4, boys outperformed girls in most key indicators. This difference impacted very positively on the school's three-year rising trend in results in key stage 4.

The difference between pupils entitled to free school meals and those not entitled to free school meals in key stage 3 is significantly smaller than the national average. In key stage 4, the difference has widened in the indicators that include English and mathematics.

Pupils with additional learning needs achieve as expected whilst more able pupils achieve very well.

Overall, the progress made by many pupils in lessons is good. In most lessons pupils' progress and standards are good. Pupils apply previous learning well and are able to master new concepts.

Most pupils listen very well to their teachers and to each other. Standards in reading are generally good. Pupils read well to each other in pairs. The majority of pupils can identify key features in texts and select evidence to support their viewpoints. Many pupils have made good progress in their reading skills. Many pupils make spoken contributions of good quality in class but a few pupils are not confident to do so.

Able pupils write extensively and well. Most pupils write short paragraphs of good quality. However, a minority of boys and girls make spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. Most work is presented neatly by pupils of all abilities.

Pupils in both key stages use their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. They have good information and communication technology skills which improve their presentation and research skills.

Most pupils in key stage 3 have reached good standards and gained qualifications in all the essential skills. In key stage 4, over half the pupils have gained Essential Skills Wales' qualifications at level 2 in communication and information communication technology. In key stage 4 in the last two years, standards in these skills have impacted very positively on the threshold level 2 indicator, level 2 including English and mathematics and the core subject indicator.

Pupils achieve good standards in Welsh in key stage 3. Results are variable but are mainly above the average compared with similar schools. However, they are below the national average over the last three years.

In the last three years, many pupils in key stage 4 were entered for the Welsh short or full GCSE course. The minority of pupils who sat the full course achieved very good results at grades A*-C. Pupils' achievement in the combined full and short course at grades A*-G is very good. In 2011 these combined results are close to the national average.

Pupils' bilingual skills are sound and improving.

Wellbeing: Excellent

All pupils feel safe in school and receive very good personal support. They feel that the school deals effectively with the few incidents of bullying. Most understand the importance of healthy living with high numbers participating in physical activities including the 5x60 initiative. Participation in fitness, sporting and related extra-curricular activities is very good.

Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Nearly all pupils are considerate and very courteous. Over the last three years, no pupil has been permanently excluded. Fixed-term exclusions are very low.

Improvements in attendance rates are outstanding. They have improved considerably over the last three years. Compared with similar schools, they are well above the average and in the top quarter. Nearly all pupils are punctual to lessons.

Pupils' involvement in community activities and events is extensive. Many participate successfully in projects and raise substantial sums of money for charities. These pupils gain very valuable levels of experience and confidence.

A significant number of pupil groups, including the school council, pupil leaders in humanities, the physical education sports captains' group, the safety group and the Eco-committee have made invaluable contributions to school life. The school council was pro-active in the design of the new school building and the humanities group continues to influence schemes of work.

In most lessons, pupils' social and life skills are very strong. Many have gained high quality external qualifications in the skills of working with others and decision making. Many pupils have very positive attitudes to work. Pupils in both key stages support younger pupils through a successful buddy system. Pupils have the necessary skills to move confidently on to their next stage of development.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Excellent

Learning experiences: Excellent

The curriculum is broad and balanced. It meets statutory requirements and the aspirations of all learners fully. The key stage 3 curriculum ensures a firm foundation for the provision of an appropriate and challenging curricular programme for all pupils.

The school has made excellent progress in meeting the challenges of the 14-19 Learning Pathways. It exceeds the requirements of the Learning Skills (Wales) Measure. All pupils are provided with an individual learning programme from a wide choice of traditional and vocational courses. Partnerships with other local providers and employers are well developed and ensure the needs of all pupils are met fully.

The organisation and delivery of the comprehensive skills' programmes are excellent. All key stage 3 pupils follow the 6 essential skills at level 1 and a minority at level 2. All key stage 4 pupils develop their key skills further as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification.

Pupils are provided with an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities and community based experiences.

The Welsh language and the Welsh dimension are developing appropriately.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship is co-ordinated well. Examples of very good joint working and projects are evident throughout the school. Green Flag status was achieved in February 2011.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is good or better in a high proportion of lessons. Preparation and planning is good. Teachers use a wide range of effective strategies to organise and focus pupils' learning. Most lessons proceed at a good pace with challenging tasks set to encourage detailed responses from pupils. Most teachers have high expectations. Pupil and teacher relationships are very good and contribute to a very positive learning environment.

Marking is thorough and regular. Positive feedback is given to pupils on how to improve. Pupils are encouraged effectively to evaluate their own learning. This enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress.

Assessment is firmly established on the 'Global Grading' system whereby pupils are provided with a target grade derived from a range of performance data. The assessment and recording system is extremely effective in tracking pupils' progress and in identifying underachievement at an early stage. This helps pupils to improve their work.

Reports to parents are good. They contain a clear summary of pupils' levels of attainment and what they need to do to improve.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The quality of care, support and guidance is excellent and firmly embedded in the school's personal and social education programme. There is a very successful emphasis on ensuring that pupils develop their emotional and physical health and wellbeing fully.

The promotion of pupils' social and moral development is outstanding. The spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good. These aspects are included effectively across the school.

Mentoring strategies of high quality meet the varying needs of the pupils and the requirements of the 14-19 Learning Pathways very effectively. These, alongside the valuable information and guidance offered by a wide range of specialist services, contribute greatly towards supporting pupils in their own learning.

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

Arrangements to address the needs of pupils with additional learning needs in mainstream classes are outstanding.

Arrangements to address the needs of pupils with additional learning needs in the Specialist Teaching Facility are outstanding.

These arrangements are enhanced further by a fully comprehensive range of informal supportive lunchtime activities. Individual education plans are specific, precise and reviewed regularly.

Members of teaching staff receive very good advice on how to adapt tasks and strategies. Teaching assistants provide valuable support.

Learning environment: Excellent

The school is a community which is fully inclusive. Opportunities for all are promoted very successfully. Pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and out-of-school activities. Pupils are encouraged consistently to reflect on their own beliefs and values and to respect others. Diversity is recognised and celebrated by the school. These features are outstanding.

The school's ethos is exceptionally positive. It is reflected in the stable and ordered environment which underpins all aspects of school life.

The quality of the accommodation in the existing school building is barely adequate. However, the school makes effective use of its learning resources.

The school buildings and grounds are well maintained.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Excellent
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Leadership: Excellent

The headteacher provides strategic leadership of exceptional quality. This has had a significant impact on the improvement in standards over the last two years.

The headteacher communicates her vision for the school very effectively and she receives outstanding support from her leadership team.

The opportunities provided by the school for members of staff to take on leadership roles are exemplary.

Responsibilities are clearly defined. Leaders and managers at all levels are held accountable for the quality of their work. Excellent teamwork and a culture that encourages innovation have been highly effective in raising standards of achievement.

The school analyses data rigorously. It sets challenging targets for pupils and monitors their progress against them very carefully. The ways in which middle leaders use this data to inform teaching and motivate pupils to succeed are highly effective.

Performance management arrangements are planned well and succeed in challenging everyone to strive for excellence.

Governors are actively involved in setting the strategic direction of the school. They are informed very well about the work and performance of the school. They are effective critical friends.

The school takes full account of national and local priorities. These feature prominently in policies and improvement plans.

Improving quality: Excellent

The school has made outstanding progress in responding to the recommendations from the last inspection.

Processes for self-evaluation and improving quality are rigorous. Roles and responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating provision and standards are understood very well.

Leaders and managers use data to monitor progress very effectively. They identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement accurately.

Rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has had a significant impact on pupils' achievement. There is a well-established culture of review, evaluation and improvement in teaching and learning. Feedback on classroom observation is thorough. It is focused on learning and standards.

Systems for gathering the views of pupils, parents and the broader community are comprehensive.

Leaders and managers use their knowledge of the school well to plan for improvement. The school development plan is an effective document to communicate key priorities, timescales and targets for improvement clearly.

The headteacher and her members of staff have established an effective learning culture. Members of staff at all levels identify and share good practice very well within the school and with other networks of professional practice.

Partnership working: Excellent

Outstanding strategic partnerships impact positively on standards, attendance and behaviour.

The headteacher has a clear vision for joint planning. The school has developed links which are highly effective with other providers.

Through this collaboration, the school has widened its curricular choices for pupils and improved efficiency in the use of resources. Quality assurance procedures to assess pupils' progress and keep courses under regular review are highly effective.

The school has established extensive curricular links with its partner primary schools to promote continuity and progression in pupils' learning. There is a comprehensive programme of cluster moderation to ensure consistency in teacher assessment.

The school plays a significant role in the community. The partnership with the multi-agency 'So-to-Do' and the Engaging Learners in Swansea projects, contributes extensively to improving standards in pupils' wellbeing and progress.

Communication with parents is excellent.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its resources extremely well. Spending reflects the priorities in school plans and expenditure is monitored closely in order to seek the highest possible impact on pupils' achievement. The school has made good progress in reducing its deficit.

There is a sensible balance between the responsibilities undertaken by governors and those delegated to the headteacher and business manager.

The school is staffed appropriately to teach the curriculum. All members of staff are deployed very well. Teachers use their planning, preparation and assessment time very efficiently.

Arrangements to identify and meet the training needs of all members of staff are very good. The quality of professional development is a significant strength of the school. In view of their overall judgment of standards, inspectors consider the value for money provided by the school to be good.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

In key stage 3 over the last three years, the core subject indicator and all the individual core subjects have improved consistently. The greatest improvement has been in mathematics.

In 2011, the core subject indicator and mathematics were in the top quarter when compared with similar schools in terms of the free-school-meal benchmark. English and science were in the top half. This was an improvement on the previous two years when nearly all indicators, except mathematics, were either in the top half or quarter when compared with similar schools.

In 2011, results in the core subject indicator and mathematics at level 5 or above placed the school first and second respectively in the school's family. These are groups of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in deprived areas, having special educational needs and English as an additional language. English and science were below the family average.

Over a three-year period, all core subjects and the core subject indicator were below the national averages.

Over a three-year period at level 6 and above, results in English, mathematics and science were rising. Compared with similar schools in terms of the free-school-meal benchmark in 2011, mathematics and science were in the top quarter. English was in the top half. Results in 2011 placed all core subjects above the family averages. Science was above the family averages for three consecutive years.

Between 2009 and 2011 pupils' achievement at level 5 and above in many non-core subjects had improved. There was a significant improvement in a minority of subjects. In 2011, results in eight of the non-core subjects placed the school in the top half or top quarter when compared with similar schools in terms of the free-school-meal benchmark. Five subjects had been in the bottom half or quarter in 2009.

In 2011, pupils had made very good progress in the core subject indicator and had performed higher than expected. Very good progress was also evident in mathematics based on pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2. Sound progress had been made in English, and science.

In key stage 3, girls generally perform better than boys over a three-year period at level 5+ in all the three core subjects. However, in 2009 boys outperformed the girls at level 5+ in the core subjects.

At key stage 4, pupils' performance in all of the threshold indicators and the average wider points score indicator which includes all approved qualifications at age 16, had risen over a three-year period from 2009-2011. The threshold level 2 including English and mathematics (a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grades A*- C) had risen by seven percentage points. This indicator remains in the top quarter when compared with similar schools in terms of the free-school-meal

benchmark. The average wider points score had improved significantly and in 2010 and 2011 was in the top quarter compared with similar schools. Pupils had performed higher than expected. The school was above the family averages in all key indicators and was the top school in the family in over half of the indicators in 2011.

During 2009-2011, pupils' performance in mathematics and science level 2 (GCSE grades A* - C) had risen consistently. It had been variable in English. Overall, the three core subjects were in the top half or quarter when compared with similar schools in terms of the free-school-meal benchmark. English was in the top quarter for three consecutive years.

In 2011, pupils had made consistent and very good progress in the threshold level 2, level 2 including English and mathematics, the core subject indicator, the threshold level 1 (a volume of learning equivalent to five GCSEs at grades D - G), wider points score and capped points score indicators based on attainment at the end of key stage 3.

At the end of Year 11 in 2011, all pupils left school with a recognised qualification. This was better than the national average. Most pupils continued their full-time education in school, further education or in work-based training. Of those Year 11 pupils who left school in summer 2011, about 4% are not in education, training or employment. This is an improvement on previous years.

Overall, in key stage 4, girls outperform boys consistently. However, contrary to national trends in 2011, boys outperform girls in most indicators. The greatest difference was in the threshold level 2 including English and mathematics. This difference was also greater than the national difference between boys and girls.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Response to parent questionnaires

Estyn received 108 responses to parent questionnaires.

Parents gave positive or very positive responses to the questionnaires. Over 96% were satisfied with all aspects of school life.

All parents are satisfied with the school where their child is safe. All are of the opinion that teaching is good and that there is a good range of activities including trips and visits. The school is very approachable.

Nearly all parents agree that the school is run well and behaviour is good. They believed that expectations are high and that children are developed as responsible individuals to achieve their full potential. Children are encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise. Children like the school where they are treated fairly and respectfully. They also make good progress.

Most are of the opinion that their children receive appropriate additional support in relation to their particular needs and are prepared well for moving to the next school or college.

Most agree that appropriate homework is given and they are kept well informed regarding their child's progress.

Response to learner questionnaires

Estyn received 171 responses from learners.

Nearly all learners state that they have someone who can be approached if worried.

Most learners feel safe in school and most say that they are doing well. Most have enough resources and the school helps them to understand and respect people from other backgrounds. There is more than sufficient support available. Most are encouraged to be responsible and become independent learners.

Most learners say that the school deals well with bullying. There are plenty of opportunities to get regular exercise.

Many believe that the school teaches learners how to keep fit. The school listens to their views and that they are treated fairly and respectfully. Good advice is given when choosing courses to follow in key stage 4.

The majority consider homework to be beneficial and that it helps them to understand and improve their work. However, only under a half of the learners in key stage 4 are of this opinion.

Just over a half of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire were of the opinion that pupils behaved and that they were able to get on with their work.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Mr Gwyn Thomas	Reporting Inspector
Mr Peter Harris	Team Inspector
Mr Glyn Griffiths	Team Inspector
Mr Huw Llewellyn	Team Inspector
Ms Helen Adams	Lay Inspector
Mrs Sarah Parry	Peer Inspector
Mrs Heather Cooper	School Nominee

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11