



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Bryncethin Primary School  
Heol Canola  
Bryncethin  
Bridgend  
CF32 9TH**

**Date of inspection: December 2012**

**by**

**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:

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

Bryncethin Primary School is in the village of Bryncethin in the Bridgend local authority. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. However, many are from homes where there is a significant degree of social and economic deprivation.

There are 257 pupils on roll, including 39 pupils who attend the nursery on a full-time basis. Fourteen pupils, between the ages of seven and eleven, attend a resource base in the school for pupils with a range of moderate learning difficulties. These pupils come from a wider area within the local authority. The school has identified around 29% of its pupils as having additional learning needs, including a very few pupils that have statements of special educational need. Approximately 39% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. These figures are above the local authority and national averages.

A very few pupils are looked after by the local authority. In the 12 months before the inspection no pupil was excluded.

Nearly all pupils are from white, British backgrounds. No pupil speaks Welsh at home. No pupil has English as an additional language.

Since the last inspection three members of staff have retired and the Sarn Nursery School was amalgamated with the school in September 2012.

The individual school budget per pupil for Bryncethin Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,482 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Bridgend is £5,467 and the minimum £2,828. Bryncethin is 16th out of the 50 primary schools in Bridgend in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of Bryncethin Primary School is good because:

- most pupils achieve good standards;
- nearly all pupils make good progress from a low base;
- the curriculum is rich, thoughtfully planned and effectively organised;
- the overall quality of teaching is high;
- there is a very positive and inclusive ethos; and
- the development of pupils' independent learning skills is well advanced.

### Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement at Bryncethin Primary School are good because:

- leadership and management, at all levels, are good;
- effective partnerships within the school and with other partners focus on raising standards;
- there is a very strong commitment from all staff for continuous improvement;
- very constructive links with parents are focused on standards; and
- rigorous and effective systems for evaluating performance are in place.

## Recommendations

R1 Improve attendance and punctuality.

R2 Ensure that assessments are accurate.

R3 Raise standards in the national teacher assessments at key stage 2 in science.

### What happens next?

Bryncethin Primary School will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Many pupils begin school with levels of basic skills which are generally below those expected for their age. Many make good progress during their time in school.

Throughout the school, oracy and communication skills are good. Many pupils speak clearly and effectively in discussions with other pupils and with adults. In the Foundation Phase, pupils develop their writing skills well so that, by Foundation Phase 2, many write independently with increasing fluency and accuracy. Handwriting, punctuation and spelling develop well. Pupils in key stage 2 make good progress in developing reading and writing skills, and many pupils at the end of key stage 2 produce very good work. Most organise and present imaginative and factual writing in different ways. A particularly strong feature is the progress many pupils make in improving their reading skills.

Nearly all nursery pupils make very good progress in Welsh oracy skills, taking into consideration their linguistic backgrounds. During their time in the Foundation Phase, most use a good range of Welsh vocabulary in formal sessions and the majority apply well the language they have learnt to informal play situations. Nearly all key stage 2 pupils build successfully on this and achieve appropriate standards in oral communication. Standards in writing are good, with older pupils in key stage 2 writing for a purpose in the third person.

In numeracy, pupils make good progress in applying their number skills in a wide variety of situations. Younger pupils construct simple pictograms to express information they collect when finding out about the world they live in. By the end of key stage 2, many use their skills in numeracy to interpret data and to draw logical conclusions. They have well-developed strategies to solve problems and to think things out for themselves. Standards in the application of skills in information and communication technology are good.

Pupils' performance at the end of the Foundation Phase assessments in 2012 in language, literacy and communication and mathematical development was below the family, local and national averages at both the expected and higher level. In personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity results were above these averages. Boys underperformed when compared to girls in these assessments.

Care should be taken when considering the performance of pupils in the end of key stage 2 assessments because of the impact of pupils who attend the learning resource base on these results.

Over the last three years the school's results at the expected level (level 4+) indicate that the school performed below the family of schools average and below local and national averages in English and science, and close to these averages in mathematics. The combined results for core subject indicators in 2012 were below average.

When the results for those who attended the resource base are discounted, results in English were close to the national and above family and local averages. In mathematics they were above. Results in science were lower. They were still above the family average but below local and national averages. The combined results were also above the family average but below the local and national averages.

There is no pattern to indicate that boys perform differently from girls. Pupils who receive free school meals do not perform as well as those not in receipt of free school meals.

Pupils with additional learning needs achieve well and those in the resource base meet the targets set. From the evidence of pupils' previous work from lesson observations and from talking to pupils, it is clear that standards within the school are higher than those reflected in the national teacher assessments.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Pupils are happy, well cared for and supported. They demonstrate tolerance and respect for each other and are particularly caring towards younger pupils.

Pupils work well together and are knowledgeable about what they need to do to improve in all aspects of school life. They take responsibility for their own learning. They are all aware of the importance of an active lifestyle and of a healthy diet.

The school council is a strong and effective forum for pupils, where they influence and improve school life. Pupils on the council demonstrate a good awareness of their roles and are keen to seek the opinions of others. The leadership values their opinions and acts upon them. For example, the school council has been successful in improving learning areas and the grounds.

Many older pupils are developing mature attitudes by taking on positions of responsibilities, such as acting as mediators and reading and sport buddies.

Attendance is adequate as, despite the best efforts of the school, attendance rates have declined and place the school in the lowest quarter of similar schools. A minority of pupils are late.

Nearly all pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Staff expectations of pupils' behaviour are consistently high. Nearly all pupils show courtesy and respect to each other, staff and visitors. They take responsibility for their actions and their work.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

The school provides a wide range of high quality learning experiences that enrich pupils' education. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and meets pupils' needs successfully. The planning process is effective and consistently implemented across the school in all subjects. Teachers structure their planning effectively to

ensure that all pupils build systematically on what they already know and can do. A wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities support pupils' learning well. The school has strong links with the local area and uses them effectively, for example when studying the Victorians in history.

Across the school, there is thorough planning for the development of the skills necessary for all pupils to become successful learners. The curriculum is carefully planned so that these skills are systematically extended.

Provision for Welsh language development and the Welsh dimension is effective. The school promotes a prominent Welsh ethos through displays, use of the language and events, so that most pupils develop a positive attitude to the language and culture.

Provision for sustainable development and global citizenship is a strength of the school. The school fosters successfully awareness of sustainable living and energy conservation. All pupils appreciate the need to recycle and conserve energy. Pupils are becoming aware of their role in the wider world through the study of different cultures.

### **Teaching: Good**

Across the school, teachers have a very good understanding of how to develop pupils' independence and how to foster their confidence and commitment to hard work. Teachers help pupils to see learning as worthwhile and enjoyable. All teachers plan carefully to ensure that work is matched to pupils' abilities appropriately and builds systematically on previous learning. Lessons are well resourced and capture pupils' interest successfully. There are very positive relationships between all pupils and staff. As a result, all pupils work well and speak confidently when discussing their work or answering questions. They know that their efforts are valued.

All teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. At the beginning of all lessons teachers make the learning objectives clear and, with pupils, they review progress towards the objectives effectively at the end of the session. This ensures that pupils know how well they have achieved and what they need to do next in order to further improve.

Systems and procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress are rigorous. The school has recently adopted new guidance on how to judge standards accurately at the end of the Foundation Phase. Pupils receive thorough feedback both orally and through marking. High-quality use of assessment for learning is developing most pupils' ability to assess their own and peers' performance successfully. Assessment information informs future planning effectively. The school informs parents regularly and in detail about their children's achievements, wellbeing and progress. However, the school has underestimated the standards of pupils in the most recent national teacher assessments. The work seen in samples of work, in lessons and in talking to pupils suggests that standards are higher in the school than those reported.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

There are very positive supportive relationships between staff, pupils and parents. Pupils feel safe and value the high standard of care and support that they receive from staff. The provision for older pupils to support younger pupils is particularly good and effective. The emotional wellbeing of pupils is supported successfully through the positive initiatives in place, including the cluster wellbeing teacher.

Healthy living and the importance of an active lifestyle are effectively promoted within the curriculum and the wide range of extra-curricular clubs on offer. The school's procedures for and the monitoring of attendance have not been successful in raising the rate of attendance.

The school has strong links with a range of specialist services and external providers. The school's work with agencies to support pupils, especially those with additional learning needs, is a particular strength and helps to ensure all are fully integrated and developing their independence within the school community. The school ensures that all pupils with additional learning needs have worthwhile access to all areas of the curriculum.

The school identifies and monitors arrangements for all pupils with additional learning needs well. There are regular reviews of progress, including annual reviews, in which parents are fully involved. Assessment, recording and reporting procedures meet statutory requirements. The school consults parents regularly and effectively.

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

The school has very good procedures in place to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good quality assemblies promote these aspects effectively. Adults and pupils have mutual respect for each other. Pupils feel able to approach staff for advice and guidance. The school has an effective framework for personal and social education. It monitors pupils' wellbeing carefully and offers focused support when needed.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school has an inclusive ethos, in which everyone is treated equally and with respect, regardless of gender, social background, race or faith. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to diversity and equality. Pupils have equal opportunity to access all areas of the curriculum and activities.

Diversity and multiculturalism are promoted well in the personal and social education programme, collective worship and wider school activities. The school provides a safe, caring and welcoming environment for all pupils.

The school buildings and grounds are clean and well ordered and are maintained to a good standard. The extensive outdoor areas have been developed thoughtfully to provide a stimulating environment that supports the school's environmental philosophy successfully. There are a wide range of resources that match pupils'

needs well. Displays throughout the school are welcoming and attractive. They help to create a stimulating and inviting learning environment. There are appropriate toilet and changing areas.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>
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<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The headteacher gives a very purposeful, inventive and effective lead. She has successfully developed with the staff a very strong commitment to working together effectively and constructively. All staff have a strong sense of direction and purpose, which is focused on raising standards and in providing a positive and supportive atmosphere for successful learning.

The senior management team and other staff groups are well organised and carry out their responsibilities with enthusiasm and commitment to the vision they all share. There are rigorous systems in place to ensure that objectives are met and the impact of initiatives is carefully evaluated.

The headteacher is very well informed about the progress pupils make and of the professional skills of all staff through systematic reviews and visits. There are well-established procedures for subject co-ordinators to provide a positive and effective lead to their subjects.

The governing body is very well informed. Governors are actively engaged with the staff and parents in judging the success of the school and in planning the way forward. The governing body has a well-developed sense of how to hold the school to account and how to look plan, with staff, for future priorities.

The school addresses local and national initiatives well. The Foundation Phase is well organised and well resourced. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Welsh language development and the use of assessment for learning techniques have become major strengths of the school. There are many opportunities for pupils of all ages to be actively engaged in projects to broaden their understanding of ecological issues and of the need to live healthily.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Leaders and managers have a thorough picture of the school's performance and its strengths and areas for development. However, they have not always ensured that end of key stage assessments are consistently accurate.

The school uses a wide range of rigorous monitoring activities thoroughly to inform the self-evaluation process successfully. These include valuable lesson observations, listening to learner sessions and scrutiny of pupils' work. The school regularly seeks the views of all stakeholders and uses these views consistently to inform the self-evaluation procedure. The school council is successfully engaged in this process. Leaders and managers use information well to produce a clear school improvement plan. The school identifies areas for improvement effectively and regularly, and reviews the progress being made rigorously.

The school has well-established professional learning communities. Good links also exist with the local authority, schools in the local cluster and schools within the family group. These networks of professional practice make a positive contribution to the school's overall provision and in helping to raise standards further. The whole school culture for professional development is good.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Partnerships with parents, the community and other schools are very good and contribute to realising the school's aims effectively. The innovative Parents' Council has had a measurable impact on raising pupils' standards and wellbeing. The school has established valuable partnerships with the local community. It involves pupils well in community activities, such as local studies and associations with religious organisations. This makes a positive contribution to enriching their learning experiences and their awareness of their locality, Wales and the wider world.

The school has very good links with, and benefits from, the services of external agencies, such as the health service, behaviour support and the educational psychologist.

Constructive links have been established with local businesses and higher education establishments. There is effective collaboration and planning between the school and the local secondary school that pupils transfer to at the end of key stage 2. This close working relationship helps to ensure that pupils make appropriate progress in the next stage of their learning. The school makes good use of other schools in its family and has visited two of these in order to target aspects for further development.

### **Resource management: Good**

The school manages its resources exceptionally well to support the learning environment and to support learning and progress. Very good and effective use is made of all staff to cover the curriculum. Robust procedures ensure that resources are allocated to meet identified priorities. Spending is planned and monitored very well. Good use is made of planning, preparation and assessment time to provide pupils with a variety of learning experiences and for staff to plan together effectively.

In view of the good standards and progress achieved by most pupils and the effective leadership and management, the school provides value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Many pupils start school with lower than expected basic skills, particularly in oracy.

Pupils' performance at the end of Foundation Phase assessments in 2012 in language, literacy and communication was below the family, local and national averages at both the expected and higher levels. Results in mathematics were also below family, local and national averages. In personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity results at the expected level were above family, local and national averages but below these averages at the higher level.

Boys under performed when their results are compared to girls. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in 2012, the school performed better than the majority of schools in these three areas of learning and in the Foundation Phase indicator.

Care should be taken when considering the information about the performance of pupils at the end of key stage 2. This is because these results contain those of pupils with moderate learning difficulties who attend the resource base.

Over the past three years the performance of all 11-year-olds at the expected level (level 4+) in English has been consistently below family, local and national averages. In mathematics, standards have improved steadily and are now close to these averages at the expected level. In science at level 4+, standards have improved and are now close to but still below these averages.

The school's performance at the higher level, (level 5+) is generally more positive. In English at the higher level, results over the last three years have been above the family average and in line with local and national averages. In mathematics, results at level 5 have been close to local and national averages and above the family average. In science, results have fallen to below these averages. The combined results (the core subject indicator) in the last three years have been considerably below those for English, mathematics and science.

When the results in 2012 of pupils who attend the resource base are disaggregated, the results in English are close to the national average and above the local and family averages. In mathematics they are above all of these averages. In science the results are above the family average, close to the local average and below the national average. The combined results are above the family and below local and national averages.

When the disaggregated results are compared to those of schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, the school performs better than 75% of these schools in English and mathematics and above 50% of these schools in science. The combined results also place the school above 50% of these schools.

Across the school over recent years pupils not in receipt of free school meals significantly out performed those who received them. There is no significant trend regarding the progress of boys compared to girls.

All pupils in the learning resource base meet the targets set for them, as do nearly all of the others who have additional learning needs.

From the evidence of pupils' work, from lesson observations and talking to pupils, standards are higher in their school work than those indicated by the national teacher assessments for seven and 11-year-olds.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

One hundred and one pupils completed the learner questionnaire. Their responses are similar to those from other schools in Wales. Pupils in Bryncethin Primary School are more positive about the behaviour of other children at play time and at lunch time.

All pupils:

- feel safe in school;
- think that they are taught how to be healthy and have lots of opportunities for exercise;
- are helped to learn and make progress;
- know whom to turn to if work is hard; and
- have enough resources and equipment to do their work.

Nearly all pupils:

- think that bullying is dealt with well;
- know whom to talk to if worried or upset;
- believe that they are doing well in school;
- think that homework helps them improve;
- feel that other pupils behave well and allow them to get on with their work; and
- think that all children behave well at play times and lunch times.

There were 27 responses to the parent and carer questionnaire. These responses are in line with those of other parents and carers in Wales.

All of those who responded agreed that:

- they are satisfied with the school;
- their children were helped to settle in when they began school;
- children make good progress;
- teaching is good;

- staff have high expectations of their children;
- staff treat children fairly and with respect and children are successfully encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- children are safe in school and receive appropriate additional support when needed;
- they are well informed about their children's progress;
- they feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem;
- their children are encouraged to be more mature and take on responsibilities; and
- children are well prepared to move on to the next phase of learning.

Nearly all parents or carers who responded agreed that:

- their children liked school;
- they understood the school's procedures for dealing with complaints;
- there is a good range of activities including trips and visits; and
- the school is well run.

A few thought that homework given did not build well on what children learn in school.

### Appendix 3

#### The inspection team

Peter Mathias	Reporting Inspector
Enir Rees Morgan	Team Inspector
Deirdre Emberson	Lay Inspector
Ceri Bowen	Peer Inspector
Andrea Wood	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	Reception, 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