



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**  
**Bancffosfelen Primary School,**  
**Bancffosfelen,**  
**Llanelli,**  
**Carmarthenshire.**  
**SA15 5DR**

**Date of inspection: November 2011**

**by**

**Dr David Gareth Evans**

**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:

<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

Ysgol Bancffosfelen is a bilingual primary school which provides education for 3-11 year old pupils. It is situated approximately two miles from Pontyberem in the Gwendraeth Valley. The majority of pupils live in the village or on neighbouring farms.

The number of pupils has been stable over the last three years, and at present there are 45 full-time pupils on the school roll. There have been changes in staffing since the last inspection; there is a new teacher for the Foundation Stage, the key stage 2 teacher works on a part-time basis and an additional 0.3 teacher has been employed for key stage 2 since September 2011.

Pupils commence in school on a full-time basis at the beginning of the term when they have their fourth birthday. The ability of pupils on entry varies considerably over time.

Welsh is the main language spoken at home by approximately 50% of pupils, but it is expected that every pupil will be fluent in Welsh and English by the end of key stage 2. Pupils' circumstances vary with around 3% currently receiving free school meals; and this figure is well below national and local averages. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups. Occasionally, latecomers join the school from English-speaking schools and areas. Approximately 30% of pupils receive support for additional learning needs, and this figure is higher than national and local averages.

The school was last inspected in November 2005.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Bancffosfelen in 2010-2011 is £3,957, which compares with a maximum of £17,415 and a minimum of £3,014 for primary schools in Carmarthenshire. The school has the 38<sup>th</sup> highest budget per pupil of the 114 primary schools in Carmarthenshire.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The school's current performance is adequate because:

- nearly all pupils make adequate progress during their time in school;
- most pupils across the school show interest in their work and their behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good;
- the quality of teaching is good; and
- there is a good relationship between teachers and pupils.

However:

- the trends in the end of key stage assessments over a period of time are low; and
- there is inconsistency in the standards pupils achieve across the school.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- school leaders are enthusiastic and have high expectations;
- all members of staff in the school share the same vision for maintaining and raising standards;
- self-evaluation arrangements are beginning to have a clear impact on outcomes; and
- the school effectively identifies and prioritises areas for improvement.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the school needs to;

R1 raise literacy standards, especially reading and writing, in key stage 2;

R2 provide more challenging tasks for more able pupils;

R3 continue to develop the best assessment practices across the school; and

R4 improve governors' understanding of the school's performance and their ability to act as critical friends

### ***What happens next?***

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations. Progress in addressing the recommendations will be monitored by Estyn.

## Main findings

<b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### Standards: Adequate

Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, in key stage 1, and at the end of Year 6, in key stage 2, must be treated with caution since small numbers in a year group can have a significant impact on the school's performance from one year to the next. Because there are so few pupils in the cohorts, it is difficult to see any clear pattern over a period regarding those pupils entitled to receive free school meals.

Children's levels of attainment when starting in school are about average. Nevertheless, most of them achieve the outcomes expected for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage. By now, the majority of pupils are making appropriate progress during their time in school. Overall, pupils with additional learning needs make good progress, but pupils of higher ability are not achieving as well as they should.

During the last few years, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have achieved at a low level when compared with local, national, family averages and when compared with similar schools. In 2011 pupil performance improved in key stage 2, apart from in Welsh. Overall, there are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls and the trend fluctuates over time.

On the whole pupils' Welsh skills are developing well by the end of the Foundation Stage. Most pupils understand and respond correctly to a good variety of simple questions and directions. They read well and prepare correct written pieces commensurate with their age and ability.

By the end of key stage 2, most pupils' literacy standards in Welsh and English are adequate. Most speak appropriately, but rarely in extended sentences. A minority of pupils tend to speak English in group work and with peers. On the whole most pupils' reading skills are developing appropriately, but they read without confidence and a minority read without appropriate expression. Most pupils writing skills in key stage 2 are not consistently effective because they do not produce extended pieces of writing across the curriculum.

Pupils make effective use of numeracy across the curriculum. End of key stage data does not reflect the standards in number seen in pupils' books. Standards in information and communications technology across the school are good. For example, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use the internet confidently to research Italy and use Skype to talk to a school in that country.

Pupils benefit from the experiences provided to enable them to appreciate the local environment. Their awareness of Welsh authors is not as good.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Most pupils have a good awareness of issues relating to health and safety. In questionnaires and in discussions all pupils say that they are happy and feel safe in school and every parent agrees with these views.

Nearly all pupils behave well and are willing to take part in discussions. They have a good relationship with teachers and other adults. They have good social skills and they show good care for each other. All pupils are very courteous.

Pupils are involved in a wide range of community activities, including eisteddfodau, performances and sporting activities.

The attendance rate for the three terms prior to the inspection is 94.74% and the school is performing higher than local and national percentages. Punctuality figures are very good.

Pupils support local and national charities regularly. They work well to support charities, including 'Children in Need', 'Operation Christmas Child', 'Macmillan Appeal', Tŷ Hafan and Barnados.

The school council is well established and ensures that pupils have a positive impact on decisions.

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

Teachers provide a range of learning activities which, overall, successfully meet the needs of many pupils, including those with additional learning needs. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school's plans to extend the Foundation Stage are developing well, including the use of the outside area for appropriate learning experiences. The phonics provision, which is comparatively new, is having a good impact on pupils' literacy development.

The range of visitors and visits arranged for pupils support and enrich their experiences effectively. Pupils benefit from visits that match their themes, for example to Llancaiach Fawr, and performances by professional theatrical companies, such as Arad Goch Theatre Company.

Overall, detailed planning ensures good continuity and progression in numeracy and information and communications technology skills across the curriculum. The provision for Welsh and English is developing appropriately and beginning to set firm foundations for pupils' language skills. Members of staff are good language role models, and this is starting to promote pupils' literacy skills more effectively.

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The Welsh dimension is a strong feature of the life and work of the school. The provision effectively promotes pupils' knowledge and understanding of their local area and Wales as a country.

The provision for sustainable development education is good. The school ensures that pupils receive good opportunities to extend their knowledge of issues relating to global citizenship through curricular, cultural and charitable activities.

**Teaching: Good**

In the lessons where good and outstanding features are observed teachers motivate and challenge pupils by very effective questioning. Teachers ensure that pupils are attentive and well motivated at all times. A variety of teaching methods are used very effectively to inspire pupils and the use of information and communications technology is a great strength in teaching, with outstanding examples.

Teachers plan effectively in most lessons and respond appropriately to the pupils' needs. Previous learning is referred to and these experiences are built upon. Effective use is made of challenging questioning to ensure pupils progress and think for themselves. Teachers try to promote pupils' independence in many aspects of the curriculum and activities are appropriately differentiated.

In lessons where teaching is not as effective, teachers do not plan in enough detail for the range of pupils' ability and the work is not sufficiently challenging for the more able ones.

Classroom assistants give good support to all pupils, and they collaborate effectively with class teachers to assess pupils' progress. Overall, marking is appropriate, but the comments do not always note what is required for pupils to improve. Assessment for learning strategies are developing appropriately and nearly all pupils are aware of their targets.

A new county tracking system is beginning to record pupil progress and the school is already using the information collected appropriately to support target groups of pupils. Parents are provided with information on their children's achievement and progress in an annual report and in two formal meetings. They state that the reports are clear and offer targets for improvement.

**Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school is a safe and happy community and the provision for pastoral care is strong. The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding pupils. There are clear procedures for dealing with bullying and discriminating on the basis of race or disability.

Members of staff have detailed information about pupils' social deprivation and any academic and emotional difficulties. The school is willing to listen to pupils and to help them. Provision for personal and social education is planned effectively.

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Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is effective. Pupils' learning needs are identified early by teachers, and there are good links with specialist agencies to support and promote pupils' development.

Individual education plans are of good quality. Progress reviews are held regularly, which include opportunities for pupils to measure their own progress in relation to their targets.

Transition arrangements between Year 6 and the secondary school are effective

**Learning environment: Good**

A friendly, productive and inclusive ethos, which is based on positive support and good relationships, is one of the strengths of the school. Issues relating to equal opportunities, diversity and equality are dealt with appropriately, and the strong arrangements that exist ensure very good behaviour across the school.

The school's extensive site is used purposefully to enrich play and learning experiences. The garden is used appropriately to grow and sell vegetables. Classrooms are of a good size with adequate resources for curricular purposes.

The school uses its buildings very effectively; attractive and extensive displays in classrooms and the school's community areas support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements well. Information and communications technology developments successfully enrich learning experiences.

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

The head teacher's management of day-to-day issues is effective. He has a strong commitment to the school and to pupils' wellbeing, and he ensures a rich provision of experiences for them and creates and maintains a happy school. Recently, appropriate attention has been given to interpreting data in order to set targets for pupils' achievement.

Members of staff collaborate closely with each other to create a positive ethos. Job descriptions outline staff roles and responsibilities. Staff expertise is used effectively to ensure good provision and support for pupils. The school gives good attention to performance management and the outcomes of the process are linked well to priorities in the school improvement plan.

National and local priorities, such as developing the Foundation Stage, receive good attention.

Governors are supportive of the work of the school and are aware of their responsibilities. They attend school as individuals from time to time, but their role in monitoring standards and provision is less well developed.

**Improving quality: Good**

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The school has established procedures to review all aspects of its work over a period of time. The self-evaluation report gives appropriate attention to data analysis and to the outcomes of monitoring procedures. Every consideration is given to the continuous evaluation of pupils' wellbeing. Consideration is also given to the views of pupils, parents and the views of the local authority. The self-evaluation report clearly identifies the school's views on areas to be developed.

The majority of school improvement priorities are clearly linked to the school development plan. For example, raising literacy standards and developing assessment for learning procedures have been identified as two current priorities. Strategies to promote the improvements are clearly identified. These include a range of procedures and clearly note those members of staff with leadership responsibilities. They also include success criteria, specific timetables and a record of the resources allocated.

The school has made good progress in responding to the recommendations of the last inspection.

Arrangements for teachers to observe lessons have been established and outcomes have had a positive effect on the school's self-evaluation processes. The school has started to take advantage of its commitment to a professional learning community with neighbouring schools in order to develop strategies for raising standards.

**Partnership working: Good**

The school has effective and constructive partnerships with parents and carers. The parents' association is hard working and enriches pupils' experiences. There are good links and appropriate transition arrangements between the school and the local secondary schools and a number of transition activities are successfully organised. Good professional learning communities have been formed with five neighbouring schools and arrangements for standardizing and moderating end of key stage teacher assessments are effective. The partnership with the Cylch Meithrin on the school site is good and, as a result, children who transfer settle easily and quickly to primary school life.

The school has a range of beneficial partnerships with the community, theatre groups, employers, charitable groups and other establishments in the local area and beyond. The wide range of experiences that emanates from these, which are increasingly through the medium of Welsh, enriches the provision for pupils. The school is aware of the importance of its relationship with relevant local authority services and it collaborates with them effectively.

**Resource management: Adequate**

The school is adequately staffed to teach the curriculum effectively. Overall, appropriate use is made of staff's time, experience and expertise and the collaboration between teachers and learning support staff is good. There are effective arrangements in place to identify staff development needs and appropriate use is made of preparation, planning and assessing time.

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Pupils have a wide range of good quality learning resources. Overall, financial management is good and relevant decisions are based on improvement needs. In view of its outcomes the school offers adequate value for money, especially with regard to the use made of its allocated budget.

## Appendix 1

### Comments on performance data

Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, in key stage 1, and at the end of Year 6, in key stage 2, must be treated with caution since small numbers in a year group can have a significant impact on the school's performance from one year to the next. Because there are so few pupils in the cohorts, it is difficult to see any clear pattern over a period of time regarding those pupils entitled to receive free school meals.

In key stage 1, teacher assessment results in Welsh, mathematics and science have been well below national and local averages over the last few years. The core subject indicator, which is the percentage of pupils attaining at least level two in Welsh, mathematics and science combined, is also below national and local averages over the last three years. When key stage 1 results are compared with similar schools, using the free school meals indicator, Welsh, mathematics, science results and the core subject indicator were usually in the fourth quartile over the last four years.

When compared with schools from the same family, results in the three core subjects and the core subject indicator have been well below the family average over the four years. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in the core subjects is also far lower than family averages. There is no significant pattern in boys' and girls' performance over a period of time.

In key stage 2, the pattern is similar to key stage 1 over the last four years. Welsh, English, mathematics and science results have been far lower than national, local and family of schools' averages. When key stage 2 results are compared with other similar schools, using the free school meals indicator, Welsh, English, mathematics, science and the core subject indicator are usually in the fourth or third quartile over the last four years. Key stage 1 and 2 results have been affected generally by the number of pupils with additional learning needs in the Year 2 and Year 6 groups. There is no significant pattern in boys' and girls' performance over a period of time.

When compared with the family of schools, results in the core subjects and the core subject indicator have been lower than the family averages for the last three years, apart from 2011. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 5 has been far lower than comparative averages during the same period.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

#### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

14 questionnaires were returned by parents and everyone is very satisfied with the school. They say that their children like and feel safe in school. All believe that the behaviour of pupils is good, that pupils are respected, treated fairly and that the school enables them to become more mature and to accept responsibilities. Also, all parents feel that the teaching is good and that their children are making appropriate progress in the school. All parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with any questions, making suggestions or raising an issue. They believe that the school provides a good range of activities, including trips and visits. All are of the opinion that the school is well organised with 79% thinking that the school is very well organised. Only seven per cent say that they do not understand the school procedures for dealing with complaints.

#### **Responses to learner questionnaires**

24 questionnaires were returned. Learners feel very positive indeed about their school. All say that they feel safe there and think that the school deals well with bullying. All know with whom to speak if they are worried or if they find the work difficult. All learners believe that teachers and other adults help them to learn and to make progress. All feel that other children behave well. All learners state that they are doing well in school and that the school teaches how to keep healthy. All are of the opinion that homework helps them to improve their work in school and that they have sufficient books, equipment and computers to do their work.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Dr David Gareth Evans	Reporting Inspector
Mr Enir Rees Morgan	Team Inspector
Mr Dylan Jones	Lay Inspector
Mrs Helen Griffiths	Peer Inspector
Mr Glenn Evans	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

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## 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