



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

**Report following monitoring  
Level of follow-up activity: significant improvement**

**Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bodringallt  
Bryn Terrace  
Ystrad  
Pentre  
RCT  
CF41 7RX**

**Date of visit: December 2015**

**by**

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

**© Crown Copyright 2016: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

**The monitoring team**

Kevin Davies	Reporting Inspector
Anwen Griffith	Team Inspector

## Outcome of visit

It is judged that Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Bodringallt has made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in June 2013.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school's name from the list of schools in need of significant improvement.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **Recommendation 1: Raise the standards of pupils' extended writing skills across the curriculum**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Across the school, many pupils receive interesting writing experiences in language lessons and this is developed in a co-ordinated way across the areas of learning and the National Curriculum. Since the last visit, the school has put a number of robust strategies in place to develop extended writing. Displays of learners' written work celebrate success effectively. The school has introduced the 'Balchder Bodringallt' (Pride of Bodringallt) scheme successfully in order to engender pupils' pride in their work.

Since September, the school has adapted its schemes of work and has mapped the various forms of writing across the areas of learning and the curriculum. As a result, pupils have regular opportunities to develop these forms across a range of subjects.

The majority of pupils in the Foundation Phase make appropriate progress in their written skills. Many of them write independently, linked to the class theme, using vocabulary and syntax that are appropriate to their age and ability. They produce pieces for various purposes and in a range of appropriate contexts by the end of the Foundation Phase. The majority spell familiar words correctly and make appropriate use of basic punctuation, including quotation marks. A few more able pupils develop their ideas sensibly by using the conjugated form of the verb regularly.

In key stage 2, most pupils have a good awareness of the characteristics of various written forms and, by the end of the key stage, they have regular opportunities to write for various audiences in both languages. Most pupils develop their ideas sensibly in line with the characteristics of the form of writing. Most pupils show a firm grasp of sentence structure, punctuation and the effective use of vocabulary according to the task. The writing standards of a few more able pupils are good; they use a wider range of vocabulary and extended punctuation to reinforce their work. An example of this is the way in which pupils produce a portrait of characters and a newspaper report from the time of the Second World War.

The school has an effective system for assessing and standardising pupils' written work. Teachers track pupils' progress effectively and provide valuable experiences for various groups of pupils. This has a positive effect on many pupils' standards of writing. The literacy leader submits a valuable report to the governing body, which

ensures that leaders have a clear overview of standards of writing across the school. As a result, governors challenge the school successfully to raise standards across the school.

**Recommendation 2: Prepare more purposefully in order to challenge more able pupils consistently and differentiate effectively for them**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has a purposeful policy that identifies clearly the strategies that are used to respond to the needs of more able pupils. The school uses a wide range of performance data, results of national tests and internal assessments to identify more able pupils and to ensure suitable provision for them in the classroom. Recent training for teachers has helped them to plan more purposefully for these pupils and has ensured more consistency in provision across the school.

Many teachers plan detailed differentiated activities and they use an appropriate range of strategies to raise standards. In the best examples, at the top end of the school, teachers set challenging success criteria and use extended tasks in order to ensure that more able pupils achieve the higher levels. However, activities are not always sufficiently challenging, nor do they respond fully to the needs of all pupils, especially in the Foundation Phase.

Recently, assessment for learning techniques and written feedback on pupils' work have been more consistent. The teacher's comments now identify strengths and areas for improvement clearly. Pupils have regular opportunities to assess each other's work and the work of peers. This ensures that they are aware of what they need to do to improve their work. Staff track progress regularly and are beginning to use the findings to plan for more able pupils.

**Recommendation 3: Provide more opportunities for pupils to make decisions and to take responsibility for their own learning in order to develop into independent learners**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Following training and visits to observe good practice in other schools, staff have introduced a number of strategies to enable pupils to develop as more independent learners.

These strategies include effective use of challenge mats, the question tree, learning records and mind maps. Teachers have prepared clear guidelines on walls across the school in order to help pupils to work more independently. This gives pupils a more active role to contribute to their own learning. As a result, many pupils across the school produce work independently and of a suitable standard. In general in lessons, most pupils' level of commitment is good.

Teachers respond constructively to pupils' work and provide a way forward. Strategies such as 'two stars and a wish' are now used more regularly across the school and there are regular opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' feedback

and take a role in their own learning. This is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' ability to work independently. However, this is not consistent across the subjects in all classes.

Through the work of the school senate and the school councils, pupils contribute extensively to the school's decisions. A marked example of this is the way in which pupils have contributed their ideas to develop the outdoor play area.

**Recommendation 4: Address urgently the health and safety issue**

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has co-operated closely with the local authority in order to address the health and safety issue that was raised during the inspection. Appropriate steps have been taken in order to ensure pupils' safety.

**Recommendation 5: Continue to co-operate with the local authority to develop the school site in order to implement the principles of the Foundation Phase in full**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Staff have received beneficial training in order to develop their knowledge of teaching methods and the principles of the Foundation Phase. They have also strengthened their understanding of the expectations for the outcomes of the phase by visiting other schools to observe good practice. The school has co-operated successfully with the local authority Foundation Phase officers in order to develop the school's indoor and outdoor areas. The indoor areas have been structured purposefully, and designated areas are prominent in each classroom. Improvements to the outdoor area have been a successful venture as the school worked jointly with parents, pupils and local authority officers. For example, a purpose-built shelter was erected in order to provide appropriate access to outdoor activities.

The school plans appropriately to develop the principles of the Foundation Phase and pupils' skills. The plans build on previous learning suitably and ensure progression and continuity in developing many pupils' skills. Learning experiences gain many pupils' interest and meet their needs. By planning jointly with teachers and supporting groups of learners, the Foundation Phase learning assistants enrich provision appropriately. However, planning does not always meet the needs of all pupils sufficiently and does not promote pupils' independence regularly enough

**Recommendation 6: Strengthen the senior management team's leadership responsibilities so that they operate more strategically**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school's management team is now more stable. Under the headteacher's very robust leadership, and with the support of the local authority, the school has established effective procedures in order to strengthen the school's leadership and management arrangements. Leaders' understanding of what needs to be done in order to improve specific aspects of provision and pupils' outcomes is sound.

The senior management team's responsibilities are balanced and members undertake their responsibilities successfully. They have undertaken valuable activities to monitor aspects of learning and teaching. Most of these activities place a clear focus on monitoring pupils' standards and include good use of attainment data. There is an obvious link between the senior management team's self-evaluation work and the school's development plans. As a result, the senior management team contribute effectively to setting the school's strategic direction. They conduct beneficial meetings that focus successfully on strategic aspects that need to be improved. The meetings' minutes are detailed and enable leaders to review progress against the school's improvement targets effectively.

### **Recommendation 7: Develop the governors' role as critical friends**

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

Communication between the school and members of the body is very good. Governors are now aware of their responsibilities as strategic leaders and they have a good understanding of the life and work of the school. They meet regularly to address a number of the school's priorities for improvement. The minutes of meetings are detailed and enable the body to challenge the school on progress against the school's improvement targets very effectively.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. They make successful use of data analysis in order to challenge the school's performance, especially in comparison with similar schools. They have a direct link with aspects of school life, and an appropriate system of sub-committees ensures their commitment to the school's strategic direction well.

Governors follow a monitoring timetable that is based on priorities in the development plan. They collect information about the school's performance by scrutinising books, classroom visits, and regular walks around the school. They have appropriate opportunities to share their experiences with the full governing body following their visits to the school. Governors use these monitoring outcomes strategically in order to challenge the school's leadership effectively to raise standards, for example to raise standards of writing across the school. They use the information to contribute to self-evaluation documents and the school improvement plans successfully.

Governors have attended a number of relevant training courses during the year and this has ensured that they have a better awareness of their statutory role. As a result, the governing body is very knowledgeable about the school's performance and what needs to be improved. Governors act as very effective critical friends by challenging the school skilfully in order to ensure improvement in provision and pupils' outcomes. For example, they use their knowledge well in order to challenge the standards of more able pupils.

### **Recommendations**

In order to maintain this progress and improve upon it, the school should continue to maintain the level of progress that it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where more progress is needed.