



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

A report on

**Ysgol Bro Sannan
Ty Fry Road
Aberbargoed
Bargoed
CF81 9FN**

Date of inspection: October 2019

by

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

About Ysgol Bro Sannan

Ysgol Bro Sannan is situated in the village of Aberbargoed in Caerphilly local authority. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work. There are 195 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll, including 19 full-time nursery age pupils. Pupils are taught in seven classes, which include four single-age classes and three mixed-age classes.

Over a three-year-period, around 26% of pupils have been eligible for free school meals. This is higher than the national percentage of 18%. A few pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has identified around 24% of its pupils as having special educational needs. This is slightly higher than the national percentage of 21%.

The school was last inspected in March 2012 and the current headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

Summary

The school places a strong emphasis on establishing a caring and inclusive learning community that promotes the Welsh language and pupils' Welshness successfully. All staff commit successfully to supporting vulnerable pupils and promoting the importance of good behaviour, courtesy and respect. As a result, most pupils enjoy coming to school, feel safe there and treat each other, staff and visitors with respect. Most staff take advantage of beneficial opportunities to develop pupils' oracy skills at all times. Most pupils develop strong oracy skills and are very proud of their ability to speak Welsh. However, pupils' reading and writing skills have not been developed to the same standard. Over-direction from staff in lessons also limits pupils' ability to develop their independent learning skills in full.

The recent period of instability in terms of leadership and staff changes has had a negative effect on the school's life and work. As a result, leaders continue to rely on external support to implement priorities for improvement and monitor progress. All staff work well with each other and others to act on any guidance on how to improve provision and pupils' outcomes. However, the school does not yet have purposeful or mature enough self-evaluation processes to identify and ensure improvement independently

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

Recommendations

- R1 Develop a robust leadership structure in order for leaders at all levels to take responsibility for important aspects of the school's life and work
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation processes
- R3 Ensure that teachers use a variety of effective learning strategies to meet the needs of all pupils
- R4 Improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills
- R5 Improve pupils' independent learning skills

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress around 12 months after the publication of this report.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

On entry to the school, many pupils' skills are lower than expected. As they move through the school, most make good progress in their oracy skills and use them skilfully to communicate with adults and peers at all times. Pupils with additional learning needs make effective progress towards their targets from their starting points.

In the foundation phase, most pupils' speaking and listening skills are sound. They listen attentively to adults and follow instructions successfully. Many discuss their work confidently and explain clearly what they are doing in tasks, for example as Year 2 pupils explain the purpose of the bones in their bodies. They use an increasing range of language patterns and appropriate vocabulary. Many enjoy reading and listening to stories, and discuss the main characters and events suitably. However, most pupils do not have sound enough strategies to build unfamiliar words, when necessary. As a result, these pupils' reading skills are weak, which limits their ability to read for pleasure and find information to support their learning.

Across the foundation phase, a majority of pupils write an increasing range of simple sentences correctly. They have an increasing understanding of vocabulary and are beginning to use basic punctuation in their work regularly. By the end of the phase, a majority of pupils use suitable vocabulary and language appropriately to write for different purposes, for example when recording facts about the importance of eating and drinking healthily. However, a minority are unsure about how to spell familiar words and many pupils' handwriting is untidy. There are also very few examples of pupils writing at length across the curriculum.

Most pupils in key stage 2 communicate clearly and join in with discussions enthusiastically. They listen attentively to the views of others and discuss various topics maturely. Many pupils make appropriate progress in their reading skills in both Welsh and English. They give due attention to punctuation and quotation marks, and express suitable opinions about the stories in their books. Many use their higher-order reading skills effectively, for example when gathering information about the effect of the Second World War on the lives of people in Swansea.

Many pupils' writing skills are developing appropriately in key stage 2. They write for different purposes and show a sound awareness of different writing genres, such as newspaper articles and monologues. A good example of this is Year 5 and 6 writing a monologue about Capel Celyn and the current debate about the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. Many older pupils use extensive vocabulary in their written work in order to enrich it. However, there are very few example of extended writing by all pupils across the stage, which hinders their ability to extend their skills further.

Most pupils' numeracy skills are developing soundly across the school. In the foundation phase, a majority make good progress in their mathematical development. By Year 2, they have an appropriate understanding of number, measurement, time and weight. They use these skills with increasing confidence in other areas of

learning, for example when weighing and measuring ingredients while cooking. Many pupils develop their numeracy skills appropriately across key stage 2. They apply their skills and knowledge from mathematics lessons suitably to solve problems across the curriculum, when handling data following an experiment on friction or when solving problems to discover how old they would be if they lived on another planet. However, a minority of pupils do not have a sound enough understanding of important concepts in order to solve number problems successfully. A few pupils' thinking skills are developing suitably, but there is very little evidence that this is consistent across the school.

Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing soundly. Soon after starting at the school, most pupils' develop basic skills suitably. For example, in the nursery class, they use an electronic tablet appropriately to make a picture of their faces. By the end of the phase, many pupils foster good ICT skills and use different programs successfully to support their learning, for example to record the class's favourite vegetables in the form of a block graph. In key stage 2, most pupils use their ICT skills successfully across the curriculum. They present varied work across the curriculum independently, for example by using spreadsheets to record and analyse information about the distance between cities and creating a database on songs from the Second World War. Many older pupils combine their skills successfully and use more than one computer program to create their finished work. For example, they use spreadsheets effectively to create formulae and links to keep a detailed record of the goods that are needed when organising a party.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Adequate and needs improvement

Ysgol Bro Sannan is a caring and inclusive community in which most pupils behave politely towards each other, adults and visitors. They are happy at the school and know who to approach when they need support. Nearly all pupils give careful consideration to the needs of others; for example, members of the 'clwb cyfeillion' (friends club) and 'mêts grêt' (great mates) succeed in supporting peers who are less confident during break times. Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay healthy, and pupils of all ages understand how to make healthy choices in terms of diet and physical activity, for example by attending extra-curricular clubs such as 'clwb hwb'. They also participate successfully in the daily 'mile a day' fitness activity in order to promote their fitness.

A majority of pupils have a sound understanding of e-safety issues and understand how to stay safe online. Most pupils are aware of the importance of taking care of the environment and their local community. Many make a valuable contribution to community life by taking part in concerts and other events. They also have a good understanding of the importance of caring for others by supporting charities. Pupils who are members of the school's committees undertake their work effectively. For example, members of the eco council set purposeful targets to reduce waste and save energy, and monitor all classes carefully. This contributes well towards ensuring that most pupils develop skilfully as knowledgeable and moral citizens. Pupils who are members of the Welsh committee have a good influence on the school's life and work by promoting the Welsh language and pupils' Welshness. As a result, nearly all pupils are proud of their Welshness and their ability to speak Welsh.

Most pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and the positive effect that this has on their progress over time. They show an interest and satisfaction in their work and take pride in what they do. Most pupils work successfully with their peers in lessons and around the school. They listen well to instructions and respect the views of others during discussions. However, many pupils' independent learning skills have not developed soundly enough and they do not always take enough responsibility for their own learning. A few pupils also do not concentrate sufficiently on tasks and lose interest. In these cases, these pupils' behaviour disrupts the learning of others.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

A good working relationship between staff and pupils lays a firm foundation for learning. Most staff model language effectively and take advantage of every opportunity to enrich pupils' spoken language, which has a positive effect on pupils' oracy skills in both languages. They deliver a suitable range of learning experiences, which engage most pupils' interest. A good example of this is the use of the outdoor shelter to emulate a refuge during the Second World War to inspire pupils to think about people's feelings during this period.

Overall, most staff use purposeful questions to challenge and extend pupils' responses. Teachers use learning assistants appropriately to support individuals and groups of pupils. However, they do not always ensure that assistants encourage pupils to work independently on tasks. A minority of teachers also do not vary their teaching methods to respond to all pupils' needs in full and develop their independent learning skills effectively. Overall, most teachers share clear learning objectives with pupils in order to ensure that learning has a purpose.

Across the school, teachers provide pupils with useful oral feedback. Overall, teachers' written feedback identifies what pupils are doing well and what they need to improve. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to respond appropriately to comments and improve their work. The school's recent system of setting personal targets is beginning to increase pupils' understanding of what they need to do to reach the next stage in their learning.

Teachers plan a suitable range of lessons and beneficial learning experiences that are based on interesting themes. They are beginning to provide suitable opportunities for pupils to guide the direction of learning by providing ideas at the beginning of each theme. This ensures that pupils have more responsibility over their own learning. Teachers plan appropriately to develop pupils' literacy skills. They provide a suitable range of opportunities for them to write for different purposes across the curriculum. However, inappropriate over-use of worksheets in many classes limits pupils' ability to write at length. The school also does not have robust enough procedures to develop pupils' reading skills. This has a negative effect on pupils' reading outcomes across the school. Teachers plan suitable opportunities to develop and apply pupils' numeracy skills in other areas across the curriculum. Although pupils make good progress in their skills in designated ICT lessons, teachers do not always take advantage of opportunities for them to apply them in other subjects.

A clear emphasis is placed on promoting Welsh culture and teaching pupils about their local area's history, for example through visits to St Sannan's Church or a museum in Swansea. They provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop as global citizens, for example by learning about pollution in our seas and performing in a musical on this theme.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is an inclusive community with a definite emphasis on ensuring care and support for all individuals. The school has robust systems for tracking pupils' progress from their starting points. Teachers use information appropriately in order to identify pupils who need additional support in terms of literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. As a result, they provide beneficial support in order to ensure that these pupils make sound progress in their learning. The deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator also work very successfully with parents, from the outset, in order to identify pupils' needs at a very early stage. This ensures prompt support and intervention for pupils and their families, and is a strong element of the school's work. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are purposeful. This includes providing beneficial support and guidance in order to develop pupils' emotional and social needs effectively.

Recently, the school has begun to include pupils in annual reviews. As a result, these pupils have more responsibility for their personal targets. The school has a comprehensive range of provision to support pupils with emotional needs. For example, by attending specific intervention sessions, some pupils develop resilience and the ability to persevere, and the use of practical numeracy sessions motivates them to learn successfully. Staff co-operate effectively with a full range of partners and external agencies to support provision for pupils with special educational needs or emotional needs. This contributes well to the school's caring and familial ethos.

Staff promote courtesy regularly and ensure that pupils behave appropriately and treat others with respect as they move around the school. The school has appropriate arrangements to promote eating and drinking healthily. It encourages pupils to keep fit effectively, for example by providing a daily opportunity for key stage 2 pupils to run a mile on the school playground. Provision for personal and social education is planned in detail throughout the school. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to stay safe. For example, the school's youngest pupils are given lessons on how to cross the road safely, and key stage 2 pupils are given effective lessons on how to use the internet safely.

The school promotes pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, successfully. Teachers plan valuable opportunities for pupils to learn about Welsh culture, and they are given valuable opportunities to perform on different local and national stages, for example by competing in the Urdd Eisteddfod. They benefit from good opportunities to learn about their local community, for example by visiting St Sannan's Church or learning about what happened in the area during the Second World War. All staff promote Welshness effectively and, as a result, most pupils have a sound understanding of the benefits of being bilingual. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills, for example by emulating the work of world-famous artists in art lessons, or by writing a piece of poetry about being homeless in a language lesson.

By being members of different councils, pupils are given suitable opportunities to contribute to school life and make decisions. For example, the 'Clwb Cyfeillion' has established a system to raise their peers' self-image by distributing 'pensiliau positif' (positive pencils), and they promote a 'diffodd y golau' (lights out) campaign throughout the school in order to reduce the unnecessary use of energy. This ensures that pupils have a say in decisions that have an effect on the school's life and work.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

Leadership and management: Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

The school has experienced a period of instability in terms of leadership and staffing changes, and this has had a negative effect on the school's strategic direction and pupils' outcomes. The headteacher is currently supported purposefully by a deputy headteacher and an acting leader of teaching and learning. As a result, leaders are beginning to lead more effectively on important aspects of the school improvement plan and are beginning to have a positive effect on provision and standards. Recently, this has ensured that leaders respond more effectively to urgent targets for improvement that have been agreed by the consortium and the local authority. However, the staffing structure remains unstable in the short term and staff roles are unclear.

Over time, the governing body has not contributed effectively enough towards setting a strategic direction for the school and towards improving the quality of provision and standards. Recently, the body has worked appropriately with local authority officers to begin to hold the school to account and establish a temporary staffing structure for the school. The chair, who was appointed recently, is beginning to provide the governing body with clear leadership. However, members are not yet fulfilling their role robustly enough or contributing sufficiently to the school's self-evaluation arrangements.

Leaders work well with officers from the local authority and the consortium, in addition to other headteachers, to implement the targets in the improvement plan. The deputy headteacher and leader of teaching and learning are now monitoring progress against these priorities more effectively. This is beginning to have a positive effect on provision and pupils' standards, for example by beginning to ensure consistency in assessment for learning methods across the school. Very recently, leaders have established a relevant self-evaluation structure, which includes lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. However, this has not yet been implemented fully by all of the school's leaders, and they continue to rely on external support when evaluating the school's work.

Very recently, the deputy headteacher and leader of teaching and learning have begun to establish a culture and ethos to support staff's professional learning. They are beginning to provide beneficial opportunities for them to increase their knowledge, understanding and professional skills by visiting other schools and attending relevant training. However, the school has not implemented rigorous enough performance management arrangements for staff, including leaders, over the last two years. This has hindered their ability to develop themselves by acting on

personal targets and taking part in relevant training. Shortcomings in these arrangements have also prevented leaders, including governors, from measuring staff success against previous targets.

Leaders have ensured an appropriate level of staffing and learning resources to deliver the curriculum, and they use these resources efficiently, on the whole. Decisions about expenditure link appropriately with the school's priorities for improvement and they make suitable use of grants. A specific example of this is the effective use of the pupil development grant to employ assistants, who provide beneficial support for pupils in terms of their wellbeing.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

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

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

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

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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