



**Report following monitoring**

**Level of follow-up activity:  
significant improvement**

**Ysgol Beuno Sant Y Bala  
Heol y Castell  
Bala  
Gwynedd  
LL23 7UU**

**Date of visit: June 2015**

**by**

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

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**The monitoring team**

Kevin Davies	Reporting Inspector
Terwyn Tomos	Team Inspector

## **Outcome of visit**

It is judged that Ysgol Beuno Sant has made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in April 2014.

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: Improve standards of writing across the school**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase are making good progress in their writing skills. By the end of year 2, they write effectively and at length in a suitable range of forms across various areas of learning. Nearly all pupils achieve to a standard that is suitable for their age and ability.

The majority of key stage 2 pupils write appropriate extended pieces in a range of different forms and for various purposes in Welsh and English. By the end of the key stage, most pupils write pieces of a good standard independently. These pupils spell and punctuate correctly in both languages, and vary sentences effectively. They understand how to improve the quality of their written work, and respond positively to teachers' comments.

Pupils' standards of presentation of work and handwriting are good.

Teachers and assistants have received useful training and guidance at the school and in effective co-operation with other schools. As a result, they have an appropriate understanding of standards of work and curriculum attainment levels. On the whole, teachers have firm and high expectations of their pupils' work, although this is not always consistent across the school. Teachers all use specific strategies, which give pupils of all ages opportunities to prepare meaningfully for writing polished pieces independently.

### **Recommendation 2: Raise pupils' attendance levels**

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has effective strategies in order to promote pupils' attendance. This has led to a significant increase in pupils' attendance percentage over the last year. They communicate effectively with parents and carers in order to reinforce the importance of good attendance. A reward system and celebration assemblies are successful in promoting high expectations among pupils and parents. The school co-operates effectively with external agencies in order to improve pupils' attendance percentage.

**Recommendation 3: Implement the Foundation Phase more effectively, particularly in terms of planning and teaching**

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The school plans effectively for developing the principles of the Foundation Phase and pupils' skills, ensuring challenging experiences and activities that meet most pupils' needs. Detailed planning ensures that pupils develop thinking skills and foster independent learning that is suitable for their age and ability. Effective use is made of the purposeful learning areas and the outdoor area in order to stimulate and develop nearly all pupils' skills.

The teacher uses the Literacy and Numeracy Framework skilfully in order to develop pupils' skills. The plans and good teaching ensure that staff build on previous learning effectively and ensure progression and continuity in developing most pupils' skills. Staff use a range of teaching strategies to develop pupils' extended writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, most pupils use their numeracy skills skilfully to solve everyday problems. Good use of information and communication technology helps to develop most pupils' skills.

Learning assistants in the Foundation Phase enrich provision and support groups of learners. They question probingly in order to develop pupils' understanding and skills effectively.

Staff have received beneficial training in order to develop their knowledge of teaching methods and principles in the Foundation Phase. They have also strengthened their understanding of expectations for outcomes of the phase by establishing professional learning networks with other schools.

**Recommendation 4: Extend the level of challenge for pupils of higher ability across the school**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has developed schemes of work that provide appropriate activities for pupils of various abilities. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their thinking and problem-solving skills regularly. The school's method of responding to pupils' work and to identify individual targets also sets a specific challenge for all pupils. However, this does not happen regularly enough across the school and the nature of the targets is not always challenging enough for the most able pupils.

Most of the more able pupils across the school attain standards that are appropriate to their ability.

The most able pupils in the Foundation Phase read fluently in Welsh and English, using effective strategies to address difficult or unfamiliar vocabulary. They succeed in conveying the meaning of the reading pieces by using intonation and they are able to discuss content intelligently.

The most able pupils' written work at the end of the Foundation Phase is of a very high standard. They are successful in creating extended pieces that are correct, include increasingly rich vocabulary, and show a firm grasp of a variety of forms.

By the end of key stage 2, the most able pupils are mature, independent learners, who submit work of a high quality in their work books. They use generally strong vocabulary in Welsh and English, as well as vocabulary and terms that are specific to a subject or area of learning. They enrich their written work successfully by using adjective, similes and idioms.

**Recommendation 5: Refine assessment for learning procedures in order to ensure that pupils understand better what they need to do to improve their work**

Strong progress in addressing the recommendation

The school has a clear policy and strategy on how to respond to pupils' work across the school. In the Foundation Phase, assessment for learning strategies have been embedded successfully. Pupils' work is marked regularly and the teacher's comments refer nearly every time to the success criteria. This includes identifying what they achieve well and what they need to do in order to improve. A strong feature of the Foundation Phase is the opportunities that are available to pupils to respond to the teacher's comments and to show their understanding of the success criteria by identifying examples. As a result, the assessment for learning strategies are having a very good effect on raising standards in the Foundation Phase.

In key stage 2, assessment for learning strategies meet many pupils' needs. Overall, teachers use success criteria effectively and provide good comments that enable pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, this does not happen regularly enough across the classes. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are able to decide on their own success criteria and use them skilfully to assess each other's work. They have valuable opportunities to respond appropriately to teachers' comments and to redraft specific pieces. This has a positive effect on raising most pupils' standards by the end of the key stage. Teachers provide relevant targets for nearly all pupils in order to develop their numeracy and literacy skills. However, at times, these targets do not provide enough challenge for more able and talented pupils.

**Recommendation 6: Ensure that school leaders implement and monitor the school's processes more effectively in order to improve pupils' achievements**

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

The headteacher has a clear vision for ensuring improvement in provision and standards and he shares it effectively with everyone who is involved with the school. He sets a clear strategy for the school and gives robust leadership to teachers and to the governing body. As a result, they have a better awareness of their role as leaders and are more able to identify strengths and aspects to be improved at the school.

Self-evaluation and monitoring procedures are now robust and the recommendations that arise from them set a clear direction for subsequent action. Progress against the recommendations is monitored and evaluated effectively.

As a result of useful training on self-evaluation and methods of writing reports, teachers have taken an effective part in activities such as scrutinising books and observing lessons. Similarly, governors take an active and useful part in the self-evaluation process by scrutinising books and schemes of work, and observing activities at the school. Reports that arise from these activities are of a high quality and are successful in identifying areas that need to be developed.

**Recommendation 7: Develop the governors' understanding of the school's performance data in order for them to challenge the school and operate more effectively**

Very good progress in addressing the recommendation

Nearly all members of the governing body have received useful training on analysing the school's performance data. They have a good understanding of the school's performance in comparison with similar schools. As a result, they challenge the school effectively in terms of performance and progress towards targets in the improvement plans. The governing body use this information well in order to address underperformance and to make strategic decisions.

The governing body has established useful sub-committees to challenge and support the school to make the necessary improvements. Most governors visit the school regularly in order to monitor provision and standards. Governors' monitoring reports are comprehensive and of good quality. They make good use of the information to ensure that the governing body is aware of the school's improvements and shortcomings.

<b>Recommendations</b>
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In order to maintain this progress and improve on 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.