



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

A report on

**Bryn C.P. School
Gelli Road
Bryn
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA14 9TT**

Date of inspection: November 2018

by

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

About Bryn C.P. School

Bryn Primary School is on the outskirts of Llanelli, in the local authority of Carmarthenshire.

There are currently 213 pupils on roll between the ages of 3 and 11. There are seven single-age classes, one mixed-age class and a nursery class, which has a mix of full and part-time pupils.

The three-year rolling average of pupils eligible for free school meals is 19%, which is marginally above the national average of 18%. The school identifies around 26% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is above the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have English as an additional language and speak Welsh at home.

There has been discontinuity in leadership in the school recently. The substantive headteacher was appointed in January 2017, but was absent due to ill health at the time of the inspection. Since mid-October 2018, a deputy headteacher from a local school has overseen the school for three days a week. The school was last inspected in May 2012.

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

Most pupils feel safe and happy in school. They behave well and are willing to work hard. They are eager to succeed. Most pupils at the school achieve satisfactory standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. However, too many pupils do not make good enough progress from their individual starting points, especially more able pupils and pupils with additional learning needs.

The school cares for pupils well and promotes their personal development appropriately. However, the curriculum and the arrangements for the support and guidance of pupils do not meet the needs and interests of all pupils well enough. The quality of teaching varies too much between classes and many teachers underestimate pupils' abilities and the full extent of what they can achieve.

The school lacks continuity of leadership and a secure leadership structure. Leaders and managers do not provide effective strategic direction to the school's work or currently demonstrate the capacity to bring about the improvements required. The governing body's role in holding the school leadership to account for the standards pupils achieve and the quality of the school's provision is weak and their oversight of the school's finances is limited.

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	Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement
Leadership and management	Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

Recommendations

- R1 Establish an effective leadership structure on all levels
- R2 Develop the governing body's ability to support the school strategically and to fulfil its statutory requirements
- R3 Ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate and derive from a robust evaluation of pupils' standards
- R4 Establish a robust system to support those pupils with additional learning needs
- R5 Improve attendance at school
- R6 Implement the principles of the foundation phase in full
- R7 Improve the quality of classroom practice so that teaching and learning support the development of pupils as independent learners and ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can

What happens next

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school. The school will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress on a termly basis.

Main findings

Standards: Adequate and needs improvement

Around half of the pupils join the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those expected for their age. By the end of their time at the school, most pupils achieve suitable standards in English and mathematics. However, too many pupils do not make good enough progress from their individual starting points, particularly the more able pupils and pupils with additional learning needs. Most pupils' progress in developing and applying their skills across the curriculum is satisfactory.

Most pupils' oral skills develop appropriately in the foundation phase. They generally, listen purposefully. By the end of the phase, the majority of pupils talk confidently about their work and experiences, for example when discussing what objects can be found in space. Most pupils in key stage 2 communicate clearly and confidently and are keen to give answers or comments when talking about their work. In Year 2, most pupils read well. They use their knowledge of phonics to help them work out unfamiliar words. They make sensible predictions about what might happen next in stories and talk confidently about famous authors and books that they have enjoyed. By Year 6, most pupils read fluently from appropriately challenging texts. They speak articulately, for example to recount stories they have read. A few pupils demonstrate empathy and use engaging vocabulary and sensitive language when discussing the feelings of a character. Most show a good understanding of texts. They use higher-order reading skills well when searching for information on topics, for example on the heart.

By the end of the foundation phase, many pupils are beginning to form a cursive style of writing. They spell a suitable range of words correctly and use full stops and capital letters with increasing accuracy. A very few more able pupils write at length, for example to retell the story of Rama and Sita. They show a developing awareness of time connectives and use suitable descriptive vocabulary. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils write purposefully in a suitable range of genres. For example, they write persuasively to encourage people to support mistreated animals and they compose creative poetry to describe a particular smell, such as vanilla. However, many pupils do not make enough progress in improving the content of their written work in lessons or over time and do not apply their extended writing skills well enough in their work across the curriculum.

In the foundation phase, many pupils develop appropriate number skills. For example, they order two-digit numbers correctly by size and solve halving and doubling number problems correctly. They can estimate the weight of objects confidently and develop a suitable understanding of standard measures. By Year 6, many pupils have suitable calculation skills. Most use a range of strategies effectively, for example to multiply decimals. Increasingly, pupils use number skills effectively in combination, for example to solve word problems about the cost of sending text messages and making calls on a mobile phone. Most show an appropriate understanding of the properties of shape and concepts such as symmetry. Many pupils interpret data purposefully and are beginning to draw suitable conclusions from their findings. For example, pupils in Year 3 investigate in

science whether the child with the longest foot has the longest hand. However, nearly all pupils do not apply their numeracy skills in their work across the curriculum often enough.

In the foundation phase, most pupils make suitable progress in developing and applying information, communication and technology (ICT) skills. Many nursery and reception pupils use tablet devices independently, for example to load games or to control on-screen figures. By Year 6, most pupils use a purposeful range of ICT skills appropriately. For example, they incorporate text and images into presentations about Antarctica and input data into basic spreadsheets. However, most pupils do not use ICT regularly enough to support their learning.

Many pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their basic skills in Welsh. By Year 2, many use simple phrases and basic vocabulary often during the school day, but they lack confidence when reading simple texts. By Year 6, most pupils use basic vocabulary to respond to simple questions and more able pupils are beginning to form their own questions to ask others. However, most pupils do not use Welsh often enough outside designated Welsh lessons.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Adequate and needs improvement

Most pupils speak confidently and proudly about their school and say that they feel safe, secure and well cared for. Most pupils know where to turn if they have any concerns, and many speak maturely about the opportunities for sharing any concerns in the class worry box. Most pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.

Most pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to staff and visitors. For example, many pupils hold doors open for visitors and greet them politely when walking around the school. Most pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner and speak confidently to adults in a range of situations. Many pupils behave well in lessons and on the playground.

Many pupils engage positively in their learning and settle well to their tasks. They listen attentively to their teachers and sustain their concentration well, often for long periods. Most pupils speak confidently about their work and discuss current and previous work with enthusiasm. They enjoy the topics they study, and are generally willing to work hard and to succeed. For example, pupils in Year 2 recall well what they needed to include in an information booklet about space. Most pupils in Year 6 are developing confidence and resilience when facing new challenges and change, for example when they complete an investigation on the amount of heat energy produced by a combination of filled test tubes. A minority of pupils in key stage 2 are developing a suitable understanding of how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve their work.

Across the school, most pupils work effectively in pairs and groups. They listen attentively to the views of others and deal well with opinions that are different from their own, for example when pupils in Year 5 discuss the impact of bullying. Most pupils are beginning to take part in making decisions about their own learning, but most pupils' independent learning skills are very limited. They rely too much on adults to direct them in their learning.

Many pupils take on responsibilities willingly. For example, the work of the playground buddies is beginning to contribute successfully to the good standards of behaviour on the school yard during break and lunch times. However, the pupil groups, such as the school council, eco committee and the Criw Cymraeg, have a limited input on how to bring about change or to make improvements around the school.

Most pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep healthy through eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise. Most pupils know that fruit and vegetables are an essential part of a healthy diet through the school council's daily fruit tuck shop and the school's healthy eating club. They enjoy taking part in physical activities, for example the daily 'shake and wake' sessions organised by the sports ambassadors, and many pupils participate actively in a range of sports clubs in school and in the locality.

Most pupils in key stage 2 understand the importance of regular attendance. However, the response to the school's initiatives to improve attendance is inconsistent. Despite the school's efforts, pupils' attendance over time has remained constantly below the average and does not compare well to that in other similar schools.

Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement

The curriculum provides a purposeful range of learning experiences for most pupils. It builds on their prior learning and meets the needs of most pupils suitably. Overall, there is a satisfactory degree of breadth and balance in the curriculum. Long-term and medium-term plans provide teachers with an appropriate overview of the curriculum of what to cover with pupils each term. However, teachers do not always plan and deliver learning in all subjects successfully in their individual classes.

Following the acting headteacher's guidance, teachers are currently making changes to their curricular plans. This is beginning to ensure that the school is responding robustly to statutory requirements and is starting to think about the new curriculum for Wales. The school is beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas for their topics. Following initial discussions with the class teacher, the pupils offer ideas for the foundation phase 'pili pala' and key stage 2 'chilli' time activities. For example, Year 6 have created their own artificial snow, comparing two different recipes.

The school plans effectively for pupils to write in a range of genres across the curriculum. However, opportunities for pupils to write at length is less well developed. Across the school, teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils build systematically on their skills in a wide enough range of contexts at an appropriate level of challenge, particularly in numeracy and ICT.

The school has yet to establish the principles of the foundation phase consistently enough. Teachers give pupils appropriate experiences in focus tasks in a few classrooms where there are purposeful role-play areas. These activities stimulate pupils' oracy skills appropriately, for example when pupils take on the role of an astronaut in the space station. However, across the foundation phase, adults lead most activities too much, and staff do not always ensure that pupils make good use of the outdoor areas or engage in their own learning enough.

Many teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach and work effectively with classroom assistants. In general, many staff across the school have an effective working relationship with pupils. They have purposeful expectations of pupils' behaviour in all classes. As a result, their classrooms are calm and respectful learning environments. In a few classes, teachers' presentations engage all pupils' interest effectively and they provide stimulating tasks that meet the needs of pupils successfully. They share clear instructions and question pupils purposefully to develop their understanding. However, teachers do not challenge all pupils enough, particularly the more able, to achieve to the best of their ability. Generally, their expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. In too many cases, teachers use worksheets frequently and this limits the development of pupils' independence and creativity too much.

Teachers create relevant success criteria in order to evaluate how well pupils have succeeded in making progress during lessons. They give pupils useful oral feedback on their efforts in lessons. There are suitable procedures in place for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their peers. However, teachers are only just beginning to use assessments appropriately to plan for the next steps in pupils' learning.

Through visits to places such as the Abergwili Museum and Stradey Castle, the school promotes pupils' understanding and celebration of Welsh history and culture through topics with a Welsh context. Most staff use the Welsh language well, but teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills independently outside of Welsh lessons. Very recently, the Criw Cymraeg have started to respond positively to the Welsh Language Charter.

Care, support and guidance: Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

The school provides a welcoming and caring environment where staff treat pupils equally and fairly. Adults provide pupils with helpful emotional and social support. For example, teaching assistants deliver a worthwhile intervention to many pupils which helps them to improve their social skills. Very recently, the school has adopted a system to encourage good behaviour and to ensure that classrooms are orderly places. As a result, pupils' behaviour has generally improved both in the classroom and around the school. There are valuable links with specialist services, for instance to provide worthwhile support for adults working with pupils who have medical needs or have a statement of special educational needs.

The school's provision for pupils with identified additional learning needs is weak. The system lacks consistency and staff are uncertain about the procedures for identifying pupils. The educational plans for pupils with additional needs differ greatly between the foundation phase and key stage 2. The targets for these pupils are too often unrealistic and not measurable enough to secure consistently good progress. Teachers have begun reviewing the plans regularly with pupils and their parents. However, the reviews do not always result in suitable new targets that build on the progress pupils have already made.

Staff make inconsistent use of the school's electronic tracking system. Inaccurate teacher assessments in a few classes affect the reliability of the information in the system. The teachers do not always focus sharply enough on the skills that pupils

have mastered and are using independently. Leaders analyse the data, but do not share the analysis with staff appropriately. This limits the ability of staff to identify pupils at risk of falling behind. The management of the system is not consistent or refined enough for leaders to identify how well different groups of pupils are doing over time or to evaluate when their progress accelerates or slows.

The school plans appropriately for pupils to develop their understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through a suitable range of classroom-based activities and after-school clubs. Visits from sportsmen from a regional rugby team and visits to a local rugby ground promote the importance of physical fitness among pupils well.

The school plans appropriately for the development of pupils' moral, spiritual and social understanding through its religious education curriculum and its personal and social programme. Staff integrate the recently introduced school values into the school's daily collective worship effectively. The new positive statements displayed around the school have improved pupils' sense of self-worth and developed a greater degree of tolerance among them. The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop empathy and charity, for example by pupils contributing to harvest hampers for the local food bank. Other activities, for example raising money for local and national charities, give pupils a sense of pride and achievement, and develop their understanding of the needs of their local community. However, the provision to develop pupils' awareness of issues in the wider world and their roles as global citizens is limited.

Leaders ensure that parents and pupils know the importance of attending school regularly and being punctual. However, this has had little impact on improving the school's attendance rates over recent years compared with those in similar schools.

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

Leadership and management: Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement

In the few weeks since his arrival, the acting headteacher, who is assisting the school temporarily from another school in the local authority, has worked hard to provide clear and approachable leadership to the school. Since his starting, the school has begun to respond positively to the findings of the local authority review and leaders have made very early progress in improving a few aspects of provision. For example, collaborative work within the school has led to a whole-school understanding of the standards achieved by pupils and the quality provision.

However, senior leaders do not currently provide effective strategic direction to the school's work. They have not developed a coherent vision for the school, and, as a result, the staff have tended to act too individually within their own classes or phases and have not developed enough of a whole-school, collective responsibility for delivering a high quality of education for all pupils. Senior leaders have not developed systems to enable the school to run smoothly day-to-day or over time. Too many aspects of the school's provision are only adequate and, currently, it does not meet pupils' needs as well as it could. For example, senior leaders do not have a strategic overview and vision for a curriculum that develops pupils' skills successfully and meets the needs of all learners.

Communication between senior leaders and the other staff is generally weak. This has limited how well staff undertake their designated responsibilities and their role in helping to deliver the school's strategic priorities. It has also hampered their capacity to work together coherently as a team. The temporary acting headteacher has ensured that all the staff now have a greater understanding of their responsibilities and has begun to pull staff together as a team. In a short time, he has also ensured that the school environment is a safer place for all staff and pupils.

The school's procedures for evaluating its own performance are limited. Until very recently, the process has drawn on too narrow a range of evidence and has not involved staff, governors, parents or pupils enough. As a result, the school improvement plans have not addressed shortcomings effectively and key groups have not been sufficiently involved in school improvement. The school has now benefited from an action plan provided by the temporary acting headteacher. This provides a better reflection of the school's strengths and areas of development than previous plans and focuses appropriately on improving outcomes for pupils. However, it is too soon to measure the impact of the plan on improving pupil outcomes and the quality of the school's provision.

The temporary acting headteacher has high expectations of all members of staff. He has identified shortcomings in the quality of teaching and learning appropriately. However, his interventions have had too little time to be fully effective. For example, the performance management arrangements are not yet robust or systematic enough to drive improvement or to meet statutory requirements. The professional learning of staff has been limited over recent years.

The governing body is very supportive of the temporary acting headteacher and his impact on the school's life and work. However, over time, the governing body has not exercised suitable scrutiny and challenge of the school leadership. Previous staffing problems have contributed to the school accruing a large budget deficit. This has had a negative impact on the staffing structure, resources and pupils' achievement. The governing body's contribution to the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes is limited and it has not fulfilled all its statutory obligations.

The school is beginning to respond to a very few national and local priorities, for example the literacy framework and the Welsh language charter. However, there has been little progress in addressing attendance issues, establishing the principles of the foundation phase and meeting the full requirements of the numeracy framework.

The school has enough books, computers and other equipment to meet the needs of all pupils. Leaders allocate the majority of the school's pupil development grant appropriately to provide support and intervention for targeted pupils. However, they do not use the entire grant for its intended purposes. The school has not deployed its resources efficiently in recent years. At the time of the inspection, the school has not agreed the most recent plan for reducing its large budget deficit with the local authority.

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:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court, Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.wales

© Crown Copyright 2019: 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.

Publication date: 24/01/2019