



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

A report on

**Ysgol Bryn Coch C.P.
Victoria Road
Flintshire
Mold
CH7 1EW**

Date of inspection: January 2019

by

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

About Ysgol Bryn Coch C.P.

Ysgol Bryn Coch Primary School serves the town of Mold and the surrounding area in the county of Flintshire. There are 646 pupils aged 3 to 11 years at the school, including 77 pupils in the nursery and 23 pupils in the learning resource classes. They are taught in 24 classes, including two part-time nursery classes and two learning resource classes for pupils in key stage 2 with complex and moderate learning difficulties. Around 11% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average of 18%.

Nearly all pupils are white British and speak English as their main language. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home. The school identifies that around 24% of pupils have additional learning needs, which is above the national average of 21%.

The current headteacher took up her post in January 2009. The school's last inspection was in September 2013.

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

Nearly all pupils in Ysgol Bryn Coch develop strong literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and apply them well in different contexts. Pupils in intervention groups, including pupils with additional learning needs, make particularly good progress from their starting points. Pupils' wellbeing and their attitudes to learning are especially strong. Teachers in the foundation phase have an exceptionally good understanding of foundation phase principles and apply these very well. They are particularly successful in ensuring continuity and progression in developing pupils' skills in self-directed tasks indoors and outside. Across the school, teachers plan imaginative and engaging lessons. There is a very consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour and a strong emphasis on helping pupils learn to be considerate, and to respect one another. Staff manage the support for vulnerable pupils and pupils with additional learning particularly well.

Leaders have a powerful vision to develop the school as an extremely inclusive and welcoming community that nurtures pupils to become happy, confident and resilient learners. Staff wellbeing has a high priority, and this creates a positive working atmosphere. An effective leadership structure leads to extremely productive teamwork in the school.

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Excellent
Teaching and learning experiences	Excellent
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Leadership and management	Excellent

Recommendations

R1 Improve standards in Welsh

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare case studies on its work in relation to its effective use of the outdoor environment to develop pupils' skills progressively across the foundation phase and its inclusive leadership and management of change.

Main findings

Standards: Good

Nearly all pupils make good progress. They develop a broad range of skills and apply them effectively in different contexts. Groups of pupils with additional learning needs make very good progress in their intervention groups from their various starting points. Nearly all pupils in the resource base progress well against their targets.

Across the school, nearly all pupils develop strong speaking and listening skills. For example, most nursery pupils listen and respond to instructions successfully. They make themselves understood effectively when they suggest who might have left the giant footprints in their outdoor area. Nearly all pupils develop a broad vocabulary and become confident communicators. For example, by Years 5 and 6, many pupils adapt their speech skilfully to suit different situations. They discuss their work and explain difficult concepts, such as respect, intelligently and confidently.

Most pupils enjoy books and stories and develop as competent readers. Most learn letter sounds and useful reading strategies in the foundation phase, so that by Year 2, many are becoming confident and enthusiastic readers. Throughout key stage 2, most pupils use their reading skills effectively in lessons. They skim and scan to find information on the internet and use dictionaries effectively to check meanings and spellings. By the end of key stage 2, most read fluently and with good understanding. They discuss the merits of different authors in a mature and thoughtful manner.

By Year 2, nearly all pupils see themselves as writers. In the nursery and reception classes, most develop their pencil grip effectively through a wide range of activities, and understand that marks have meaning. In Year 1, more able pupils begin to write simple words and phrases confidently. By Year 2, many pupils write legibly for different purposes. They spell frequently occurring words particularly successfully and use full stops correctly. However, their use of capital letters is less consistent. Across the school, most pupils write confidently for a wide variety of purposes and apply their skills well in different contexts. By Year 6, many pupils plan and redraft their work effectively and understand how to improve their work by choosing vocabulary carefully. For example, in work about 'Blackface the Immortal', they describe 'an immense pain that grew throughout his fingers and oozed into his slender arms'. However, older pupils do not always write creatively at length well enough.

Most foundation phase pupils develop strong numeracy skills and apply them independently in interesting contexts. For example, more able pupils in the reception class use their measuring skills carefully to make a magical animal exactly five centimetres long out of dough. By Year 2, many pupils measure different lengths of ribbon accurately in centimetres and order them correctly from shortest to longest. Across key stage 2, most pupils continue to develop their numeracy skills well. For example, many pupils in Year 4 use different strategies to work out which items they can pack into a suitcase without going over the 20kg weight limit. By Year 6, most pupils apply their mathematical skills particularly effectively. For example, more able pupils tackle a challenging task successfully to work out how to calculate which breakfast from a menu makes the most profit.

Nearly all pupils develop and apply a suitable range of ICT skills effectively. For example, Year 2 pupils create a stop motion video of a boat travelling to a lighthouse confidently and independently, using a tablet computer. Key stage 2 pupils develop their word processing skills well, such as to write an interesting blog about Morse code and to create informative presentations. They use databases competently to determine which material is best for making curtains.

Most pupils understand the benefits of speaking Welsh and enjoy learning the language. Nearly all pupils, including pupils in the resource provision, use simple words, phrases and greetings appropriately. More able pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read familiar Welsh texts suitably and pronounce many words correctly. They are beginning to write for a suitable variety of purposes, for example to express a simple preference for different versions of 'Sosban Fach' in Year 4. However, overall, standards are inconsistent, and pupils do not extend their Welsh speaking skills well enough by using them regularly throughout the school day.

Most pupils develop their physical and creative skills well. For example, in the foundation phase, nearly all pupils make increasingly sophisticated junk models and express their ideas skilfully using water colour paints. Pupils from the resource provision enjoy creating a dragon dance and refine their movements successfully in response to feedback. Many pupils develop strong sporting skills, including cross country running and netball skills.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

Nearly all pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Their personal and social skills are highly developed. Vulnerable pupils who attend the school's nurture provision make very good progress in developing their confidence and ability to access the curriculum successfully.

Nearly all pupils behave well in their lessons and around the school. By key stage 2, they show a very mature understanding of the school's positive behaviour management strategies that encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions. Many pupils, particularly vulnerable pupils, benefit extremely well from this approach and a very few make exemplary progress with managing their emotions and developing self-control.

From the foundation phase upwards, nearly all pupils, including those in the resource provision, engage very well in their learning. They are eager to try new experiences and concentrate and persevere extremely effectively to complete tasks. From their first days in the nursery class, they develop and progress as confident and independent learners. They work highly successfully on their own, in small groups and in whole class situations, and settle quickly at the start of their lessons. Most pupils are very reflective and have a thorough understanding of their strengths and their areas for improvement. For example, in the reception class, pupils talk confidently about their targets and the progress they are making. They explain that they can count and recognise number confidently, but that they now need to learn to write numbers down, starting with numbers up to five. By Year 6, nearly all pupils tackle challenging tasks with resilience and explain clearly how feedback from peers, teachers and parents helps them to improve.

Across the school, most pupils work collaboratively extremely well. This is a notable feature of the school. In foundation phase classes, nearly all pupils settle very quickly to work together productively in areas of continuous and enhanced provision. For example, they support each other with tricky tasks such as cutting tape with scissors, so that they can make their models successfully. By key stage 2, most pupils show high levels of self-control, and respect the contributions of others. For example, more able pupils have a mature understanding of the need to allow others to speak when discussing their group work, and remaining calm when disagreements occur.

Nearly all pupils develop positive attitudes towards eating healthy food and taking regular exercise. In particular, they respond enthusiastically to the many worthwhile opportunities the school offers to be physically active in its extensive grounds, such as running the daily mile. Pupils participate wholeheartedly in an impressive range of extra-curricular activities, including cross country running, rugby, netball and the school choir. As a result of taking part in these activities, many pupils, including the more vulnerable, develop their emotional resilience particularly well.

Members of the school's committees, including representatives from the resource provision, undertake their roles with pride. They gather opinions from their peers and contribute highly effectively to making decisions that have a positive impact on school life. For example, pupils from the school council speak confidently about their successful meeting with senior leaders to discuss installing sound boards in the canteen to reduce the noise level and improve pupils' lunchtime experience. They organised a very successful poetry and craft afternoon for the residents of the local nursing home, and are particularly proud of their work in supporting residents with dementia. Their work contributes very effectively to the strong, caring ethos in the school and to developing a particularly mature understanding of pupils' needs. Across the school, nearly all pupils show a high level of care and concern for others. For example, pupils in the resource provision are concerned about visitors' safety as they travel from home to school during the adverse weather conditions.

As they progress through the school, nearly all pupils develop a worthwhile understanding of their role in promoting sustainable living. For example, Year 5 pupils talk knowledgeably about recycling and re-using plastic. Most pupils are very aware of fairness, equality and tolerance in their interactions with one another. This is especially evident in their support for vulnerable pupils and pupils with medical and other needs.

Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent

The particularly strong working relationships between teachers and pupils, and the extremely consistent approach to teaching are notable strengths of the school. Nearly all teachers and teaching assistants are inspired by the school's vision to achieve high standards within a happy and caring environment. This is reflected in the dedication and good humour they bring to their work. Nearly all teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. They work together extremely well to apply consistent strategies and routines, creating a calm and purposeful working atmosphere throughout the school. This promotes pupils' wellbeing highly effectively, and contributes significantly to the strong progress pupils make.

Across the school, most teachers plan highly imaginative and stimulating lessons that spark pupils' interest and engage them extremely well in their learning. For example, a visit from 'Fairy Eleri' to the reception class creates an atmosphere of wonder and excitement. This instantly captures pupils' imagination, and provides excellent opportunities for extending pupils' thinking and speaking skills. Teachers in Year 5 inspire high levels of involvement in topic work by starting their lesson with a video message from a local mechanic asking for information about how to prevent rust. Linking their work with real life situations in this way gives key stage 2 pupils a very strong sense of purpose. Nearly all teachers set a brisk pace to their lessons that maintains pupils' interest and supports their progress successfully. Nearly all teachers are good role models and support pupils effectively in developing strong attitudes to learning. For example, staff in the resource provision question pupils skilfully to involve them in their learning and develop their vocabulary effectively.

Nearly all teachers know their pupils well. They use information from observations and assessments effectively to plan next steps in pupils' learning successfully. There are strong systems across the school to involve pupils fully in their learning and help them understand what they need to do to improve. Teachers help pupils to progress effectively in lessons by checking their understanding, and correcting misconceptions sensitively. They make very good use of teaching assistants to provide additional support. This is particularly valuable in the foundation phase in enabling pupils to make the most of the extensive and very well-planned learning environments.

The school's exemplary understanding of foundation phase principles is thoroughly embedded. From the nursery to Year 2, staff promote the foundation phase ethos very effectively. For example, foundation phase teachers provide an extremely effective balance between adult-directed learning and opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and follow their interests independently. They have an excellent understanding of the benefits of outdoor learning and provide staff and pupils with appropriate clothing for different weather conditions so that they can use the outdoor environment throughout the year. Staff work together to plan and resource the learning environments very skilfully. They make sure that there is consistency and progression in the space, resources and experiences they provide, so that pupils develop their skills systematically from year to year. This is a particular strength. For example, there are good quality wooden blocks in all classes, with plenty of space for pupils to experiment with these. Teachers communicate high expectations of what pupils can achieve with these, which match pupils' stage of development closely. This enables pupils to build on prior learning highly effectively. They create increasingly complex structures and develop their understanding of shape, size and measure progressively well. This promotes an extremely high level of wellbeing and very strong attitudes to learning.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum throughout key stage 2 that stimulates and challenges the full range of pupils very successfully. They plan carefully to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills progressively. Teachers weave opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in engaging contexts into their topic work. They provide many rich opportunities for interesting visits linked to the topics that support pupils' learning purposefully. For example, a visit to the Imperial War museum deepens pupils' understanding of events in World War 2 effectively.

The school provides very carefully targeted interventions that meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils including less able pupils and pupils eligible for free school meals extremely effectively. The school's arrangements for grouping pupils in key stage 2 are highly effective and impact very positively on their learning and experiences.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The school's highly effective approach to care, support and guidance has pupils' wellbeing at its heart and has created a thoroughly inclusive ethos of mutual respect and trust between staff and pupils. This supports pupils particularly well in establishing mature and extremely positive attitudes to learning as they move through the school.

Leaders and all staff, know pupils very well. Leaders gather a wealth of information about each pupil to track their wellbeing, progress, behaviour and attendance. They use this information highly effectively to ensure that nearly all pupils develop their skills well and pupils with additional learning needs make very good progress from their different starting points in class and through carefully targeted and monitored interventions

The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is exceptionally strong. The additional needs coordinator manages and co-ordinates high quality targeted support extremely effectively through a range of particularly effective intervention programmes. She leads a highly qualified team of staff who work very well together. They make the most of advice and support from external agencies and of opportunities to attend training to develop their knowledge and expertise. This leads to a very consistent, measured and highly skilled approach that has an extremely positive effect on pupils' standards and wellbeing.

A strength of the school is its compassionate and highly effective approach to supporting emotionally vulnerable pupils. Its well-established wellbeing programme, Y Berllan, supports pupils to think, communicate, behave and relate to one another, effectively. Nearly all pupils who attend make very good progress socially and emotionally. They develop the confidence to apply known strategies that help them deal with the day-to-day challenges of school life effectively. The school makes this provision available to other schools in the area, and their pupils also benefit from this highly effective programme.

The school establishes extremely productive partnerships with parents. This helps parents take an active role in their children's learning and development. For example, the school welcomes parents in to see what their children are doing through initiatives such as class assemblies, parent workshops and an invitation to join their children for a school dinner.

Pupils engage in worthwhile opportunities to learn about healthy living and to develop good habits for life. There is a strong tradition of being physically active in the school, with successful extra-curricular sports clubs and regular opportunities to run the daily mile or take part in the pre-school cross country run. The school develops pupils' emotional resilience particularly well through teaching them to talk to each other and consider one another's point of view to help resolve disputes. Staff apply

this approach patiently and consistently so that pupils understand the principles thoroughly. There are high expectations for staff and pupil behaviour and these are displayed throughout the school as a constant reminder. This creates a positive working atmosphere, contributes effectively to the school's extremely tolerant and respectful ethos, and supports everyone's wellbeing so that pupils and staff enjoy being there.

There are valuable opportunities for all pupils, including resource base pupils, to take on responsibilities and play a full part in the life of the school and the wider community such as through the many effective pupil councils.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully and provides worthwhile opportunities for them to develop secure values. For example, the school helps pupils to understand about the needs and rights of others through raising money for projects that are highly relevant to them, such as to fund research into combating illness, or to send resources to a school in Africa. Whole school assemblies focus on a useful range of thought-provoking themes. For example, a visit from a former pupil, now an international athlete, helps pupils to understand the importance of having a go, working hard and not giving up.

The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their self-confidence, and their ability to express themselves and work as a team. For example, pupils from across the school compete and succeed in a wide range of sports competitions, including football and gymnastics, and perform in front of large audiences in the school eisteddfod and class assemblies. Pupils in key stage 2, including resource base pupils, organise a tuck shop, a Caffi Cymraeg and a community café where they share information with parents.

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

Leadership and management: Excellent

The headteacher has a powerful vision to develop the school as an extremely inclusive and welcoming community that nurtures pupils to become happy, confident and resilient learners. It gives a particularly high priority to staff wellbeing. Leaders share this vision effectively with all staff, pupils, governors and parents and it is embedded at the heart of the school's work.

Leaders set high expectations for themselves and all staff. They ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities clearly. This means that leaders, teachers and support staff work together extremely effectively and apply a highly consistent approach to teaching and learning within year groups and across the school. Leaders provide valuable opportunities for staff to work in groups to observe one another teach and share feedback in a constructive way. This contributes extremely effectively to the reflective culture of continuous improvement in the school. It involves middle leaders purposefully in evaluating the quality of the provision and supports teachers to develop and improve their practice successfully.

Senior leaders and year group teams focus extremely well on identifying and implementing priorities for improvement. They gather a wide range of first-hand

evidence of standards and provision, including teaching, and involve partners effectively in evaluating the school's work. This means that leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. Regular staff and leadership meetings focus clearly on pupils' progress and identify where individuals and groups need additional support. For example, in response to particular individual needs, the school established and embedded high quality provision to help vulnerable learners learn to manage their behaviour extremely effectively. More recently, through gathering first-hand evidence from self-evaluation procedures, leaders identified a shortcoming in reading standards. In response, the school improved resources and the quality of provision. It involved parents by encouraging them to read with their children daily. This led to measurable improvements in standards and in pupils' enjoyment of books.

Governors are highly motivated and have a thorough knowledge of the school and its challenges. They understand and support the school's vision exceptionally well. This enables leaders to focus effectively on supporting pupils' wellbeing and providing rich learning experiences. The governing body provides useful challenge when necessary, such as ensuring effective staff training that links well to the school improvement plan.

School leaders develop staff's professional expertise and support their wellbeing exceptionally effectively. For example, all teachers are fully involved in meeting school improvement priorities through representing their year on working groups. This develops their leadership skills and sense of shared responsibility particularly well. Leaders implement highly effective performance management procedures. These have been adapted recently to take good account of the new professional standards. Teachers work in professional learning teams to identify the most appropriate priorities for their own professional development. They appreciate the opportunity to reflect on their work together. This leads to highly constructive professional dialogue that supports them extremely well in developing strong and consistent practice. Leaders ensure that all teachers and classroom assistants benefit from regular professional development opportunities that link clearly with the school's improvement priorities. As a result of this particularly strong practice, all staff understand that their work is valued, morale is high and there is a happy working atmosphere in the school.

Leaders create a valuable culture of sharing good practice and learning from others, with a strong focus on meeting national priorities, including beginning to prepare for the new curriculum. For example, the school prioritises developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and meeting the needs of disadvantaged learners effectively. The school benefits from extensive collaborative working with other schools and shares its own good practice usefully. This has helped in developing the school's approach to implementing the digital competence framework and making the Professional Standards for Teaching and Learning part of everyday working. The school develops extensive partnerships that support pupils' standards and wellbeing successfully. For example, it values its relationship with pre-school providers in supporting pupils and families as they move into the school. It benefits from collaborative learning opportunities with local high schools and this work prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.

The school makes the most of the available space to create a particularly effective indoor and outdoor learning environment in the foundation phase. There are especially spacious, well-planned and well-resourced outdoor learning areas for many foundation phase classes. Across the school, leaders use financial resources effectively to support a range of initiatives that benefit all pupils.

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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