



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

A report on
Brynamman Primary School

**Brynceunant
Brynamman
Ammanford
Carmarthenshire
SA18 1AH**

Date of inspection: October 2023

by

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

This report is also available in Welsh

About Brynamman Primary School

Name of provider	Brynamman Primary School
Local authority	Carmarthenshire County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	275
Pupils of statutory school age	226
Number in nursery classes (if applicable)	47
Percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average <i>(The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 23.0%)</i>	23.1%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) <i>(The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 16.1%)</i>	46.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils who speak Welsh at home	40.9%
Percentage of statutory school age pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2018
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	01/06/2015
Start date of inspection	02/10/2023

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different from those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:
mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Overview

Brynamman Primary School is a homely and welcoming community where pupils are respected by all staff. During their time at the school, most pupils make sound progress in developing a good range of skills. Provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is a notable strength and most develop to become confident Welsh speakers. Across the school, most pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well in their work across the curriculum.

All members of staff have high expectations of pupils and provide activities that engage their interest successfully. Pupils are supported well by a team of effective assistants. As a result, nearly all pupils behave well and participate actively in their lessons. Pupils contribute appropriate ideas to influence what they learn. They become increasingly independent learners as a result of refining the school's teaching methods in line with Curriculum for Wales. Pupils are given the responsibility of representing their peers on different groups, such as the school council. However, their role has not been developed in full to have a wider effect on the school's life and work.

The headteacher leads the school well and is supported effectively by other senior leaders. Together, they create an environment where all staff are valued and work together diligently as a team. Governors support the school effectively and provide challenge, where appropriate. Leaders evaluate the school's work accurately and all staff are given valuable opportunities to have input into the process. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders respond proactively to support pupils to arrive at school punctually and consistently. However, a very few pupils continue to arrive at school late and, overall, attendance rates are too low.

Recommendations

- R1 Address the well-being issue that was raised during the inspection
- R2 Improve attendance and punctuality
- R3 Develop the leadership role of pupils to have a wider effect on the school's life and work

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 a case study on its work in relation to motivating pupils to speak Welsh, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Learning

Most pupils make strong progress during their time at the school, including pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and those who are eligible for free school meals.

Pupils begin to acquire Welsh speaking and listening skills from an early age and nearly all respond appropriately to simple commands. The youngest pupils develop as increasingly confident speakers. They provide responses to staff on a variety of contexts in Welsh and are keen to speak with visitors. At the top of the school, nearly all pupils communicate naturally in Welsh in formal and less formal activities outside the classroom. Many recall relevant vocabulary and terminology that are linked to the class theme and use them purposefully, for example when describing the source of the River Amman. The oldest pupils are beginning to develop speaking and listening skills in an international language successfully, for example as they present personal information in French.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. The youngest pupils develop a sound awareness of the form and sound of letters from an early age. By Year 2, most pupils apply their reading skills successfully, for example when placing instructions to make a cup of tea correctly in the right order. Most of the oldest pupils read fluently in both languages and a majority use appropriate intonation. They use their skills successfully to gather information, for example when gathering facts about the story of the Tryweryn Valley.

Across the school, most pupils develop writing skills successfully in Welsh and English. The youngest pupils benefit from specific activities to strengthen their skills to hold recording tools with increasing accuracy, which prepares them effectively to start making marks. As a result of the staff's clear and high expectations, the standard of presentation of the work of many pupils across the school is consistently good, with clear development in pupils' handwriting skills over time. By the end of Year 2, many pupils write successfully in a wide range of genres. For example, they write factual pieces to convey their knowledge of Castell Coch skilfully. Many Year 4 pupils write extended pieces and add relevant details or descriptions. By the end of Year 6, most pupils write purposefully in Welsh and English and consider the requirements of the reader. For example, they create a poster to convey information about fair trade and use mature syntax when writing a newspaper article. Many write extended pieces in Welsh with good accuracy and include relevant details, for example when creating persuasive text to encourage the public to join the campaign of 'Merched Beca' ('Rebecca's Daughters').

Nearly all pupils in the nursery and reception classes learn appropriate mathematical vocabulary from a young age. They sing Welsh nursery rhymes to recognise numbers, for example. As pupils' skills and confidence increase, they solve practical problems successfully, for example by collecting the correct number of woollen yarns to create 'hair' for different characters. As pupils move through the school, most develop data-handling skills successfully. For example, Year 4 pupils sort animals by considering what they eat and use a Venn diagram successfully. The oldest pupils

record information from scientific investigations carefully, for example when creating cross-sections of a local river to show its depth and writing an accurate analysis of the information. Most use calculation skills effectively in their work across the curriculum, for example when solving which percentage of various produce belongs to particular food groups.

Across the school, most pupils develop sound digital skills. The youngest pupils use an app confidently to create an attractive poster about frogs. By Year 2, they combine their skills successfully, for example when recalling a familiar story and presenting it by creating an animation with a voiceover. Most pupils use a range of programs to support learning in language and theme lessons regularly, particularly when presenting information. For example, Year 5 pupils create advertisements to promote their new toothpaste brand by using filming equipment and a green screen successfully.

Across the school, most pupils develop creative skills effectively. They experiment with paint independently in the school's lowest years. Year 2 pupils use percussion instruments to compose pieces of music to accompany the story of Cantre'r Gwaelod effectively, for example. Year 4 pupils create multimedia pieces inspired by a Welsh artist's interpretation of the legend of Blodeuwedd and create pieces of music digitally to accompany the story. The oldest pupils create models of the journey of a river skilfully and act competently to play the role of a journalist reporting on the recent floods in New York.

Nearly all pupils make sound progress in developing their physical skills. They take advantage of a range of different experiences during physical education sessions, such as gymnastics, sports and athletics. As a result, they develop balancing and co-ordination skills successfully.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

Across the school, the behaviour of nearly all pupils is very good, which contributes towards creating an effective learning environment. They are extremely polite and treat each other, adults and visitors with courtesy and respect around the school. They are proud of their school and nearly all feel happy within its familial, homely and inclusive community. This is one of the school's notable aspects.

Across the school, most pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively and undertake new experiences effectively. In a mathematics activity, Year 6 pupils listen to a digital clip from the current captain of the Welsh rugby team when solving a range of verbal problems. This contributes effectively to strengthening their sense of belonging to the community and their aspirations for the future as a result of seeing one of the school's former pupils succeeding.

Pupils know whom to approach for advice if anything is worrying them and are confident that adults will listen to them. Most have sound knowledge of online safety. For example, they know how to set a strong password to keep their digital workspaces secure and what steps to take should a stranger contact them online.

Nearly all pupils have a good understanding and a positive attitude about how to live, eat and drink healthily and the importance of undertaking physical exercise. For

example, Year 6 pupils conduct an investigation into the effect of exercise on the heart rate and then dissect a real heart. This enriches pupils' experiences and heightens their curiosity towards their learning. Many pupils take advantage of opportunities to attend a variety of extra-curricular sports clubs after school hours, such as the football and netball clubs.

Most pupils develop as mature ethical citizens. The youngest pupils develop attractive posters about the effects of plastic pollution on the ocean. Year 5 pupils discuss Nelson Mandela's stand against apartheid laws skilfully. As a result, they develop a sound understanding of issues relating to equality and fairness.

Pupils respect the contributions of others and respond positively and sensitively to their ideas. Most pupils are confident in their learning skills and give things a try and persevere with a range of activities without fear of failure. Across the school, many pupils discuss their work and respond appropriately to feedback from adults, referring to success criteria effectively when checking their progress. They have a suitable understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. When they are given an opportunity to do so, a few pupils across the school are beginning to offer and respond to feedback from their peers. As pupils move through the school, they respond positively to opportunities to influence what they learn, for example by contributing to planning activities at the beginning of themes. By doing so, they identify what they would like to know and discover further by asking imaginative questions.

Most pupils are very willing to undertake responsibilities and suggest ideas regarding issues relating to the school. Members of the school council make decisions that influence a few aspects of the school's life and work. For example, they have ordered a variety of play equipment for break and lunchtimes. As a result, there are fewer disagreements on the playground and most pupils play happily together. Members of the 'Cryw Cymraeg' promote the Welsh language across the school appropriately, which contributes firmly to a wonderful Welsh ethos at the school. The eco council promotes respect for the environment by collecting litter in the local area and planting vegetables and plants to make the school grounds more attractive. These experiences develop pupils to become moral and knowledgeable citizens. However, the leadership role of pupils through council activities does not have a wider impact on the life and work of the school regularly enough.

The attendance rate has increased slightly over the past two years but continues to be lower than the pre-pandemic attendance levels. Overall, the attendance levels of pupils who are eligible for free school meals are lower than that of their peers. A few pupils also arrive at school late on a regular basis.

Teaching and learning experiences

Staff have an excellent working relationship with pupils and foster a supportive and inclusive environment successfully. They work together as a team and know the pupils and their families well. All staff have high expectations of all pupils. They manage pupils' behaviour skilfully, which has a positive effect on their attitudes to learning.

Teachers create a stimulating and attractive learning environment. Displays are a combination of pupils' work, useful information and attractive murals that celebrate the local area successfully. Teachers also use the outdoor areas skilfully. For example, pupils in the nursery class are stimulated when discussing the story of the Three Little Pigs in the forest, while Year 6 pupils make creative models that show the flow and features of a river. Staff organise a good range of appropriate educational visits to enrich and reinforce learning, for example through field work visits when learning about the Black Mountain.

Teachers plan and provide a broad curriculum that reflects the nature of their local context. The activities that are planned create a strong sense of belonging to the village and the local area, which ignites pupils' interest in learning more about their history and culture. Staff make effective use of Welsh myths and history. For example, Year 3 pupils work on illustrating and creating jewellery by emulating the style of a local artist.

Teachers provide learning activities effectively while supporting pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Provision to develop pupils' Welsh language skills is a strong feature of the school's work. Across the school, all staff model the Welsh language robustly. They have consistently high expectations of pupils as they speak Welsh. They use a variety of skilful and fun methods to immerse the youngest pupils and to expand the vocabulary and understanding of the oldest pupils. This helps pupils to develop their fluency when speaking successfully over time. For example, staff in the nursery and reception classes play alongside the pupils and take advantage of every opportunity to ask questions and enrich the language. In Year 2, teachers hold shared reading sessions and discuss stories highly effectively. Opportunities are provided for pupils to write across a wide range of genres, with numerous opportunities for them to apply their skills in activities across the curriculum. For example, the youngest pupils write a description of Twm Sion Bolgi and the oldest pupils write poems about rugby skilfully. As a result of this provision, the school has a strong Welsh ethos and most pupils are very proud to be in a Welsh-medium school and speak the language with pride.

Across the school, staff provide beneficial opportunities for pupils to nurture their independent learning skills by providing 'interesting time' sessions. Staff support pupils to be ambitious and plan challenging activities to support them to make sound progress in their skills. However, in a few cases, teachers provide too many ready-made frameworks and worksheets which hinder pupils' ability to develop their independent learning skills and achieve to the best of their ability.

Teachers set clear objectives at the beginning of lessons, which enable pupils to review their progress during and at the end of the session. Teachers share expectations appropriately, which enables pupils to review their own learning. They ask skilful questions, encouraging pupils to extend their answers and recall knowledge and understanding from previous lessons.

Teachers provide suitable oral and written feedback to help pupils make progress. They use a marking code that is consistent across the school and provide constructive comments to pupils about what they have done well and what they need to improve. Staff use effective assessment methods and, in the best practice, they challenge pupils to refine their written work purposefully. When they are given an

opportunity to do so, a few pupils are beginning to offer suitable feedback to their peers. Recently, teachers have begun to adapt the methods of tracking pupils' progress. They have an increasing understanding of pupils' development and progress as they move through the school.

Care, support and guidance

The school is a welcoming, inclusive and Welsh community where pupils are given effective support and equal rights to activities. For example, during registration periods, staff provide a daily resource for pupils to identify their emotional well-being. This enriches pupils' self-esteem and social skills well and enables them to share their feelings with others successfully. In the '*C/wb Lles*' ('Well-being Club'), staff provide effective methods for pupils to learn how to express feelings and manage their emotions effectively. As a result, pupils who attend are happier and complete activities in their lessons more confidently.

Staff prioritise pupils' emotional care successfully through practical activities in the well-being areas. Wonderful, purposeful well-being corners are provided, called '*Y Cwtsh Clyd*', which offer valuable provision for pupils. This contributes firmly to the caring and helpful learning environment, which is a notable element of the school.

The school has an inclusive ethos and detailed and clear progress-tracking systems to support pupils with ALN. Individual needs are identified at an early stage and support programmes, including emotional well-being, literacy and numeracy, meet the needs of ALN pupils effectively. Across the school, they are supported strongly by a team of staff who monitor pupils' progress thoroughly. As a result, they have a detailed understanding of the progress of ALN pupils.

Teachers produce detailed one-page profiles for ALN pupils effectively, which include their interests and a description of what helps them to succeed. Teachers include pupils, parents and the views of a range of external agencies effectively to provide specialist and beneficial support for pupils. For example, staff work highly effectively with a nearby education centre to support the development of the independent living skills of specific pupils.

Morning reflection periods promote pupils' spiritual and moral development successfully. Staff lead purposeful discussions about a variety of issues, such as respecting others and recognising differences. For example, in Year 5, staff use the story of Jesus turning water into wine to convey that each pupil and person has their own unique value. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to study other religions, such as Judaism and Sikhism, which provides pupils with a suitable opportunity to study various cultures and traditions.

Pupils are given time to reflect on and support their understanding of the multicultural nature of society well, for example by studying the lives of influential people such as Rosa Parks and Betty Campbell. As a result, pupils develop healthy attitudes towards celebrating diversity.

Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to celebrate the heritage and culture of Wales, which includes local stories. For example, Year 2 pupils visit and learn about the history of Llyn Llech Owain and then present the story in their own

words. Teachers also make valuable use of visitors to expand pupils' creative and expressive experiences, for example as famous Welsh musicians visit a local cinema to perform songs with pupils. This contributes successfully to supporting many pupils to work together effectively and gain confidence when performing. The school encourages pupils to take part in sport and leisure activities. For example, they compete regularly in Urdd sports competitions and have reached the final of the Welsh rugby cup.

Leaders follow a range of appropriate processes to safeguard pupils. They organise beneficial sessions for pupils to develop their understanding of how to stay safe, such as sessions about appropriate and inappropriate touching. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality regularly. They work with the education welfare officer to improve the attendance of individuals and promote good attendance by rewarding classes, as appropriate. However, pupils' attendance and punctuality continue to be an area for improvement. In addition, during the inspection, a safeguarding issue came to the attention of the inspection team. This was discussed with the headteacher and a representative of the governing body and the local authority.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a clear vision based on the school motto, '*Byw i'r presennol, edrych i'r dyfodol*' ('Live in the present, look to the future'). With the skilful support of his management team, he succeeds in leading effectively in adapting and refining the pedagogy to meet the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, while maintaining high expectations and standards. A culture of co-operation for the well-being and education of pupils is evident throughout the school, with all staff working diligently to achieve the school's strategic aims.

Teachers and assistants have recently begun to contribute to the self-evaluation and planning for improvement process, for example by drawing up priorities in the school improvement plan. As a result, all staff have ownership of the school's current improvement priorities and a sound understanding of what needs to be achieved.

Leaders have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and the main areas for development. They consider an appropriate range of evidence to evaluate teaching and pupils' progress and achievement. For example, leaders and teachers observe lessons regularly and scrutinise pupils' work. All teachers also discuss pupils' books in departmental meetings, which enables them to identify and disseminate effective practice. For example, they identify the most effective examples of providing feedback to pupils.

Governors support and challenge leaders appropriately. They visit the school regularly and provide useful feedback on different aspects of the school's life and work. For example, a member of the body has visited the school during lunchtime to discuss pupils' attitudes towards keeping healthy. The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting these aspects.

Leaders have high and firm expectations in terms of promoting the Welsh language. They give due attention to national priorities when setting a strategic direction for the school. For example, leaders have succeeded in transforming processes to support pupils with ALN in line with the legislative changes, and they are evolving teaching

methods to align with the principles of Curriculum for Wales. On the whole, they maintain a culture of safeguarding appropriately.

With the support of the headteacher, the full governing body sets the annual budget appropriately and monitors expenditure shrewdly, taking into account the school's current requirements and the long-term financial climate. For example, they review the school's staffing structure to ensure that it responds to pupils' needs and is sustainable. Leaders work diligently to reduce the impact of poverty on pupils. For example, they use the pupil development grant appropriately to hold intervention sessions to promote pupils' well-being, literacy and numeracy skills.

Staff are given valuable opportunities to develop their professional practices. They attend training sessions and are given beneficial opportunities to co-operate with other schools to share effective practice. For example, leaders have visited another school to evaluate the impact of specific software. They also work with teachers from the secondary school to present French sessions for the school's oldest pupils successfully. The school has robust processes for managing the performance of teachers and assistants which, in turn, supports their professional development.

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/members of the management committee 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, middle leaders, and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work 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 lessons, including learning support groups and the specialist resource base (where appropriate), 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 (where appropriate) and in outdoor areas
- visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning (where appropriate)
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs
- 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' well-being, 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 (<http://www.estyn.gov.wales>)

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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