



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

Ysgol Bryn Gwalia CP

**Clayton Road
Mold
CH7 1SU**

Date of inspection: November 2010

by

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



**INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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

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Context

Bryn Gwalia is a primary school close to the centre of Mold, the county town of Flintshire. There are 163 pupils of statutory school age at the school and 28 nursery pupils who attend on a part-time basis. The number on roll has increased over the last three years although it is less than when the school was last inspected in 2004.

The school has a local authority resource centre for pupils with Hearing Impairment. These pupils are integrated into all aspects of the school.

Sixty per cent of pupils come from the local estate which is in a Communities First Area and 27% of pupils are entitled to free school meals (FSM). The school describes the area it serves as an area of socio-economic deprivation. Nearly all the pupils come from homes where English is the predominant language. Ten pupils come from an ethnic-minority or mixed community. Five pupils come from a Welsh-speaking home.

Currently, there are 40 pupils identified as having additional learning needs (ALN) and nine of these have statements. There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils placed on School Action in September.

The present acting headteacher has been in post for over three years.

The 2010-2011 individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Bryn Gwalia C.P. is £3,733, which compares with a maximum of £7,635 and a minimum of £2,660 for primary schools in Flintshire. The school has the 12th highest budget per pupil out of the 74 primary schools in Flintshire.

Summary

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate

Current performance

At Ysgol Bryn Gwalia the overall current performance of the school is adequate because although:

- the inclusive and caring ethos of the school ensures that all pupils and staff are valued;
- nearly all pupils make good progress and achieve well; and
- the standards of teaching is good;

there are also:

- shortcomings in some key skills;
- shortcomings in developing the Welsh dimension; and
- over the last three years, poor attainment of pupils in comparison with similar schools.

Prospects for improvement

The prospects for improvement at Bryn Gwalia School are adequate because:

- the acting headteacher has had a positive impact on pupil achievement; and
- she has instilled a strong sense of common purpose throughout the school by creating a shared vision and caring ethos where nearly all the pupils achieve well.

However:

- these have not yet led to an improvement in standards overall;
- the governing body's role in monitoring standards of attainment is underdeveloped; and
- there is uncertainty with regard to the long term management of the school.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 improve standards of attainment in the core subjects;
- R2 further develop the strategic management role of the governing body in relation to raising standards of attainment;
- R3 develop pupils' understanding and knowledge of their Welsh heritage; and
- R4 further develop information and communications technology (ICT) provision and skills throughout the school.

What happens next?

Estyn will revisit the school in about a year's time. The visit will focus on progress against the recommendations in the original report and will lead to a brief report that will be sent to the school.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

Standards: Adequate

Nearly all pupils start in the school with skills below those normally expected for children of their age, especially in language. From these low starting points, nearly all make good progress in their learning throughout the school.

For three of the last four years, the percentage of pupils attaining the core subject indicator (CSI), the expected level in English, mathematics and science in key stage 1, has been lower than that of the family of schools, the local authority and Wales. At the end of key stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the CSI has been lower than that of the family of schools, the local authority and Wales for the last four years and the gap is widening.

In key stage 1, 30% of pupils in 2010 achieved the CSI. This performance is significantly below the family and Wales average and the gap between them is widening. Pupils' performance was in the fourth quarter for all subjects and the CSI when compared with schools within the same free school meals (FSM) group. No pupils attained level 3 in mathematics. However, the percentage of pupils attaining level 3 in English and science was higher than that of the family of schools. The performance of pupils has been in the third and fourth quarters for CSI for three of the last four years, when compared with schools within the same FSM group

In key stage 2, 54% of pupils in 2010 achieved the CSI. This performance is also significantly below the family and Wales average and the gap between the school, the family and Wales is also widening. Pupils' performance was in the fourth quarter for all subjects and the CSI when compared with schools within the same FSM group. The percentage of pupils attaining level 5 in 2010 was higher than for the family of schools in science, similar in mathematics but lower in English. When compared with schools within the same FSM group, the performance of pupils has been in the fourth quarter for the CSI for the last three years.

The performance of boys and girls achieving level 2 in key stage 1 has fluctuated over the past four years with no clear pattern emerging. However, over the same time period, more girls gain level 3 in English and science than boys but more boys gain level 3 in mathematics. At key stage 2, boys do not attain as well as girls in English at level 4, but do better than girls in mathematics and science at this level. This same pattern emerges for level 5 attainment in mathematics and science.

The percentage of pupils entering the school with ALN is higher than the national average. Generally, these pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities. Hearing Impaired (HI) pupils make very good progress.

The communication skills of the majority pupils are developing well. They listen attentively, speak clearly, and read and write with confidence. However, a few lower key stage 2 pupils' communication skills are not as well-developed. Many pupils

respond very well to teachers' questioning, can recall previous learning and are aware of their next steps in learning. They are able to work independently, discuss in pairs and work well in groups. Most upper key stage 2 pupils accurately identify the skills they will need to complete a task.

The information and communications technology (ICT) skills of the majority of pupils are developing satisfactorily and they are using these skills to improve their learning in subjects across the curriculum.

Nearly all pupils enter the school with little or no Welsh language skills. Pupils enjoy developing their early language skills in the nursery; in key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils show a positive and enthusiastic attitude in learning Welsh. Their standards in speaking, reading and writing are adequate overall.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to adopting healthy lifestyles, including taking regular exercise.

Pupils are happy, and feel safe and secure in school, they are polite, and behaviour is consistently good. This is reflected in their positive and generally enthusiastic attitude to learning. Pupils have well-developed personal and social skills.

Life skills are greatly enhanced with pupils' involvement with the Credit Union Scheme, which is part of the Communities First Initiative. This prepares them well for life outside school in the future.

The School Council plays an active part in the life of the school. Pupils feel that their suggestions are taken seriously and can influence decision-making. They are also involved in community issues and are championing Fair Trade within the town.

Attendance over the last three years is good compared with similar schools. Overall punctuality is good.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Nearly all teachers provide a good range of stimulating learning experiences, which generate pupils' interest in learning. Most lessons are well-planned and teachers ensure that activities are challenging and at an appropriate level for pupils. Teachers support ALN pupils effectively.

Pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are mostly developed in a systematic way as they progress from the Foundation Phase through to key stage 2. Staff make effective use of visits, special events and visitors to enrich pupils' learning and there is good use made of outdoor provision to support learning. Opportunities to develop pupils' communication skills and numeracy skills are well-planned. Staff use Catch-Up and RM maths successfully to ensure that pupils acquire the necessary

communication and numeracy skills to access the wider curriculum. Provision for ICT skills is not as well-developed.

The school makes good provision for pupils to take responsibility for the environment. Pupils' involvement in recycling, energy conservation and healthy eating, and a significant involvement in Fair Trade, have promoted pupils' awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship well.

The provision for Welsh language is developing well and the use of incidental Welsh is consistently good. However, there is not enough attention to Welsh artists, authors and other aspects of Welsh culture.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is good or better in nearly all lessons. Nearly all teachers plan effectively, use a range of teaching strategies and clearly identify learning outcomes. As a result, nearly all pupils are stimulated and challenged, and make good progress in their achievement. All staff make effective use of the interactive whiteboards and other resources and most lessons have a lively pace. Nearly all teachers use Assessment for Learning strategies well. Pupils know their learning targets, assess their work and that of others, and understand what to do to improve. The close, caring relationship established between staff and pupils enhances learning and leads to pupils achieving well. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. On a very few occasions teaching does not sufficiently engage or challenge pupils.

Marking of pupils' books is detailed and constructive; it enables pupils to see how well they are doing and what they will need to do next to improve their work. All staff know the pupils very well and understand how to move them successfully to the next step in their learning. Effective teacher assessments track pupils' progress and inform future planning well.

Foundation Phase half-termly reports are very good; they are informative and provide clear and concise information about the progress children are making. The annual reports to parents provide good information, indicating what pupils need to do next to move their learning forward, and also include pupils' self-assessment of what they need to improve.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school promotes the health and wellbeing of the pupils very well. A wide range of activities, both during and after the school day, encourage pupils to become more physically active and to eat healthily.

The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to explore a range of issues and allow time for reflection and thoughtfulness. Hearing Impaired (HI) pupils have attended performances of a deaf orchestra and benefited from a visit by an army chaplain who has a hearing impairment. These activities provide positive role models for pupils. The school is an inclusive community that promotes and values diversity very successfully.

Good relationships with a range of outside agencies ensure that information can be shared quickly and effectively to support individual children. HI pupils have good access to a range of specialist services such as audiology and speech and language therapy.

Procedures to support pupils transferring from the school to their next stage of education are well-established and effective.

Additional learning needs are identified effectively and pupils are supported well. Teachers use individual education plans (IEPs) effectively to set realistic targets that are evaluated regularly. Pupils contribute well to the evaluation of their own progress and the setting of their own targets.

The school has an appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school has a fully inclusive ethos, takes full account of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and acts positively on any information about pupils. It is a very caring and supportive environment and offers equal access to the curriculum to all pupils.

Levels of resourcing are good and well-matched to pupils' needs. Attractive and extensive displays in classrooms and communal areas celebrate pupils' achievements.

The school building is well-maintained. Effective use is made of outside areas for the Foundation Phase classes. The school grounds are well-maintained and are used well for a wide range of activities that enrich pupils' learning experiences.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate
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Leadership: Adequate

The acting head teacher has a clear and shared vision that has created an environment where all staff and pupils are valued and respected. She has been instrumental in developing the inclusive ethos and, as a result, the school is a happy place for the pupils to learn and for the staff to work. There is a strong sense of common purpose where the wellbeing and happiness of the pupils is nurtured and their progress and achievements are celebrated. However, this has not yet impacted enough on pupils' attainment.

The school governors are very supportive of the acting headteacher and fulfil many aspects of their role successfully. A particularly good feature is the involvement of a governor in assisting the school with writing and editing its PSE policy. However, governors do not challenge the school enough with regard to performance data.

The school is meeting national priorities successfully. For example, the 'Raise attainment and individual standards in education' (RAISE) project and the pupils' active involvement in their learning through Assessment for Learning (AfL) is consistent in all classes.

Policies, procedures and documentation meet statutory and legal requirements and are implemented consistently across the school.

Improving quality: Adequate

The senior management team use an appropriate range of evidence in the self-evaluation process to determine what the school is doing well and which areas need to improve. All staff are involved in the process and pupils' and parents' views are also carefully considered. School leaders monitor lessons, planning and pupils' work across the school.

The current school development plan prioritises the areas that the self-evaluation process has identified as needing to improve and has an appropriate focus on raising pupils' standards. However, this is at an early stage of development and has not had time to impact on standards.

The school has made good progress during the last few years in a number of important areas since the last inspection. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching and in the standard of pupils' achievement in most areas of the curriculum.

However, self-evaluation has not yet impacted on the standards pupils attain in the core subjects at the end of key stages.

Staff within the school share their expertise and knowledge and work within a positive, collaborative environment. Some are also involved in working with other schools on specific issues and these links are having a good impact on the quality of teaching and learning at the school.

Partnership working: Good

The school has developed good and effective partnerships with many agencies, especially those that provide support for HI and ALN pupils. The link with the HI unit at the local comprehensive school makes a positive and valuable contribution to the learning and social experiences of the HI children.

The school has good links with the local pre-school play groups and with the comprehensive school in Mold, both of which benefit pupils when moving from one stage of education to another.

There is an open, trusting and supportive relationship between the school and the parents. The school has strong community links and good links with the initial teacher training institutions in the region.

Resource management: Good

The school is sufficiently staffed and manages its budget appropriately. It has a good range of learning resources which are used well to meet the needs of all pupils and make very good use of its support staff. Through performance management procedures, the management team focuses well on developing all staff. Staff work hard as a team and are keen to improve their knowledge and skills.

In view of the good standards of achievement, the progress in learning of nearly all the pupils and the high quality of the care and experiences provided for the pupils, the school is providing good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

There were 35 responses to the questionnaire and unanimous agreement that:

- their children like Ysgol Bryngwalia and were helped to settle in well;
- staff expect children to work hard and do their best; and
- they make good progress.

Nearly all believe that:

- the school is run well;
- pupils behave well and that teaching is good;
- homework builds on what is done in school;
- staff treat all children fairly and with respect and that their child is safe at school;
- they feel comfortable about approaching the school; and
- the school helps children to become more mature and take on responsibility.

A few parents:

1. do not understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints;
2. feel that their child does not receive appropriate ALN support; and
3. do not believe that there is a good range of activities.

Responses to learner questionnaires

There were 87 pupil responses and unanimous agreement that:

1. there are lots of chances to get regular exercise; and
2. teachers and adults help them to learn and make progress.

Nearly all were positive with regard to all the other areas.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Maldwyn Pryse HMI	Reporting Inspector
Clive Phillips HMI	Team Inspector
James Jones	Lay Inspector
Tim Britton	Peer Inspector
Margaret Lonsdale	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11