



*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 Bro Sannan  
Ffordd Tŷ Fry  
Aberbargoed  
Bargoed  
CF81 9FN**

**Date of inspection: March 2012**

**by**

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



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:

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

Ysgol Bro Sannan is in the village of Bargoed, Caerphilly. The school's catchment area is Aberbargoed, Cefn Fforest, Markham, Argoed and Llwynceilyn. The school was opened in September 2004 for early years and key stage one pupils, and since 2005 the school has provided for key stage two pupils. There are 195 pupils at the school, including 14 part-time, nursery age pupils.

Welsh is the school's main medium of language and the aim is to ensure that pupils are completely bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary school. Eight per cent of pupils come from Welsh speaking homes. Two per cent are from an ethnic minority background, which is lower than the percentage for the local authority.

The authority states that the area in which the school is situated is economically disadvantaged. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils receive free school meals, which is higher than the national percentage, and 22% of pupils are on the additional learning needs register.

There has been a great deal of change in the school's staff and the management staff since the last inspection. Following the retirement of the former headteacher in the Easter term 2011, the current headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2011.

The individual school budget per pupil in 2011-2012 for Ysgol Bro Sannan is £3,109. The maximum per pupil for Caerphilly schools is £6,779 and the minimum is £2,498. Ysgol Bro Sannan is 27th out of 75 primary schools in Caerphilly in terms of school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

Ysgol Bro Sannan's current performance is good because:

- seven year old pupils have performed consistently better than the schools in the family during the last four years;
- the standard of work that was seen in pupils' books and in lessons is consistently good;
- pupils participate fully in lessons and show clear progress in their ability to work independently;
- the school is a happy, caring community that promotes a number of aspects of wellbeing and emotion well; and
- there is robust co-operation and a strong feeling of teamwork among the school's staff.

However:

- Pupils' standards in reading and writing have not yet been developed fully.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear, strong vision that is shared with all the school's stakeholders;
- she knows the school well, and offers clear guidance and strategic direction to the life and work of the school;
- the headteacher has focused successfully on pupils' wellbeing and creating a happy, caring community;
- the management team has implemented robust strategies in order to raise standards of literacy across the school, and this is beginning to have a good effect on pupils' achievement; and
- the school has a detailed, effective tracking system that tracks pupils' progress in several areas of school life.

However:

- the self-evaluation is not probing enough to set challenging, specific targets for improvement; and
- the role of the governing body has not been developed fully in order to challenge the school about its standards.

## Recommendations

- R1 raise standards of reading in key stage two and develop older pupils' higher level reading skills;
- R2 raise writing skills throughout the school and reduce the gap between boys and girls;
- R3 develop the self-evaluation document so that it is more evaluative and that the school development plan identifies more specific, quantitative targets for improvement;
- R4 develop the governing body's structure and role in the life of the school, to be more accountable for the standards achieved by pupils

### What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan, showing how it will address the recommendations. Progress against the recommendations will be monitored by the local authority.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

In the Foundation Phase, the performance of seven year old pupils that have attained the expected level in Welsh, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator) has risen from 75% in 2007 to 88% in 2011. Pupils' performance is consistently higher than that of the family over the last five years. Seven year old girls performed better than boys in terms of attaining the core subject indicator in four of the last five years. This has placed the school among the top 25%, in comparison with similar schools in terms of entitlement to free school meals. Pupils who attained level 3 and higher in Welsh and science compare favourably with the schools in the family.

In key stage two, the core subject indicator has increased during the last five years, except in 2009 and 2010 when the cohort that was assessed was small, and many pupils had specific learning needs. Pupils' performance in Welsh, English, mathematics and science has compared favourably with the schools in the family in three of the last five years. The number of pupils who attained level 5 and higher in 2011 compared favourably with the family's averages. Eleven year old girls performed better than boys in terms of the core subject indicator, in three of the last five years. The performance of eleven year old pupils who attain the expected level in the core subject indicator, in comparison with similar schools with entitlement to free school meals, has varied from the bottom 25% to the top 50% during the last five years.

Nearly all pupils in the Foundation Phase are making good progress in their literacy skills. Most pupils have a firm grasp, appropriate to their age, of the Welsh language. Most pupils use Welsh naturally when talking to one another, and pupils from non-Welsh-speaking homes become fluent quickly. The majority contribute enthusiastically to class discussions. They are confident when discussing their work, and express themselves clearly and with some accuracy. They can talk about events in stories they have read, expressing an opinion simply about characters and events.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase are making appropriate progress in their ability to write independently. By the end of the Foundation Phase, the majority of pupils can write creatively, showing an appropriate grasp of form and basic punctuation.

By the end of key stage two, the oral skills of most pupils are developing well. They become confident when speaking about their work and in informal conversations, in both languages. The majority are making appropriate progress in their reading skills. However, the understanding of a minority of pupils of what they are reading and their ability to respond to authors' styles is undeveloped. Pupils who have received additional support to improve their reading skills are making appropriate progress.

The majority of pupils in key stage two are writing appropriately in a range of written forms in both languages. They show an appropriate standard in terms of accuracy of language as well as their ability to organise their work into paragraphs. However, the

content is limited and there is not enough detail in the work. The majority of pupils are beginning to make appropriate use of redrafting to improve their first attempts.

Pupils across the school concentrate well and recall their previous learning. They co-operate well together and respond appropriately to the tasks that are presented to them. Most pupils are developing to become independent learners.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all pupils are happy and feel safe at school. They are aware of the importance of eating healthily and taking regular physical exercise. They can voice an opinion and express concern confidently through the 'feelings box' and through activities such as circle time. They are glad to help others as 'faithful friends' and through money-raising activities, and they have raised money for a number of charities and good causes.

Most pupils show enjoyment and interest in their work. They behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and friendly to one another, and to adults. Nearly all pupils have the appropriate skills to co-operate with others, to solve problems and to take responsibility for their learning.

All pupils are encouraged to take a full part in school life. The school council and the eco council contribute effectively towards making decisions and discussing continuous improvements.

Older pupils have an increasing understanding of the importance of the world of work through being responsible for the fruit shop.

Nearly all pupils arrive at school punctually, and their attendance during the last three years is higher than the average of similar schools.

Through a range of activities at school, and the extra-curricular experiences, pupils develop their social skills appropriately.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

The school provides a range of stimulating learning experiences that capture interest and develop pupils' skills effectively. They plan together effectively and this ensures good development and consistency across the school. The range of visits and experiences that are arranged for pupils enriches their learning. In the Foundation Phase and key stage two, the school provides good opportunities for pupils to contribute to planning and to choose themes that appeal to them.

Emphasis is placed on using polished Welsh across the school among staff and pupils. This is a strength. There is a Welsh and Welsh language ethos at the school and nearly all pupils speak Welsh fluently. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig has been integrated in a number of aspects of the curriculum and a feeling of Welshness is developed through school and extra-curricular activities.

The school targets groups of pupils who need additional support successfully, and this has a positive impact on the standards and outcomes of these pupils.

Provision for developing pupils' understanding of sustainability and global citizenship is good. Pupils demonstrate maturity when discussing such issues. The school operates in a sustainable way through recycling and the work of the Eco Council affirms the importance of this to the school.

### **Teaching: Good**

Teaching across the school is good. Teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies and present lively, stimulating lessons. Interesting tasks and probing questioning challenge pupils, and appropriate pace and encouragement promote their commitment and their enjoyment of lessons. A very successful working relationship exists between adults and pupils that fosters effective learning across the school. Pupils' behaviour is managed in a sensitive, effective way.

Teachers possess good, up-to-date subject knowledge. They have high expectations in terms of behaviour and quality of work presented by pupils. Suitable, effective planning is undertaken for the range of ability. However, there is a lack of opportunities for the development of extended writing in both languages across a range of subjects. The school has put strategies in place recently to develop pupils' reading. However, this has not yet been embedded across the school.

Assessment for learning strategies are integrated into lessons, and they are now developing consistently across the school. Objectives and success criteria are shared with pupils regularly. An effective system for marking and responding to children's work is implemented across the school and this fosters pupils' ability to improve specific aspects of their work.

Parents receive information on their children's progress and development in the form of an annual report; the reports are detailed and include targets for improvement.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school is a very caring community that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. The 'Faithful Friends' system reinforces the ethos of respect, responsibility and care that is a strong element of school life. A club has been formed as part of the school's plans to address boosting the confidence of shy, uncertain pupils and, as a result, these pupils take more responsibility for their learning. The school takes advantage of every opportunity to offer pastoral support of a high standard to pupils. Appropriate use is made of specialist services such as health visitors and the police in order to support pupils' physical and emotional health. Staff provide Personal and Social Education classes along with activities connected with Healthy Schools and Eco Schools. These contribute well towards the various valuable experiences provided for pupils.

The school has very thorough systems that identify pupils with educational needs through regular observation, discussion with parents and holding formal and informal assessments. The school's successful tracking system tracks pupils' progress, and



as a result, the staff have very good knowledge of pupils' needs. Pupils' work programmes have a positive influence on forward planning within classes. Support is co-ordinated very well and there are effective links with specialist external agencies.

The school has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding.

### **Learning environment: Good**

There is a very inclusive ethos at the school. There is a welcoming community and there is a warm atmosphere among staff and pupils. There is respect for all individuals and everyone is eager to help one another. Everyone has an opportunity to be part of the school's life and appropriate policies, plans and procedures are in place in order to allow this to happen.

Excellent use is made of the building, internally and externally, in order to create a stimulating and appealing learning space. All displays are of a high standard. They are stimulating and attractive and promote effective learning. There is an extensive supply of good quality resources to support learning and teaching. The facilities are clean and suitable, and the whole site and building are maintained to a high standard. Pupils are taught to respect and care for their environment.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and, in a short space of time, has conveyed that vision successfully to staff, governors and pupils. She knows the school well and offers clear guidance and strategic direction to the life and work of the school. Through the co-operation of staff and governors, the headteacher has quickly put strategies in place that are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement and wellbeing.

A senior management team has now been established at the school, after a period of uncertainty and absence. The ethos of co-operation is a strength among the senior management team. All the school's staff have job descriptions and they co-operate very effectively as a team.

The school pays appropriate attention to national and local priorities. The Foundation Phase is now firmly established and a wide range of appropriate resources is used to stimulate the pupils' interest and reinforce their experiences. Appropriate attention is paid to the learner's voice in every aspect of school life.

The school has a wide range of management and curricular policies that are implemented effectively.

A period of uncertainty and changes in the school's staff and the governing body has influenced the governors' ability to fulfil their duties in full. They receive regular reports from the headteacher and staff on standards and they are aware of some aspects of the curriculum that need to be developed. Although they have some awareness of the school's performance data, their understanding of how the school is performing has not developed well enough to challenge the school.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

The self-evaluation document gives an appropriate picture of school life. The school has begun to include staff, governors and pupils in this process. It is a process that includes some data analysis, lesson observation and monitoring pupils' work. Some of the school's strengths and areas for development are identified. However, in parts, the document is too descriptive and not evaluative enough.

There is some connection between the self-evaluation and the school development plan. The current plan includes targets for the actions, costs and responsibilities as well as the success criteria. However, the school does not use the evidence from self-evaluation thoroughly enough to set challenging and specific targets for improvement. The targets are not quantitative enough, and as a result it is not easy to measure progress.

The staff have begun to co-operate in professional learning communities within the school to develop literacy skills and to attract boys to read. The school has now implemented a number of strategies in order to develop standards, but it is too early to measure their impact on pupils' standards and outcomes.

Two of the five recommendations have not been implemented in full following the previous inspection.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school works effectively with a range of partners. It maintains very positive links with parents in order to support learning, by showing a willingness to discuss any concern and welcoming constructive dialogue on ways to improve the school's arrangements. Thorough and regular information is given to parents on their children's progress.

The link with the community is good, and pupils benefit from a range of external visits and visitors to the school. The school has not yet begun to form links with local businesses.

Regular visits are arranged between pupils at the Cylch Meithrin and the school. The co-operation that exists between the Mudiad Meithrin and the school promotes a close and effective partnership. Teachers meet regularly with staff from the schools in the cluster in order to moderate pupils' work. Through effective procedures, pupils at the school transfer to the secondary school smoothly. The school welcomes pupils from Ysgol Cwm Rhymini regularly for periods of work experience.

The school receives a wide range of support from the county and from the advisory services, and these have a positive impact on aspects of the school's work, for example raising standards of attendance and promoting positive behaviour.

The Parents Association is very supportive and contributes very effectively to the school's work.

### **Resource management: Good**

The school has an appropriate level of staff to teach the curriculum. Their training is clearly linked to the school's priorities in the development plan and to performance management objectives.

Classroom assistants, administrative staff and the caretaker make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school. Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is used effectively to plan work and monitor pupils' progress. Pupils benefit from the service of an additional part-time teacher who supports literacy skills.

The headteacher manages the school's finances and resources effectively, and reviews expenditure regularly with the help of authority officers. The school makes appropriate use of its planning for improvement procedures in order to identify priorities for expenditure on learning resources. The school makes good use of funding and of other sources of money such as the school effectiveness fund to target support and improve the quality of learning resources. Although the governors receive regular reports on the spending of funding, they do not at present play an active part in monitoring.

Considering pupils' current good standards of work, and the strong leadership of the headteacher and the management team, the school offers good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

In key stage one, the performance of seven year old pupils that have attained the expected level in Welsh, mathematics and science (the core subject indicator) has risen from 75% in 2007 to 88% in 2011. The results of 7 year old pupils in 2011 show that the school is performing amongst the best in the family in terms of the core subject indicator. Pupils' performance is consistently higher than that of the family during the last five years.

Comparisons over a period of four years show that 7 year old pupils are performing consistently higher than the family in Welsh, higher than the family in two of the last four years in mathematics, and higher than the family in science in three of the last four years.

Seven year old girls performed better than boys in terms of attaining the core subject indicator in four of the last five years.

Pupils who attained level 3 and higher in Welsh and science compare favourably with the family's schools.

In key stage two, the performance of pupils who were assessed in the core subject indicators has shown progress during the last five years, except for 2009 and 2010, when many pupils had specific learning needs, and were on the additional learning needs register. Pupils' performance at level 4 and higher in Welsh, English, mathematics and science has compared favourably with that of the schools in the family in three of the last five years. Pupils' performance at level 5 and higher does not compare favourably with the averages for the family and Wales during the last four years.

The performance of 11 year old pupils in writing in English and Welsh has been significantly lower than that of the family and of Wales for the last four years. Eleven year old girls performed better than boys in terms of the core subject indicator in three of the last five years. Girls have performed better than boys in Welsh and English over a period of four years, while boys have performed better than girls in mathematics and science.

In 2011, the achievement of pupils in key stages one and two who are entitled to free school meals was lower than those who are not entitled. This is true for the last five years.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty-six responses were received from parents:

All agree or agree strongly:

- that they are satisfied with the school, and that their children like school and are making good progress.
- that their child has received support to settle in the school;
- that staff expect their child to do his/her best;
- that homework builds on what is learnt at school;
- that their children are encouraged to be healthy and to take physical exercise; and
- that the school helps children to become more mature and shoulder responsibility.

Nearly all indicate:

- that teaching is good and that there is a good variety of activities, including trips or visits;
- that staff treat every child with respect;
- that their child is safe at school;
- that they feel comfortable about asking the school a question, making suggestions or identifying a problem; and
- that they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

Most indicate:

- that the school is run well;
- that their child is prepared well for moving on to the next school; and
- that their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any individual appropriate needs.

Many indicate:

- that they receive regular information about their child's progress;

On the whole, the responses are similar to the averages across schools in Wales. However, 89% of parents indicate that behaviour is good, which is lower than the corresponding figure of 96% across schools in Wales.

## Responses to learner questionnaires

Seventy two key stage 2 responses were received.

Most indicate:

- that the other teachers at the school help them to learn and make progress; and
- that they know what to do and to whom to speak if they find the work difficult.

Many believe:

- that they feel safe at school and that the school deals well with any bullying;
- that they know to whom to speak if they are worried;
- that the school teaches them how to keep healthy and that there are many opportunities at school to take regular physical exercise; and
- that they are doing well at school and that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work; and
- that homework helps them to understand and improve their school work.

The majority believe:

- that other children behave well and that they can do their work.

In general, the responses of the school's pupils are similar to the responses of pupils across Wales. However, only about half of Bro Sannan's pupils are of the opinion that behaviour at play-time and lunch-time is good, in comparison with the corresponding figure of 84% across schools in Wales.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Anwen Griffith	Reporting Inspector
Rhiannon Harries	Team Inspector
Glenda Jones	Lay Inspector
Helen Hopkins	Peer Inspector
Tracey Addicott	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority. If it is available, the data report can be seen on our website alongside this report.

### 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' (FPR) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. FPYear 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	FPR	FPY1	FPY2	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:

Foundation Phase	Reception, 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

## **Glossary of terms – Primary**

### **National Curriculum**

#### **Expected National Curriculum levels**

- By the end of the key stage 1, at the age of seven, learners are expected to reach level 2 and the more able to reach level 3.
- By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of eleven, learners are expected to reach level 4 and the more able to reach level 5.

#### **Core subject indicator in all key stages**

The core subject indicator relates to the expected performance in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science, the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Learners must gain at least the expected level in either English or Welsh first language together with mathematics and science to gain the core subject indicator.

#### **All-Wales Core Data sets**

Schools and local authorities may refer to performance relative to their family of schools. These families of schools have been created to enable schools to compare their performance to that of similar schools across Wales. Families include schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, living in 20% most deprived areas of Wales, having special education needs at school action plus or statemented and with English as an additional language acquisition less than competent.