



*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**

**Bronington Voluntary Aided Primary School  
School Lane  
Whitchurch  
SY13 3HN**

**Date of inspection: January 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

Bronington Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School is situated in the village of Bronington, four miles from the town of Whitchurch in Shropshire and 12 miles from the town of Wrexham.

The school educates learners between the ages of three and eleven. Children start in Reception on a full-time basis at the beginning of the academic year following their fourth birthday. There are currently 85 pupils on the school roll. Nine children attend the nursery part-time. This overall total is a little lower than during the last inspection in January 2006.

Pupils are organised into four classes according to age, two in the Foundation Phase and two in key stage 2. The headteacher is responsible for teaching a class for the equivalent of two days a week.

The school serves an area which is mostly advantaged economically. Many pupils come from professional backgrounds. Seven per cent of the pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is well below the local authority and all-Wales average.

All the pupils come from homes where English is spoken as a first language. None of the pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken. Nearly all pupils are of white British ethnicity. There have been no exclusions during the past two years.

Less than 5% of pupils are identified as having additional learning needs and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below the national average of 20%.

The individual school budget per pupil for Bronington Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £3,563 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Wrexham is £8,569 and the minimum is £2,903. The school is 19th out of the 60 primary schools in Wrexham in terms of its school budget per pupil.

The school was last inspected in January 2006.

The headteacher has been in post for almost four and a half years.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils achieve good standards in reading;
- most pupils are highly engaged and motivated and display enjoyment and confidence in their work;
- the behaviour and courtesy of almost all pupils is very good;
- the learning environment is inclusive and caring;
- support and guidance are effective;
- opportunities for pupils to learn about sustainability are very good;
- the quality of teaching is mostly good; and
- close and effective links exist between the school and its local community.

### Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the quality of leadership by the headteacher and curriculum leaders is good and the headteacher has a clear vision for the direction of the school;
- the school's self-evaluation process ensures that outcomes and provision continue to improve; and
- participation in professional learning communities continues to impact positively on provision.

## Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 ensure consistently good teaching across the school to raise the percentage of pupils who attain above the expected level in the core subjects at the end of the Foundation Phase and in science in key stage 2;
- R2 ensure that the governors offer sufficient challenge to improve the school's performance further;
- R3 increase the involvement of pupils in the school self-evaluation processes; and
- R4 attend without delay to the safety issues highlighted during the inspection.

### **What happens next?**

The school will produce an action plan to show how it will address the recommendations. The progress that the school makes in addressing the recommendations will be monitored by the local authority which will report its findings to Estyn.

## Main findings

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?</b> | <b>Good</b> |
|---|-------------|

### Standards: Good

The majority of pupils start the school with a good level of key skills. Most pupils achieve or exceed the expected outcomes for their age by the end of the Foundation Phase.

Over the last few years, pupils' performance at the expected level in English, mathematics, science and the core subject indicator (English, science and mathematics combined) has been good. It has been above average in key stages 1 and 2 when compared to the performance of schools in the same family and to that of schools in Wales as a whole.

Pupils across the school listen attentively to each other and to their teachers.

In the Foundation Phase, most pupils' oral skills are very good. They answer questions with enthusiasm and confidence, and engage very well in discussion with their peers. In key stage 2, the majority of pupils are able to discuss their work very well. Many express their own ideas confidently in pairs, groups and in plenary sessions.

All pupils with lower ability and special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and personal targets. A minority of more able pupils across the school do not always achieve their full potential.

The relative performance of boys and girls varies from year to year and there is no significant overall pattern in this variation. In 2011 in key stage 1, boys performed better than girls in mathematics and girls performed better in English and science. No obvious differences were observed in lessons.

All pupils make very good progress in developing their reading skills according to their age and ability. In the Foundation Phase, most pupils display enthusiasm and a secure understanding of the letter or sound patterns they are learning. All pupils develop as keen independent readers. In key stage 2, most pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression. There are a few more hesitant readers, but they have the confidence to correct themselves as they read.

Most pupils across the school make good progress in their writing skills relative to their age and ability. In the Foundation Phase, most children are very enthusiastic about writing. They make good progress in letter formation and in developing their handwriting. In key stage 2, the majority of pupils write effectively for a range of different purposes and demonstrate good writing skills. They have a good understanding of the conventions of grammar, but do not always apply their knowledge of punctuation in their own writing. The minority of more able pupils produce writing of good quality.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 make good progress in developing both their literacy and numeracy skills.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Welsh second language are developing well in Nursery and Reception. Most pupils across the school show a growing confidence in using Welsh structures learnt in the Welsh lessons, but do not use the language enough outside of Welsh lessons.

**Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all pupils are highly engaged and motivated, and display enjoyment and confidence in their work. They have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy the wide variety of activities on offer in lessons and in after-school clubs. They feel valued and supported in the school.

Pupils' work in pairs or groups is a strong feature, and they apply their oracy skills effectively across a range of subjects. Many take responsibility for their own learning; they often enjoy the work, and show interest and perseverance to remain on task. Nearly all the pupils have very strong interpersonal skills for their age and ability.

The majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards healthy eating and exercise. They enjoy using the range of facilities and equipment available in the high quality outdoor area. Pupils are knowledgeable about healthy foods through their work in developing the school gardens and eating the produce they grow. Many pupils take up school meals with the healthy menu options.

The behaviour and courtesy of almost all pupils are very good. The oldest pupils set good examples as role models for younger pupils. The school has a wide range of links with the community. These links develop pupils' social skills and help to prepare them well for life and work outside school.

The School Council links actively with the local community and fundraises for charity, but has too limited a role in making decisions about the daily life of the school and in deciding what pupils learn. The Eco Council has a very good impact on school life through prioritising aspects of sustainability for improvement, for instance energy conservation and monitoring its implementation.

Attendance is good at 96% and over the past four years it has been in the top 25% when compared with that of similar schools. Nearly all pupils attend school punctually.

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|---|-------------|
| <b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b> | <b>Good</b> |
|---|-------------|

**Learning experiences: Good**

The school meets requirements in relation to the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education and the Foundation Phase. The range of visitors, and the visits organised for the pupils, support and enrich their experiences effectively.

Provision in nursery and reception is very good with very effective use of both the inside and outdoor areas to develop pupils' independence and skills across the curriculum.

The teachers are well supported by good schemes of work. Planning by class teachers ensures good progression in pupils' skills in communication and numeracy across the curriculum. However, the work does not always provide focused support for all more able pupils, particularly in the core subjects at the end of the Foundation Phase and in science in key stage 2.

Provision for the Welsh language succeeds in laying firm foundations for developing pupils' language skills. In some classes, members of staff use Welsh regularly in a wide range of learning contexts. Teachers' use of incidental Welsh is not consistent throughout the school resulting in missed opportunities for developing the pupils' ability and confidence in using Welsh. The Welsh dimension is a good feature of the life and work of the school. It promotes the pupils' recognition and understanding of their local area and of Wales as a country and nation.

The provision of education for sustainable development is very good. The school successfully promotes sustainability through schemes such as energy conservation, developing the garden area and monitoring water use. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of global citizenship across the curriculum and through a variety of cultural and charitable activities.

### **Teaching: Good**

All teachers have good subject knowledge. They use an effective range of teaching approaches that create a very positive learning environment. All members of staff establish good working relationships with learners.

Most teachers ask good open, and often very challenging questions which effectively develop pupils' thinking skills. They use praise well to encourage pupils who lack confidence. There are clear lesson aims, which teachers share with pupils. Overall, the pace of lessons is good and teachers' expectations of pupils are high. However, in a few lessons, the pace is too slow and work does not challenge the more able pupils enough.

The school uses data on pupil performance to track and analyse the progress of pupils effectively over time.

In general, the school's procedures for giving verbal and written feedback to pupils are effective. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers set improvement targets for individual pupils, which enable them to measure their progress over time.

Staff use assessment for learning strategies effectively in most classes. Most pupils are able to talk about their work and evaluate how they could improve it in the future. Teachers and support staff ensure that the youngest children in the Foundation Phase have many good opportunities to use and extend their independent learning skills during lessons.



In key stage 2, teachers adapt the work to suit pupils of different abilities effectively in the majority of the lessons. However, there are a few learning activities that do not challenge pupils enough.

The quality of the reports to parents and carers on their children's progress is good. Parents are kept regularly informed about their children's achievements and wellbeing. They are satisfied with the information given to them informally, during open evenings and in the end of term reports.

The school's system for reaching an agreed opinion on attainment levels at the end of key stages is good and the arrangements for moderating teachers' assessments with nearby schools are effective.

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

The school is a Christian community and promotes its values well. The quality of pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. Members of the community, such as the local community police officer, make an effective contribution to developing pupils' awareness of health and safety issues.

The school supports pupils with additional learning needs well. Individual education plans are regularly evaluated and updated. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that children receive professional support on educational and other matters, for instance in supporting the visually impaired to access the curriculum fully. As a result, pupils make the progress expected towards achieving the targets set for them. Support does not always ensure that the more able pupils achieve their best.

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

Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and parents state that they are very satisfied with the care, support and guidance provided to their children.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school promotes an inclusive ethos and all pupils are valued and receive equal access to all areas of the school's provision. An appropriate range of policies and procedures are in place to value diversity and to promote equality and equal access to the curriculum.

Effective use is made of the school's internal space and the learning areas are stimulating and colourful. Pupils' work is highlighted through appropriate displays that celebrate successes and progress.

The school has a good range of resources that match pupils' needs well. For example, a good range of information technology equipment is used effectively to raise standards across the curriculum. All pupils are accompanied by staff at all times as the computer suite.

Accommodation is generally of a high quality. It is well maintained and provides a calm atmosphere to promote successful learning. Classrooms and corridors are full

of colourful and stimulating displays illustrating the work of pupils. The boys' toilet facilities in key stage 2 are only adequate for the pupils' needs. Outside areas are maintained to a high standard.

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b> | <b>Good</b> |
|--|-------------|

### **Leadership: Adequate**

The quality of leadership is good and the headteacher has a clear vision for the direction of the school. His involvement and commitment are good features of the school's management.

The members of staff identify suitable priorities in order to secure effective and continuous school development. Leaders put clear emphasis on raising standards and improving the provision. They have been well involved in policy-making decisions and they have designed and implemented good schemes of work.

Teachers and support staff work effectively to develop provision to raise standards. All staff reflect well on their work and use a wide range of evidence to help them improve pupil performance.

Pupils and staff feel valued and all have specific responsibilities to develop the school as a learning community. All this impacts well on the overall ethos.

The school gives good attention to local and national priorities. It works diligently and successfully to promote high standards in reading throughout the school. It also effectively promotes pupils' understanding and positive attitude to healthy eating, fitness and sustainability.

The Governing Body is very supportive and members think highly of the school's profile within the local community. Governors have made important contribution to overcoming major financial and health and safety issues. They receive data from the headteacher about the school's performance, which they analyse well. However, they do not always offer sufficient challenge to ensure that the more able pupils reach their full potential particularly at the end of the Foundation Phase.

### **Improving quality: Good**

Self-evaluation is an integral part of school life. However, it does not give consistent opportunity to involve parents and pupils in the process. Governors are well informed by the headteacher and contribute effectively to the evaluation and impact of initiatives, such as improving the outdoor learning environment and identifying and addressing safety issues. Nevertheless, they do not challenge the school sufficiently to improve its own performance.

The present school development plan identifies clearly how priorities from the self-evaluation processes are taken forward. This includes clear actions, specific milestones, responsibilities and desired outcomes. The headteacher's annual reports now take account of past priorities to include information on significant improvements in reading standards and pupil self-esteem.

Recently, the school has adopted a new self-evaluation format to aid a deeper analysis of its performance. It is in the process of prioritising identified areas for development and placing them within a manageable time frame.

The school's participation in two professional learning communities has impacted positively on the school's provision. One focuses on developing effective assessment for learning and the other on understanding how to develop pupils' thinking skills. Both strategies have had a positive effect on the school's provision.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school works closely with parents and other schools and it has a strong relationship with the local community. It has developed effective partnerships with a range of outside agencies to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Additionally, the school has built a valuable partnership with the voluntary sector to set up after-school facilities.

Good links have been formed with the local authority, which has recently resulted in a complete new format to record the school self-evaluation process. The headteacher collaborates well with the local cluster of schools partners to plan and pool resources. He has taken a leadership role in developing joint assessment resources for English at key stage 2 and in ensuring training and support for safeguarding.

Very good transition arrangements exist with the local play groups and good pastoral and curricular links exist between the school and the local secondary school. These links help to prepare all children effectively for the next stages in their education.

### **Resource management: Good**

Staff are well deployed throughout the school and the standard of the accommodation is good.

There is a plentiful supply learning resources of good quality. However, the location of the computers for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils limits their access to them and to opportunities to develop their technological skills across the curriculum.

The school's management of teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is good.

Staff roles and responsibilities are clear and the school has an effective system for performance management. As a result, the leaders respond well to the needs of improving the whole-school as well as providing appropriately for the staff's professional development.

There are appropriate opportunities for staff to attend courses within and outside the school. Such professional development is having a positive impact on school life. This is particularly evident in the way that staff in the Foundation Phase have created an exciting and engaging learning environment.

Finances are managed efficiently. Spending decisions are well matched to school development priorities with a strong focus on raising standards. The school has also addressed major safety issues concerning the building which were identified by the governors through their annual risk assessment. This resulted in a deficit budget. The school, with the support of the Parent Teachers Association, has diminished the deficit significantly. It is working closely with the local authority to bring the budget in line by September 2012. The school provides good value for money because of the good outcomes attained by pupils at the end of key stage 2.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Estyn compares schools against two main data sets; their free-school-meal group and their family of schools. These groupings are based on the level of disadvantage of pupils in the school. This includes the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals and also a number of other socio-economic indicators when schools are placed into 'families' of a dozen or so similar schools. Each school's performance is ranked against that of others in its family. Pupils are expected to achieve level 2 at the end of key stage 1 and level 4 at the end of key stage 2.

The proportion of its pupils entitled to free school meals, namely 7%, and other factors place this school amongst the least disadvantaged of schools in Wales but the highest in comparison with similar schools. Pupils enter the school with a level of skills that varies from year to year and there is no significant overall pattern.

During the period 2008-2010, in end of key stage 1 and in key stage 2 assessments, the performance of pupils at the expected level in English, mathematics, science and the core subject indicator (English, science and mathematics combined) has been consistently better than the average of schools in the same family, as well as better than the average for schools in the county and in Wales as a whole.

In 2011, at the end of key stage 1, all pupils achieved the expected level in English, mathematics and science. This means that the school's performance exceeded the average for its family of schools, the county and Wales.

In key stage 1, the small percentage of pupils who attained above the expected level (level 3) in English in 2011 was a slight improvement over the school's performance in previous years but remained considerably lower than the average for the family. The small percentage of pupils who reached level 3 in mathematics was also considerably lower than the average for the family of schools.

In 2011, in key stage 2, all pupils achieved the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science. Consequently, the school's performance was better than the average for the family, the county and Wales.

In 2011, the percentage of pupils who achieved above the expected level in English at the end of key stage 2 was considerably higher than the average for the family, the county and Wales. The percentage of pupils who achieved above the expected level in mathematics exceeded that of previous years and was also considerably higher than the average for the family, the county and Wales. The percentage of pupils who reached this level in science remained just slightly lower than the average for the family, the county and Wales.

There is a significant difference in the performance of boys and girls who achieve above the expected level in individual subjects. This is true of both key stages.

In 2011, in key stage 1, in English, no boys achieved at level 3. Although a quarter or so of the girls achieved level 3, this is a lower proportion than that found in similar

schools, the county and Wales. In mathematics, no girls achieved level 3, but a third of the boys achieved level 3. This proportion is considerably higher than the average for similar schools, the county and Wales. In science, no boys achieved level 3. Although a quarter of the girls achieved level 3, this is a lower proportion of girls than the average for the family, the county and Wales.

In key stage 2, in 2011, in English and science, more girls than boys achieved level 5. The difference in performance between boys and girls was more marked in mathematics, where 67% of the girls and 45% of boys achieved level 5.

Attendance is good at 96% and is consistently higher than the average for similar schools.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Parent questionnaires

Thirty-one parents completed the questionnaires and overall they expressed very positive views about the school and the percentages are consistent with national averages. Without exception they confirmed that their child:

- was helped to settle in well at the school;
- likes school and feels safe there;
- is making good progress;
- receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;
- is encouraged to be healthy; and
- is well prepared for moving on to the next stage in his or her education.

All of the parents:

- are comfortable about approaching the school with questions;
- are satisfied that teachers expect their child to work hard at all times and do his or her best;
- believe that the school is well run and that pupils behave well;
- agree that homework builds well on what their child learn in school; and
- consider that they are kept well informed about their child's progress.

Most parents understand the school's procedures for dealing with complaints. This proportion, however, was a little lower than the current national benchmark.

#### Learner questionnaires

Forty-four pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. The overall response was positive and percentages were close to the current national benchmarks.

All pupils indicate that:

- they feel safe in the school;
- children behave well and this enables them to get on with their work in lessons;
- behaviour is good at playtime and lunchtime;
- the school deals well with any bullying;
- they are doing well;
- teachers and other adults in the school help them to learn and make progress;
- they know what to do and whom to ask if they find the work hard;
- they have enough books, equipment and computers to their work; and
- the school teaches them how to keep healthy and there are lots of opportunities for regular exercise.

Most pupils know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. Most feel that homework helps them to understand and improve their work. The percentage of positive responses in these two areas is a little lower than current national benchmarks.



## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

|                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Dr Prydwen Elfed-Owens   | Reporting Inspector |
| Carolyn Thomas           | Team Inspector      |
| Peter Duncan Haworth     | Lay Inspector       |
| Kathryn Thomas           | Peer Inspector      |
| Mr V Coope (Headteacher) | 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.

### 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. FYear 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.