



*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**

**Brynmenyn Primary School  
Bryn Road  
Brynmenyn  
Bridgend  
CF32 9LA**

**Date of inspection: September 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

Brynmenyn Primary School is in the village of Brynmenyn, near Bridgend. The present school opened in 1913. The area served by the school is neither prosperous nor disadvantaged. About 50% of pupils attend from out of catchment and about 30% come from neighbouring areas that are in receipt of Communities First funding. The proportion entitled to receive free school meals is 24%, which is slightly above the average for primary schools in Wales.

There are currently 204 pupils on roll aged between three and 11, including nursery pupils. The number has increased steadily since the last inspection. About 62% of the pupils are boys although this fluctuates from year to year. Pupils are taught in seven classes, most of which contain two age groups.

Around 26% of pupils receive extra support for their additional learning needs, which is slightly above average. No pupils have a statement of special educational need. English is the sole or predominant language of nearly all pupils and very few use English as an additional language. No pupils use Welsh as their first language. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010. The school was last inspected in 2006.

The individual school budget per pupil for Brynmenyn Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £2,986 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Bridgend is £5,486 and the minimum is £2,737. Brynmenyn is 42nd out of the 52 primary schools in Bridgend in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

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

### Current performance

The school's current performance is judged as adequate because:

- most pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are about average overall, but the performance of a minority of pupils, usually boys, is too low;
- standards of literacy have improved recently, but are still too low;
- most pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and most behave well;
- the curriculum is practical and creative, but does not place enough emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills;
- the overall quality of teaching is adequate, although the quality of marking is inconsistent;
- care, support and guidance are adequate although safeguarding arrangements are not as good as they should be;
- strategic leadership and management roles are shared widely; and
- partnerships with other schools, the local authority and the community are good.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are judged as adequate because:

- senior leaders and governors share a commitment to school improvement;
- regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is thorough, widespread and a key factor in their improvement;
- the senior management team is effective in building a relatively new team of teachers and assistants; and
- improvement processes have not yet resulted in a sufficient rise in standards of literacy, but the school has arrested the decline and standards are rising, albeit from a low base.

## Recommendations

- R1 Improve standards of literacy throughout the school, especially for boys and those pupils who are more able
- R2 Strengthen further the curriculum for literacy
- R3 Improve the teaching and learning of boys and the more able
- R4 Develop the strategic management role of the governing body
- R5 Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are reviewed more regularly and that all staff are trained fully and often in safeguarding procedures

### **What happens next?**

The school will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn will monitor the school's progress.

## Main findings

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

Adequate

#### Standards: Adequate

Many pupils start at the school with skills below those expected for their age. Over time, most, including those with additional learning needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning. Girls' achievements generally are higher than those of boys in almost all areas in the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2, especially in English. The under-achievement in key stage 2 has been reduced significantly in 2011-2012 compared with 2010-2011. It has been reduced even more in the current cohort in Year 6 (2012-2013), from the evidence of their current achievements in reading and writing. Boys' achievements in writing, while still about 30 percentage points below those of girls, improved by 40% last year. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils' overall skills in literacy and numeracy are now at least adequate. Attainments in speaking and listening are good. Outcomes in reading and writing have been much more variable in the past, mainly due to the lower attainments of a minority of boys.

By the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012, pupils' results at the expected level (Outcome 5 or higher) in the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator were broadly in line with those of pupils in other schools in the family. Pupils' achievements in language, literacy and communication skills were slightly below average in comparison with those in the family of schools. Their results in mathematical development were slightly above the average of other schools in the family. In personal and social development, pupils' results were below the average in the family of schools. Pupils' results in achieving the higher than expected level (Outcome 6), however, were well below the family average in all areas.

By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment over recent years at the expected level (level 4 or higher) in all three core subjects, and the core subject indicator, was a little below the family average. This placed the school in the lower 50% in comparison with similar schools for key stage 2. The proportions achieving at the higher than expected level (level 5 or higher) in English, mathematics and science placed the school in the lowest 25% of similar schools.

In mathematics in 2011-2012, achievements at the expected level 4 were a little below family averages. The results at the higher level 5 in mathematics were well below family averages in 2011-2012. In key stage 2 science in 2011-2012, the results at level 4 were slightly below the family average. Pupils' results at the higher level 5 in science were well below family averages but are improving now.

Pupils' competence in reading is satisfactory overall and their writing for different genres is of an average standard. However, too many boys do not read with sufficient fluency by the end of key stage 2. Girls read and write well and make good progress. Pupils' skills overall in handwriting and presentation of their written work are satisfactory. The skills of many in information and communication technology (ICT) are good. As they develop their thinking skills, many pupils make progress in

refining and reflecting on new ideas. The thinking skills and creative skills of many are good, but their independent research skills are more limited. Pupils are adept at considering philosophical questions and understand that others may have different views on a range of issues.

The results of pupils achieving level 4 or higher in Welsh as a second language in 2012 were well above its family average. Nearly all boys and girls develop effective Welsh language skills in the Foundation Phase and by the end of key stage 2. Many achieve good standards in oral Welsh and make appropriate progress in reading and writing in Welsh. They use incidental Welsh confidently throughout the school and have a good understanding of the culture and history of Wales.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Nearly all pupils say they feel safe in school. Most enjoy learning and are well motivated. They study with enthusiasm and sustain concentration. They work well with others and on their own. They contribute to topic planning and take responsibility for their own learning.

Pupils develop a good range of social and life skills through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These promote an awareness of life outside school successfully. Most understand the importance of keeping healthy, through a good diet and plenty of exercise. They know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset, including their teachers and peer mediators. They have good working relationships with each other and with staff. Most pupils have a good understanding of sustainable development and many are globally aware through contacts abroad.

Overall attendance rates are good and have been above 93% for the last five years. This compares favourably with local and national averages and with other schools in its family. The proportion of unauthorised absences is low. The school encourages all pupils to arrive on time and most are punctual. There were two fixed-term exclusions in the last academic year.

Many pupils take an active part in school life. The school council is involved fully in finding the right candidates for its various activities through a fully democratic process. The school's inclusive ethos, its curriculum and many assemblies are based on uplifting moral values, such as respect for others. This has a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing.

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

The school provides a range of learning experiences, which meet the needs of most pupils. Teachers work effectively to provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced, building systematically on pupils' knowledge and skills. Opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills are particularly well planned. The literacy curriculum, especially the planning for the teaching of reading, is not rigorous enough. However, the new guided reading sessions in groups, though short, are helping to raise standards in reading.

Teachers generally match tasks well to pupils' needs, including those with additional learning needs. Planning for the development of subject specific skills and key skills is detailed and appropriate. Throughout the school, the curriculum does not provide enough challenge for more able pupils or for boys.

Planning for pupils' key skills is satisfactory. The use of key skills is regularly incorporated into lessons. Opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge of the Welsh dimension are comprehensive. The planning for learning the Welsh language is good.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular sporting, artistic and musical activities as well as visits in the locality and beyond. These stimulate pupils to gain a broad range of social, artistic and physical skills.

The school is dedicated to recycling a range of materials and conservation of electricity. The eco-committee is very active in ensuring that all pupils play a part in this. Committee members, and their fellow pupils, have a good understanding about the need for recycling. The curriculum encourages pupils to think about sustainable development, but they are less aware of global issues.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

The overall quality of teaching is adequate. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Many use a range of teaching and learning strategies and ask questions well to drive pupils' learning forward. Lessons are well prepared and effectively organised with clear learning objectives, resources of good quality, and direct links to assessment. The pace of lessons is brisk and they give pupils the scope to work in pairs and small groups. They promote key skills regularly but do not promote literacy enough. In the Foundation Phase and in key stage 2, teachers generally prepare stimulating learning experiences for pupils. Their management of pupils' behaviour is good. The school has many support staff who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. In the Foundation Phase, for example, teaching assistants lead group learning in and out of the classroom.

Most teachers provide constructive oral feedback, which clearly shows learners how to improve. Pupils' progress in learning is assessed regularly and generally monitored carefully by teachers at individual and group level. Most teachers use good strategies to assess learning and to promote logical thinking and independent learning. They reflect on their assessments when planning for future work. Marking is inconsistent in its effectiveness. It is helpful and detailed in most classes but limited in others. When helpful, it usually enables pupils to know how well the teacher judges they are achieving and how they can improve. However, pupils' involvement in evaluating their own progress, and in identifying areas where they can improve, is limited. Reports to parents are clear and informative. Parents and carers feel well informed by the school about their child's progress.

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

Most pupils say that they feel safe in school. Good policies are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils and there are appropriate risk assessments in place. If



problems arise, staff employ consistent strategies to work with parents or carers to improve the situation. There is a detailed programme of study for personal and social education for the Foundation Phase, but it is less detailed in key stage 2.

Through appropriate assemblies and with input from visitors, the school nurtures pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development well. Moral development is promoted particularly well, principally through the Values Education Programme. The school monitors pupils' emotional needs and self-esteem well through surveys. These are followed up by in-depth and supportive mentoring of those who may be in a vulnerable situation. The school is effective in promoting healthy eating through its fruit-only snack policy and its fruit tuck shop. Teachers promote good oral hygiene effectively for Foundation Phase pupils through a tooth brushing scheme.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. Teachers use their expertise well and analyse data effectively to identify pupils in need of more support. Teaching assistants provide effective intervention in classes, with appropriate support in withdrawal groups. Pupils have individual education plans of good quality. These plans are evaluated regularly and updated, in consultation with parents. Teachers make good use of these child-friendly individual educational plans to set targets and monitor progress. The school makes effective use of a wide range of outside agencies and specialist services, including those provided by the local authority, to support pupils with additional learning needs. The school identifies more able and talented pupils but does not do enough to challenge or extend their learning.

The headteacher and the school secretary monitor attendance well. They work closely with the educational welfare officer to address attendance issues.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet most requirements and the policy for safeguarding is appropriate. However, the procedures are not reviewed regularly enough. Also, some ancillary staff have not received appropriate training and are unaware of the proper procedures for safeguarding.

### **Learning environment: Adequate**

The school has a positive and caring ethos, which encourages pupils to treat others fairly and with respect. It is an inclusive community, where pupils enjoy equal access to all educational opportunities. Assemblies make a good contribution to the promotion of respect for individuality, diversity and appreciation of pupils' talents. The values-based curriculum effectively develops pupils' tolerance, respect and perseverance. Lessons which focus on the development of pupils' philosophical understanding challenge stereotypes effectively.

The quality of the accommodation is adequate. Good use is made of the limited space available and there are attractive displays of information, artefacts and pupils' work. Nevertheless, most classrooms and the school's only hall are too small for the number of children who use them. This is a significant impediment to practical learning in lessons such as art, dance or drama. The school does not have a library. The outdoor environment, though limited in many respects, has a number of good features, such as stores of wheeled toys, games and sandpits. The school makes

good use of a local community garden to enrich pupils' learning. A youth offending team has recently developed a quiet area for reflection with decking and attractive wooden structures. The separate outdoor areas for nursery and reception children are well resourced. They have good flooring and secure boundaries. These areas are used well for outdoor learning in the Foundation Phase. The school is appropriately resourced. Pupils make good use of the ICT equipment, such as the many new laptops, tablets and interactive whiteboards.

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

The headteacher has succeeded in building a good team of teachers and teaching assistants, many of whom are newly appointed. Responsibilities have been distributed widely. Staff morale is high and teachers work effectively to develop a positive partnership with pupils and parents. The deputy headteacher and senior management team provide good support for the headteacher and other staff. They are driving forward many recent initiatives and developments. The leadership has succeeded in arresting a decline in standards, although much remains to be done.

Performance management arrangements for staff are thorough and meet statutory requirements. Targets relate closely to school improvement priorities. Staff and governors work together well. Staff monitor their areas of responsibility efficiently and keep good documentation. School policies for subjects and aspects of provision meet statutory requirements. They include national and local priorities, such as the development of the Foundation Phase, thinking skills and bilingualism. There is a rolling programme of policy review although the timescales are at times too long.

Over recent years the governing body as a whole has given the school good support, especially in making good senior appointments. It has not, however, always provided sufficient challenge or critical friendship to leaders and managers. Governors are aware of issues relating to standards and are supportive of the plans for improvement. However, they have not challenged the school enough to raise standards. The governing body's annual report and prospectus meet requirements.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

The senior management team has strengthened the process of self-evaluation over the last two years. The self-evaluation report is fairly concise and centres on evaluation of standards and the monitoring of teaching and learning. The programme of monitoring is thorough and regular and all teachers take part fully in the self-evaluation process. The school seeks and considers the views of pupils and parents frequently and values their views.

There are good links between the self-evaluation report and the school development plan. Action plans for the main development areas are detailed, but do not have enough specific, measurable targets to support the evaluation of progress. Self-evaluation has had a moderate impact on improving standards. The school has made partial progress in addressing the main recommendations of the last inspection. It has fully met three of the five recommendations of the last inspection report in 2006.

All staff are involved in professional development, which enhances their teaching. Well-established professional learning communities enable teachers to share expertise on assessment with local colleagues. Staff have played a key part in a local authority initiative on learning and play. This has helped improve the curriculum, as has teachers' research into developing pupils' philosophical understanding.

**Partnership working: Good**

The school has effective strategic partnerships with parents, governors, the local authority, social services and local schools. These make a significant contribution to pupils' wellbeing in particular. The school, via reports, questionnaires and newsletters communicates well with stakeholders. Transfer arrangements are good. There is an efficient moderation process for pupils' attainments in place between the school and its local cluster of schools.

While there are limited opportunities to link with local industry and businesses, the school has fostered a productive relationship with local residents. This has resulted in a bequest of land which was developed as a community garden. An initiative to employ young offenders has resulted in the construction of an area for pupils' quiet reflection. Outside agencies are effectively engaged to provide specialist support for pupils who have additional learning needs

**Resource management: Adequate**

The school manages its resources adequately. In general, it directs its funding towards strategic priorities. It effectively deploys teaching and support staff and good use is made of their expertise. The impact of resources on teaching and learning is kept under review. The use of resources contributes to satisfactory outcomes for pupils. The school works well with other providers to pool resources wherever possible. However, an underspend in last year's budget of about 10% resulted in the school addressing fewer educational priorities. As pupils achieve only satisfactory standards overall, the school gives adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Many pupils enter the school with achievements below average. By the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012, pupils' results at the expected level (Outcome 5 or higher) in the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator were broadly in line with those of pupils in other schools in the family and in Wales. Pupils' achievements in language, literacy and communication skills were slightly below family of schools and all-Wales averages. Their results in mathematical development were slightly above family, local authority and all-Wales averages. In personal and social development, pupils' results were below the average in the family of schools, but in line with local and national averages. Pupils' results in achieving the higher than expected level (Outcome 6), however, were well below the family average in all areas and well below local and national averages. The overall achievements of boys were lower than those of girls.

By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment over recent years at the expected level (level 4 or higher) in all three core subjects, and the core subject indicator, was a little below the family, local authority and national averages. This placed the school in the lower 50% in comparison with similar schools for key stage 2. The proportions achieving at the higher than expected level (level 5 or higher) in English, mathematics and science placed the school in the lowest 25% of similar schools.

The results of boys, although still about 30 percentage points lower than those of girls, have improved significantly in writing by about 40% in 2012. Although boys' standards in English in the classroom are still below average, the decline has been arrested and standards are starting to rise, albeit from a low base. This improvement in achievements is also the case for the proportion of pupils gaining level 4 or higher in the core subject indicator, and in mathematics and science.

In the core subject indicator, and in English, mathematics and science from 2009 to 2011, the proportion of pupils in key stage 2 who attained at the expected level (level 4 or higher) declined. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher than expected level (level 5 or above) declined steeply in that time to well below average compared with the figures for the family and Wales.

In mathematics in 2012, achievements at the expected level 4 were in line with local, but slightly below national averages. The results at the higher level 5 in mathematics were well below local, national and family averages in 2012.

In key stage 2 science in 2012, the results at level 4 were in line with local and slightly below family and all-Wales averages. Pupils' results at the higher level 5 in science were well below local, national and family averages.

The results of pupils achieving level 4 or higher in Welsh as a second language in 2012 were well above family and all-Wales averages.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to learner questionnaires

Ninety-nine pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Almost all feel safe in school and 84% believe that the school deals well with any bullying, which is below the national average of 92%. Most, about 86%, think that they are well supported; especially having someone to talk to if they are worried such as their peer mediators. This is below the national average of 96%. The great majority feel that they are taught well how to keep healthy and that there are many chances for regular exercise in school. Almost all feel that they are doing well at school. Many believe that there are enough resources to enable them to learn well and 82% believe that homework is of value to them. A large minority, 42%, feel that other pupils do not always behave well in class. This last proportion is well above the national average of 23%.

#### Responses to parent questionnaires

Sixty parents completed the questionnaire. Most express positive views about the school. In particular, all respondents are pleased with the school and say their children like being there. All feel that their children are making good progress and are safe at school, which is above the national average of 96%. Most parents find staff approachable if they have any questions or concerns. About 75% feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. This is well below the national average of 90% of parents. Most parents feel that there are a good range of activities including trips and visits. Virtually all parents feel that the school is well run.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Robert Alun Isaac	Reporting Inspector
Enir Rees Morgan	Team Inspector
Rhiannon Mary Boardman	Lay Inspector
Andrea Waddington	Peer Inspector
Helen Clare Dale	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.