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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

**Report of visit
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Bryn Celyn Primary School
Bryn Celyn
Pentwyn
CF23 7EH**

Date of visit: February 2014

by

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

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The monitoring team

Jane Mccarthy	Reporting Inspector
Mike Maguire	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring visit

Bryn Celyn Primary School, Cardiff is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in November 2011.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the school from the list of schools requiring special measures.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Raise standards in writing and numeracy across the curriculum and in science and Welsh

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that most pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils write short texts well in literacy lessons and in other areas of learning. At the end of key stage 2, most pupils have a wide range of vocabulary and write purposefully in a variety of styles. Opportunities for older pupils to write extended pieces across the curriculum have improved, particularly in history and geography. Pupils' writing for a range of purposes is lively and interesting, for example when writing newspaper reports about the Second World War and arguments for and against deforestation. Most pupils make good progress with handwriting skills and the presentation of their work has generally improved.

Opportunities for the development of numeracy skills across the curriculum have also improved. Many Foundation Phase pupils are using and applying number, measuring and data skills effectively across a range of learning areas. For example, in Year 2, they compile data about healthy foods into tally charts and bar graphs. In key stage 2, many older pupils use their numeracy skills well, especially in science and geography. Pupils use line graphs effectively to show findings following investigations into pulse rate changes and produce spreadsheets and graphs to record information taken from the school weather station.

The science scheme of work is having a positive impact on pupils' science skills. Pupils in the Foundation Phase show a good understanding of the properties of materials. Many older pupils produce work of a good standard. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for them to use and apply their numeracy and problem solving skills in science lessons.

Standards of Welsh second language are continuing to improve. In the Foundation Phase, most pupils make good progress in their ability to understand and follow basic instructions in Welsh. Towards the end of the Foundation Phase, pupils write simple sentences correctly using familiar words. In key stage 2, pupils' written work in Welsh shows accurate use of vocabulary and basic sentence patterns when writing about familiar topics and themes. A few more able pupils are beginning to write extended pieces of work independently. Many pupils in Year 6 are able to hold a conversation in Welsh using an appropriate range of familiar sentence patterns and vocabulary. The school has introduced opportunities for pupils to work with others

from the adjoining Welsh-medium school to develop their use of incidental Welsh.

In the Foundation Phase, pupil attainment in 2013 at the expected outcome 5 has improved significantly since 2012 in literacy and mathematical development. When compared to that of other schools in the same family, pupils' attainment was above the average. Over the last two years, improved performance has moved the school from the bottom 25% in 2012 to the upper 50% in 2013.

Pupils' attainment at the higher outcome 6 improved in 2013 and, in literacy, was above the family average. When compared to that of similar schools, pupils' attainment also improved in 2013.

In key stage 2, attainment in English, mathematics and science at the expected level 4 improved significantly over the past two years and was well above the family average in 2013. When compared to that of similar schools, attainment over the last two years has risen from the bottom 25% to the top 25% in all three subjects.

However, at the higher level 5, attainment in English, mathematics and science fell significantly to below the family average. When compared to that of similar schools, in all three subjects, attainment fell from higher 50% in 2012 to the lowest 25% in 2013.

Recommendation 2: Improve teaching and assessment to ensure that all pupils are challenged and know how to move forward in their learning

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

In nearly all classes, teachers mark pupils' work regularly and comment constructively on their achievements. These comments help pupils to see what they have done well and, in most instances, how they can improve. In lessons, most teachers give pupils time to make these improvements.

Most teachers provide opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers and this is becoming more consistent across the school. As a result, many pupils are able to assess the progress they are making effectively. The school now needs to ensure that all pupils are involved in assessing their own learning and that of others.

Most teachers set clear learning objectives and provide activities that meet the needs of pupils with different abilities well. There is good pace and challenge in most lessons and teachers use a range of relevant contexts for learning that motivate pupils and maintain their interest. For example, pupils in Year 6 use their numeracy skills to work out the profit and loss of different stocks and shares.

The school is using a tracking system to monitor pupils' progress accurately. Teachers use this to monitor the progress of groups of learners effectively including those who are receiving free school meals, those on intervention programmes and those who are more able. Many teachers now use this information to adjust their lesson planning appropriately.

Recommendation 3: Develop the role of the governing body in setting the strategic direction of the school and in challenging performance

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The headteacher and the senior leadership team have a clear vision, which is shared successfully with staff and governors. Governors have improved their roles in a number of important areas and they now have a good knowledge of school standards and provision. They are supportive of the school and generally contribute effectively to providing a sense of direction for its work.

Since the last monitoring visit, governors have made good progress regarding the leadership of the school with the appointment of a deputy headteacher. This permanent appointment provides the school with a significant degree of stability.

The governing body is now involved in monitoring standards and provision for areas of the curriculum. The school has established a system of link governors recently for specific subjects and a few general areas of school life. Governors meet teachers who have responsibility for literacy, numeracy, additional learning needs and attendance to discuss what is working well and areas that need improvement. This system and governors' involvement with year groups of pupils is improving their first-hand knowledge of the work of the school effectively.

At the regular meetings held, senior leaders and teachers now provide governors with the outcomes of all monitoring activities. School leaders also make regular presentations to governors about their subject areas and the standards achieved by pupils. In addition, governors have become more engaged in the work of the school through a programme of activities that involve, for example data analysis, a mathematics challenge activity and judging the quality of teachers' marking. These are helping governors make increasingly accurate judgements about what is working well in the school and the progress the school is making.

As a result, governors are now more confident in asking relevant questions at meetings and are beginning to challenge leaders and managers more effectively, for example about the performance of pupils and the progress the school is making in response to the inspection recommendations. Training, provided by the local authority system leader, has helped governors to engage in this process more effectively.

In order to continue to challenge the school, governors need to develop further their link roles in relation to their subject responsibilities and other areas such as attendance.

Recommendation 4: Carry out self-evaluation processes rigorously to identify school improvement priorities linked closely to improving pupils' standards

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has successfully introduced a range of appropriate self-evaluation procedures that inform leaders and managers well about the school's strengths and

shortcomings. These include regular lesson observations, book scrutiny, listening to learners and gathering the views of pupils, parents and governors. There is now a strong culture of self-evaluation amongst staff and a positive ethos of working together as an effective team.

Subject leaders use a good range of monitoring information to produce improvement plans. These plans are evaluative and indicate the impact that school initiatives have on pupils' standards of achievement.

The school's self-evaluation report uses information from all monitoring activities. This is a detailed and accurate document that clearly indicates the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

The current school improvement plan contains appropriate priorities. These have clear timescales, budget allocations and targets that relate to improved standards of achievement.

Although the current school improvement plan is based appropriately on the recommendations from the previous inspection, it contains too many actions for the school to effectively monitor and evaluate concurrently. Therefore, in order to ensure that the school continues to improve effectively over the next three years, it needs to concentrate on fewer priorities.

Recommendation 5: Improve attendance

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school continues to make good progress with this recommendation. Teachers track pupils' attendance carefully and follow up instances of non-attendance promptly. The school provides pupils with rewards for good attendance and this is having a positive impact throughout the school. As a result of these strategies, attendance is improving. However, attendance levels still do not compare well with those of similar schools.

Recommendation 6: Address shortcomings identified in safeguarding procedures

This recommendation has been fully addressed.

The school has introduced a range of procedures that have addressed the shortcomings identified in the 2011 report. The governing body has also successfully addressed additional shortcomings highlighted during a previous monitoring visit. All staff have received training and understand how to apply the school's safeguarding guidelines.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to work towards meeting the inspection recommendations that have not yet been fully addressed.