

Report following monitoring

Level of follow-up: Special measures

Bryncethin Primary School

**Heol Canola
Bryncethin
CF32 9TH**

Date of visit: May 2026

by

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

Outcome of visit

Bryncethin Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection. As a result, His 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

R1. Improve leadership at all levels

Leaders have developed an effective distributed leadership structure across the school. They have worked with staff to review and clearly define their roles and responsibilities. As a result, all staff now understand their role in leading learning and share responsibility for supporting pupils to make progress. Leaders have benefited from a range of purposeful professional learning activities. These have supported them to develop their leadership skills. They work successfully with other schools and outside agencies to gain an understanding of effective practice in teaching and learning. They apply what they learn well in their own school.

Leaders use their improved leadership skills confidently to improve the quality of the teaching and learning. For example, the school's curriculum benefits from leaders' deeper understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They work with colleagues to ensure there is a common approach to learning across the school. This includes the consistent approach to teaching phonics and mathematics.

Governors are more involved in the life of the school. They visit regularly to strengthen their understanding of its work and its strengths and areas for development. Leaders share their evaluations with governors to help them understand the school's performance. This information empowers governors to ask questions to deepen their understanding of the school when holding leaders to account.

Leaders collaborate effectively with colleagues across the school. This helps staff to understand leaders' high expectations for teaching, learning and progression. It also builds a shared understanding of how pupils' knowledge and skills develop over time. There is a positive culture of learning that supports pupils to make progress over time.

Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to improve their leadership skills. They regularly participate in leadership groups such as the School Council, Eco Committee and Criw Cymraeg. They work with their peers, teachers and leaders to help improve the school. For example, the Criw Cymraeg monitor the use of the Welsh language and help to promote spoken Welsh during assemblies. Pupils appreciate that their views are valued and take pride when contributing ideas that support the school's development.

R2. Ensure that monitoring and evaluation processes identify precisely the strengths and areas for development of the school's work most in need of improvement and contribute effectively to school improvement planning

Leaders have developed a clear and focused cycle for monitoring the work of the school. This includes a wide range of activities related to their specific responsibilities. They communicate high expectations for teaching and learning clearly to staff, and these underpin all monitoring activities. Leaders are developing effective monitoring and evaluation skills to ensure their findings are precise, informative and support improvements in teaching and learning. This work undergoes robust quality assurance by the headteacher, who has created a positive culture of respectful critical analysis. Leaders now share their evaluations with the governing body who are becoming increasingly confident when holding the school to account.

Leaders use their evaluations effectively to plan improvements to provision and provide beneficial professional learning for staff that support better outcomes for pupils. They use the information gathered from pupil progress meetings purposefully to evaluate the quality of learning. Leaders provide helpful feedback to colleagues from lesson observations and through analysing pupils' work. These professional conversations help all staff to understand what is working well and identify areas for improvement.

Leaders are developing the skills to recognise when they need to adapt planned actions. For example, they considered and implemented improvements to the teaching of mathematics to ensure there were no gaps in the development of pupils' skills. Leaders use information from monitoring and evaluation effectively to support staff to develop the school's curriculum.

R3. Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress with their literacy, numeracy, digital and independent learning

Across the school, the quality of teaching continues to improve. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress in literacy, numeracy, digital skills and independent learning.

Leaders continue to provide beneficial professional learning opportunities for staff to support improvements in teaching and learning. Recently, they have focused on developing the structure of lessons and the use of success criteria. This is helping teachers to plan lessons effectively. In lessons, nearly all teachers identify clear learning intentions and revisit them regularly with pupils. Teachers have an improved understanding of what pupils need to be able to do for learning to be successful. This is having a positive impact on pupil progress.

Across the school, the teaching of mathematics and numeracy is improving. Teachers continue to use practical resources appropriately to support pupils' understanding of key mathematical concepts. They use cold and hot tasks in mathematics lessons effectively to assess pupils' understanding and measure their progress. Teaching now builds successfully on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding.

Leaders continue to place a high priority on improving the teaching of literacy. Teachers and support staff embed systematic phonics teaching consistently. They encourage younger pupils regularly to apply their expanding knowledge of letter sounds effectively across the curriculum. Older pupils enjoy improved opportunities to read engaging texts, both across the curriculum and for pleasure. They discuss the different features of texts, such as a cliff hanger, with increasing confidence.

Teachers continue to focus well on improving pupils' writing skills. They provide increased opportunities for older pupils to write at length and improve their work through editing and redrafting. This has increased rates of progress particularly in pupils' use of interesting vocabulary and their understanding of writing for an audience.

Teachers and support staff now have further opportunities to develop their understanding of foundation learning. This has strengthened the school's focus on learning through play. The youngest pupils benefit from thoughtful developments to their outdoor learning environment. This space is inviting, engaging and promotes pupils' curiosity effectively. Many pupils show high levels of independence as they lead their own play and learning.

There continues to be a strong focus on supporting pupils to influence their learning. Staff involve pupils regularly in decision making, such as choosing which environmental issue to research. This supports the development of pupils' independent learning skills and improves the relevance of the curriculum for pupils.

Provision for supporting pupils' digital skills is improving steadily across the school. Better access to resources means that devices are used more regularly, rather than being limited to discrete lessons. Teachers benefit from support with planning opportunities to develop

and apply skills across the curriculum. Consequently, teachers have a greater understanding of the expectations for pupils in each year group.

R4. Improve rates of attendance

Overall, rates of attendance across the school are improving. Leaders and staff analyse data rigorously to identify pupils and families at risk of low attendance. Leaders monitor the attendance of vulnerable groups carefully and take appropriate action to reduce barriers to regular attendance. They are aware the school is at an early stage in embedding these improvement strategies and understand the need for continuous monitoring of this important work.

Leaders involve stakeholders purposefully in strategies to improve attendance. They seek the views of parents through questionnaires to promote regular attendance. Teachers share attendance information with parents purposefully to help them to understand the effects that low attendance can have on their child's progress. The school council supports leaders to promote regular attendance by considering rewards for those who attend consistently and suggesting initiatives, such as 100% attendance day.

The school works effectively with the local authority and education well-being officers to support its attendance strategies and provide assistance for families. In addition, the school's Family Engagement Officer (FEO) works with families of pupils who persistently do not attend school. Through sensitive relationship-building, particularly with families from low-income households, the school is beginning to reduce barriers to attendance. In addition, the FEO works across the wider school community and involves pupils in understanding why attending school, and on time, is important.