



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Bodnant Community School  
Ffordd Parc Bodnant  
Prestatyn  
LL19 9NW**

**Date of inspection: February 2018**

**by**

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

## About Bodnant Community School

Bodnant Community School is in the seaside town of Prestatyn on the North Wales coast. Currently, there are 413 pupils on roll, aged from three to eleven, including 60 nursery pupils who attend part-time. There are 15 classes at the school, none of which are mixed age.

About 13% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average of 19%. The school identifies around 26% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is above the national average of around 21%. Very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

Most pupils are from a white British background. Very few pupils speak Welsh at home and only a few speak English as an additional language.

The headteacher took up her post in September 2012 when Bodnant Infant School and Bodnant Junior Schools amalgamated. She was previously the headteacher of Bodnant Infants School.

The school's last inspection was in May 2013.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website at the link below.  
<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/Schools/SchoolSearch?lang=en>

## Summary

The school delivers interesting and engaging experiences for all its pupils. Teachers, particularly in the foundation phase, plan exciting opportunities for outdoor experiences, which stimulate learning. Pupils at the school make good progress from their starting points and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Staff track the progress of individuals well, and provide additional interventions successfully for those who need it. Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good.

School leaders have a strong and clear vision based on teamwork and the wellbeing of all. Leaders have ensured many improvements in the past few years and have a clear vision for the school's future.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Raise standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- R2 Ensure that activities provide appropriate challenge for all pupils at the appropriate level
- R3 Provide opportunities for a wide range of staff to be involved in gathering first hand evidence on the quality of teaching and learning
- R4 Reduce the deficit budget.

## **What happens next**

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

On entry to the school, most pupils have literacy and numeracy skills that at least correspond with what is expected for their age. During their time in school, nearly all pupils make good and consistent progress from their starting point. Pupils with additional learning needs make at least good progress towards their individual targets.

In both key stages, nearly all pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other. They respond to instructions and questions confidently and express their opinions clearly. For example, older pupils speak passionately and maturely about their work and about school life. Most pupils explain what they are doing in tasks vividly and with obvious enthusiasm.

Most pupils show enjoyment in reading and are keen to read aloud to adults. In the foundation phase, nearly all pupils' reading skills are developing successfully. Most pupils use an effective range of phonic strategies confidently to build unfamiliar words when necessary. Most pupils in key stage 2 read fluently and enthusiastically and they develop well as readers as they move through to Year 6. They discuss the content of their books maturely and give sensible reasons for their choices. They predict what will happen next in the story and identify features of different texts. Most use dictionaries and reference books purposefully to enhance their work.

Nearly all younger pupils' early writing skills are developing well. In Year 1, pupils are beginning to join simple sentences, for example when writing a letter to Santa or a postcard from the seaside to the headteacher. By the end of the foundation phase, the more able pupils write interesting sentences independently. For example, they use exclamation marks correctly and a wide range of interesting vocabulary in a diary entry. Most pupils at the end of key stage 2 use punctuation accurately and make plausible attempts at spelling more complex unfamiliar words. They write to a high standard for a broad range of purposes and use paragraphs well. They consolidate their writing skills effectively when writing for various purposes across the curriculum. A good example is their written report of being segregated in class according to their eye colour. They explain well how this made them feel and their empathy towards victims of segregation.

Nearly all pupils develop a sound knowledge of mathematical concepts as they move through the school so that they are confident mathematicians by the time they reach Year 6. They have a good grounding in mathematical language early on. For example, many pupils in the nursery class understand objects as being 'big' and 'small' by building different size towers in the outside area. Most pupils gain a strong understanding of number, and apply their mathematical skills to wider purposes. By the end of Year 2, nearly all pupils solve number problems confidently and recall number facts quickly, by applying previous learning in new situations. For example, Year 2 pupils solve money problems using the 'garden centre' in the outdoor area, calculating the bills and the need for change. A majority have a sound understanding of multiplication and place value, and they use data with increasing accuracy and present it in different forms. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils are confident

in applying their mathematical skills across the curriculum. Year 6 pupils use their numeracy skills extensively to solve problems. For example during their work on the Second World War, they use their knowledge of co-ordinates effectively to plot airfield sites in the four quadrants on a map.

Most pupils make good progress in developing their skills in the Welsh. In the foundation phase, pupils respond appropriately to a range of instructions given in Welsh and ask and answer simple questions confidently. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils sustain a conversation in Welsh, extending their answers appropriately. They read simple texts with understanding and write short paragraphs about themselves that contain suitable detail.

Most pupils develop a limited range of ICT skills. With assistance, pupils in Year 2 for example, create bar graphs to show which Welsh food they prefer. In Year 4, they search the internet for information on famous explorers and present this in the form of basic word processed documents. In Year 6, most pupils create simple presentations about how to challenge racism in football. However, overall, most pupils' ICT skills are weak for their age and level of ability.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good**

Nearly all pupils develop strong attitudes and behaviours to help them learn. They are proud of their school, talk enthusiastically about their learning and enjoy the topics they study. They take a positive approach to challenging work, and are willing to persevere with difficult tasks. They have a sound understanding of strategies to help them overcome problems in their learning, such as consulting with their peers. As they move through the school, they become increasingly skilful at identifying how to improve their own work and that of others. Most pupils work well cooperatively and independently to complete their tasks. For example, Year 6 pupils work together effectively to solve problems involving calculating the floor area of a room and the associated cost of a carpet. As a result, by the end of key stage 2, most pupils are developing well as ambitious, confident, capable and independent learners.

Most pupils behave well in their classes and as they move around the school, responding well to adult directions and the school's behaviour policy. Nearly all pupils show respect towards one another in class and value each other's contributions to discussions. They are polite to visitors and considerate to one another. Overall, most pupils have a good understanding of fairness, equality and tolerance.

Nearly all pupils receiving intervention support make good progress with developing their social and emotional skills. They persevere well to complete tasks successfully. They play a full role in the life of the school, such as taking on posts of responsibility as well as representing the school in sports and the arts. As a result of the good quality pastoral care in the school, many of the pupils that receive intervention support develop their confidence and resilience well.

Most pupils understand which foods help keep them healthy. Many talk knowledgably about this, for example Year 4 pupils design a poster to explain healthy and less healthy choices to their peers. Many pupils are enthusiastic about their physical education lessons and engage well in strenuous activities at break times.

They talk positively about feeling safe in school and are confident that staff will deal with any unpleasant behaviour decisively. Many pupils take up responsibilities appropriately in the school. For example, younger pupils enjoy being 'helpwr heddiw' and older pupils support their peers and teachers as 'Bodnant Buddies'.

Many pupils develop a suitable understanding of living sustainably. For example, the school council monitors classroom waste and awards certificates that reflect how successful each class is in recycling materials during the week.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Most teachers plan thoughtful topics, which engage the interests of nearly all pupils. In the foundation phase, most teachers provide exciting opportunities for outdoor experiences, which stimulate learning and help pupils to make effective progress. For example in Year 2, pupils have purposeful 'real life' mathematical challenges involving money in their class 'garden centre' and they make models of the Menai Bridge using construction blocks. Across the school, nearly all teachers ask a wide range of purposeful questions to encourage the pupils to think more deeply about their learning. For example, teaching assistants in the nursery class prompt pupils effectively to consider which objects are tall, short and long as part of their topic on the 'Green, Green Grass of Home'. Staff work effectively with less able pupils to deliver a wide range of interventions to help these pupils reach the expected level in their basic skills.

The school provides a comprehensive and effective range of learning experiences that engage and challenge nearly all pupils. Pupils in the foundation phase enjoy consolidating their literacy, numeracy and physical skills in the outdoor forest area. For instance, pupils in Year 1 enjoy developing their creative and performance skills in an activity to devise a dragon dance using a range of musical instruments.

Working relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively in lessons, and as a result, nearly all pupils concentrate well on their tasks. However, in a few classes not all activities challenge all pupils at an appropriate level. In these instances, pupils lose concentration and they do not make good progress in their learning.

Teachers provide comprehensive opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills, and to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils recently visited a local castle in Prestatyn as part of their topic work. Displays around the school celebrate the Welsh culture effectively. Many teachers and teaching assistants use the Welsh language appropriately throughout the day, for example when giving positive praise or instructions to pupils.

The school provides cohesive, well-planned opportunities for all pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, through specific lessons and in other areas of learning. The curriculum includes purposeful opportunities for nearly all pupils to enjoy a wide range of literature as part of their work. In addition, all pupils make good use of the schools' library bus to foster a continued interest in books and reading. In most cases, planning in the foundation phase provides ample opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills independently through active learning experiences. However, occasionally a few specific language sessions do

not reflect the ethos and principles of this stage of learning, as they are too formal and adult led. Opportunities for pupils to improve their ICT skills are underdeveloped.

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

The school has robust and effective systems for identifying and tracking the progress of pupils with additional learning needs. High quality learning plans meet the needs of individual pupils successfully. Staff, pupils and parents review the plans regularly. Well trained and dedicated staff deliver a range of intervention programmes to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. As a result, most pupils with additional learning needs make at least good progress in relation to their ability and personal targets.

Staff provide beneficial programmes to support vulnerable pupils, including those with emotional and physical needs. For example, 'worry points' throughout the school, nurture groups and the work of the school counsellor have a positive impact on raising pupils' self-esteem. As a result, targeted pupils demonstrate improved levels of confidence and engagement in school life.

Informative and individualised annual reports give parents an accurate picture of their child's progress and include specific targets for improvement. In addition, termly assessment reports make parents aware of their child's progress.

The school provides useful opportunities for all pupils to learn the importance of making healthy choices about what they eat and drink and the importance of taking regular exercise. Older pupils organise play activities at lunchtimes in their roles as 'Bodnant Buddies'. There are regular opportunities for pupils to engage in physical education lessons and a range of school competitive sports, for example football, rugby and athletics. These help improve pupils' fitness levels beneficially.

Staff and other adults teach pupils how to stay safe effectively. For instance, meetings with the police liaison officer make pupils aware of how to keep themselves safe, including dealing with peer pressure and road safety. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

The school provides beneficial opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness through collective worship and religious education lessons. A variety of valuable learning experiences help pupils engage with the creative arts and cultural activities, for example through participating in the school choir, Urdd Eisteddfod competitions and in whole-school and class productions. There are appropriate regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on how they should treat others and to consider and help those less fortunate than themselves. For example, through school assemblies, charity fundraising and work with the local food bank.

The democratically elected school council is well established. Members take their role seriously and make valuable contributions to decision-making in the school. For example, they lead a project to improve equipment in the school play areas using supermarket vouchers donated by parents. A visit by the school council to the mayor's chambers and the council chambers in Ruthin improved pupils' understanding of democracy effectively.

The school provides all pupils with appropriate opportunities to be active in the local community. The school choir performs at local venues and pupils improve the local environment through, for example litter picking. A recent school trip to France by year 5 and 6 pupils helped to develop pupils' understanding of diversity and the wider world.

### **Leadership and management: Good**

Senior leaders have a clear vision for school improvement based on team work and the wellbeing of pupils. Since the opening of the new building on a single site in 2016, they have engaged successfully with all staff to create a whole school ethos that places pupils' wellbeing at the centre of their work. Senior leaders ensure the consistency and quality of provision across the school effectively.

Members of the senior leadership team distribute their responsibilities across the key stages well. This ensures that they have a good knowledge of the professional practice of staff in their phase and the learning experiences that pupils engage in. They work collectively with most staff well to improve the quality of provision. For example, foundation phase leaders and staff visit other local primary schools to view effective practice in developing outdoor learning areas. They use this experience well to create their own imaginative and engaging outdoor environment that develops pupils' literacy, numeracy and creative skills effectively. All members of staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and how to carry out their roles. Most teaching assistants play a particularly strong role in developing younger pupils' reading and writing skills.

The school is developing a successful track record of improvement. Senior leaders have a thorough understanding of the standards achieved by pupils at a whole school and individual level. They monitor the progress of pupils carefully and use this information well to plan improvement actions. For example, the outcome of their tracking of pupils' skills and the analysis of test information indicated a need to improve pupils' mathematical reasoning skills. Senior leaders arranged training and worked with staff to introduce daily sessions that use the outdoor environment to develop pupils' ability to think logically and solve mathematical problems. As a result, many pupils made improvements in their mathematical reasoning skills.

Senior leaders utilise a variety of methods to inform their understanding of the quality of standards and provision. They use the results from pupil and parent questionnaires well to inform the content of the school's self-evaluation report. They observe lessons to gauge the quality of teaching and to identify good practice and areas for improvement. They look at pupil work to judge the quality of learning experiences and the standards they achieve. This often results in improved practice. For example, senior leaders identified a need to enhance the quality of feedback to pupils and worked with staff to review and improve school policy. As a result, many pupils now have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve. However, in most cases, it is only senior leaders that gather first hand evidence on the quality of teaching and learning. This limits opportunities for all members of staff to work collaboratively to make judgements on the quality of provision and identify areas for improvement.

Leaders ensure an appropriate range of professional development activities for staff. These link suitably to school improvement priorities and support their individual practice well. For example, as a result of whole school training in yoga techniques, nearly all staff are better equipped to support pupils' behaviour and mental health.

The headteacher provides regular updates on many areas of the school's work to the governing body. This includes a range of performance data, progress against actions in the school development plan and staffing issues. As a result, governors have a good understanding of developments in the school and its targets for improvement. On a few occasions, governors gather evidence of the standards achieved by pupils through learning walks and looking at pupils' work. However, overall, these opportunities are too limited.

The school manages its resources well to meet the needs of pupils and the requirements of the curriculum. Senior leaders plan the use of grant funding effectively. For example, the school uses a Welsh Government grant well to deliver intervention programmes to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a result, these pupils make better than expected progress in many areas of their skills development. The school has, in agreement with the local authority, accrued a significant budget deficit as a result of amalgamation. However, the school's ongoing financial management is competent and there are appropriate plans in place to balance the budget whilst ensuring no negative impact on pupils.

## Copies of the report

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

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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