



*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  
Ysgol Bryn Clwyd  
Llandyrnog  
Denbigh  
LL16 4EY**

**Date of inspection: November 2010**

**by**

**Merfyn Douglas Jones**

**for**

**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

Ysgol Bryn Clwyd is a small County Primary School located in the rural village of Llandyrnog, near Denbigh. It provides education for 26 boys and girls aged from three to eleven years, four of whom attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school serves the village and surrounding area.

The school reports that the area from which pupils are drawn is neither particularly advantaged nor disadvantaged. Approximately 23 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is higher than the local and national averages. There is a full range of ability on intake, but generally attainment on entry is below average overall.

Around 42 per cent of pupils have additional learning needs (ALN), including two pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN). This again is above local and national averages.

Nearly all pupils' home language is English with three pupils from homes where Welsh is the first language.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2010 and shares her time between Ysgol Bryn Clwyd and Ysgol Gellifor. After significant collaboration between the Modernising Education Department and School Improvement/Inclusion Department, governors, parents and local schools, the Shared Headship Pilot began in September 2010. This is a county model for the modernisation of education in Denbighshire.

There are two full-time teachers and one part-time teacher in the school. There are also two teaching assistants (TAs).

The school was last inspected in December 2004.

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Bryn Clwyd is £4,913 which compares with a maximum of £9,184 and a minimum of £2,626 for primary schools in Denbighshire. The school has the eleventh highest budget per pupil out of the 54 primary schools in Denbighshire.

## 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 school is good because:

- all pupils, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and those with English as an additional language (EAL), make good progress and achieve good standards;
- teaching is consistently good and learners benefit from an interesting and varied curriculum;
- all pupils feel safe and secure and are developing good social and life skills; and
- there are good links with parents and the local community.

### Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because:

- the recently appointed headteacher leads effectively and has a clear sense of purpose and direction which is shared with all staff and governors;
- significant progress has been made on the issues for attention identified in the last inspection report; and
- self-evaluation is based on a system of on-going monitoring of teaching and learning.

## Recommendations

- R1\* Further develop procedures for tracking and recording learners' progress in key skills across the curriculum.
- R2 Increase the effectiveness of the school's improvement plan (SIP) with specific, quantifiable targets and success criteria.
- R3 Ensure that individual pupil targets, including those in individual education plans (IEPs), are specific and achievable.
- R4\* Continue to develop the role of the governing body.

\*Identified by the school in its recent improvement plan.

### What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

## Main findings

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

Good

#### Standards: Good

With such small numbers of pupils at the end of both key stages, the analysis of data and identification of trends over time needs to be done cautiously because one pupil's results can have a significant effect on the school's overall performance.

The high percentage of pupils with ALN or with EAL also makes a difference and has a negative effect on the comparative data against family, local and national averages.

Over the last four years, benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils' results fluctuate greatly from being in the bottom 25% to the top 25%, due to the very low cohort numbers and the high percentage of pupils with ALN.

The core subject indicator (CSI) results (the percentage of pupils that achieve level 2 or above in key stage 1 and level 4 or above in key stage 2), also fluctuate greatly in both key stages. The difference between the performance of boys and girls also fluctuate considerably over the years.

The majority of children on entry to the school start with below average skills for their age. The value added progress they make by the end of key stage 2 is good.

Across the school, nearly all pupils make good progress in the development of their communication, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, which they use effectively across the curriculum. Their creative, problem solving and independent learning skills are also good.

Most learners' Welsh language and bilingual skills are well developed. Their awareness of the heritage and culture of Wales is good.

#### Wellbeing: Good

Pupils' wellbeing is good. All pupils feel safe and nearly all understand what they need to do to keep healthy. They work well together and most are involved in decisions to improve their own learning. Their personal and social development is good.

Attendance at 93% is below local and national averages. Most pupils are punctual and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour of nearly all pupils is good both in class and at break and lunchtimes. They are polite and considerate towards adults and each other.

Most pupils' attitude to learning is good and their confidence as independent learners is good.

The school council, along with members of the eco committee and healthy schools committee, are actively involved in making decisions that have a positive effect on aspects of school life.

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

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the Foundation Phase and National Curriculum, including religious education.

Experiences planned for children in the Foundation Phase are of high quality. Children are encouraged to learn through activity, by experimenting, playing with ideas, and solving problems individually and with others. The indoor and outdoor environments combine seamlessly to provide fun, safe and stimulating opportunities for children to learn through first-hand experiences. This provision is excellent and sector leading in terms of the variety of opportunities and experiences for developing all learning skills. Throughout the school, a wide range of stimulating learning experiences meets the needs of all pupils. Curriculum plans build systematically on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding and follow a two-year cycle to avoid unnecessary repetition of subject matter and to maintain pupils' interest and motivation.

Many activities challenge learners with interesting opportunities to work creatively and to solve problems. Curriculum plans give appropriate consideration to the development of pupils' key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the historical and cultural characteristics of the locality and Wales is developed effectively. Throughout the school, Welsh is used consistently in all aspects of school life and learners' bilingual skills developed well as a consequence. A good range of visits, visitors to school and extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' experiences significantly.

Most pupils' awareness of sustainable development is good and they understand the need to care for the environment. Global citizenship is successfully promoted by all teachers.

### **Teaching: Good**

Teaching is good across the school. All teachers plan their lessons with clear objectives and tasks that are well matched to learners' ability. They use a range of resources to support learning and to motivate their pupils. Open-ended questioning extends learners' thinking and communication skills and there are regular opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.

There is an efficient system for measuring and tracking learners' progress in English and mathematics through the school. Assessments made when children enter the school provide a useful benchmark against which progress may be measured. Test results are analysed rigorously in order to identify individuals who would benefit from additional support.

Teachers use 'skills ladders' to record pupils' achievement in the foundation subjects, but these records are insufficient to gauge progress.

Teachers know their pupils very well and give good support and oral feedback while they are working. Marking in books is effective, referring to intended outcomes and suggesting ways to improve. Aspects of assessment for learning help pupils judge their own progress. Reports to parents are detailed and helpful.

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

Pupils and parents have access to useful information about school life through a detailed school prospectus and regular newsletters that are very informative and much appreciated by parents. Induction procedures for new pupils are clear and successful.

All parents and nearly all pupils agree that the school helps pupils achieve emotional and physical health and wellbeing. Pupils know whom to approach if they have concerns. The school takes good account of the 'Framework for Personal and Social Education' (PSE) and successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Staff know their pupils extremely well, identifying their particular needs and supporting them with specialist services and agencies as appropriate.

The school has an appropriate and detailed policy and procedures for safeguarding, and all staff have been CRB checked.

Provision for pupils with ALN is good. Pupils' learning needs are identified early and external agencies are involved when appropriate. IEPs are written and reviewed collaboratively however the majority of targets are too broad or vague to be able to measure success effectively.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is an inclusive community and all pupils are valued and treated equally. They recognise and respect diversity and children are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate differences.

The school building and grounds are well maintained and are utilised by the school and the community. The school uses the space inside and outdoors effectively and provide a stimulating and attractive learning environment that supports learning and teaching.

The school is well resourced and these resources are well matched to the pupils' needs. Resources in the community are used effectively and imaginatively to supplement and enrich the curriculum.



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

The recently appointed headteacher provides very effective leadership and, in a very short period of time, has developed a very strong sense of teamwork where staff and governors share a common sense of purpose and direction. This has a positive effect on the ethos of the school.

She has delegated leadership successfully, and this ensures the day to day running of the school is effective and efficient, particularly in her absence and in her shared headship role. Her management is very purposeful and knowledgeable, and she already has the respect and loyalty of staff, governors, parents and pupils alike.

The governing body is well informed and is developing a good understanding of how the school is performing through the use of data and the recent introduction of link governors to subject areas. This is helping governors to further develop their role in challenging and supporting the school's management.

The school is effective in addressing national and local priorities and the Foundation Phase is very successfully implemented for all pupils to the age of seven. The school is also working to ensure the 'School Effective Framework' is integral to its successful development.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The school evaluates its work honestly and accurately, and leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The self-evaluation report is based on first-hand evidence and observation. Since her recent appointment the headteacher has evaluated a number of aspects of the school's work and has a clear strategy for more comprehensive reviews in future.

Senior staff have routinely monitored and evaluated teaching and learning and the school regularly consults parents, pupils and members of the community. All staff contributed to the self-evaluation report and the subsequent improvement plan, which was compiled jointly by the previous and current headteachers.

The headteacher analyses performance data rigorously to identify pupils who are underachieving or who are more able. By adjusting provision accordingly, standards are improving.

The SIP draws on the self-evaluation review but is not a fully effective tool in bringing about improvement, because priorities are not linked to standards, do not describe tasks and targets in sufficient detail, or provide quantifiable success criteria.

### **Partnership working: Excellent**

The school's inclusive nature is a strength. Partnerships with parents and the local community are very effective. All pupils benefit from a good number of links with local schools and businesses.

There are highly effective links with the local cluster of primary schools and the secondary school, with Ysgol Bryn Clwyd taking the lead in establishing joint projects. Examples relate to curriculum planning, transition projects, the Foundation Phase and the design of an effective method of tracking pupils' progress.

As part of the School Effectiveness Framework, members of staff from schools in the cluster regularly plan projects and visits jointly and share good practice, thereby raising standards.

Transition arrangements between the schools are good. The school is proactive in training and securing accreditation for members of support staff.

**Resource management: Good**

The school has enough resources and they are of good quality and matched to needs of pupils. Efficient partnership work with other small schools allows for sharing of resources, further improving outcomes.

The school has responded appropriately to conditions within national agreement on workload and teachers use the time set aside for planning, preparation and assessment effectively.

Staffing and financial resources are managed well and deployed effectively making best use of the time, expertise and experience. Staff appraisal and performance management ensures development needs are identified and met.

The SIP provides costs and spending is linked to priorities. The school delivers good quality education and pupils make good progress. The school provides good value for money.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Stakeholder satisfaction report**

The inspection team agreed with the stakeholders' views.

### **Responses to parent questionnaires**

Nearly all parents strongly agree or agree with all the comments in the questionnaire except very few who did not understand the procedures for dealing with complaints.

### **Responses to learner questionnaires**

Nearly all pupils agreed with the comments in the questionnaire except a few who disagreed with the comment on behaviour in classrooms and at playtimes.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

Merfyn Douglas Jones	Reporting Inspector
Christopher Dolby	Team Inspector
Justine Barlow	Lay Inspector
Ceri Williams	Peer Inspector
Susan Roberts	School Nominee

### Contractor:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd., Oaks Lea, Higher Knolton, Overton,  
Wrexham, LL13 0LF

## Copies of the report

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## 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' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 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	R	Y1	Y2	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:

Key stage 1	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