



*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 Pen Y Bryn  
Wentworth Avenue  
Colwyn Bay  
Conwy  
LL29 6DD**

**Date of inspection: June 2013**

**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

Ysgol Pen-Y-Bryn Foundation School is situated above the coastal resort of Colwyn Bay in Conwy. The school was built in 1987; it was extended in 1996 and transferred to foundation status in 1999. At the time of the inspection, there were 466 pupils on the school roll including 59 part-time nursery children. It is the focal point of a large housing estate that includes rented and private housing. Most of the families have settled in the area from other parts of the United Kingdom. The school admits nursery children at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Pupils begin full-time education at the start of the academic year during which they will be five.

Approximately 94% of pupils come from English speaking homes and 2% of pupils speak Welsh at home. The remaining 4% of pupils come from a mix of other ethnic groups. Four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is an increase since the previous inspection but is well below both local and national averages. The school identifies 48 pupils as having additional learning needs including a very few pupils that have a statement of special educational need. A very few pupils are looked after by the local authority.

There are the equivalent of nearly 17 full-time teachers and an additional 16 teaching assistants on the staff. There are also five clerical staff. The headteacher was appointed to his current post in 2009. Previously he was the school's deputy headteacher

The individual school budget per pupil for Ysgol Pen Y Bryn in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,081 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Conwy is £12,262 and the minimum is £3,081. Ysgol Pen Y Bryn is 60th out of the 60 primary schools in Conwy 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>Good</b>

### Current performance

The school's performance is adequate because:

- the school is a happy, caring and inclusive environment in which pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and high levels of self-confidence;
- standards of pupil behaviour and wellbeing are high throughout the school;
- pupils who have additional learning needs make good progress from their starting points;
- pupils' attendance levels are high;
- pupils' oral skills are good; and
- the school provides a wide range of activities that gain pupils' interest and stimulate them to learn.

However:

- standards at the end of Foundation Phase and key stage 2 place the school in the lower 50% of similar schools;
- a significant minority of older pupils in key stage 2 do not write well enough in relation to their age and ability;
- the quality of teaching is too variable in key stage 2; and
- learning activities do not always provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the senior management team have gathered a wide range of first hand evidence to produce a comprehensive self-evaluation report;
- the school's development plan identifies clearly the priorities for improvement;
- the school is well aware of its own performance;
- the governing body is particularly effective in its role as a critical friend; and
- parents and governors contribute effectively towards the school's work.

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Improve pupils' performance in end of the Foundation Phase and key stage assessments at both the expected and higher levels
- R2 Improve standards in Welsh, especially in key stage 2
- R3 Ensure that numeracy and literacy skills are planned purposefully across the curriculum, and that plans are implemented consistently, particularly in key stage 2
- R4 Ensure that teachers plan learning experiences that are adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those of higher ability
- R5 Ensure that senior managers challenge underperformance robustly

### **What happens next?**

The school will draw up an action plan which 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

Most pupils enter the nursery with levels of skills above those expected for their age. Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make good progress as they move through the school.

Most pupils develop good speaking and listening skills. They respond well to questions and communicate effectively with adults and each other in formal and informal situations. Nearly all use good sentence structure and they use an extended vocabulary appropriate to their age and ability. Most pupils read at a level suitable for their age and stage of development. They enjoy books and reading, and older and more able pupils are able to discuss their favourite authors.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, many pupils write for a variety of purposes. A few produce good examples of extended pieces of writing. They are developing a sound grasp of punctuation, spelling and handwriting skills. However, progress in writing is not as good at key stage 2. A significant minority of older pupils do not write well enough in relation to their age and ability, particularly in subjects other than English. These pupils write short pieces in a limited range of forms, showing little attention to presentation.

Foundation Phase pupils are developing good numeracy skills, which they apply in other areas of the curriculum, for example, sorting similarities and differences between Wales and Botswana into a Venn diagram. In key stage 2, pupils' use of numeracy across the curriculum does not reflect fully the skills learnt in mathematics lessons.

By the end of Foundation Phase, pupils instigate and engage in relevant conversations about themselves and the weather in Welsh. They speak clearly, with good intonation and pronunciation. Many pupils write a sequence of simple sentences correctly. In key stage 2, however, pupils make limited progress in developing their use of the Welsh language and do not build on the skills already learnt.

Pupils' attainment at outcome 5 (the expected outcome) in Foundation Phase 2012 for the three areas of learning is below the family averages but above the local and national averages. The attainment of more able pupils at the higher outcome (outcome 6) does not compare favourably with the family, local or national averages. The relative performance of boys and girls generally reflects the national picture at the expected level where boys achieve less well than girls. However, boys outperform girls at the higher outcome in all areas of learning.

In key stage 2, performance at the expected level (level 4) for the last four years in English, mathematics and science has fluctuated from the lower 50% to the higher 50% when compared the performance in other similar schools. In 2012, pupil

performance in English, mathematics and science was below the family average but above the local and national averages. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls at key stage 2.

Over time, pupils entitled to free school meals and pupils with additional needs achieve appropriately in line with their abilities.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of having a healthy lifestyle through eating sensibly and taking regular exercise. Many participate keenly in the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Nearly all pupils are happy, feel safe in school and know whom to turn to with any concerns.

Most pupils accept positions of responsibility readily and help other pupils eagerly. For example, the 'squaddies' play an effective part in ensuring a harmonious atmosphere during play times.

Pupils are well cared for within a nurturing learning environment. As a result, most pupils develop good social and life skills as they progress through the school.

Across the school the attitudes and behaviour of all pupils are a significant strength. They behave well in classes and in assemblies. All pupils show care and concern and are polite and thoughtful to each other and to adults.

The school council and eco-committee play an increasingly active part in the life of the school. Pupils involved in these committees are confident that the school listens to their views. Their involvement in school improvement activities has helped to improve reading resources in the school library.

Nearly all pupils have good awareness of health and safety issues and know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils' level of attendance is around 96% and this places the school in the top 25% of similar schools. The level of unauthorised absences very low and pupils' punctuality is good.

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

The school provides pupils with a wealth of rich learning experiences that generally meet their needs well. Throughout the school, well-planned activities provide pupils with interesting learning opportunities such as learning Mandarin and operating a radio station.

In the Foundation Phase, where planning and organisation are most effective, activities engage, challenge and motivate all pupils. However, in key stage 2, planned activities do not always provide enough challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able. The school plans well to meet the needs of pupils that require additional support and pupils on intervention programmes make good progress.

The provision for the development of pupils' skills is developing well. In the Foundation Phase, planning for pupils to write and use their numeracy skills across the curriculum is well established and effective. However, in a few cases, teachers' planning in key stage 2 does not build fully on this good practice.

The school provides a good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, which play a significant part in developing pupils' personal and social skills.

The school plans very well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the historical and cultural characteristics of Wales. Pupils' visits to local castles and other places of interest help them to learn about local history and customs. They also study a good range of Welsh artists, which enriches their learning experiences of Wales. However, the provision for learning the Welsh language is not progressive enough.

The school promotes awareness of sustainability and energy conservation effectively. It has a well-developed partnership in conjunction with the local secondary school with a school in China. This helps pupils to understand their roles as citizens of the world.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

Most teachers have good subject knowledge and develop good working relationships with pupils. This has a positive impact on pupils' sense of wellbeing and enthusiasm for learning. Nearly all teachers' classroom management is generally effective and they manage and work well with additional adults in the classroom. Where teaching is most effective, teachers have high expectations and provide appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils. The lessons have good pace and teachers use a wide range of strategies to maintain pupils' interest and secure good behaviour. However, this practice is too variable, particularly in key stage 2. Work is not always sufficiently challenging for pupils of higher ability, or adapted appropriately to meet the needs of less able pupils.

Teachers track pupils' progress effectively across the school using comprehensive assessment records. These records provide valuable information on pupil progress. In the best examples, teachers use these records effectively to inform their planning and track individual pupil performance. However, this practice is not fully embedded throughout the school.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but their comments do not always give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work. Many teachers use a few assessment for learning strategies appropriately but there is a lack of consistency across and between classes. Pupil involvement in reviewing their own learning and progress and setting their own learning targets is at an early stage of development. Written reports to parents are detailed and include good opportunities for pupils and parents to contribute their own views.



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

The quality of care, support and guidance is effective and makes a positive contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their high levels of wellbeing. The school meets pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs well both in lessons and through the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school promotes the benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle successfully.

The school has effective arrangements in place to monitor attendance levels and to promote positive behaviour. It engages effectively with a range of appropriate external agencies to support pupils' learning and developmental needs.

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

The school provides effective, well-focused guidance for pupils with additional learning needs. Teachers identify needs at an early stage and there is well-planned provision and support. The school has established a number of intervention groups for pupils, which effectively meet their needs. Staff assess and track pupils' progress well and use this information to adapt their provision appropriately.

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school is an inclusive community where all pupils have equal access to the various aspects of the school's life and work. All staff celebrate the work and achievements of pupils well. Staff promote pupils' tolerant attitudes well and ensure that all pupils are free from harassment by challenging stereotypes and celebrating diversity. The school provides a caring and welcoming environment for all pupils.

Learning resources throughout the school are good and are appropriate for pupils' needs. Classroom accommodation is suitable for the numbers of pupils and the activities planned. However, space in circulation areas is very limited and the school hall is far too small for whole school events. Toilets are in good condition and are sufficient for the number of pupils.

Displays are of high quality. They celebrate pupils' achievements and aid learning well. The school has a multi-use games area and has developed its outdoor learning environment successfully. Outdoor areas provide good opportunities for learning and recreation. The buildings and grounds are well maintained, and appear clean and welcoming. Security around the building is good.

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

All members of staff work successfully together to create a welcoming, well-ordered, inclusive learning environment for all pupils. Management systems are effective in supporting the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis. Leaders have clear vision, values and aims for the school which concentrate on improving pupil

outcomes. However, progress in achieving improved outcomes for more able pupils has been variable over the last few years.

The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders and managers are defined appropriately. Senior managers take responsibility for implementing a wide range of initiatives and hold regular meetings with staff to discuss progress in these areas. However, leaders have not done enough to ensure that initiatives and actions are consistently embedded across all classes.

The school has an appropriate system to manage the performance of staff.

The governing body provides a sense of direction for the school. It acts as a critical friend, providing support and challenge in equal measure. Their recent work to secure an external award has improved and strengthened their knowledge of how to monitor the work of the school. Governors know the school's priorities for improvement well and monitor effectively the school's progress towards achieving improved outcomes. However, their role in the school's self-evaluation process and school development planning is underdeveloped.

The school pays due attention to addressing national priorities, including raising standards in numeracy and literacy. The school has embedded the principles and practices of the Foundation Phase successfully.

### **Improving quality: Good**

The self-evaluation document is an honest and accurate account of the school's current performance. Information gathered from a range of first hand evidence is used well to identify strengths and areas for development. Nearly all members of staff and pupils contribute to the self-evaluation process, but the role of governors and parents in the process is under developed. The self-evaluation process is a regular part of the school's work and involves rigorous monitoring of all aspects of school life.

There is a clear link between the priorities in the school development plan and the areas for development identified in the self-evaluation report. Actions to bring about improvement are appropriate and targets are sufficiently challenging. Priorities in the current development plan focus well on raising standards of attainment and achievement for all pupils. Actions have suitable time scales for delivery and appropriate resources allocated.

The school has made good use of external agencies to quality monitor their improvement system. This is reflected well in the self-evaluation report and school development plan.

The school has established effective professional learning networks with other schools to share best practice and support staff professional development. A recent initiative to raise standards in writing is the result of a visit to a school within the family. Early indications are that this is having positive impact on standards of writing in the school.

### **Partnership working: Good**

Good partnership activities make valuable contributions to improving the outcomes and wellbeing of pupils, for example collaborating with Bangor University on a number of research projects concentrating on healthy eating and exercise.

The parents of the school are supportive and offer their expertise to enrich the pupils' learning experiences. These include parents visiting the school to talk about their own professional careers.

Strong links exist between the school and the private nursery situated on the school site. Staff work together very well and the children transfer confidently from the nursery to the school.

Good transition arrangements between the school and its feeder high schools ensure that the older pupils settle easily into secondary schools. Pupils benefit from a well-structured transfer programme. This includes a series of activities that focus both on curriculum matters and on supporting their social and emotional development.

The school enriches pupils' learning experiences through strong links with the local community. Examples include visits to the local church, supermarket and the beach.

### **Resource management: Adequate**

The school has good levels of staffing to deliver the curriculum in both the Foundation Phase and key stage 2. The management and deployment of staff are effective. Leaders make good use of subject specialists on the staff to enhance pupils' knowledge and skills in specific subjects. All staff have good opportunities for continued professional development.

Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time is effectively organised. In the best practice, staff use their allocation effectively to plan together to ensure parity of provision in parallel classes.

The school is well resourced and spending decisions are well matched to the school's needs. Governors review and monitor expenditure regularly and effectively. The recently purchased tablet computers have had a positive impact on pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills and their use of ICT across the curriculum.

The school makes appropriate use of its funding. Due to the shortcomings identified in standards, the school provides adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Pupils' performance in the Foundation Phase outcome indicator in 2012 is below the family average but above the national average. Outcomes in personal, social and cultural diversity at the expected level are slightly better than the national averages but below the family averages. Outcomes in language, literacy and communication together with mathematical development at the expected level are below the family averages but above the national averages. The school does not perform as well as other schools in the family in relation to the proportion of more able pupils attaining above the expected level in the three areas of learning.

In 2012, when compared to attainment for pupils in similar schools across Wales, pupil outcomes in the Foundation Phase, at the expected level in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity, were in the lowest 25%. Pupils' performance in language, literacy and communication skills, together with mathematical development, placed the school in the lower 50% of similar schools. More able pupils' results at above the expected level in language, literacy and communication skills placed the school in the lowest 25% of similar schools. However, the attainment of more able pupils in mathematical development and personal, social and cultural diversity placed the school in the lower 50% of similar schools. Girls outperform boys marginally at the expected level in the three areas of learning. However, boys outperform girls at the higher than expected levels.

In key stage 2, pupils' performance over time in the core subject indicator, the expected level in English, mathematics and science, is slightly below the family average but considerably higher than the local and national averages. Attainment at the expected level in English, mathematics and science is below family averages but above national averages. More able pupils' performance at level 5 in English, science and mathematics is below the family averages. Gender performance is variable but, generally, girls outperform boys in all three subjects at the expected level. However, this is reversed in English and mathematics at the higher level.

In 2012, when compared to performance levels in schools in similar circumstances across Wales, pupils' attainment in key stage 2 at the expected level placed the school amongst the lower 50% for English, mathematics and science. More able pupils' attainment at above the expected level fluctuated between the bottom 50% of performance levels for similar schools to the bottom 25% in the three subjects.

Although there are no discernible long-term trends at the expected level, there has been a noticeable deterioration in performance at the higher level in all three subjects over the last two years.

Pupils entitled to free school meals and pupils with additional learning needs make good progress in relation to their starting points.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Responses to parent and carer questionnaires

Fifty-four parents or carers completed the questionnaire. Overall, responses were slightly more positive than national norms.

All parents or carers say that:

- their child likes school;
- their child is safe at school;
- there is a good range of activities including trips or visits; and
- the school helps their child become more mature and take on responsibility.

Nearly all parents say that:

- overall they are satisfied with the school;
- their child was helped to settle in well when they started in school;
- their child is making good progress;
- pupils behave well in school;
- teaching is good;
- the school is well run;
- their child is encouraged to be healthy and to take regular exercise;
- staff treat children fairly and with respect;
- their child receives appropriate additional support in relation to any particular individual needs;
- staff expect their child to work hard and to do their best; and
- they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

Most parents or carers say that:

- the homework given builds well on what their child learns in school;
- they are kept well informed about their child's progress;
- they understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints; and
- their child is well prepared for moving on to the next school.

## Responses to learner questionnaires

One hundred and eighteen pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Most of their responses were better than national norms. However, their response in relation to all children behaving well and their ability to get their work done was not as positive as the national picture.

Nearly all pupils say that:

- they are doing well at school;
- they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset;
- they feel safe in school;
- there are lots of chances at school to get regular exercise;
- the teachers and other adults in the school help them learn and make good progress;
- they know what to do and whom to ask if they find the work hard;
- they learn how to keep healthy;
- nearly all pupils behave well at playtimes and lunch time; and
- they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work.

Most pupils say that:

- they think homework helps them to understand and improve their work in school;  
and
- the school deals well with bullying.

The majority of pupils say that other children behave well and they can get their work done.

## Appendix 3

### The inspection team

Peter Roach	Reporting Inspector
Rhian James	Team Inspector
Buddug Bates	Team Inspector
Peter Haworth	Lay Inspector
Brian Davies	Peer Inspector
Jane Love	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))

### Year groups, the Foundation Phase 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 local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	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 Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, 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**

### **Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)**

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

### **The core subject indicator (CSI)**

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science.

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

### **All-Wales Core Data sets**

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.