



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

**A report on**

**Borras Park Community Primary School  
Borras Park Road  
Wrexham**

**LL12 7TH**

**Date of inspection: January 2018**

**by**

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

## About Borrass Park Community Primary School

Borrass Park Primary School occupies two adjacent sites in the town of Wrexham. It was formed from the amalgamation of Borrass Park Infant School and Borrass Park Junior School in September 2016.

There are 478 pupils on roll, including 31 part-time nursery pupils. Pupils are taught in 15 classes, three of which are mixed age. The school also hosts two hearing impairment units, funded by the local authority.

Around 14% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the Wales average of 19%. The school states that around 19% of pupils are on the additional learning needs register, which is similar to the Wales average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of special education needs. Nearly all pupils are white British. No pupils speak Welsh at home and a very few have English as an additional language.

The headteacher took up her post in September 2016. She was previously head of Borrass Park Infant school. This is the school's first inspection since amalgamation.

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

Most pupils at Borrás Park Primary School make good progress during their time at the school. They have a positive attitude towards their learning and show high levels of care and consideration towards each other and adults. The school's support for pupils attending the hearing impairment classes, is strong and they make good progress in the development of their social, emotional and communications skills. Teachers develop positive working relationships with pupils that support and encourage them to succeed. However, the overall quality of teaching across the school is not consistent. Senior leaders have led the process of amalgamation of the former junior and infant schools very successfully. As a result, pupils, staff and parents feel a strong sense of pride and ownership in their new school.

<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>Adequate and needs improvement</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that leaders address the shortcomings identified in teaching to ensure consistently good practice across the school
- R2 Improve pupils' ability to apply a range of strategies in mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum
- R3 Develop the quality of feedback so pupils know how to improve their work
- R4 Address the issue of site supervision

## **What happens next**

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

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

Many pupils enter school with skills around those expected for their age. During their time in school, most pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve at least the level expected for their age. However, pupils' progress across and between year groups and classes is not always consistent enough. Pupils in the hearing impairment classes make good progress in developing their social, emotional and communication skills.

Across the school, most pupils speak confidently and listen well. Pupils in reception use adjectives to describe the feel of dough using words such as squishy, squashy and slimy. Year 2 pupils make puppets and props to support their enactment of the Santes Dwynwen story. When retelling the story, they use appropriate expression, interesting language and build effectively on the contributions of others. Pupils in Year 6 use a mature vocabulary and adapt their language well to suit the audience, for example when making reasoned arguments about whether a character in a story is guilty or innocent of being continuously unkind.

Foundation phase pupils develop a beneficial range of reading strategies that they use well to read a wide range of books. Pupils enjoy reading and talk about their favourite stories and characters with enthusiasm. Many pupils in key stage 2 build ably on this effective start. For example, pupils in Year 4 decode unfamiliar words well and many use expression appropriately when taking on the voice of a character. A minority of pupils do not pay good enough attention to the punctuation in the text and sometimes lose the flow of the story as a result. By the end of Year 6, many pupils read well for meaning. They use extracts from a text to back up their opinions effectively and make suitable deductions and inferences based on what they have read.

Many pupils in the foundation phase write freely and with confidence. Nursery and reception pupils make good attempts at communicating meaning through mark making activities. Many hear the initial and end sounds in words and begin to make suitable approximations. Many Year 2 pupils retell simple stories successfully. They make imaginative word choices that capture the readers' interest well. Pupils in key stage 2 make steady progress in developing their writing skills both in English lessons and across the curriculum. Pupils that are more able understand the main features of a suitable range of genres well and use these in their writing effectively, for example when explaining the dangers of smoking as part of their work in science. Pupils build their handwriting and presentation skills appropriately over time. Across the school, pupils rely heavily on their knowledge of single sounds to spell words. As a result, they do not always use their wider phonological knowledge to improve their spellings skills at a fast enough rate.

Pupils use their mathematical skills well in real life contexts in the foundation phase. They solve problems involving time and money well, for example when playing in the class shops and when paying for their snacks. Pupils in key stage 2 learn a useful range of written strategies to help them solve numerical and word problems. They read and interpret graphs and charts well and use their data skill effectively, for

instance when creating scatter graphs to show whether there is a relationship between lung capacity and height. Pupils have a few gaps in their mathematical skills, such as not having a wide enough range of mental calculation skills. On occasion, this slows down their ability to solve problems and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Most pupils develop useful information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In the foundation phase, pupils practice pre-programming skills by giving their friends instructions relating to direction and movement. Most pupils have good mouse control and access a few suitable programmes. Many know how to save and access their work. In key stage 2, pupils apply a useful range of ICT skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils create an imaginative blog to inform other children how to stay safe on line. Older pupils record and produce informative films to warn others of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning and use programming to develop games for younger pupils.

Across the school, pupils develop their Welsh language skills to a level suitable to their age or stage of development. Foundation phase pupils respond appropriately to a range of teachers' instructions and hold simple conversations, for example where they discuss the weather and what they want to purchase in their shop. In key stage 2, pupils build on this steady start and begin to use and recognise a wider range of language patterns in their speaking, reading and writing activities. For example, Year 6 pupils express their opinions using a learnt bank of words and phrases.

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

Nearly all pupils feel safe, well cared for and valued. They understand the importance of positive values such as equality, fairness and tolerance, and demonstrate these daily. They are polite and treat both their peers and adults with respect. Most pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe when online.

Most pupils have a strong understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the school and take these seriously. For example, the cyngor eco has introduced a useful policy that has reduced the amount of litter on the yard and encouraged pupils to eat healthily.

Nearly all pupils are well aware of the need to eat healthily and to exercise. Many pupils, including those with additional learning needs, participate enthusiastically in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. For example, foundation phase pupils enjoy developing their dance skills in their Strictly Coming Dancing club.

Most pupils demonstrate good behaviour in class and around the school. They respond well to behaviour rewards, for example merit points, certificates in sharing assembly and the incentive of having hot chocolate with the headteacher on a Friday.

Most pupils settle quickly and are ready to learn at the start of a lesson. Many pupils engage well in lessons and sustain concentration appropriately. Most pupils work well collaboratively and are supportive of one another in their learning. For example, a group of pupils in the foundation phase work together successfully to build a football stadium in the construction area.

In lessons, most pupils have an appropriate understanding of what to do when they find work difficult. However, they are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work. Most develop resilience as they go through school. For example, older pupils realise that making mistakes can lead to improved understanding. However, pupils make a limited contribution in deciding what and how they learn.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Adequate and needs improvement**

Throughout the school, adults have effective working relationships with pupils. A majority of teachers plan interesting learning experiences that engage pupils well. They model language carefully to support pupils and ask questions that enhance pupils' learning successfully. Many teachers consider pupils' prior learning effectively when planning lessons and ensure that they plan activities that develop pupils' skills and understanding suitably. However, particularly in key stage 2, a notable minority of teachers do not plan learning well enough to challenge pupils at the correct level. As a result, pupils do not always make enough progress in lessons. A minority of adults over-direct activities. This hampers the pace of lessons and gives pupils too few opportunities to lead their own learning.

During lessons, many teachers provide pupils with helpful oral feedback about what they are doing well and how they can make improvements to their work. They regularly help pupils to know what criteria they need to meet to be successful with tasks. As a result, most pupils understand suitably what they need to do during lessons. Teachers provide pupils with a useful range of opportunities to assess their own work and that of other pupils. However, these are not yet having sufficient impact on improving pupils' learning. All teachers provide pupils with written feedback about their work, however, in too many cases this does not help pupils understand well enough how to make necessary improvements. Overall, the standard of teaching is adequate and needs improvement.

In the foundation phase, the planned curriculum engages pupils effectively. It provides them with exciting opportunities to develop important skills through a range of carefully considered activities. For example, pupils develop a useful understanding of fractions when cutting and eating their toast. Teachers plan learning in the outdoor environment effectively, such as leaving a trail of cards through the wooded area on which pupils can read information. These activities allow pupils to develop their literacy and thinking skills well.

In key stage 2, interesting topics, such as the Victorians in Wrexham, allow pupils to develop appropriate knowledge and skills in many areas of the curriculum. Many pupils respond well to these learning experiences. However, teachers do not ensure consistently that they use long-term plans effectively enough to develop pupils' skills and understanding systematically, for example in the use of spreadsheets and databases. The school uses visits and visitors beneficially to enliven the curriculum.

Teachers short-term planning identifies a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils in the foundation phase have useful opportunities to write words and phrases about dough characters that they have made during a creative activity. In Year 6, pupils use their literacy skills effectively to write imaginative letters in the character of

an evacuee during the Second World War. However, in a minority of classes, teachers do not implement these opportunities consistently enough, particularly those to develop pupils' numeracy skills.

The curriculum provides engaging opportunities for pupils to learn about the culture and heritage of Wales. For example, pupils study the art of contemporary Welsh artists. Many teachers model the Welsh language effectively, helping pupils to develop their language skills suitably. However, opportunities to develop pupils' Welsh language skills outside of Welsh lessons are at an early stage of development.

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

The school is an inclusive community and the integration of pupils from the hearing impairment classes into the everyday life of the school is a strong feature. For example, all staff and most pupils sign a few simple words during collective worship and as part of other whole school events. Assemblies contribute well to the strong whole school ethos and the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social skills. For example, 'thought of the day' provides valuable time for pupils to reflect on their opinions and beliefs.

Effective methods of communication ensure strong relationships with parents. For example, parents value the school's frequent posts to online platforms and social media that keep them well informed about school events and allow them to see what their child has achieved in school.

The school uses its tracking system effectively to monitor the progress made by all pupils. They use this information well to identify pupils in need of additional support. For example, the school provides beneficial intervention groups to support pupils who need to improve their reading and writing skills. However, support to develop pupils' mathematical understanding is not as strong and teachers do not use information from tracking systems well enough to plan future learning.

Provision for pupils with complex needs is exceptionally strong. Individual education plans identify next steps in learning clearly and support the development of these pupils well. The school has very good links with external specialist agencies. For example, staff work closely with specialist speech and language therapists to deliver individualised language programmes.

The school has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking. For example, in the foundation phase all staff encourage discussions about healthy eating and exercise during snack time.

Teachers ensure that pupils have many opportunities to influence the decision making process. For example, the school council consulted with local authority representatives about proposals to build a new school on one site.

There is an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs that support pupils' social and cultural skills well. For example, the school choir and orchestra perform regularly to their peers and have worked with a national orchestra and performed in a large local venue.



The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern. However, the inspection team identified a few areas of concern regarding site supervision, which they brought to the attention of senior leaders.

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

Senior leaders have a clear vision for improvement based on collaborative working and a strong ethos of inclusivity. The headteacher has led the process of amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools effectively. Senior leaders have worked consistently to ensure that staff, pupils, parents and governors play a full part in the process. As a result, all stakeholders feel a strong sense of pride and ownership in the new school.

All members of staff have a good understanding of their specific roles and carry out their responsibilities effectively. They played a key role, in partnership with the headteacher and governing body, in designing the new leadership structure. As a result of their involvement in this process and the approachable style of senior leaders, nearly all staff feel well supported and confident to express their views on school improvement issues.

Senior leaders are beginning to communicate high expectations of pupil standards and quality of teaching across the school. In many areas, they have worked well to ensure consistency and continuity of provision. For example, the introduction of a new whole school behaviour policy supported by effective training has led to positive behaviour management across the school. However, despite good progress in many areas, the quality of teaching and planning across the school is inconsistent. Senior leaders do not provide sufficient opportunities for teachers to share their best practice.

Senior leaders work with all staff to gather a wide range of evidence on the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This includes gathering the opinions of parents and pupils through annual questionnaires, undertaking a thorough analysis of a range of performance data and gauging pupils' standards through looking at their work and undertaking lesson observations.

The school generally identifies the most important priorities for improvement. There is a close link between the outcomes of monitoring activities, the content of the school's self-evaluation report and the school's development plan. In a short space of time, leaders have improved key areas of the school's work. For example, the provision of additional reading support groups, new homework arrangements and the development of a whole school reading policy have resulted in improved reading skills for many more able pupils.

The newly established governing body balances its responsibility to support and challenge the work of the school well. The headteacher's reports provide them with key information on the work of the school, such as the impact of staff training and progress towards improvement priorities. A few governors gather first-hand evidence, such as when undertaking a learning walk with pupils to review the provision for ICT. Governors challenge senior leaders appropriately on the quality of education that the school is providing, particularly in terms of the school's assessment data.

Staff work with senior leaders to identify effective professional learning opportunities. These link clearly with the priorities of the school development plan and support staff performance management objectives well. For example, the school's two ICT co-ordinators visited another primary school to view good practice in the implementation of the digital competency framework. As a result, the school has an effective subject action plan for ICT and a clear vision for the development of pupils' digital competence.

The school benefits from many worthwhile partnerships with other providers to improve the professional practice of staff. For example, the deputy headteacher led a project with other local primary schools to improve the moderation of pupils' writing skills. As a result, teachers across the school now have a more accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' writing.

The school is well resourced. There are sufficient books, computers and other equipment to meet the needs of pupils and for the delivery of the curriculum. The outdoor provision for foundation phase pupils is particularly strong. Teachers generally use this well to support the development of pupils' skills. The school buildings on both sites are aging, but senior leaders plan well to make the best possible use of the available space. They work in partnership with governors and the local authority to manage expenditure from the school's central budget and grant funding. The school targets financial resources well to ensure the best outcomes for 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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Publication date: 26/03/2018