



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

A report on

**Brynteg County School
Maesteg
Brynteg
Wrexham
LL11 6NB**

Date of inspection: January 2019

by

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

About Brynteg County School

Brynteg County Primary school is in the village of Brynteg, in Wrexham local authority. There are 199 pupils on roll between the ages of 3 and 11. The school has seven single-age classes and a part-time nursery class.

The three-year average for pupils eligible for free school meals is around 32%. This is much higher than the national percentage of 18%. A few pupils come from an ethnic minority background. Very few pupils have English as an additional language and no pupils speak Welsh at home.

The school has identified 39% of its pupils as having additional learning needs. The percentage of pupils with additional learning needs is much higher than the national percentage of 21%.

The headteacher took up her post in September 2009. The school was last inspected in July 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

During their time at the school, many pupils make strong progress from low starting points. They develop effective literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Most pupils behave well, care for each other's feelings and demonstrate respectful attitudes to staff and visitors to the school. Most pupils feel safe at school and praise the staff's care, support and guidance.

The school provides a broad range of vibrant and stimulating learning experiences that improve pupils' skills successfully. Teaching and assessment procedures support most pupils to achieve well from their individual starting points. Teachers and teaching assistants respond sensitively to the needs of all pupils, including those that are most vulnerable. Additionally, they provide valuable educational opportunities, effective guidance and purposeful support for parents.

The headteacher and governors have a clear vision and work together well to address the school's development targets and to bring about identified improvements. The leadership team focus well on improving provision by promoting professional learning and the teaching and learning experiences have a significant impact on raising pupils' outcomes.

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

Recommendations

- R1 Address the safety issues relating to the school grounds
- R2 Develop pupils' extended writing skills effectively, particularly those of the more able
- R3 Ensure that pupils apply their numeracy skills purposefully across the curriculum at an appropriate level
- R4 Improve pupils' standards of Welsh

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' literacy and numeracy skills are well below the level that is expected for their age. During their time at the school, many make good progress in developing these skills. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve effectively against their personal targets.

Many pupils develop effective oracy skills and they speak confidently with each other and adults. They listen attentively to instructions and explanations and understand that this contributes beneficially to their learning. As a result, many discuss their work enthusiastically. For example, foundation phase pupils describe the lives of penguins in the South Pole sensibly. In key stage 2, many discuss and explain their work skilfully, particularly their research into the weapons, vehicles and aircraft used in the First World War.

Many pupils develop efficient reading skills. In the foundation phase, many read a broad range of texts proficiently and with good understanding. They discuss the content intelligently and pronounce unfamiliar words by using effective phonic strategies. For example, they identify important words and sounds that correspond to different characters in stories, such as how a mouse deceives a monster in order to survive.

Many pupils in key stage 2 read a range of different types of literature fluently. They adapt their tone to engage the interest of the listener well. They use internet research effectively, for example to find out about the benefits and dangers of micro-organisms, such as bacteria, in their lives. As a result, many use their higher order reading skills successfully to discover relevant information from different sources to aid their learning. However, a minority of more able pupils read books that do not challenge them enough.

Many pupils across the school write well for different purposes in a range of contexts. In the foundation phase, many write interesting and accurate accounts of their favourite places and facts about stick insects. They write persuasive letters to a circus master and describe events from history, such as the story of Guy Fawkes. In key stage 2, they describe the horror of eating trench stew in the First World War. They also research the lives and practices of people in Nigeria and consider thoughtfully the adverse effects of homelessness on the lives of individuals. However, pupils' extended writing does not always reflect their true ability, particularly that of the most able.

Most pupils make suitable progress in developing their Welsh oracy skills. By Year 2, many pupils use familiar phrases occasionally with teacher prompting. A minority of pupils in key stage 2 speak appropriately and with good pronunciation. Nearly all pupils' reading and writing in Welsh relies heavily on teachers' guidance.

Overall, many pupils across the school have a good understanding of number concepts. A majority follow instructions well and apply their mathematical knowledge successfully during lessons and numeracy tasks. One example is how foundation

phase pupils compare the different properties of three-dimensional objects effectively, such as a cube and a cuboid, noting their similarities and differences. Additionally, many pupils use symbols for 'greater than' and 'smaller than' accurately to order numbers during a number hunt and measure glittered fish independently using rulers. In key stage 2, many present and analyse data successfully. They understand the need to use different graphs to convey scientific information effectively. For example, they create purposeful line graphs to compare temperatures in Wales and Botswana and to present results on the lengths of shadows at different times of the day. As a result, the majority of pupils, across the school, choose the appropriate mathematical methods to complete new tasks independently. A minority of pupils apply numeracy skills effectively across the curriculum to solve problems.

Most pupils in the foundation phase use ICT equipment confidently. They use electronic tablets to gather information about how plants grow, and create animations effectively with green screens to provide information on famous Welsh landmarks. Most pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate good ICT skills. They apply their skills well, choosing the best methods to present their work. For example, they use databases purposefully to record their favourite Second World War aeroplanes. Most use secure passwords purposefully to access and complete their work on learning websites, both in the classroom and at home.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Good

Nearly all pupils show pride in their school and feel safe within its inclusive and nurturing environment. Staff and pupils share a warm, caring and respectful working relationship. Most pupils know where to go if they are worried or upset to receive reassurance and guidance. They are happy to discuss any concerns with members of staff and are confident that they will listen to them and act upon their concerns.

Most pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy by eating a balanced diet and drinking water. Older pupils promote healthy eating and drinking well by running a fruit shop that sells a selection of fruit, and apple juice produced from the school orchard. Most pupils understand the importance of keeping fit. They participate enthusiastically in regular physical exercise within school and during the broad range of extra-curricular activities available to them.

Most pupils have a beneficial understanding of how to stay safe online. They describe thoughtfully the necessary precautions needed to ensure that their information is secure, such as not revealing their passwords and personal details to others.

Many pupils take an active part in school life through the school council, eco-club and digital champions. They display a good understanding of the importance and purpose of their roles. As a result, members of the school's committees contribute effectively to school life. For example, the digital champions deliver assemblies to promote the awareness of online safety.

Most pupils are knowledgeable about the lives of children in other countries and cultures. They discuss intelligently facts about the differences and similarities of school pupils in France and Romania. As a result, their involvement in the beneficial

relationships with schools abroad broadens their global awareness well. For example, they have exchanged information on their Welsh heritage, culture and traditions with other schools across Europe.

Most pupils develop a good understanding of the differences between right and wrong, through their awareness of values promoted by the school. Many pupils are ambitious, capable and independent learners. They apply themselves enthusiastically to new experiences with confidence. They listen attentively to teachers' instructions and move smoothly from one activity to another. Across the school, many pupils develop their resilience effectively. They demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and refer regularly to their 'super spider', and how making mistakes is an opportunity to learn and grow.

Most pupils demonstrate a readiness to learn at the beginning of lessons. They work well individually, in pairs and in groups. They are willing to discuss their work with their peers, and do so confidently. As a result, most pupils respect the contributions of others and respond positively to their ideas.

Most pupils offer constructive ideas for learning, which extends their knowledge and understanding effectively. For example, foundation phase pupils have a positive input into 'challenges' set in the classroom and key stage 2 pupils offer purposeful suggestions to develop their topic work.

The behaviour of most pupils, inside and outside classes, is consistently good. They are polite and treat other pupils, staff and visitors with respect. Most pupils care for each other sensitively. They work, and play together successfully. They support the schools caring and friendly ethos by showing empathy for others on the school playground. A good example of this is the 'buddies' and 'playmakers' who offer support and provide activities for all pupils during playtimes.

Nearly all pupils are punctual at the start of the school day. Many pupils respond positively to the school's celebration of good attendance and they understand the importance of attending school regularly.

Teaching and learning experiences: Good

The school provides a broad, balanced and creative curriculum that engages most pupils' interests effectively. Teachers provide a wide variety of stimulating and vibrant learning experiences, which promotes pupils' learning and enriches their understanding of different topics successfully. For example, they grow apples in their orchard and press them with professionals to make apple juice, which they sell to other pupils.

The school works well with other schools to address the requirements of the new curriculum. This includes developing assessment practices and art-based projects. Teachers consider pupils' opinions and interests wisely when planning lessons and act upon them purposefully. As a result, they adapt their planning skilfully to follow pupils' suggestions and ideas, such as changing a theme from studying the Victorians to researching the Second World War.

The school invites many visitors to the school, such as the local heritage group, ceramic and textile specialists and scientists. This provides pupils with inspirational opportunities to take part in activities that enhance their educational experiences significantly. The culture and heritage of Wales is celebrated effectively through studying famous artists and renowned landmarks, such as Mount Snowdon and Llangollen. Additionally, the school provides meaningful educational visits to local places as a stimulus for thematic work. These include creating a timeline on the history of Erddig Hall and outdoor art work based on nearby sites of former furnaces and coalmines.

Teachers have a good awareness of the principles of the foundation phase and, alongside teaching assistants, provide varied and stimulating opportunities to learn, both indoors and outside. For example, pupils build covered dens outdoors and research the skeleton to learn how it supports and protects the body's organs.

In key stage 2, teachers adapt the curriculum purposefully to match the needs of nearly all pupils, which includes sharing well-planned learning objectives with pupils clearly. For example, teachers keep pupils on task effectively when using a sum of money to buy food for a party by asking thought provoking questions.

Teachers provide regular opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and ICT skills successfully across the areas of learning in the foundation phase and in a variety of contexts in key stage 2. However, planning for pupils to develop their numeracy skills across all subject areas is less well developed.

Most teaching sessions proceed at a brisk pace and maintain the interest of most pupils successfully. However, in a few lessons, teachers' introductions are too lengthy, limiting the time for pupils to engage actively with tasks. Teachers and teaching assistants work together successfully and they have good working relationships with pupils. They employ effective behaviour management strategies. As a result, most pupils are well behaved and ready to learn at the beginning of each teaching session.

Teachers plan the next steps in learning for most pupils successfully. This supports learning positively and leads to the provision of purposeful interventions, which consolidate and develop pupils' learning. Teachers model high values and attitudes effectively, which nurtures courtesy, respect and a calm learning environment. However, at times, teachers do not challenge pupils to work to the best of their ability, particularly the most able.

Across the school, teachers use a variety of successful teaching strategies, which have a positive effect on most pupils' standards. They use assessment for learning practices purposefully as an integral part of teaching and learning. Most teachers provide sensible oral and written feedback to pupils. This enables pupils to identify clearly how to improve their work, through the use of the school's colour coded marking practices. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and the work of others.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a very nurturing and caring community with an inclusive and happy family ethos. The staff ensure that the arrangements to support pupils' wellbeing are thorough and rigorous. This is a significant strength and an exceptionally positive

aspect of school life. Staff encourage pupils to work together and consider the views of others effectively. As a result, most pupils are confident, treat others with respect and their behaviour is good. All staff play a pivotal role in providing outstanding levels of care and guidance for vulnerable pupils and those with additional learning needs.

The school provides a wide range of purposeful intervention programmes to improve pupils' speech and language, literacy and reading skills. Suitably qualified staff deliver the well-structured programmes effectively. As a result, nearly all targeted pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. Intervention sessions, which focus on pupils' wellbeing, are effective and they enable most pupils to participate in lessons successfully. This improves their self-esteem and co-operation skills.

Staff use the school's tracking systems efficiently to monitor the progress of all pupils. They make good use of assessment, which helps them identify any pupils in need of additional support efficiently. However, teachers do not use the information from tracking progress effectively enough to prepare challenging activities for the most able pupils to raise their standards.

The school promotes a successful and supportive relationship with parents. The school's partnership with many parents supports family life significantly. As a result, parents appreciate the help and guidance they receive from the school, in terms of their own wellbeing and that of their children. The school encourages parents to become active and involved in their child's learning. For example, parents take part in reading sessions with their children in the 'reading café' in the foundation phase, and staff invite nursery parents to 'stay and play' sessions. The school's very effective working relationships with other services promotes high quality co-operation and collaboration. It creates a tailored package of support for individual pupils and families that meets their needs successfully.

Staff provide valuable opportunities for pupils to contribute towards the school's life and work. This enriches their experiences and prepares them well to take responsibility for their decisions and to consider the views of others carefully. For example, all pupils contribute to planning their class topics and supporting younger pupils at lunchtime and playtimes.

The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about making healthy lifestyle choices and it has appropriate arrangements to promote healthy eating and drinking.

Through regular assemblies and effective curriculum work, pupils celebrate diversity and develop their spiritual, moral and social understanding purposefully. This enables them to learn successfully about the importance of trust, perseverance and tolerance. Staff encourage pupils to be responsible citizens who are willing to help others. Pupils also benefit from a good range of cultural experiences, such as theatre visits and working with local artists, which raises their awareness of creative activities beneficially.

The school's safeguarding arrangements generally meet requirements and are not a cause for concern. However, the inspection team drew school leaders' attention to safety issues that require improvement, relating specifically to the school grounds.

Leadership and management: Good

The headteacher places pupils' wellbeing at the heart of the school's vision and philosophy. She ensures good standards and positive wellbeing for pupils through successful collaboration with staff. She works purposefully with the whole school community to establish a stimulating and supportive learning environment for staff and pupils.

The leadership team supports the headteacher effectively. They lead by example, set high expectations and work with all staff enthusiastically. They draw purposefully on the skills of staff to improve the quality of teaching and create a shared understanding of professional values. All staff focus well on ensuring that pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. As a result, all members of staff carry out their responsibilities diligently to support pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Regular school meetings have a clear focus on the school's priorities for improvement. All staff have a good understanding of what the school does well and what areas it needs to improve. The school addresses national priorities effectively and staff have a positive focus on improving outcomes for pupils. The school has beneficial links with local consortia and other schools, for example to improve assessment practices, literacy provision and pupils' writing skills.

The governing body is, knowledgeable and supports the school well. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and hold her to account rigorously as critical friends. Senior leaders inform the governors effectively about the standards that pupils achieve. They arrange for them to take part in activities to gain direct understanding of the work of the school, which benefits school improvement. For example, by working alongside teachers in learning walks and looking at the quality of pupils' work, governors develop a valuable understanding of the school's current practices.

The governing body ensures that the school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff, including teaching assistants to support pupils in the classroom. Governors have a good understanding of the school's context within its community and support the school well in addressing issues of deprivation. They allocate grant funding sensibly to benefit pupils' standards and wellbeing. As a result, they discharge their statutory obligations purposefully.

The school's processes to evaluate its effectiveness are rigorous and based on a wide range of first-hand evidence. The systems to improve quality include listening to learners, lesson observations, considering the views of parents and a thorough analysis of assessment data. As a result, leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They use this information well to plan for and bring about improvements. They make sure that all staff work together to focus on areas that the school has identified as a priority and evaluate the success of actions effectively.

Procedures to manage the performance of staff are robust. Leaders develop staff's knowledge and skills effectively. They manage resources successfully to support pupils and promote regular improvements across the school. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to relevant opportunities to support their professional development and they link this closely to school improvement priorities.

The school manages its finances and resources effectively. The accommodation provides a learning environment of good quality for pupils. The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, manages the budget and monitors the effect of spending rigorously. The school makes good use of the pupil development grant, which has a positive impact on the wellbeing and standards of pupils.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

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

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

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

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