



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 y Berllan Deg
Circle Way East
Cardiff
CF23 9LD**

Date of inspection: July 2011

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:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	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 y Berllan Deg is a Welsh-medium school, located in the east of Cardiff, and it is maintained by Cardiff local authority. The school admits children from a very wide catchment area, from Pontprennau, Cyncoed, Penylan, Pentwyn, Llanedeyrn, Roath, Splott and Tremorfa. The school was established in 1999 and moved to its present site in 2003. It provides education, through the medium of Welsh, for 449 children, and 8.5% are entitled to receive free school meals.

Seventy-six per cent (76%) of the pupils are fluent in Welsh. Fourteen per cent (14%) come from homes where Welsh is spoken as a first language, 3% are from an ethnic minority background, and 86% from homes where Welsh is not spoken. However, Welsh is the main medium of communication and learning in the school. Fifteen point three per cent (15.3%) receive support for additional educational needs at the School Action level, and 3.8% at School Action Plus level, and 0.6 % have a statement. Three pupils have specific learning difficulties, and nine have communication difficulties. No exclusions were recorded, either temporary or permanent, in the year before the inspection.

The individual school budget in 2011 per pupil for Ysgol y Berllan Deg is £2,998, which compares with a maximum of £14,067 and a minimum of £2,787 for primary schools in Cardiff. The school has the 92nd highest budget per pupil of the 102 primary schools in Cardiff.

The school was last inspected during the Summer Term of 2005 and the current headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- the pupils make good progress;
- the pupils feel safe and receive good support from the teachers;
- the school plans carefully in order to provide a wide range of exciting learning activities; and
- the school prepares the pupils very well for becoming responsible and knowledgeable members of the community.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision for the school and succeeds in conveying this effectively to the staff and pupils;
- self-evaluation is core to the life and work of the school;
- the members of the governing body shoulder their responsibilities conscientiously and understand their role well; and
- the school manages its resources well.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

R1 improve consistency in the good and excellent teaching throughout the school;

R2 develop whole-school self-assessment procedures more effectively; and

R3 expand the opportunities for older pupils to self-evaluate and set individual targets across the curriculum.

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Many of the pupils start at the school with skills that are close to or higher than the expected levels. During their time in the Foundation Phase they make good progress.

In key stage 1, during the last two years, seven-year-old pupils have performed better than the average for pupils in other schools in its family, and in comparison with the all-Wales average. This is because of the high proportion of pupils that have succeeded in reaching the expected level, namely level 2, in the three core subjects, Welsh, mathematics and science, together. However, the pupils' performance is not as good when compared nationally and with the average performance of other schools with a similar percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. Performance in the core subjects at seven years of age places the school in the lower 50% of similar schools.

On the whole, pupils' performance at the end of key stage 2 is better than the average for the family of schools, as well as the all-Wales average. However, their performance in mathematics and science places the school in the lower 50% of schools that have a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school is among the upper 50% of these schools in relation to performance in Welsh and English, and there has been a pattern of improvement over the last three years in the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 or higher in reading at the end of key stage 2.

In 2010, the most able pupils did better on average than more able pupils in other schools in the family of schools in reaching a higher than expected level, that is level 3 at seven years of age and level 5 at 11 years of age in each of the core subjects. They have made good progress over the last three years. Teacher assessments in 2011 show that girls perform better than boys in key stage 1, and boys better than girls in key stage 2.

The pupils make consistent progress and achieve well in most of the lessons. They listen well and respect each other's contributions. The pupils make good progress in reading and writing, and they undertake extended writing for various purposes in Welsh and English by the end of key stage 2. The pupils' oral skills are very good. They speak confidently and can explain clearly what they are reading and also about their life in the school. Most use Welsh naturally when playing and communicating with one another. The pupils make good progress in their bilingual skills and they are fluent in Welsh and English by the end of key stage 2.

The pupils who have additional learning needs make appropriate progress and achieve well against their individual targets. Pupils with a statement of special needs make significant progress in terms of the levels of the national curriculum by the end

of key stage 2. In addition, nearly all of the more able and talented pupils reach their potential.

Wellbeing: Good

Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and they receive good support from the teachers. They agree that the school teaches them to keep healthy and they develop a very good understanding of living and eating healthily. The school provides a caring and safe environment, in which the wellbeing of each one of the pupils is central. Pupils' attendance compares favourably with that of the family and is higher than the national average and that of the local authority. The 2009 and 2010 attendance percentage is over 94%. The pupils arrive punctually at lessons and most of them are enthusiastic and join in actively. The pupils' behaviour is excellent and they communicate courteously and clearly with visitors to the school. They also show respect and care towards their peers. They are very proud of their school and are courteous in dealing with the school staff and with visitors. Nearly all pupils agree that the school's teachers help them to learn and make progress. There were no exclusions during the year before the inspection.

The pupils appreciate the opportunities to contribute to the school's decisions by belonging to relevant groups such as the school council, the eco committee, Bosys Bach y Berllan, and the fair trade committee. These groups have made a constructive contribution to the development of the school.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Excellent

The school plans carefully in order to provide a wide range of exciting learning activities. Visitors to the school, as well as appropriate educational visits, ensure that learning is interesting, pleasant, relevant and challenging to the learners.

The whole-school plans, as well as the plans of individual teachers, ensure the development of skills across the curriculum. The pupils have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and a range of appropriate and challenging experiences was seen in the learners' work. Very effective use is made of NAIN (Nodi'r Amcan i Ni – Identifying the Objective to Us) in every lesson in order to ensure that the learners understand the objective of the activity.

The provision for the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is excellent and enables the learners to make very good progress. Without exception, the Welsh dimension is deeply rooted in all aspects of the curriculum and it is a strength across the key stages. Regular visits are arranged by a range of Welsh facilitators, for example the Welsh Children's Poet, Theatre in Education, and authors. In undertaking projects such as Fair Trade Week, and collecting money for charities, Global Citizenship is another strength at the school and the pupils are very well prepared for becoming responsible and knowledgeable members of the community. Links with Lesotho and Patagonia further strengthen the pupils' awareness. There is very good provision to enable pupils to learn about sustainability and the school has earned the second green flag

for eco schools. In addition, as a Healthy School, it successfully promotes projects for reducing waste, saving energy and eating healthily.

The pupils are encouraged successfully to become independent learners who are prepared to reflect critically on their own ideas, actions and results and those of their peers.

The school responds well to the requirements of the Foundation Phase and Curriculum 2008. There is special strength in the provision of the Foundation Phase in the Nursery and Reception classes.

The school makes exceptional use of its grounds and provides experiences that promote good knowledge and understanding of the environment of the area and the requirements of the curriculum.

Teaching: Good

In every one of the lessons, the teachers set and share clear objectives and ensure that the learners are aware of the success criteria in order to develop the standard of their work and their key skills. In the best lessons, these success criteria are set by the pupils. The teachers have a very good understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and various strategies to boost the independence of the pupils in a number of aspects of the curriculum. In most of the lessons, the teachers and other adults stimulate the pupils by using open-ended, challenging questions. Where teaching is at its most effective, the teachers use good classroom management and organisation and the level of commitment of most of the pupils in these classes is high. In most of the lessons, activities are differentiated appropriately.

In the few lessons where the teaching is not as good, the teachers do not plan in enough detail in order to promote and develop the key skills, and the most able pupils are not always extended.

In most of the lessons the teachers provide constant opportunities for pupils to evaluate both their own work and that of their peers. Although the process is rooted across the key stages, this is not consistent among the older pupils.

The classroom assistants are aware of their duties and their role, and contribute considerably to the learning and the provision. The relationship between the teachers, the support staff and the pupils is excellent and contributes significantly towards improving standards. The teachers' comments on the work of the learners are detailed and constructive and note what is needed to be done in order to improve. However, in a few cases, the marking of pupils' work is not always consistent across the classes.

The school is developing a comprehensive procedure for assessing and tracking learners' progress. It moderates work regularly in order to ensure consistency in the assessment; this is done at school level as well as through detailed standardising in the core subjects. The school also meets with the schools in the Glantaf cluster in order to moderate standards.

The school provides clear information to parents about their children's achievements, welfare and development.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a happy, safe and inclusive community where there is respect and care amongst the pupils and the adults. The staff undertake health and safety responsibilities conscientiously and implement them effectively. Pupils and parents indicate that there is no bullying problem. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

The school has an appropriate policy and it has procedures for safeguarding.

Under the guidance of an effective co-ordinator, the school knows the pupils who will need additional learning support early and provides appropriate and extended programmes for them. It works closely with external agencies and as a result the quality of the care and support for these pupils is very high.

The provision for health, safety and hygiene education is good. The school assemblies create an appropriate Christian tone and a reflective ethos.

Considerable emphasis is given to providing interesting opportunities for promoting pupils' cultural development, as an integral part of the curriculum.

The provision for personal and social education is excellent. The information for parents is good and the school prepares regular and comprehensive newsletters for them.

Learning environment: Excellent

The school ethos reflects its inclusive policies and open atmosphere in an excellent way. There is a family ethos based on implementing policies that respect the rights of all individuals within the school community. The pupils have equal opportunities in all areas of the curriculum.

The school ensures that the pupils are given opportunities to develop and extend their academic and social skills fully. There is a positive learning atmosphere. Very positive attitudes towards equality and diversity are promoted through procedures such as collecting for charities, supporting a school in Lesotho, international aspects, curricular themes and circle time.

The building and classrooms are adequate for the number of pupils on the register. The building and the external facilities are developed excellently and are used to the utmost in order to promote good outcomes for the pupils. There are colourful and very creative displays of the pupils' work, which is of high quality and provides a stimulating and positive atmosphere for learning.

The school's buildings and grounds are maintained to a very high standard, and there are effective procedures in place for managing the building and the site.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?
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Good

Leadership: Good

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and succeeds in conveying it effectively to the staff and the pupils. This ensures that every member of staff understands their role in implementing the school's plans and arrangements. The deputy head is shouldering a large number of managerial responsibilities effectively, and this includes assessing and monitoring schemes of work across the school. Although they are comparatively new to their posts, the members of the leadership team are developing their roles very conscientiously. The unit leaders and subject co-ordinators convey high expectations and promote a supporting and supportive ethos. The relationship between them and the remainder of the staff is based on working together and appreciating one another's contribution and ensuring that individuals work very successfully as a team. This co-operative ethos promotes opportunities to discuss and prioritise the issues that have been identified for successful improvement.

Under the guidance of an experienced chair, the members of the governing body undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and understand their role well. The members of the body accept responsibility for shadowing different subjects. They develop their role as critical friends. For example, they visit the school regularly, discuss with co-ordinators and receive reports on performance in specific areas. After this, they report back formally to the full body in order to set priorities for improvement. The contribution of governors to the self-evaluation and planning for improvement process is good. They receive data reports, discuss it consistently and consider any trends in performance in setting priorities for improvement.

Appropriate attention is given to national and local priorities. The school succeeds well in satisfying the principles of the policies of the Welsh Government, for example for Iaith Pawb, A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales, by developing the pupils' bilingual skills in Welsh and English. By the time they reach 11 years of age, pupils have good bilingual skills. The provision for the Foundation Phase and Curriculum 2008 was established successfully, ensuring purposeful and interesting experiences for the pupils.

Improving quality: Good

Self-evaluation is core to the life and work of the school. It has a procedure that gives specific attention to every subject or aspect. Managers consider a range of information, which includes data on standards and a detailed analysis of trends over time. The information is yet to be used effectively to raise the pupils' outcomes to be as good, or better, than pupils in similar schools in terms of free school meals and nationally. Constant attention is given to evidence of the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observations, and successful arrangements have been established in order to discover the opinion of parents and pupils through questionnaires and through listening to the comments of the school council, the eco committee, Bosys Bach y Berllan and the fair trade committee.

The annual improvement plans include robust and useful strategies that define tasks to be carried out within suitable periods. Responsibility for co-ordinating the strategies that have been identified in order to raise the standards of groups of learners has been allocated to different members of staff, and as a result these are starting to develop. The school improvement plan has been appraised regularly, with the outcomes contributing appropriately to most of the priorities in the subsequent improvement plan.

Leaders provide valuable opportunities for the whole staff to benefit from continuous professional development. The procedures include an appraisal cycle that leads to agreed goals based on individual development needs and the school's priorities for improvement. The school co-operates with other schools in effective networks of professional practice, which include developing reading schemes and the 'Gwraidd ac Adenydd' project, in order to research into developing pupils' Welsh identity. This has led to the raising of pupils' standards in the Welsh language across the school.

Partnership working: Good

Partnerships with parents are strong. The school has an active Parent Teachers Association, which helps it to provide resources that enrich the pupils' experiences in curricular and extra-curricular contexts.

There is close and effective contact between the school and the nurseries that feed it, which helps new pupils to settle in quickly. The transition arrangements with Ysgol Gyfun Glantaf prepare the older pupils well for the next stage of their education. The teachers in the cluster standardise work, share resources and attend meetings regularly in order to develop curricular elements jointly, for example through providing German lessons. Links with special agencies have led to improvements in pupils' welfare. There are strong links with the local authority, Menter Iaith Caerdydd, the Urdd and teacher training institutions, which enrich the provision and promote outcomes for the pupils.

The school plays a prominent part within the community. Pupils visit different places regularly, for example the local library, St Fagans and the National Museum. They also often welcome individuals from the community and local employers to the school. This makes a positive contribution towards enriching their learning experiences and their awareness of their locality.

Resource management: Good

The leaders and the managers control the budget allocated to the school well, ensuring appropriate staffing arrangements in order to teach the curriculum effectively. There is a strong link between the school's priorities and spending decisions. The processes for monitoring the budget are good and give relevant consideration to the regular financial reports that are provided by the local authority's education service.

The school manages its resources well. It has plenty of good quality learning resources. Investment was made recently in information and communication

technology equipment that has led to an improvement in standards. The school's buildings and grounds are managed and kept to a high standard.

There are suitable arrangements for evaluating and managing the performance of all staff and effective use is made of the planning, preparation and assessment time that is available to the teachers. Appropriate use is made of classroom assistants, and their contribution in the Foundation Phase, and in supporting pupils with additional learning needs, is appropriate.

In considering pupils' outcomes and the use made of finance, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Learner questionnaires

One hundred and three key stage 2 pupils completed the questionnaire. Nearly every one of the pupils is of the opinion that they are treated with respect and feel safe in school, and that the school deals well with any bullying. They are all of the opinion that enough resources are available for them to do their work and also they feel that they are doing well at school. A minority of the pupils disagree that standards of behaviour are good in the lessons and during play time and lunch time.

Parent questionnaires

One hundred and fifty-six parents, or carers, completed the questionnaire and the level of parents' satisfaction with the school is high. Nearly all of them agree or agree strongly that their children like school, feel safe and are encouraged to be healthy. They also agree that their children are making good progress and that the pupils behave well. The responses of the parents in the questionnaire confirm that the staff treat every child fairly and with respect, and expect them to do their best. Parents understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaints and feel that they can come in for a discussion, or express a concern with no problem. A few of the parents are of the opinion that the homework does not build well on what the children learn.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Ray Owen	Reporting Inspector
Huw Watkins	Team Inspector
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector
Dyfrig Wyn Elis	Peer Inspector
Mari Phillips	School Nominee

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