



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

**Bodringallt Primary School
Bodringallt Terrace
Ystrad
Pentre
Rhondda
CF41 7QE**

Date of inspection: December 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

Bodringallt Primary School is located in the village of Ystrad in the Rhondda Fawr Valley. The school provides education for pupils between three and eleven years. Nearly all pupils come from the immediate area. The school is housed in two separate buildings, one of which also provides accommodation for a youth centre. A unit for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties was relocated to the school in 2007. The unit provides places for pupils from across the local authority.

Currently 85 full-time pupils attend the school, eight of whom have placements in the unit. Pupil numbers have risen in recent years. The school is organised into three mixed age mainstream classes and the unit class. Pupils represent the full range of ability but attainment on entry is well below the local average. No pupil speaks Welsh as a first language or receives support for English as an additional language. No pupils come from an ethnic-minority community.

Within the local area there are high levels of unemployment and social deprivation. Forty-six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly higher than the local authority and all-Wales average. Fifty-three per cent of pupils have been identified as having additional learning needs, which is also well above the local authority average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. No pupils are looked after by the local authority.

The acting headteacher has been in post since April 2009.

The individual school budget per pupil for Bodringallt Primary School in 2011-2012 means that the budget is £4,988 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £6,499 and the minimum is £2,788. Bodringallt Primary School is fifth out of the 114 primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

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

Current performance

The overall judgement on the current performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils make very good progress in their learning;
- the school ethos has a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing; and
- teaching is of a consistently high standard.

Prospects for improvement

The school's current prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher is a very effective leader who has established a culture that is clearly focused on improvement;
- the headteacher is well supported by a committed team of teaching and support staff; and
- self-evaluation and planning for improvement are strengths of the school.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in extended writing at key stage 2;
- R2 improve the performance of more able pupils;
- R3 develop pupils' involvement in assessing and improving their own work;
- R4 improve the outdoor learning environment and the toilet facilities; and
- R5 continue to improve attendance.

What happens next?

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

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

The majority of pupils start school with skills that are lower than the local authority and all-Wales averages. The robust tracking system within the school shows that from their starting points most pupils make very good progress.

The achievement and progress of pupils in lessons are good. Most pupils have a sound recall of previous learning and apply their learning confidently in new situations. They have positive attitudes to learning and settle quickly to their tasks.

On entry to the Foundation Phase many pupils have poor speaking and listening skills. As they move through the school, they develop the ability to listen carefully and attentively to staff and each other. By the end of key stage 2, nearly all pupils speak clearly and confidently in class and when working in groups. Many provide thoughtful and often lengthy responses, using suitable terms and vocabulary.

All pupils in the Foundation Phase talk enthusiastically about books and their favourite stories. They handle books as a reader and the more able read simple texts accurately. They make good use of their knowledge of sounds to help them to read unfamiliar words.

Many pupils at the end of key stage 2 are self-motivated and confident readers. They use a wide range of reading strategies and many read with fluency and expression, paying attention to punctuation. All talk enthusiastically about favourite authors and the types of books that they have read, including non-fiction and fiction.

In the Foundation Phase, pupils' writing skills develop well and, by the end of the phase, many pupils write independently with increasing fluency and accuracy. They make good progress in developing their handwriting and use of punctuation. Spelling becomes increasingly accurate, with pupils making good use of their knowledge of letter sounds.

In key stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in developing literacy skills so that, by Year 6, work is well presented with good standards achieved in handwriting. Most pupils spell accurately and their work is punctuated correctly. Pupils write with increasing fluency and accuracy. They organise and present imaginative and factual writing in different ways. However, their extended writing skills are underdeveloped and they do not redraft work well enough.

Pupils identified with additional learning needs achieve well against the targets in their individual education plans and pupils who attend the unit make consistently good progress. The individual tracking of pupils' progress shows that boys and girls achieve equally well, relative to their starting points. Nearly all pupils entitled to free school meals achieve well, although a few pupils whose attendance is very low do not succeed as well as they could. A few more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.

Nearly all pupils' Welsh language skills are well developed. Overall, standards in oracy are good. Pupils' progress in reading is more variable. However, by the end of key stage 2, a majority of pupils understand Welsh texts at an appropriate level. Pupils' writing skills develop appropriately and by the end of key stage 2 pupils' standards in writing are satisfactory.

Over the last four years, pupils' attainment in the core subject indicator (CSI – the expected performance in English or Welsh, mathematics and science in combination) at the end of key stage 1 has remained stable, but is still below the family and all-Wales average. The overall performance in English has also remained stable, although results in oracy have shown a downward trend. No pupils have achieved the higher level 3 in English, mathematics or science over the past four years. Overall, girls achieve better than the boys.

At the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in the CSI has risen, with boys and girls achieving almost equally. Pupils' performance in 2011, in the CSI, was above the family average. In the last two years, no pupils have achieved the higher level 5 in any subject.

Over time, pupils' performance at the end of both key stages, excluding pupils in the unit, has shown an upward trend.

Wellbeing: Good

All pupils say they feel safe, happy and secure in school. They recognise the importance of keeping fit and taking regular exercise. They know that they need to eat sensibly in order to stay healthy.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and have a very positive attitude to learning. They show great pride in their school and participate in school life with interest and enthusiasm. They are proud of their local community and have a good understanding of neighbourhood issues.

Most pupils take an increasing responsibility for their own actions. They are beginning to set their own targets for improvement and to evaluate their work.

As pupils move through the school they develop good social and life skills. Behaviour is almost always good. All pupils show courtesy and respect to each other, staff and visitors. The school's nurture class has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and wellbeing. Although attendance has improved this term, pupils' attendance has been consistently in the lowest 25% when compared to that of similar schools.

The school council and eco committee are well established and effective in making decisions. They represent the views of the rest of the school well. Members are actively involved in the running of the school, for example by undertaking health and safety assessments.

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

The curriculum fully complies with statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced, and meets the needs of most pupils well. Teachers meet to plan collaboratively, and teaching assistants have an active role in the planning, monitoring and evaluation process. This ensures that there is a continuity of provision for all pupils. The pupils are placed effectively in mixed age groups, which take appropriate account of their stage of development. Withdrawal classes are used effectively to ensure that all pupils acquire the skills needed to fully access the curriculum. The curriculum is effectively enhanced through extensive extra-curricular activities, varied opportunities for out-of-school learning and very strong links with the community.

Provision for the development of pupils' communication, numeracy and information communication and technology (ICT) skills is thorough and effective. Particular emphasis is placed upon reading and writing skills, which are specifically planned for in all subject areas.

Welsh language provision is a strength of the school. Strategies to develop competence and skills are very well embedded in the school. Provision for the 'Cwricwlwm Cymreig' is good and is clearly identified in planning.

The school promotes sustainability successfully through initiatives such as recycling, saving energy, living and eating healthily and promoting fair trade. The eco council is very successful in supporting this. The school works hard to ensure that pupils learn about their place in the wider world, for example through the project 'Around the world in 80 schools' and links with other countries.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching is at least good in all lessons. All teachers demonstrate up-to-date subject knowledge and use this well to ensure that activities engage and motivate pupils. Lessons are of a good pace and keep the attention of all pupils throughout the lesson. Teachers share the learning outcomes of lessons consistently with pupils. This ensures that all pupils are clear about the tasks and expected outcomes. However, opportunities to challenge the more able pupils to achieve higher standards are sometimes missed.

The Foundation Phase is well organised and staff work as a team to plan and deliver stimulating and challenging activities for all pupils. In key stage 2, lessons are planned well and teachers use a good range of activities, resources and approaches to inspire and challenge learners. All teachers and assistants are good language models. Adult support is well focused and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Pupils' behaviour is managed effectively during lessons through a range of successful strategies. All staff provide praise and encouragement for pupils, especially for those who are less confident or vulnerable. This has a positive impact on pupils' self-esteem and wellbeing.

On a few occasions, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to verbally assess their own performance and that of others. However, pupils' involvement in their own learning is at an early stage of development.

A good range of assessments is used well to inform planning. Teachers mark work consistently and conscientiously. Pupil records are clear, systematic, manageable and useful. They enable staff to set individual targets and ensure progression in learning. Reports to parents meet statutory requirements and provide them with good information on their child's progress.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school provides a happy, safe and caring environment. There are appropriate and effective policies and arrangements for promoting healthy living and supporting pupils' emotional and physical wellbeing. This is reflected in the positive and supportive ethos within the school.

Personal and social education provision is delivered successfully through a structured approach. The school has well established links with a range of specialist services and external providers. These ensure that support is appropriate, consistent and effective in meeting pupils' needs.

Pupils have extensive opportunities to develop their understanding of social and cultural issues. Whole-school assemblies provide appropriate opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The general ethos of the school and the quality of relationships significantly enhance pupils' moral development and encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions.

The effective systems of the school ensure that pupils with additional needs are identified very early. All teaching and support staff play an active role in supporting these pupils. Their needs are met through an extensive range of programmes. The nurture programme established within the school to support pupils with emotional, social and learning difficulties is highly effective and a strength of the school. Tracking procedures are used well to target additional support and to monitor pupils' progress.

Individual education plans are child-friendly and of good quality. They are reviewed regularly with the involvement of the pupil. The school keeps parents fully informed and encourages their involvement.

The school has procedures and an appropriate policy for safeguarding.

Learning environment: Good

The school has a positive ethos that values all pupils and ensures equality of opportunity. It takes positive steps to discourage all forms of harassment and discrimination. Racial and social equality issues are explored and discussed through the personal and social education programme, in subjects and in assemblies.

The school provides a safe environment for pupils to learn. The rooms are colourful and filled with relevant and stimulating displays that support and improve pupils'

learning. Staff manage and use indoor accommodation exceptionally well to ensure the best opportunities for the whole school community. Classrooms are spacious and resources are plentiful and of a high standard. The rainbow room, which hosts the nurture group, is an excellent facility. Although outdoor areas are adequate they are not developed well enough to provide good outside learning experiences for all pupils. The school's toilet facilities are only adequate and require attention.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and leads by example. She has an exceptional grasp of the needs of the school and is very committed to taking the school forward by improving pupils' standards and the quality of provision. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and they work closely together as the senior management team. Teaching staff with leadership responsibilities carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and their work supports school improvement well. All staff share common values, have a real sense of purpose to their work and ensure that systems are consistently implemented. This in turn, leads to improving standards.

Governors carry out their roles efficiently. They are well informed about the school's performance and use this information to help set the school's strategic direction and tackle any areas of underperformance.

The school takes appropriate account of national and local priorities. For example, work on improving standards in Welsh has had a positive impact on pupils' standards. The involvement in local and national scheme, such as the Healthy School's Initiative, has ensured that support for pupils' health and wellbeing is now a strength of the school. The school takes good account of the School Effectiveness Framework.

Improving quality: Good

The school has exceptionally thorough procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. Senior managers have a very clear picture of the school's performance, its strengths and areas for development. A wide range of rigorous monitoring activities is used to inform the self-evaluation process. This includes accurate lesson observations, which are undertaken regularly across the school. The school regularly seeks the views of all stakeholders through the use of questionnaires and uses these views to inform the self-evaluation procedure. The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection provides a comprehensive and accurate overview of the school. It clearly identifies areas for improvement.

All of the information gathered is used effectively to produce a detailed and clear school development plan. The process of planning for improvement impacts positively on raising standards and improving the quality of provision. For example, recent initiatives to raise standards in literacy are having a significant impact on the standards that pupils achieve.

There are well-established professional learning communities in the school. Good links also exist with the local authority, schools in the local cluster and schools within the family group. These networks of professional practice make a positive contribution to the school's overall provision.

Partnership working: Good

The school has successful partnerships with parents and keeps them well informed through the school text system and web page. It works effectively in partnership with a range of agencies including the local authority and the local community. These partnerships help to enrich and support all pupils' learning and wellbeing.

There are strong links with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer, especially in providing support for pupils' social and emotional wellbeing. Carefully considered transition plans ensure that pupils are well prepared for secondary education. There are systematic moderation processes for end of key stage 2 assessments that involve staff from the local cluster of primary schools, the local secondary school and the local authority. The school employs a peripatetic teacher for Welsh from the local secondary school which impacts very positively on pupils' standards in Welsh.

Resource management: Good

The school budget is managed effectively with a firm and consistent focus on linking spending to priorities for improvement.

There are a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff. These are deployed effectively to deliver a learning programme that is increasingly well matched to individual pupils' needs. All staff contribute very well to the work of the school.

Planning preparation and assessment time is managed well. The school identifies the needs of staff through regular appraisal, which includes precisely defined programmes of performance management targets for teaching staff.

The school provides good value for money because of the progress made by pupils, the efficient and effective use it makes of funding, the wide range of learning experiences it offers, and the high level of care, support and guidance it provides.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

Key stage 1

Over the last four years, pupils' attainment in the CSI, at the end of key stage 1, has remained stable. However pupils' performance at the expected level (level 2), is still below the family of schools average. When pupils' performance is compared with that of similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (free-school-meal benchmarks), the school has consistently been in the lowest 25%.

Pupils' attainment in English has generally followed the same pattern as the CSI. It has been below the family average and in the lowest 25% when compared to the relative performance of schools with similar percentages of free school meals. Pupils' performance in oracy has shown a downward trend over this period and in 2011 pupils' performance was well below the family average. Results for reading and writing, although below those of the family, have remained relatively stable. Girls perform better than the boys in English, but the gap is not as pronounced in oracy as it is in reading and writing.

Pupils' attainment in mathematics and science, at key stage 1, has been uneven. Girls, generally, do much better than boys in mathematics and science. The difference is greater than the family and all-Wales averages.

No pupil has achieved the higher level 3 in English, mathematics or science over the past four years.

Key stage 2

Over time, there has been a steady trend of improvement in the CSI. However, for the past four years, when compared to the relative performance of schools with similar percentages of free school meals, pupils' performance in the CSI, mathematics and science has been in either the lower 50% or lowest 25%. In 2011, pupils' performance in English placed the school in the upper 50% when compared to similar schools.

Pupils' performance in English and the CSI has been above the family average for two of the past four years. In mathematics and science, pupils' performance has generally been below the family average.

No pupil has achieved the higher level 5 in English, mathematics or science, for the past two years.

Girls and boys achieve almost equally in the CSI. This contrasts to the all-Wales and family average, where girls do better. In English, the performance of boys and girls is very similar although girls achieve slightly better in reading. There is a similar pattern for mathematics and science at level 4, with girls performing slightly better in mathematics.

The school's results are sometimes adversely affected by pupils attending the unit and by the small number of pupils in a cohort.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Response to parent questionnaires

Twelve parents completed the questionnaires. All expressed the view that overall they were satisfied or very satisfied with the school. They say that their children were helped to settle in well when they started school and that they like school. They feel that their children are safe in school and that pupils behave well. All parents believe that their children are making good progress at the school and that teaching is good. They say that staff expect the pupils to work hard and do their best. They believe that all children are treated fairly and with respect. Nearly all parents also say that pupils receive appropriate support in relation to any particular needs. Although all parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question, suggestion or problem, a very few say they do not understand the procedure for dealing with complaints. All parents who expressed an opinion believe the school is well or very well run.

Overall, in all aspects, the views of parents are more positive than the responses of parents from other schools.

Response to learner questionnaires

All pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. All pupils say they feel safe in school. They feel that the school deals well with bullying and they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. They all say that the teachers and other adults help them to learn. Many pupils feel that they are doing well at school. All of the pupils agree that their homework helps them to understand and improve their work. They think that they have enough books, equipment and computers to do their work. Nearly all pupils think that other children behave well so that they can get their work done. Nearly all say that children behave well at playtimes and lunchtime.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Linda Williams	Reporting Inspector
Enir Rees Morgan	Team Inspector
Catherine Jenkins	Lay Inspector
Michael Hayes	Peer Inspector
Janet Todd Jones	School Nominee

Copies of the report

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

Under the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003, the school must provide copies of the report to all parents of the school. Where a pupil is subject to placement by a local authority, a copy of the report should be sent by the school to each relevant authority.

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