

**Inspection under Section 28 of the
Education Act 2005**

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Abercynon Infants School
Ynysmeurig Road
Abercynon
CF45 4SU**

School Number: 6742049

Date of Inspection: 04/02/08

by

**Luned Eleri Betts
17717**

Date of Publication: 09/04/08

Under Estyn contract number: 1114407

© Queens Printer and Controller of HMSO 2008: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

Abercynon Infants School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Abercynon Infants School took place between 04/02/08 and 06/02/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Luned Eleri Betts undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **full** inspection.

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 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 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 National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	1
Summary	2
Recommendations	9
Standards	10
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	10
The quality of education and training	13
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	13
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	15
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	19
Leadership and management	21
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	21
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	22
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	24
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	25
Under 5s	25
English	31
Welsh second language	32
Mathematics	33
Science	34
Information technology	35
Design technology	36
History	37
Geography	38
Art	39
Music	40
Physical education	41
Religious education	42
School's response to the inspection	43
Appendices	44
1 Basic information about the school	44
2 School data and indicators	44
3 National Curriculum assessments results	45
4 Evidence base of the inspection	46
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	47

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Abercynon Infants School is situated in the centre of the village of Abercynon at the southern end of the Cynon Valley. The local education authority (LEA) is Rhondda Cynon Tâf. Children attend the school from the age of three when they receive full time nursery education until they leave at seven years of age when they are transferred to junior schools in the area. Most of the pupils live within close proximity to the school but a small number come from outside the catchment area.
2. At the time of the inspection the number on roll was 55, a figure that included 21 full time children in the nursery. Ten children of reception age shared a classroom with younger Y1 pupils while older Y1 pupils were in a mixed age class with Y2 pupils. The number of pupils fluctuates regularly; consequently class organisation can vary significantly from year to year.
3. The school describes its intake as economically disadvantaged with a number of its parents having become unemployed due to the lack of work in the area. There are increasing social problems in the village and many children live with single parents. Many are admitted to school with a low baseline in language, learning and social skills. Approximately Eight % are from an ethnic minority background. The majority have English as a first language but there is a small number whose first language is either Urdu or Romanian. There is no one who speaks Welsh at home. Thirteen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN); none is statemented. No pupil is 'looked after' by the local authority. Ten % of pupils are eligible for free school meals.
4. The school was last inspected in March 2002. It has gained the Investors in People award three times since the last inspection and received the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time in 2006. The school gained the first phase of the Healthy School Scheme in July 2007 and was awarded the ECO green flag in January 2008.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The school's aims are to:
 - provide a welcoming, happy, caring stimulating environment in which all pupils feel secure and confident so that they can develop according to their individual needs and abilities;
 - present a balanced curriculum;
 - foster in each pupil a feeling of self-confidence and success;

- encourage an awareness of moral values;
 - foster a positive attitude to learning;
 - encourage all pupils to achieve their maximum potential; and
 - encourage good relationships between pupils and all with whom they come into contact during the day.
6. The school's mission statement is 'There's nothing better than my best'.
7. Priorities for this year are to:
- evaluate the progress made by the school since the last inspection;
 - plan and prepare for the implementation of the Foundation Phase;
 - raise awareness of the importance of physical education and school sport;
 - establish education for sustainable development and global citizenship as a core value of the school;
 - raise standards in phonics by implementing a new phonics programme;
 - continue to improve the overall quality of the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' learning and achievements;
 - further develop the bilingual skills of children and support staff; and
 - further develop aspects of leadership and management in relation to the self-evaluation process, the induction of new staff and the management of resources

Summary

8. Abercynon Infants School is a warm welcoming community where pupils feel secure and valued. Staff, many who have been at the school for a number of years, work well as a team to provide a good quality education for pupils. Outstanding features are the central place of the community of Abercynon in the school's curriculum provision and the promotion of new initiatives, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	Grade 2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	Grade 2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	Grade 1
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	Grade 2
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	Grade 2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	Grade 3
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	Grade 2

9. The inspection team agreed with the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report in five of the seven key questions. In the other two key questions the inspectors awarded a higher grade as they felt that the school had underestimated its performance.

10. Standards in sessions observed during the inspection were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	69%	12%	-	-

11. These percentages are well above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target that by 2010 98% of standards should be Grade 3 or better. They are also above the national averages as published in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) Annual Report for 2005-6, where overall standards in primary schools are reported to be Grade 2 in 65% of lessons and Grade 1 in 12%.

Grades for areas of learning for under-fives

Under fives	Grade 2
-------------	---------

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 3	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 3	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 3
Creative development	Grade 3	Grade 2

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	KS 1
English	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2
History	Grade 1
Geography	Grade 1
Art	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2

12. The overall quality of the provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
13. Because of the small and varying numbers in cohorts, it is difficult to obtain a clear picture of the school's performance against other schools. Generally however results are similar to those in 2007, where English and mathematics were above the LEA and national percentages, while science was below. Results in English in particular have shown a steady increase since 2005. The Core Subject Indicator (CSI), which is a combination of results in all three core subject, is higher than local and national percentages. In comparison with schools who have the same number of free school meals, the school is a little below the top 25% in English, at the top of the upper 25% in mathematics and a little below the upper 50% in science.
14. Children under-five and pupils in Key Stage 1(KS1) achieve the targets set for them and succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
15. Younger children in the nursery class respond well in small groups to the support provided and gain a sound understanding of what they are to do and how well they have completed their task. In KS1 they respond well to the sharing of the learning outcomes at the start of sessions and show a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how well they have achieved.
16. In the nursery class standards in the key skill of literacy are good but have some shortcomings, especially in listening skills. Those with limited skills on entry make sound progress, however, in speaking in English, and some progress well in Welsh. In numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) children achieve appropriate levels of competence; many progress well with their computer skills.

17. Children in reception and younger pupils in KS1 make good progress in all key skills. Older Year (Y1) pupils and those in Y2 make outstanding progress in numeracy, literacy and bilingualism and make good progress in ICT.
18. In the nursery class children's creative and problem solving skills display good features that outweigh shortcomings. At the lower end of KS1 standards in problem solving are good; they are outstanding at the upper end of the key stage.
19. Progress made in personal, social, moral and wider development is good. The youngest children learn routines quickly and the majority persevere well with their work. Pupils in KS1 are motivated from the start of the school day; they develop the ability to work independently and to make decisions. The vast majority are considerate and courteous and have good levels of self-discipline.
20. At 91.5% the average rate of attendance for the three terms before the inspection is slightly above the LEA but below the all Wales averages. It is also well below the WAG target of 93% Attendance of children under five is consistently below 93% and nursery are particularly low. Most pupils are punctual at the start of the day but a few persistently arrive late.
21. Pupils' understanding of equal opportunities is outstanding as this aspect is firmly embedded in the school's work. They have a very well-developed knowledge and understanding of differences and similarities between cultures and customs around the world.
22. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of the world of work and of their place in the community. Responsibilities undertaken by very young pupils give them a valuable insight into the role of workers and managers and ensure that they have an understanding of fair play for all.

The quality of education and training

23. The quality of teaching in sessions observed during the inspection was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	52%	24 %	-	-

24. These figures are a little below both the WAG's 2010 target of 80% of lessons to be a Grade 2 or better and the national picture reported by HMCI in her annual report for 2005-2006, where the comparable figure is 79%.
25. Teachers create an environment that is welcoming and, in general, stimulating. They use support staff and volunteer helpers most effectively in the classroom, and with groups of pupils who have particular language or mathematical needs.
26. In lessons where there are outstanding features, teachers stimulate and challenge pupils, they have high expectations of standards of work and

behaviour, they provide differentiated tasks and use very effective teaching techniques and strategies.

27. In lessons where teaching is less effective, shortcomings include too much guidance by teachers and, at times, a lack of appropriate class control.
28. Equal opportunities are well promoted in lessons, and all pupils are treated equally, irrespective of gender, race or disability. All staff display a positive attitude towards Welsh, and encourage pupils to use the language as often as possible.
29. Teachers cater appropriately for the learning of all pupils, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). They plan effectively to meet individual needs and monitor and review pupils' progress well.
30. Assessment is an integral part of curriculum planning. Teachers know their pupils well, and have a good knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. They mark pupils' work regularly, and, in general, provide positive comments, which offer appropriate guidance. They help them to set their own targets so that they know what they need to do to improve their work.
31. The curriculum for children under-five and national curriculum (NC) subjects and religious education in KS1 fully meet statutory requirements and the needs of the range of learners. The curriculum is broad and balanced.
32. Appropriate differentiation is provided to meet the needs of a wide range of abilities in mixed age classes and the curriculum is accessible to all. An outstanding feature is the way schemes of work have been refined to suit the needs of the school and its location in Abercynon. However they have not been revised to include the provision the school has already made for the Foundation Phase.
33. The curriculum is suitably accessed by pupils with SEN who are provided with suitably challenging tasks both in class and withdrawal sessions. More able pupils are also presented with suitably challenging activities. Provision ensures that the school does not encourage gender stereotyping. The school's planning for key and basic skills is good overall.
34. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is good. The school's provision for PSE has outstanding features and is promoted well through members of the school council and the eco committee. Good personal support and guidance is provided through the school's personal and social education programme, which is taught across the curriculum.
35. The school's collective worship successfully promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development. Provision for cultural understanding is outstanding; pupils have a sound understanding of the diversity of the world.
36. The good provision for bilingualism and the cwricwlwm Cymreig is very effective in promoting pupils' Welsh identity and a sense of belonging.

37. The school's strategies for developing pupils' awareness of sustainable development are outstanding. These enable them to appreciate that managing waste locally contributes to the future of the global environment. Healthy eating and living initiatives are also outstanding features.
38. Visits to the community and beyond, as well as visitors to the school, enrich the curriculum. Parents are very supportive of events organised by the school and communication with them is good. Links with surrounding schools are good and enable the school to be involved in a variety of initiatives.
39. Pupils are very well cared for in the school, and a high priority is given to their welfare and guidance. Induction for new pupils and a smooth transition to the primary schools in the area are very effective.
40. Procedures and policies in place to monitor, behaviour, progress and performance are effective. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very carefully monitored.
41. The school has a clear policy for health and safety, and procedures for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of pupils are good.
42. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Those with particular needs are identified at an early stage and the positive arrangements made to meet their needs are effective. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice (CoP) and implements its policy well. Pupils' individual education plans (IEP) have clear targets and successfully outline teaching strategies and the resources required to achieve them.
43. The school takes outstanding account of the diversity of pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds and successfully tackles any stereotypical choices.
44. The school has a suitable access plan under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Leadership and management

45. The school has good clear vision and mission statements. These are known to all adults involved in the school and are reflected consistently in daily life. School aims are clearly displayed for all to see.
46. The headteacher, who is highly experienced, provides the school with sound and positive leadership. The senior teacher plays a very effective supporting role.
47. Teaching, support assistants and all adults who work at the school have clear job descriptions that define their responsibilities clearly.
48. The school's management and promotion of new initiatives is outstanding. The part played by the school in the small school's network project in which the

headteacher takes the lead, enriches provision immensely. Projects undertaken by the network have been highly successful in enabling the school to participate in many WAG initiatives.

49. Performance management procedures are well established and identify staff and school needs effectively. Targets set by the school for the school development plan (SDP), staff and children are realistic but challenging and are reviewed appropriately. Provision for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time for teachers under the new workload arrangements is appropriately organised.
50. Members of the governing body (GB) make a valuable contribution to the school. They realise the need to develop their role further in school management issues and curriculum responsibilities and to have a greater involvement in the self-evaluation process and the monitoring of teaching and learning.
51. Curriculum coordinators evaluate their subjects; they write annual action plans and monitor books but do not play a sufficiently active role in formally monitoring the teaching and learning in classrooms. This is a significant shortcoming.
52. Parents' opinions are sought through questionnaires. A strong feature of the school's self-evaluation process is the involvement of children in the under fives' classes and pupils in KS1 in the self-evaluation process. The eco-committee are very prominent in deciding the school's strategies for sustainable development and have been in the forefront of the school's success in achieving the Green Flag award.
53. Progress since the last inspection has been good, particularly in raising standards in curricular subjects.
54. There are enough qualified teachers and support staff in the school to deliver the curriculum effectively. Support staff work very effectively with teachers, enhancing the quality of education for pupils, especially those with ALN.
55. An abundance of good learning resources is available to meet the needs of the curriculum for those children under-five and in KS1. The quality of resources is good and teachers make effective and imaginative use of them during lessons.
56. Overall the quality of the accommodation has good features that outweigh shortcomings. The school makes effective use of the space available. However the way the accommodation is organised at present does not ensure parity of experiences between children in the nursery and those in the reception class.. The nursery classroom has access to an enclosed outdoor playground with soft fall surface but reception children are located in a classroom at the opposite end of the school with no easy access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Difficulties in the layout of the accommodation also limit the school's preparations for the Foundation Phase.

57. Spending decisions match targets and priorities identified in the SDP and the GB contributes well to this process, which clearly influences the management of resources in the school. Financial implications are clearly thought through, and the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to move the school forward staff and GB need to:

- R1 maintain the good and outstanding standards in curriculum subjects and address shortcomings identified in the areas of learning for under-fives
- R2 revise schemes of work to include the necessary adaptations for the Foundation Phase;
- R3 develop the role of the curriculum coordinators in monitoring their curriculum areas;
- R4 further develop the role of the GB in the self-evaluation process; and
- R5 review the use made of the accommodation in order to address;
- the needs of all children under five years of age;
 - the expectations of the forthcoming Foundation Phase; and
- R6 improve attendance percentages especially of children under-five.

Recommendations 2,4 and 5 are already identified as areas in need of development in the current SDP.

The GB is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

58. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
59. Standards in sessions observed during the inspection were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	69%	12%	-	-

60. These percentages are well above the WAG target that by 2010 98% of standards should be a Grade 3 or better. They are also above the national averages as published in the HMCI Annual Report for 2005-6, where overall standards in primary schools are reported to be Grade 2 in 65% of lessons and Grade 1 in 12%.
61. The overall quality of the provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The majority of children on entry have limited social and language skills. By the time they have reached the end of their year in reception however, they make good progress and the majority achieve their potential.

Grades for areas of learning for under-fives

Under fives	Grade 2
-------------	---------

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 3	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 3	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 3
Creative development	Grade 3	Grade 2

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	KS 1
English	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2
History	Grade 1
Geography	Grade 1
Art	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2

62. Because of the small and varying numbers in cohorts it is difficult to obtain a clear picture of the school's performance against other schools. Generally however results are similar to those in 2007, where English and mathematics were above the LEA and national percentages, while science was below. Results in English in particular, have shown a steady increase since 2005. The CSI, which is a combination of results in all three core subjects, is higher than local and national percentages. In comparison with schools who have the same number of free school meals, the school is a little below the top 25% in English, at the top of the upper 25% in mathematics and a little below the upper 50% in science. There is no significant difference between boys and girls but there are fluctuations between the performance of both at times.
63. Children under-five and pupils in KS1 achieve the targets set for them and succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Those who receive extra support in withdrawal sessions in a range of support initiatives make good progress and therefore confidently and successfully access the curriculum alongside their peers.
64. Younger children in the nursery class respond well in small groups to the support provided and gain a sound understanding of what they are to do and how well they have completed their task. In KS1 pupils respond well to the sharing of the learning outcome at the start of sessions and show a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how well they have achieved. This is an outstanding feature of the class at the upper end of the key stage where pupils have a very clear understanding of what the teacher wants to see in their work. At the end of sessions pupils share how they have achieved these expectations confidently with others. This prepares them extremely effectively for the next stage in their learning.
65. In the nursery class standards in the key skill of literacy are good but have some shortcomings, especially in listening skills. Those with limited skills on entry make sound progress, however, in speaking in English, and some

progress well in Welsh. In numeracy and ICT children achieve appropriate levels of competence; many progress well with their computer skills.

66. Children in reception and younger pupils in KS1 make good progress in all key skills. Older Y1 pupils and those in Y2 make outstanding progress in numeracy, literacy and bilingualism and make good progress in ICT. These pupils use numbers increasingly confidently throughout the school day and many show an outstanding ability to solve number problems in a range of different ways.
67. Children's creative and problem solving skills in the nursery class have good features that outweigh shortcomings. However the lack of freedom to make choices and solve problems inhibits their imagination, creativity and the need to work things out for themselves; this is a significant shortcoming. In reception and KS1 standards in creativity are good. They are good in problem solving at the lower end of the key stage and outstanding especially in relation to number at the upper end of the key stage.
68. Progress made in personal, social, moral and wider development is good. Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to complete the variety of tasks available for them when they arrive. As a result they are enthusiastic and interested and settle quickly to their chosen activity showing good levels of concentration. The youngest children learn routines quickly and the majority persevere well with their work. Pupils in KS1 are motivated from the start of the school day; they develop the ability to work independently and to make decisions.
69. Children and pupils throughout the school understand what is expected of them and the vast majority are considerate and courteous. They are caring of each other and show respect to staff and to visitors. They move sensibly and safely in and around the school.
70. Older pupils are good role models for younger ones. Relationships are good with boys and girls working and playing well together. They take turns and share willingly. The vast majority have good levels of self-discipline but a small number of the youngest boys show challenging behaviour and occasionally become restless in whole class activities. Pupils generally do not disrupt others.
71. At 91.5% the average rate of attendance for the three terms before the inspection is slightly above the LEA but below the all Wales averages. It is also well below the WAG target of 93% Attendance of children under five is consistently below 93% and nursery are particularly low. Most pupils are punctual at the start of the day but a few persistently arrive late.
72. Most pupils are punctual at the start of the day but a few persistently arrive late and often miss the social time and teachers' explanation of tasks at the start of the morning session.
73. Pupils develop a good understanding of corporate responsibilities through their roles on the well established eco committee and school council. Throughout the school they show great commitment to their roles as monitors and take their responsibilities very seriously. They are eager to help their teachers and each other.

74. Pupils' understanding of equal opportunities is outstanding as this aspect is firmly embedded in the school's work. Boys and girls work and play together very well. They have a very well-developed knowledge and understanding of differences and similarities between cultures and customs around the world.
75. As a result of their involvement in a good range of projects such as the centenary celebration of the local church, and the dedication of the Godly Play area, pupils have an outstanding understanding of the world of work and their place in the community. They make significant progress in their decision making skills when working with the Glancynon Gardening and Bryncynon Strategy Groups to develop the very valuable curriculum activity zone at the rear of the school.
76. Responsibilities undertaken by very young pupils give them a valuable insight into the role of workers and managers and ensure they have an understanding of fair play for all. Their awareness of the work done by the local police constable, the fire service and the coastguard is exceptional. Older pupils' involvement in the Playground Partnership Project provides them with opportunities to take on various jobs, work out plans, do some market research and work out budgets. This also introduces pupils successfully to the important basic principles of entrepreneurship.

The quality of education and training

Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings.

77. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 3 given the school in its self-evaluation report since the inspectors felt that the school had underestimated the quality of teaching.
78. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	52%	24 %	-	-

79. These figures are a little below both the WAG's 2010 target of 80% of lessons to be a Grade 2 or better and the national picture reported by HMCI in her annual report for 2005-2006, where the comparable figure is 79%.
80. In all lessons there is thorough planning and clear attention is paid to the development of key skills. Teachers create an environment that is welcoming and, in general, stimulating. Classroom routines are well established and, on the whole, encourage independent learning. Teachers share the lesson outcomes prior to their activities. Their relationships with children under-five

and pupils in KS1 are good. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and are aware of recent developments.

81. Teachers use support staff and volunteer helpers most effectively in the classroom and with groups of pupils who have particular language or mathematical needs. Teaching of the under-fives is generally good, although there are some shortcomings.
82. In lessons where there are outstanding features teachers:
 - stimulate and challenge pupils;
 - have high expectations of standards of work and behaviour;
 - provide differentiated tasks to cater appropriately for pupils in different year groups within the class, and for pupils of different abilities; and
 - make purposeful use of a very good variety of teaching techniques and strategies.
83. Good features in teaching include:
 - a lively pace to lessons;
 - ensuring that pupils take an active role in their learning; and
 - purposeful and innovative use of resources.
84. In lessons where teaching is less effective, shortcomings include too much guidance by teachers and, at times a lack of appropriate class control.
85. Equal opportunities are well promoted in lessons and all pupils are treated equally, irrespective of gender, race or ability.
86. Teachers meet the English language needs of learners well, with a good emphasis placed on developing and extending oral skills through initiatives such as 'Catch Up' and the services of a visiting language support teacher. Their use of incidental Welsh is good in KS1 and promotes the development and application of bilingual skills well across NC subjects. All staff display a positive attitude towards Welsh, and encourage pupils to use the language as often as possible.
87. Teachers cater appropriately for the learning of all pupils, including those with ALN. They plan effectively to meet individual needs and monitor and review pupils' progress well.
88. Assessment is an integral part of curriculum planning. The assessment, recording and reporting policy is a useful document. The quality of assessment is good, and effective use is made of assessments to inform and improve planning. Teachers know their pupils well and have a good knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses.
89. Members of staff use assessment information systematically to support pupils' progress, which is recorded in individual record files. Formal assessment, through the use of focused tasks and standardised tests, takes place regularly. Day-to-day assessments are made through careful observation, appraisal and the noting of significant features in pupils' work and development. The 'athro

bro' makes effective use of monitoring sheets to record pupils' progress in Welsh, and to plan according to pupils' needs. Teachers make detailed evaluations of the week's lessons and use the information to inform their future planning.

90. The tracking system which highlights the progress of individual pupils and cohorts over a period of time is effective and identifies any need for intervention. It also provides valuable data to support the school in the target setting process. Effective use is made of data to identify performance trends in the core subjects and to set suitable, challenging targets for improvement.
91. Assessment procedures are effective and manageable; these include baseline assessments, end of key stage assessments and those for pupils with SEN; they fully meet statutory requirements.
92. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and, in general, provide positive comments which offer appropriate guidance on how work can be improved. Teachers talk regularly to their pupils, and provide good quality oral feedback about their work. They help them to set their own targets, resulting in them gaining a good measure of understanding of what they need to do to improve and make progress.
93. The quality of annual reports to parents is good; they meet statutory requirements and provide clear, positive judgements about attainment in all subject areas, as well as celebrating children's achievements.
94. Parents are happy with the information the school provides about their children's progress. They appreciate opportunities to discuss their children's development with staff formally each term. Relevant information is transferred to the receiving junior school when pupils move on to the next stage of learning.

Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

95. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 given by the school in its self-evaluation report. The team awarded the school a Grade 1 for this key question because of the many outstanding features they identified. Pupils are provided with an enriching and challenging curriculum, which successfully promotes a sense of interest and curiosity in their locality and the wider world.
96. The curriculum for children under- five and NC subjects and religious education in KS1 fully meet statutory requirements and the needs of the range of learners.

97. For the under-fives the curriculum is appropriately based on the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. In the nursery class planning is exceptionally detailed and shows clear integration of the areas of learning under relevant and interesting themes.
98. In KS1 the curriculum is broad and balanced. Links between subject areas are good and contribute extensively to the effectiveness of pupils' learning. Homework is effective in extending pupils' understanding of literacy and is a good extension of their learning.
99. In KS1 schemes of work over a two year cycle and teachers' short term planning are detailed and display continuity and progression in learning across the school. There is appropriate differentiation to meet the needs of a wide range of abilities in mixed age classes and the curriculum is accessible to all.
100. Curriculum schemes use LEA examples as a basis for planning. An outstanding feature is the way these have been refined to suit the needs of the school and its location in Abercynon. However they have not been revised to include the provision the school has already made for the Foundation Phase.
101. Themes that provide pupils with exciting opportunities to understand the community of Abercynon are outstanding and impact positively on progress and standards in history and geography in particular. They provide a curriculum that is outstanding in its flexibility. This often allows pupils to share their 'special things' with others.
102. The curriculum is suitably accessed by more able pupils and by those with SEN and all are provided with suitable challenging tasks both in class and withdrawal sessions. Provision ensures that the school does not encourage gender stereotyping.
103. The school's planning for key and basic skills is good overall. Opportunities for prioritising literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in individual sessions are clearly identified in short term planning; this has a significant effect on standards achieved.
104. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is good; these extend pupils understanding successfully. An outstanding science club session was observed during the inspection which built on activities previously introduced by the Education Business Partnership (EBP). Pupils benefit from professional coaching from Cardiff City Football Club. These activities impact significantly on pupils' personal and social development and enrich the quality of their learning.
105. The school's provision for PSE has outstanding features. In class sessions pupils discuss feelings such as what is special for them.
106. The school's collective worship successfully promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils understand the need to conform on whole school collective occasions and understand the moral messages that are introduced. The simplicity of prayer in the class devotion at the upper end of the school,

where pupils understand the need to quieten down and prepare themselves to speak with God, is outstanding.

107. Provision for cultural understanding is outstanding. Pupils have a sound understanding of the diversity of the world. The involvement of the school in the small school network project impacts successfully on pupils' understanding of other cultures. This has enabled the school to study aspects of India, Pakistan and China in depth and goes beyond an understanding of their celebrations to how they live, eat and dress and to the uniqueness of their music including the dances and the instruments they play. Work from this project was displayed at an event at the University of Glamorgan. These activities, as well as the many opportunities pupils have to collect for those less fortunate in other parts of the world such as raising money for ' Food Aid', successfully promote pupils' understanding of global citizenship.
108. The good provision for bilingualism, especially at the upper end of the school, is very effective in promoting pupils' Welsh identity and a sense of belonging. The school introduces the cwricwlwm Cymreig well into its schemes of work. It uses the community of Abercynon as a starting point ensuring that children understand who they are and where they live. Pupils also have a sound awareness of people in Wales who have made a significant contribution such as Richard Trevithick, Mary Jones and Laura Ashley.
109. The school's strategies for developing pupils' awareness of sustainable development are outstanding. Eco school activities permeate school life. The school garden establishes an awareness of the need to care and respect forest and outdoor life. This is extended further when nursery children visit a farm and learn to care for small creatures and also when pupils learn how to care for caterpillars in the school. Pupils' awareness is enhanced through their involvement with the Bryncynon Strategy and Glancynon Gardening Groups.
110. Pupils appreciate that managing waste locally contributes to the future of the global environment. They fully understand the need to save electricity and design posters to remind everyone of this. The need to ensure that taps are turned off is the responsibility of the water monitors and pupils keep an eye on thermometers, so that they can turn off the heat when classrooms are too warm. Reusing and recycling paper is a very important part of the school's provision for sustainable development. The school is part of the Yellow Wood's project where telephone directories are recycled; Christmas cards are also recycled. Composting activities include visiting allotments, making compost from their fruit peelings and growing their own potatoes in the compost.
111. The healthy eating and living initiatives are outstanding features. Even very young children understand the importance of eating fruit instead of biscuits and crisps and of exercising regularly. They understand how their hearts respond to exercise and that plenty of exercise is good for them.
112. Visits to the community and beyond, as well as visitors to the school, enrich curriculum provision is an outstanding feature. Visitors include a local ceramic

artist, members of the clergy, dance groups, instrumentalists and senior citizens.

113. Visits to Llancaiach Fawr, Caerphilly castle, Techniquet, Dare Valley Community Park, the local library, the local museum in Aberdare and the Museum of Welsh life provide a wealth of experiences for pupils.
114. The school does not have a formal parent-teacher association but parents are very supportive of events organised by the school. Home/school tasks include projects such as making a picture of what it means to live in Wales for a wall hanging quilt; this helps to develop pupils' understanding of the local community and the Welsh culture.
115. Communication with parents is good. There is good daily informal contact between them and staff. Regular newsletters and other letters keep them very well informed about activities and events. The school prospectus complies with statutory requirements and gives useful information on subjects taught.
116. In addition to the outstanding links with small schools through the network, links with surrounding schools are good and enables the school to be involved in a variety of initiatives, such as the physical education and school sports (PESS) project, which provides opportunities for pupils to work with other agencies and support the school's work, for example on healthy lifestyles and sustainable development. Pupils' work in PSE and religious education is enhanced through working with On Track and clergy as well as visits to local churches.
117. Invited members of the community support school events and celebrations such as concerts and assemblies. Pupils go out into the community to entertain and activities such as the Easter Bonnet parade are shared with the community.
118. There are effective links with the receiving junior school. Teachers are involved in cluster oracy and reading projects as well as a mega maths project, for example.
119. The school is in partnership with an initial teacher training university and a college of further education. It has strong links with the receiving comprehensive school and provides good quality training and work experience for student teachers, secondary school pupils and childcare students.
120. The school's links with industry are good overall. Local businesses contribute regularly towards fundraising events that the school organises in order to acquire money for specific purposes.
121. The school's provision for lifelong learning and community regeneration is outstanding. Parenting skills taught to parents enriches children's home lives and the satisfaction of parents. Pupils' outstanding awareness of how to undertake responsibilities and manage waste and the number of healthy living initiatives provide a sound foundation for the quality of pupils' future lives.

Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings.

122. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
123. Pupils are very well cared for in the school, and a high priority is given to their welfare and guidance. They benefit from the caring approach of all members of staff. They feel safe and secure and are well supported by adults. Parents confirm that their children are happy at school and that those who need additional support are well catered for. When necessary, the school is quick to seek help from external agencies, such as health visitors and educational psychologists.
124. The school works closely with parents and ensures that both parents and carers are fully involved in discussions about the care of their children. They feel confident in approaching the school about any matter of concern. The school works hard to involve parents in the education of their children and has been involved in a variety of family learning and intergenerational projects. As a result very young children become familiar with the school and the staff and settle quickly when they are admitted.
125. Induction for new pupils is very effective and is one of the strengths of the school. The Link Up group for children under three years of age allows parents and their children to become familiar with the school setting, and to get to know members of staff; this arrangement is valuable in easing the transition from home to school. The effective pre-school brochure enables parents to become aware of the expectations of the school prior to their children's entry. The school arranges a smooth transition for children to the primary schools in the area.
126. Provision for the personal support and guidance of pupils effectively involves specialist services, such as the emergency services and visits by the school nurse. Circle time is used well to develop pupils' personal and social skills, and to address any concerns the pupils might wish to discuss.
127. PSE is promoted well through members of the school council and the eco committee who take on responsibilities such as finding ways of improving the school environment and well-being of pupils.
128. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very carefully monitored. Parents are reminded at an early stage and through newsletters of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The school works closely with the education welfare officer (EWO) and those families who give concern. Targets are set and pupils are rewarded weekly for good punctuality.

129. Pupils' behaviour is closely monitored and incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with sensitively. Teachers apply policies for behaviour management consistently and all adults in the school are very good role models. Pupils devise classroom rules and have responsibilities for behaviour through the school council. They are very well supervised at all times both indoors and out. The school receives valuable support and advice from specialists in behaviour management.
130. Trained mid-day supervisors engage pupils in playground games very effectively and have a role in the reward system. The lunchtime supervision policy and handbook provide clear guidance and ideas for playground games.
131. The school has a clear policy for health and safety and procedures for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of pupils are good. Regular and thorough health and safety risk assessments are made at the school and when preparing for off-site visits. The school's accident book is used effectively for recording accidents, and there are good systems in place to deal with pupils who become unwell during the day. Pupils benefit greatly from the school's involvement in several initiatives to promote a healthy lifestyle, for example, the Fun and Fitness project.
132. The policy for child protection is appropriate. Members of staff have received relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities in this area.
133. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Those with particular needs are identified at an early stage, and arrangements made to meet their needs are effective. The school complies fully with the CoP and implements its policy well. Pupils' IEPs have clear targets and successfully outline teaching strategies and the resources required to achieve them. Members of staff make good use of these plans to prepare differentiated tasks in the classroom.
134. Support staff withdraw groups for lively sessions of Catch Up, Spotlight Mathematics, Teaching Talking and Soundwork. A small number of pupils benefit from weekly language support by a visiting specialist teacher. These initiatives enable pupils to make good progress in language and mathematics. Good links with other professionals, such as speech therapists, are effective in supporting the school's provision.
135. The school takes very good account of the diversity of pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds in providing them with appropriate support and guidance. Fairness and full equality of opportunity for all underpins all aspects of the school's work.
136. The school successfully tackles any stereotypical choices of behaviour, and policies and practices actively promote gender equality. Good race relations are actively promoted across all areas of activity. In discussions with inspectors, pupils state clearly that bullying is not an issue in the school, and that staff deal well with any oppressive behaviour.

137. The school is aware of the need to ensure that pupils with disabilities are treated equally, and it has a suitable access plan under the Disability Discrimination Act, should there be pupils, employees and service users with physical disabilities in the school.
138. An outstanding feature of the provision is the school's recognition and respect for diversity. It promotes a keen awareness of multiculturalism and diversity successfully through RE lessons and through the use of Persona Dolls in circle time. Also, visits by outside providers support the teaching and learning of multicultural awareness in stimulating ways.

Leadership and management

Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

139. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
140. The school has good clear vision and mission statements. These are known to all adults involved in the school and are reflected consistently in its daily life. School aims are clearly displayed for all to see.
141. The headteacher, who is highly experienced, provides the school with sound and positive leadership. She combines the demanding task of managing the school and teaching a mixed reception and a Y1 class for three days a week.
142. The school has no deputy headteacher but the senior teacher, who is an outstanding role model as teacher, plays a very effective part in supporting the headteacher. Both have been at the school for a considerable number of years and work well together. They carry out their considerable curriculum responsibilities effectively.
143. A teacher employed on a part-time basis enables the headteacher to receive the appropriate management time for administrative and management duties. This is effectively organised.
144. The curriculum expertise of both the part time and a recently appointed full-time NQT, who is employed in the under-fives' classroom, is used effectively. Adequate support is provided in the classrooms by very effective assistants who are given curricular responsibilities that makes good use of their expertise and adds to their professional development.
145. Teaching, support assistants and all adults who work at the school have clear job descriptions that define their responsibilities clearly.

146. A broad range of very clear policies underpins the school's effective classroom provision and daily administration. The school day proceeds briskly and no time is wasted.
147. The school's management and promotion of new initiatives is outstanding. The part played by the school in the small school's network project in which the headteacher takes the lead, enriches provision immensely. Projects undertaken by the network have been highly successful in enabling the school to participate in many WAG initiatives.
148. Staff meetings are held regularly. Agendas and minutes indicate that all staff are involved in planning the curriculum and in discussing daily activities. The good team spirit, warm ethos and a sense of community ensures that difficulties in managing a small school and undertaking a heavy load of responsibilities are overcome.
149. Performance management procedures are well established and identify staff and school needs effectively. In service education and training (INSET) opportunities meet needs well and have impacted considerably on the provision. As one member of staff has only recently been appointed, training and INSET opportunities for her are yet to be provided.
150. Targets set by the school for the SDP, staff and children are realistic but challenging, and are reviewed appropriately. The SDP also has an overview of goals up to 2010.
151. Provision for PPA time for teachers under the new workload arrangements is appropriately organised. A session taken by a supply teacher covering for PPA time in the class for older children was very effective.
152. Members of the GB make a valuable contribution to the school. They fulfil statutory requirements. Some have been linked with the school for a long time and visit the school regularly; others are new to their roles. Members are aware of their responsibilities in overseeing the school's budget in a school where cohorts may vary significantly from year to year. They can justify an underspend in the school budget because of the uncertainty in relation to pupil numbers and staffing needs. Members realise the need to develop their role further in school management issues and curriculum responsibilities.

Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

153. The inspection team's findings match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report. Although there are good features to the self-evaluation document and process, formal self-evaluation is not sufficiently integrated into the school community.

154. The school produced an informative self-evaluation report prior to the inspection, which provides a clear picture of the school; the document is closely linked to priorities identified in the SDP. The school knows itself well. Priorities in the current SDP are well matched to the recommendations in this report.
155. However, the inspection team concluded that the school had underestimated the effectiveness of its curricular provision and the quality of teaching and its assessment procedures. In two key questions, therefore, the team awarded the school a higher grade than it had given itself but agreed with the grade given by the school in the five other questions.
156. An appropriate action plan was produced in response to the findings of the last inspection report. This was effective in addressing the key issues identified.
157. Progress since the last inspection has been good, particularly in raising standards in curricular subjects. Standards in three subjects judged to be good (Grade 2) in the last inspection have been maintained. Subjects judged to be satisfactory (Grade 3) are now judged to be at least good (Grade 2). Those that were unsatisfactory (Grade 4) in the last inspection are now all at least a Grade 2. Standards in both history and geography have improved significantly, as both subjects are now a Grade 1.
158. In response to the other key issues identified, schemes of work have been revised since the last inspection, but, because of the need to adapt them further in line with the forthcoming Foundation Phase, this remains a recommendation in this inspection. There has been a significant improvement however in ensuring that learning outcomes are clearly identified. The role of curriculum leaders in monitoring standards is still in need of developing further especially because of staff changes. The accommodation is also still making parity of provision for children under-five difficult. Work provided for reception and KS1 is now more challenging as the differentiation provided ensures progression in pupils' learning. The range of investigative work across the curriculum in KS1 has now succeeded in developing pupils as independent learners, especially at the upper end of the key stage.
159. The SDP prioritises effectively and has been an effective vehicle in the self-evaluation programme. Outcomes of targets in the document are regularly evaluated; this is a strong feature. It is clear from the current SDP that the school sees the inspection process as part of the self-evaluation process.
160. The school evaluates its performance in comparison with other schools but because of the small and varying number in each cohort, it is difficult to come to sound conclusions. Targets set are reviewed regularly.
161. Curriculum co-ordinators evaluate their subjects; they write annual action plans and monitor books. Although the proximity of the teaching areas enable them to be constantly aware of how their subjects are progressing, they do not play a sufficiently active role in formally monitoring the teaching and learning in classrooms. This is a significant shortcoming.

162. The self-evaluation report has been an effective document in raising the awareness of the GB about whole school issues and priorities. Members, however, are not sufficiently involved in the self-evaluation process and do not monitor teaching and learning.
163. The opinions of parents are sought through questionnaires; at the pre-inspection meeting parents felt that their opinions are welcomed by the school.
164. A strong feature of the school's self-evaluation process is the involvement of children in the under-fives' classes and pupils in KS1 in the self-evaluation process. In discussions with the inspectors the school council showed that they were very knowledgeable about the school and recent improvements. They were eager to say what suggestions they had made and the actions that had been taken to implement their wishes. The eco committee is very prominent in deciding the school's strategies for sustainable development and have been in the forefront of the school's success in achieving the Green Flag award.

Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings.

165. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
166. There are enough qualified teachers and support staff in the school to deliver the curriculum effectively, although the school has had a number of staff changes over recent months due to falling pupil numbers. Teachers share views and experiences in the best interests of pupils.
167. All members of staff, including teachers who are NQTs, receive the allocated PPA time, which they use effectively. Teachers undertake developmental training regularly, which enables more effective delivery of the curriculum and pastoral support.
168. Support staff work very effectively with teachers, enhancing the quality of education of pupils, especially those with ALN. The 'athro bro', the visiting language support teacher, external initiative leaders and volunteers all contribute effectively to pupils' education.
169. The school clerk undertakes her tasks efficiently, and helps greatly in the smooth running of the school. The caretaker and lunch time staff also work efficiently, and make an important contribution to the caring ethos of the school.
170. An abundance of good learning resources is available to meet the needs of the curriculum for those children under-five and KS1. The quality of resources is good, and teachers make effective and imaginative use of them during lessons. A considerable investment has been made in ICT resources; this is having a positive impact on pupils' standards. The school has good resources for creative and practical work and good use is made of the environment as a valuable learning tool.

171. The school is a single storey building housing three classrooms. It has recently undertaken a programme of repairs and refurbishment indoors and out. The curriculum activity zone in the garden at the rear of the extensive hard surface playground is an outstanding feature and has resulted in the school achieving the Eco Green Flag status.
172. Overall the quality of the accommodation has good features that outweigh shortcomings. The school makes effective use of the space available. However, the way the building is organised at present does not cater fully for the needs of the under-fives, as it does not ensure parity of experiences between children in the nursery and those in the reception class. The nursery classroom has access to an enclosed outdoor playground with soft fall surface but reception children are located in a classroom at the opposite end of the school with no easy access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Difficulties in the layout of the accommodation also limit the school's preparations for the Foundation Phase.
173. The space in the main entrance area is used effectively as a resource base and staff room and the spacious multi purpose hall separate from the main school is very well used for whole school assemblies, lunch, physical education and other activities.
174. The building is cleaned to a good standard and a variety of creative displays and photographs stimulate and interest pupils.
175. Spending decisions match targets and priorities identified in the SDP, and the GB contribute well to this process, which clearly influences the management of resources in the school. Financial implications are clearly thought through, and the school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Grade 2

Language, literacy and communication skills

Nursery children

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

176. Overall, the more mature children in the nursery develop good listening skills. They demonstrate this when listening intently to the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt.' Children are eager to talk about what they themselves had for breakfast when discussing the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They handle books correctly and many keep on task when listening to one of their

favourite stories on a listening station and following the text. They are quick to suggest what clues pictures in books provide, they recall facts in sequence and many can often predict sensibly what comes next in a story. They explore making marks on paper and can follow simple writing patterns accurately.

Shortcomings

177. A number of children have difficulty in listening to instructions and in following a story to the end without becoming restless and the speaking skills of a significant number of children are underdeveloped.

Reception children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

178. Children display good listening skills. They listen intently to the class story and therefore answer questions about the events and characters correctly. They make good progress in their use of a range of Welsh words and expressions. The vast majority express their ideas effectively, using appropriate vocabulary often emulating language used by pupils in KS1 who share their classroom. Most can describe, for example, how they make a sandwich and what they use as a filling. They know a range of words they can use to describe materials such as 'prickly', 'rubbery', and 'shiny'. They recognise key words in a story and can sequence pictures from the story 'The Sandwich that Max Made' correctly.. They understand terminology such as author and illustrator and realise that there are many kinds of writing such as letters and recipes.

Shortcomings

179. There are no important shortcomings.

Personal and social development

Nursery children

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

180. The majority of children are aware of school routines and that they need to listen and conform at certain times of the day. Overall they are able to engage in solitary play, they play alongside others in a small group and they understand that they must act sensibly when a part of a whole class and when the whole school comes together. They show a willingness to share and realise that they cannot join a group in the play area which is over subscribed. They are courteous and most are talkative to visitors. They relate well to each other and show respect for their friends and the toys with which they play.

Shortcomings

181. A minority of younger children have difficulty in keeping on task and often disrupt the start and end of sessions when children are together on the carpet; this sometimes impedes the enjoyment and progress of other children.

Reception children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

182. Children become aware that certain things are special in their lives and that a wall hanging they make in class is special, because they have made it with their friends. They understand the importance of having classroom rules and that taking on responsibilities in turn is a way of helping each other. They understand that when taking on the role of Helpwr Heddiw they are playing their full part in the team. They move between groups in free choice activities confidently and interact well with their peers. They understand the need to dress appropriately for a range of classroom activities and are aware of the need for hygiene as they handle food and prepare for lunch. They conduct themselves sensibly when eating their healthy snacks in class.

Shortcomings

183. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Nursery children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

184. Children can recite numbers up to five clearly and have a good understanding of the concepts of the number three, for example. They are able to put items in sets of basic numbers; they can sort according to colour and size and can sequence objects according to colour. They have a clear understanding of big, middle sized and small and use the terminology correctly when role playing in the three bears' house. They develop a good understanding of a range of mathematical language related to shape and size which they use accurately when talking about their work with construction kits. When filling containers in the sand and water tray they explore the number of small sand and water containers they use to fill a large container. They develop a good understanding of the concept of empty and full.

Shortcomings

185. There are no important shortcomings.

Reception children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

186. Children have a good recognition of number and recognise the symbols for them. They count aloud confidently in both English and Welsh. They have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and understand that they have different properties. They confidently sort out objects according to size and colour. They understand the need for money when buying and selling and have some knowledge of the basic coins they use in their class fruit shop; they realise the purpose of the till. They develop a sound awareness of capacity when using containers in sand and water and understand what is used to weigh objects in the shop. Their use of mathematical terminology including positional language develops well.

Shortcomings

187. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

Nursery children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

188. Children are beginning to understand the concept of time both during the school day and in times past. They show an active interest in the surroundings in the garden when going on a 'bear hunt'. They understand that owls come out at night and that some birds stay here over the winter. They work out that they can record certain features of their journey in simple illustrative maps. Through labelling their own teddy bear with their home address they begin to understand what having an address means. They understand clearly what ingredients are needed to make porridge for the three bears and how it is made. They investigate a range of materials successfully to work out which one is best to keep a teddy bear dry. They understand that some materials soak in water and understand why they are not waterproof. They develop a basic understanding of why some objects float and others sink.

Shortcomings

189. There are no important shortcomings.

Reception children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

190. Children have a good knowledge of plants and trees that grow in the garden including what changes they can expect over the seasons. They understand that there are different kinds of weather and can describe them. They can name a range of fruits and understand that they are considered to be good for their health.
191. They quickly learn the names of various countries and understand that people have different tastes in foods and wear a variety of different clothes all over the world. Children have a developing awareness of the features of the area in which they are growing up and can name a variety of buildings locally. They understand what kinds of houses are seen mainly in Abercynon. They understand how to work parts of the computer and the interactive whiteboard. They know the names of a range of materials and make accurate suggestions about what material would be best for building a house for the three bears.

Shortcomings

192. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Nursery children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

193. Children have a good awareness of space. They use the inside play area in the nursery well and give appropriate regard to safety when moving around. In the nursery outside play area they develop good pushing and peddling skills on a variety of bicycles and make good use of the area for various types of travelling such as running and jumping. Children handle a range of table top equipment with dexterity and can build blocks and fit together jigsaws of various sizes. They handle a range of writing and drawing equipment well and can use scoops to pick up sand and water effectively. They try hard and succeed in dressing themselves appropriately for messy activities and when eating lunch handle eating equipment well.

Shortcomings

194. There are no important shortcomings but children do not practise a sufficient variety of physical skills in the outside play area.

Reception children

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

195. Children develop good skills in class when handling table top items. They are able to use a variety of tools to shape clay in order to make a variety of shapes. They also handle magnets competently when trying to attract materials. They utilise a range of writing and painting equipment well. When playing with the class dolls' house they can handle a variety of very tiny items of furniture appropriately. They use the parts of the computer competently. They show a developing ability to control their bodies when travelling in different ways in the school hall and try hard to sequence their movements.

Shortcomings

196. Children's awareness of space and skills in playing on large equipment and developing kicking, throwing, climbing, running, pushing and pulling skills are underdeveloped because of their restricted accommodation.

Creative development

Nursery children

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

197. Children enthusiastically sing a number of nursery rhymes and songs. They enjoy taking part in fun voice warm ups and try to sing with their best voices. They often accompany their songs by using body parts to do the actions. They develop a good musical vocabulary and use the correct names for a range of untuned instruments and can describe the actions needed to play them. They also develop a good understanding of dynamics, rhythm and pitch when producing sounds. They investigate colour when mixing paint and use a range of materials in their artwork. They take on the roles of the three bears and goldilocks convincingly in the role-play corner.

Shortcomings

198. Children do not make sufficient choices when painting and creating objects and their role play opportunities are limited to the theme they study.

Reception children

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

199. Children have a good knowledge of nursery rhymes and sing them energetically. They display good rhythmic and pitch awareness when singing

'Beth sydd yn y fased siopa?' during their Welsh lesson. They sing together in small groups and understand how they make different sounds. They can name a range of different instruments and understand how they are played. They understand what is meant by pattern and produce attractive prints based on Indian patterns. They use a range of materials to produce attractive looking houses and use clipboards effectively to draw what they observe in the school garden. They role play effectively in the class fruit shop.

Shortcomings

200. There are no important shortcomings.

English

Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

201. Pupils across the key stage develop good listening skills which develop particularly well in Y2 when they listen to a collection of nursery rhymes. Their listening skills are also good when engaged in exercises where they need to predict the next word or line in their class reading book. They listen intently to their peers who offer suggestions about the characters they like in a story or what punctuation marks are needed to help the reader.
202. The majority of pupils in Y1 and Y2 develop good speaking skills. Those chosen for extra support in language sessions held by specialists outside the classroom, gain confidence in speaking on a one-to-one basis and confidently use their skills back in the classroom. They are eager to discuss their tasks in small groups and begin to use extended sentences confidently. They describe items effectively and use a range of comparisons when talking about fruit.
203. In both classes in KS1 pupils are eager to investigate books. They can sequence the events in a story successfully. They understand that it is important to read stories expressively in order to relate to the reader. They understand that strategies such as large bold print in a text convey an important and exciting part of a story.
204. Across the key stage pupils realise that characters are fundamental to a good story and they empathise well with them. They use picture clues well to decide what comes next and know the different purposes of narrative and speech. They can identify the conventions of presenting the spoken word in a story such as speech marks and speech bubbles.
205. Pupils in Y1 copy and write their own short sentences. They begin to understand that there are different kinds of writing; they compose lists and short weather forecasts and sequence sentences about making a sandwich. In Y2 they know how a play is presented in script and what poems look like on paper. They write interesting endings to stories, describe their favourite places and compose appropriate thank you poems and letters.

206. Pupils' knowledge of punctuation is good. In Y1 pupils understand the importance of inserting full stops and capital letters in their work. In Y2 they know when to use exclamation marks, question marks and commas and understand the purpose of an ellipsis in a text.

207. Pupils' spelling and handwriting across the key stage is good.

Shortcomings

208. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh second language

Key stage 1: Grade 2 : Good features with no important shortcomings.

Good features

209. Pupils are consistently eager to use Welsh during class activities and collective worship. They display a good understanding of previously learnt and new vocabulary and sentence patterns used by teachers.

210. Across the key stage pupils use Welsh confidently when greeting at the start of sessions. They know a range of language patterns describing their feelings and can use these in questions and responses. They respond accurately to a range of commands in Welsh and can give likely reasons for the absence of their friends.

211. In Y1 and Y2 pupils can describe variations in the weather accurately, count confidently and know the Welsh words for colours. Some can convey simple messages in Welsh from one class to another.

212. In Y1 pupils confidently use the question 'Ga i?' to ask for items from the shop and they give the appropriate forms of answers. In Y2 pupils ask correctly about likes and dislikes and use 'Beth wyt ti'n hoffi?' when leading a discussion about a variety of foods.

213. Pupils in KS1 can read simple Welsh books such as 'Tedi Twt yn y Siop' and can suggest appropriate words to insert in the story when the text is hidden. They enunciate clearly a number of Welsh songs; their expression and attention to dynamics shows an understanding of what the songs are about.

214. Older pupils can write simple dialogues in Welsh. They spell a wide range of words accurately.

Shortcomings

215. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematics

Key stage 1 : Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

216. Pupils respond correctly and rapidly during oral and mental mathematics sessions, demonstrating effective use of appropriate mathematical language and good recall of number facts.
217. Pupils across the key stage use tables, pictograms and graphs effectively to record information. They make appropriate use of ICT to support and extend their work in data handling.
218. In Y1 pupils read, write and order numbers with increasing accuracy, showing a good understanding of the place value of two digit numbers. They count confidently in twos and count backwards and forwards correctly to twenty.
219. In Y1 pupils are competent at applying their knowledge to a range of practical activities, including simple problem-solving situations, such as counting fillings in sandwiches. Most pupils tell the time correctly to the hour, and have a good understanding of money. They count coins accurately when role-playing in the classroom shop.
220. Pupils in Y1 use non-standard measures effectively when weighing and measuring length, and recognise two-dimensional shapes easily; they describe the properties of these shapes correctly.
221. In Y2 pupils know number facts to twenty, and the vast majority work successfully with two-digit numbers, showing a good understanding of place value. They count confidently in fives and tens to a hundred, and add and subtract capably.
222. Standards in investigative mathematics in Y2 are good. Pupils in Y2 name and describe the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes well. They use standard measures confidently when measuring length and capacity, and their understanding of money is good.

Shortcomings

223. There are no important shortcomings.

Science

Key stage 1 : Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

224. Pupils across the key stage have good enquiry and investigative skills. They have good observational skills; they observe closely and purposefully using their senses critically.
225. Pupils in Y1 recognise and name common materials easily. They discuss similarities and differences between materials in various rooms in the home effectively and distinguish well between natural and man-made ones; they sort them knowledgeably according to properties.
226. In Y2 pupils' understanding that materials can be changed by heating is good. As they investigate the effect of heat on various ones, they discuss confidently the ways in which butter and wax change when heated, and predict sensibly what the materials will look like when cooled after heating.
227. Pupils across the key stage have a good understanding of the concept of a fair test and make reasonable predictions about the likely outcomes of their investigations. In Y2 they are aware of the need to check their findings by repeating observations if necessary, for example, when investigating how the colour of bread changes when making toast.
228. Pupils in both year groups record their work in a variety of appropriate ways, through discussion, drawing and writing, and through creating symbols, charts and tables. For example, Y1 pupils use a simple table to record the results of an investigation to identify the flavour of jelly beans using their sense of taste. Y2 pupils assess evidence obtained intelligently, and show a good understanding of the purposes of the investigations.
229. All pupils use appropriate scientific vocabulary, for example, words related to texture and appearance, when describing the properties of everyday materials, such as metals, plastics and textiles.
230. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things is good. Y1 pupils' knowledge of the life cycle of a butterfly is particularly sound, and they are able to classify animals and plants successfully, according to observable differences and similarities. Through visits to the Daerwynno Centre, Y2 pupils have a good knowledge about numerous mini-beasts that live in the forest. They know that plants need light and water to grow and can distinguish between different types of leaves.
231. Y2 pupils describe ways of keeping healthy, and easily identify foods that are part of a healthy diet. They recognise and name the external parts of the human body effectively.

232. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of the benefits of electricity. Y1 pupils identify many everyday electrical appliances and Y2 pupils construct simple circuits involving batteries, wires, bulbs and buzzers. They understand that electrical devices will not work if there is a break in the circuit. Y2 pupils are also aware that there are many kinds of sound and many sources. They know that sounds are heard when they enter the ear, and understand well that as sound travels away from its source it becomes fainter.
233. Through their investigations with magnets, Y1 pupils recognise magnetic and non-magnetic materials well.

Shortcomings

234. There are no important shortcomings.

Information technology

Key stage 1 : Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

235. Pupils are confident in their use of information technology equipment and software. They load programs successfully and independently, and use both the keyboard and mouse to make selections and respond to program instructions. They enter, save and retrieve their work effectively.
236. Y1 pupils move images on the screen confidently and use art packages effectively to create pictures and colourful patterns. With adult support, they construct simple graphs to show their favourite fruit.
237. Y1 pupils use a word processor successfully and more able pupils can adapt the text as required. They realise that devices, such as robotic toys and vehicles, respond to commands and signals.
238. Y2 pupils' word processing skills develop well. They use upper and lower case letters and different fonts appropriately and add pictures to text. They make good use of the computer to create attractive pictures, showing a good measure of mastery of drawing and painting tools.
239. Y2 pupils are familiar with some of the uses of information technology in everyday appliances in the home and in equipment used in school, such as the listening centre. They use the interactive whiteboard confidently, demonstrating a good understanding of the different tools available.
240. Y2 pupils make appropriate use of the Internet to locate and print information from a specific website. They organise and classify information effectively and present their findings using charts or graphs.

Shortcomings

241. Although there are no important shortcomings, pupils' skills in using the internet are underdeveloped.

Design technology

Key stage 1: Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings.

242. No lessons in design and technology were seen during the inspection. Evidence recorded, however, indicates that standards are good.

Good features

243. Pupils across the key stage have a good knowledge and understanding of the process of designing, making and evaluating. They use a good variety of pictures and words to record steps taken in creating their product.
244. Pupils discuss their work confidently and enthusiastically, using appropriate vocabulary to describe different techniques and processes. For example, they use the terms 'weft' and 'warp' naturally when describing an investigation into the structure of fabrics.
245. Pupils in Y1 discuss their ideas and evaluate simple products before focusing on practical tasks. For example, they investigate the structure of fabrics, such as hessian, successfully when designing table mats. Y2 pupils analyse market trends effectively before developing their own ideas; for example, when creating their own healthy cereals, they give careful consideration to the appearance of the packaging in order to attract customers to the product.
246. All pupils discuss their experiences in a broad range of contexts well, such as the steps they take when making cakes and smoothies. Older pupils describe in detail how they create 'dream catchers' with twigs, ribbon and shiny materials during a visit to the Daerwynno Centre.
247. Pupils assemble, join and combine a broad range of materials and components effectively and safely. They choose suitable materials for the tasks and, when required, measure, mark, shape and cut accurately. They experiment with a variety of joining techniques, such as gluing and stitching; their finished products reflect their original plans and are of good quality.
248. Pupils in both year groups evaluate their ideas and designs as work progresses, and make adaptations as necessary.
249. Pupils across the key stage use ICT appropriately to enhance their work. They produce effective computer-generated plans when designing houses and know that electrical circuits can be used to produce movement in some products. Y1 pupils can control the movement and direction of the floor turtle effectively by

programming it with a sequence of instructions. Y2 pupils use simple mechanisms, structures and axles effectively in their products. They successfully compare different ways of reinforcing a structure when making moving vehicles.

250. Pupils' knowledge about the use made of design and technology in society is appropriate.

Shortcomings

251. There are no important shortcomings.

History

Key stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

Outstanding features

252. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of chronology and that people change over time from babies and toddlers to adults and old people. They also have an outstanding knowledge about how the shops in Abercynon have changed over time and they can talk about the changes to services in the village.

Good features

253. Pupils have a good knowledge of historical terminology and use words, such as 'then' and 'long ago' and 'when great grandma was little', correctly.

254. Across the key stage pupils have a good understanding of homes in the past. They are aware of the features of Celtic houses and understand that some people lived in mansions and castles. They consolidate their knowledge well when visiting Llancaiach Fawr and Caerphilly castle. They understand what materials were used to build a Norman castle.

255. Pupils understand that homes looked different when their great grandparents were young and that most houses were built of stone. They know that light sources have changed considerably over time and that holidays people take today are vastly different from the past. They handle a number of artefacts such as butter pats and washing and ironing equipment purposefully.

256. Following a visit to the Museum of Welsh life, they can identify differences between houses in the past and now; they understand that windows were smaller, that roofs were often made of straw, that water did not come from taps and that open fires were the focal point of the home.

257. Pupils understand that supermarkets are a feature of modern life. They realise that coins have changed and that prices have also increased considerably. They use their visit to the Cynon Valley museum well to consolidate their

learning. They also understand how transport has changed considerably from the era of the steam train.

258. Pupils have a good understanding of people who are important in the history of Wales such as Jemima Nicholas and the followers of Rebecca.
259. Across the key stage pupils use photographs well to further their understanding of the past and know that they can obtain historical information from the internet..

Shortcomings

260. There are no important shortcomings.

Geography

Key stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

Outstanding features

261. Pupils' geographical enquiry skills are outstanding
262. Pupils in both year groups have a very sound knowledge of their locality. They describe their own homes in detail, and make perceptive observations about houses in general in Abercynon. They have a thorough knowledge of shops and services in the village and suggest sensible ways in which their local environment could be improved.
263. Pupils' map making and map-reading skills are outstanding. Through drawing route maps from their homes to favourite shops, and from school to the post office, they develop an excellent understanding of why maps are produced and used. Y2 pupils make very effective use of simple grid references to locate specific features during a walk in St.Gwynno Forest and they use aerial maps particularly well to observe physical features.

Good features

264. Pupils select information effectively to identify differences between their home village and a seaside location further afield. They respond intelligently to questions about both locations.
265. Pupils in both year groups have a good knowledge and understanding of other countries. They know a great deal about India and Pakistan, and discuss very well the location of the countries and their physical features, people's beliefs, costumes and customs.

266. By the end of the key stage pupils use directions based on the four points of the compass accurately. They name and locate the countries of the United Kingdom correctly on a map.
267. Y1 pupils know a great deal about the seasons, especially winter, and understand well that weather and climate can influence people's lives. Pupils in Y1 and Y2 realise how people can improve the environment by recycling and saving energy.
268. All pupils use terms such as hill, river, and railway station correctly when describing geographical features.

Shortcomings

269. There are no important shortcomings.

Art

Key stage 1: Good features and no important shortcomings.

270. No lessons in art were seen during the inspection. Evidence recorded however indicates that standards are good.

Good features

271. Pupils across the key stage have a good understanding of colour and shade and that mixing paint can produce a variety of effects.
272. Pupils have a broad experience in using a range of materials and techniques. They use a variety of brushes and printing equipment when creating repeated patterns. When making patterned prints they use cotton buds, bottle tops and cotton reels effectively. They create very attractive tie and dye patterns, which are made into an attractive wall hanging.
273. Across the key stage pupils use a variety of paper materials including recycled paper creatively to make their versions of houses emulating the designs of Cefyn Burgess.
274. Pupils use twigs, leaves seeds and cones to make nature collages using a variety of gluing and sticking techniques and they develop a good understanding of texture.
275. In Y1 and Y2 pupils have a good understanding of the type of art which is popular in various cultures. In Y1 they create a colourful Chinese dragon showing a sound awareness of pattern. They also explore patterns successfully when emulating traditional Indian and Islamic ones.
276. In their three dimensional work, pupils work effectively with a visiting ceramic artist to create tiles showing house patterns. They use clay well and develop

an awareness of line and pattern when using it to create the effect of windows, doors and other features. They use a number of pressing and pinching techniques before the tiles are glazed successfully.

277. Pupils have some knowledge of well known artists such as Van Gogh, and use his ideas when creating flower pictures and drawing the contents of rooms. They also improve their observational skills when looking closely at photographs of houses and homes and drawing their own. They draw from memory recalling the colour of paint and stonework.
278. Pupils use a computer paint program successfully in order to create a variety of pictures of colourful and attractive houses and homes in a variety of colours and shapes. They also design attractive posters in the context of their eco work.

Shortcomings

279. There are no important shortcomings.

Music

Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

280. Pupils across the key stage know a number of language songs, nonsense ones and nursery rhymes. They confidently sing them as individuals and in small groups in front of peers.
281. Pupils develop a good awareness of pitch and rhythm. They can identify which sounds are low ones and which are high and understand that some instruments play high sounds while others produce low ones. They listen to a rainbow song to identify the pitch of sounds. In Y1 they understand the need to change the shapes of their mouths to produce a variety of sounds. They can sort sounds into groups successfully.
282. Across the key stage pupils confidently clap a variety of rhythms and identify how many beats there are in a number of words. They are able to walk accurately to the rhythm of a variety of nursery rhymes.
283. Pupils are eager to identify a range of different untuned instruments and use the terms 'plucking' 'beating' and 'scraping' accurately to describe the appropriate actions for playing them. They are aware that different instruments are popular in various countries; for instance, they understand from the story 'The Raja's Secret'; that the sitar is popular in Indian music. They are also aware of instruments used in Africa and that the harp is popular in Wales. When experimenting with brass instruments they realise that it is not easy to obtain a sound.

284. Pupils listen to music in response to pictures and stories and create an accompaniment to a pizza story. They use appropriate instruments to convey words such as 'sprinkle', 'roll', and 'chop' when accompanying the story. They also use instruments effectively to convey an accompaniment based on the sounds in a poem.
285. Pupils understand the importance of the conductor and are eager to take on the role or respond to a conductor's commands when making music.

Shortcomings

286. There are no important shortcomings but pupils' experience in composing and appraising is not fully developed.

Physical education

Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

287. All pupils in KS1 have a good awareness of the benefits of exercise on health, and know the reasons for warming up before exercising.
288. In their gymnastics lesson Y1 pupils show good control over their bodies and use space sensibly. They use a good variety of travelling movements to create lively sequences and effectively evaluate their own performance and those of their peers.
289. In their dance lesson, based on making friends, Y2 pupils express their feelings well through gestures. They move sensitively showing a good awareness of the whole body; they display good co-ordination.
290. In an Indian dance session pupils in both year groups show good awareness of body parts, especially their hands, and respond well to musical stimuli. Their 'Funny Bones' dances, inspired by a visiting professional dancer, show pupils working well as individuals and as members of a group to create amusing and exciting dance sequences.
291. Y1 and Y2 pupils' skills benefit greatly from coaching sessions with professional sportsmen and women, such as a football coach, to further develop their ball-handling skills. Their jumping, throwing and balancing skills are developed well by the ABC Sports Challenge. They have good climbing and balancing skills, as seen when they use the large climbing apparatus provided by the Playground Partnership Project.
292. Photographic evidence of physical education lessons show pupils getting onto and over gymnastic apparatus in a variety of ways, and handling small apparatus, such as balls and hoops correctly when participating in obstacle races.

Shortcomings

293. There are no important shortcomings.

Religious education

Key Stage 1:Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features

294. Pupils across the key stage have a good understanding of what it means to be a Christian.
295. Pupils have a sound awareness that the Bible is a special book for those who believe in God. They empathise with Mary Jones' effort to possess her own copy. They understand that the Bible tells its readers that God created the world over six days and rested on the seventh day. They understand why Sunday is a special day for Christians.
296. Across the key stage pupils can recall stories from the New Testament and show a clear understanding of the significance of Easter and Christmas celebrations and other events in the Christian calendar, such as Shrove Tuesday.
297. Visits to Christian places of worship in the community reinforce their understanding of Christianity. They know that these are very special places. They understand that some Christians are baptised. They can name artefacts found in chapels and churches such as lecterns and pews, and understand the role of the vicar.
298. Pupils know that saying prayers is a way of addressing God and realise that they have to conduct themselves appropriately when they do so.
299. Across the key stage pupils understand the differences between Christian customs and those of the Jewish religion. They understand that the Torah is a special book for the Jews and that they use a yad carefully to prevent any damage when handling the Torah. Their visit to a synagogue consolidates their understanding of how Jews worship and what clothes they wear when praying. They know that they also have celebrations and special times.
300. Pupils talk confidently about their own special times and special possessions. They are aware of the importance of sharing and caring for others. They understand the significance of their eco-activities as a way of cleaning up the world and understand the importance of rules within their community

Shortcomings

301. There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

302. We are very pleased the inspection findings recognise the good progress the school has made since the last inspection especially the improved standards in geography, design technology and music.
303. We are pleased the inspectors noted the outstanding features of using the local community to enhance pupils' learning and also the promotion of new initiatives which has a positive effect on pupils too.
304. The inspection report clearly states that the school knows itself well. In particular, the report confirms that we all work together to make our school a happy, caring place where everyone feels respected and valued.
305. The report also acknowledges the role the governing body plays in the running of the school.
306. An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations, three of which have already been identified in the school development plan for this year. Together with the governing body we will discuss ways to take the school forward to address these recommendations. Where possible, these will be met before the end of the school year and any not met immediately, will form the basis of our school development plan for next year.
307. The staff would like to thank the inspection team for the positive and courteous way they conducted the inspection.
308. A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governing body annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making on the action plan.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Abercynon Infants School
School type	Nursery and Infant
Age-range of pupils	3-7 years
Address of school	Ynysmeurig Road, Abercynon Rhondda Cynon Taf.
Postcode	CF45 4SU
Telephone number	0 1443 740393

Headteacher	Mrs Angela Stokes
Date of appointment	June 1998
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Victor Lloyd- Nesling JP
Registered inspector	Mrs Eleri Betts
Dates of inspection	Feb 4-6 2008

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	21	10	15	9	-	-	-	-	55

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	3	2	3.6

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	11:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10.5:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	17
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2007	82.2%	84.0%	90.7%
Summer 2007	85.2%	87.3%	92.5%
Autumn 2007	89.5%	88.5%	91.2%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y2:				
			10				
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	70	20
		National	0	3	14	63	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	70	20
		National	0	4	15	55	26
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	70	20
		National	0	5	16	68	11
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	100	0
		National	0	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	80	20
		National	0	2	11	65	22
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	80	10
		National	0	1	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	90%	In Wales	80.1%

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent a total of seven inspector days in the school. The headteacher took on the role of nominee. A team meeting was held prior to the inspection.

Inspectors visited 37 sessions or part sessions.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, GB and parents before the inspection; and
- headteacher and teachers and they talked consistently to children during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- a comprehensive range of documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- a range of children's work and activities.

Four questionnaires were returned by parents of which a 100% were positive.

The inspection team also held post-inspection meetings with the staff and the GB.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs Eleri Betts Registered Inspector	Context of the school Summary report Recommendations Key Questions 1/3/5/6 Under-fives, English, Welsh, history music, art, religious education.
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1/3/4/7
Mrs Zohrah Evans Team Inspector	Key Questions 2/4/7 Mathematics, science, design technology, information technology, geography, physical education.
Mrs Angela Stokes Headteacher Nominee	Attending inspection team meetings, supplying information and writing the school response.

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, the headteacher, staff, pupils and students for their co-operation and courtesy during the inspection.

The inspection contractor

E.L.L.I.S. (Cymru) Ltd.
Willastones
13 Heol Pentre'r Felin
Llantwit Major
Vale of Glamorgan
CF61 2XS