

**Inspection under Section 10 of the
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**YSGOL ABERSOCH
LÔN GWYDRYN
ABERSOCH
PWELLHELI
GWYNEDD
LL53 7EA**

School Number: 661/2009

Date of Inspection: 28 – 30 September 2004

by

**Mr D M Cray
Registered Inspector 92/16768**

Date: 30 November 2004

Under Estyn contract number: T/01/04/P

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Ysgol Abersoch was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Ysgol Abersoch took place between 28-30 September 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr D M Cray 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
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

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Ysgol Abersoch is a small school providing education for pupils between 3-8 years of age. It serves the seaside village of Abersoch and its rural hinterland and is maintained by Gwynedd Local Education Authority. The area is described as not being particularly prosperous and heavily dependent on tourism. A very small percentage of pupils come from Welsh speaking homes (5%). However, Welsh is the primary medium of the life and work of the school and by the time the pupils transfer at the beginning of year 4 to nearby Ysgol Sarn Bach to complete their primary education, they have a firm grasp of the Welsh language. They reflect the full ability range.
- 2 There are currently 21 pupils between 3 and 8 years of age on the school register and they are admitted on a part-time basis in the September following their third birthday and on a full-time basis in the September following their fourth birthday.
- 3 Some 15% of pupils receive free school meals (Gwynedd 15%; Wales 19%). No pupils are considered to have special educational needs.
- 4 The school was last inspected during the autumn term of 1998 and since then there have been changes to the staffing complement, and a new headteacher was appointed in September 2003.

The school's priorities and targets

The school's aims and objectives include:

- create an environment and atmosphere where pupils can nurture mutual respect and care for each other, and where they are able to develop their understanding and come to discover the beauty of the world in which they live;
 - provide a full opportunity for each pupil to develop and play a full part in the social and cultural life of a bilingual community;
 - develop self-discipline, self-respect and self-confidence through various activities and respect and appreciate the characters, talents and convictions of other people.
- 6 The priorities for the current year include:
- self-evaluation;
 - produce a new Language scheme;
 - raise standards in science;

- establish a joint project with Ysgol Sarn Bach to exchange staff strengths and move pupils between schools;
 - ensure that raising standards is a continuous process in the area of information and communications technology.
- 7 The school sets targets according to the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government. They are not published in order to safeguard the small number of pupils in question. However, they are discussed with a member of the advisory team of the Local Education Authority.

Summary

- 8 Ysgol Abersoch is a good school. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgements in relation to the standards achieved by pupils and other areas of their work.

Table of grades awarded

- 9 The inspection team adjudged the work of the school as follows:

Key question	Inspection grade
1 How well do the learners achieve?	2
2 How effective is the teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences fulfil learners' needs and interests and those of the wider community?	2
4 How good is the care, leadership and support for learners?	2
5 How effective is the strategic leadership and management?	2
6 How well do the leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7 How efficient are the leaders and managers in their use of resources?	2

Standards

- 10 Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 1	Grade 1
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 11 The school sets targets that are realistic for its pupils and they are met on a regular basis.
- 12 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

- 13 Over the years, the school's results in key stage 1 as determined by teacher assessments, and previously, by test and task results, in the core subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science, compare very favourably with county and national levels. They also compare well with comparator schools in Wales. There are no obvious differences in the performance of boys and girls in this key stage.
- 14 The under-fives and the pupils in the key stages make good progress in the development of their key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy, and in their use of information and communications technology across the curriculum.
- 15 Although the majority of pupils come from English speaking backgrounds, their success in mastering the Welsh language at an early stage is one of the school's primary strengths.
- 16 The vast majority of pupils show a high level of motivation. They behave well, showing courtesy and respect to all.
- 17 Pupils' levels of attendance over the past year are slightly below 90%. This is strikingly low and this aspect is adjudged as being in the Grade 4 category. There is a strong tendency for some parents to withdraw their children from school for family holidays during term time.

Quality of education and training

- 18 In the lessons observed, it was adjudged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
27%	40%	33%	---	----

- 19 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is considerably higher than the Welsh Assembly Government target of 95% of lessons being satisfactory and 50% good or better.
- 20 The teachers motivate the pupils to learn and they set appropriate challenges for them. In the best lessons observed, the questioning was effective with variety in the nature of the questions asked in order to generate suitable responses.
- 21 The school fulfils the requirements for assessment and reporting on pupils' progress, although the reports do not always give clear guidance to parents as to what is required to help their child to move forward.
- 22 The learning experiences offered by the school fulfil the needs of each individual pupil. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is planned in a way that ensures natural continuity and progression from one stage of teaching to the next. It conforms to statutory requirements.

- 23 Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is promoted very effectively, and is one of the school's major strengths.
- 24 Parents make a valuable contribution to the life of the school through their willing support at all times and the school plays an important part in the life of the local community.
- 25 The school provides a caring and safe environment and atmosphere for all pupils.
- 26 Pupils' behaviour and performance are monitored effectively, but the procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are not sufficiently sound.
- 27 The school promotes affirmative action to overcome any prejudices and presuppositions based on gender, race, language or social background, and to respect diversity, according to the guidelines contained in the equality policy.

Leadership and management

- 28 The headteacher provides a clear and purposeful sense of direction for the work of the school and undertakes her duties effectively. She has high expectations for the school for the future and is well supported by all members of staff.
- 29 The governing body is very supportive of the school and meets regularly. The headteacher is primarily responsible for setting the school's strategic direction and there is room for the governing body to further develop its role in terms of monitoring standards and the quality of provision.
- 30 The administration and recording of pupil absences do not fulfil the requirements of Welsh Assembly Government circulars. The school discharges its responsibilities in terms of teaching time requirements and the handbook distributed to parents. There are some minor shortcomings in the annual report.
- 31 The school's self-evaluation arrangements are developing well, reflecting a culture of self-criticism. Everyone involved is committed to maintaining and improving standards and the quality of provision.
- 32 The findings of the inspection team correspond to the school's judgements in each of the seven key questions.
- 33 The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The targets in the action plan dealing with key issues identified in the previous inspection have been achieved and the steps taken have had a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement.

- 34 The school operates with fewer than two full-time teachers, including the headteacher. It succeeds in providing a good range of expertise by using part-time teachers who have expertise in various curricular areas. They are all experienced teachers and are well grounded as to what is required to provide effective teaching for each pupil.
- 35 The daily administrative procedures are undertaken smoothly and to particularly good effect. The current arrangements ensure that there are two adults on the school campus at all times.
- 36 In general, the school has a good supply of good quality resources for the age range in its care. There is room to improve the supply of large toys for the under-fives.
- 37 The school building and grounds are well maintained. There is a high standard of cleanliness throughout the building. The quality of the displays is an outstanding feature and they make a considerable contribution to a particularly stimulating learning environment.
- 38 Disabled access is provided through one of the school's side entrances, but this is not so for the main entrance because of the steps leading up to the door.

Recommendations

- 39 In order to improve the areas inspected at the school, staff and governors need to:
- maintain and build upon the good standards found in the subject areas inspected;
 - set specific targets for improving the low attendance levels and regularly monitor the levels achieved;
 - further develop the role of governors in the work of monitoring standards and the quality of provision;
 - strengthen the reports provided for parents on pupils' progress by giving clearer guidance on what is required in order to make further improvement;
 - ensure that statutory requirements are fulfilled in relation to:
 - the annual report of the governing body;
 - school registers;
 - improve the supply of large toys for the under-fives.

The governing body is responsible for changing its present development plan to incorporate action steps to be taken in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receipt of the report showing how the school intends to address the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be distributed to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do the learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 40 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 41 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 42 Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 1	Grade 1
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 43 The school sets targets that are realistic for its pupils and they are met on a regular basis.
- 44 Over recent years, the school has not published the results of assessments conducted on pupils at the end of key stage 1 in order to safeguard the anonymity of the small number of pupils in question. The numbers are also too small to make meaningful comparisons with county and national data on a year-by-year basis. However, it can be seen that over the years the school's results as determined by teacher assessments, and previously by test and task results in the core subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science, compare very favourably with county and national levels. They also compare well with comparator schools in Wales. There are no obvious differences in the performance of boys and girls in this key stage.
- 45 The school does not take part in end of key stage 2 pupil assessments because they are transferred to Ysgol Sarn Bach at the beginning of year 4.
- 46 The under-fives and the pupils in the key stages make good progress in the development of their key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy, and in their use of information and communications technology across the curriculum. The majority listen attentively to presentations by their teachers and to each other. They speak clearly, read correctly and confidently and they write well for various purposes. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in subjects such as science and information and communications technology across the curriculum to gather information,

- understand new concepts and present their work. Pupils in key stage 2 achieve good standards in their use of Welsh and English in their studies.
- 47 Although the majority of pupils come from English speaking backgrounds, their success in mastering the Welsh language at an early stage is one of the school's primary strengths. Although there is a tendency for the younger pupils to turn to English when talking to each other and in informal situations, they are fluently bilingual by the time of their transfer at the end of year 3.
- 48 Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and as they develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. They give of their best and they work at the highest level of their ability. They have a good awareness of what is required of them to improve their standards of achievement.
- 49 The vast majority show a high level of motivation, they are enthusiastic and contribute well and conscientiously to lessons. Occasionally, teachers need to keep an eye on individual pupils to ensure that they persevere with the task in hand and that they concentrate throughout the lesson.
- 50 Pupils behave well in the classroom and at play. They have a clear understanding of the expectations and values promoted by the school. They are courteous and respectful of all.
- 51 Pupils' levels of attendance over the past year are slightly below 90%. Because of the small number of pupils on the school register, the absence of individual pupils has a marked effect on attendance levels. However, they are strikingly low and this aspect is adjudged as being in the Grade 4 category. There is a strong tendency for some parents to withdraw their children from school for family holidays during term. The school has no specific targets to improve levels of attendance.
- 52 Pupils have a good awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities and diversity in their own community and beyond.
- 53 As part of the formal curriculum and in extra-curricular activities, pupils are well prepared to play a full part in the life of the local community.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

54 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.

55 In the lessons observed, it was adjudged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
27%	40%	33%	--	---

56 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is considerably higher than the Welsh Assembly Government target of 95% of lessons being satisfactory and 50% good or better.

57 The teachers motivate the pupils to learn and they set appropriate challenges for them as individual pupils. In general, the learning sessions are appropriately timed, although there were some instances of excessively long presentations during the inspection. Teachers employ an appropriate range of strategies to support their pupils and they provide regular learning support through suitable and timely interventions.

58 There are good working relationships within classes. Teachers are very aware of the needs of individual pupils, providing appropriate support. They show respect to the pupils and their work, and this is reflected in the pupils' attitudes towards their work and to their fellow pupils.

59 Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge. In the best lessons observed, the questioning was effective, with variety seen in the nature of the questions asked in order to generate suitable responses. Teachers use a range of contexts and appropriate resources. Although there are no pupils on the register of special educational needs, teachers are aware of the needs of individual pupils and the tasks they set are appropriately differentiated.

60 In general, the planning is effective and although both classes contain pupils from more than one learning stage, their requirements are met through careful planning.

61 Teachers make effective use of a range of teaching methods and resources to promote pupils' active participation in the lessons. Lesson presentations are clear, building on pupils' prior knowledge. Suitable resources are used in a purposeful way to support the learning, for example, artefacts in art lessons, planning sheets in language lessons. When the part-time nursery assistant is in school, effective use is made of her skills to support the development of nursery age children at the school.

- 62 The school's equal opportunities policy is implemented fully in order to ensure that each pupil, regardless of race, gender and/or disabilities, is considered equal and is respected on the basis of his or her ability, achievement and particular gifts.
- 63 Pupils' linguistic needs are fully satisfied and the work undertaken to develop pupils' bilingual skills is one of the school's outstanding features.
- 64 Teachers monitor and review the progress of individual pupils on a regular basis. They discuss their work with the pupils as it is marked, setting appropriate targets to ensure progress. Occasionally, individual pupils set their own targets.
- 65 Teachers operate an effective assessment system across the curriculum. Standardised tests are used in addition to teacher assessments. Assessments are recorded in individual files that contain a range of relevant information for each pupil. The school has embarked on the process of creating subject portfolios to support and moderate the assessment work, and there is room to continue to develop this aspect of its work.
- 66 The school fulfils the requirements for assessment and reporting on pupils' progress, although the reports do not always give clear guidance to parents as to what is required to help their child to move forward.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 67 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 68 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 69 The learning experiences offered by the school fulfil the needs of each individual pupil. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is planned in a way that ensures natural continuity and progression from one stage of teaching to the next. It conforms to statutory requirements.
- 70 The school's long and mid term planning in each curricular area clearly identifies the opportunities to develop pupils' basic and key skills. They are not as apparent in the short term planning.
- 71 The school participates in competitions and activities arranged locally by a range of organisations. These activities expand and enhance pupils' experiences.
- 72 Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is promoted very effectively, and is one of the school's major strengths. The daily sessions of collective worship are supported by a detailed and comprehensive policy and scheme that outlines themes for reflection.
- 73 The school fulfils the requirements within the Framework for Personal and Social Education, giving appropriate attention to all relevant aspects in designated lessons, including Circle Time.
- 74 Effective partnerships have been developed with several agencies. Parents make a valuable contribution to the life of the school through their willing support at all times and positive responses were received at the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires returned. The school plays an important part in the life of the local community and holds and supports events at local venues that are very well supported. There are also good links with the local tertiary college.
- 75 The school has a number of good links with local employers that are used to develop the curriculum, and the headteacher has a formal link with a local recording company. In its self-evaluation report, the school has indicated its intention to further develop its links with the world of work.

- 76 Pupils' bilingual skills are developed to particularly good effect and this is reflected in their growing ability to work in both languages.
- 77 Appropriate attention is given to sustainability and global citizenship. Pupils are able to talk confidently about the importance of saving energy, safeguarding the world from pollution, and the school operates an effective recycling scheme.
- 78 The emphasis on encouraging pupils to become independent learners enables them to develop problem-solving skills and to make their own decisions, and this lays a good foundation for developing their enterprise skills.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 79 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 80 The school provides a caring and safe environment and atmosphere for pupils, working closely with parents and carers to provide support and guidance. The system of sharing information with parents about the term's work in sheet form is good practice, and is a means of promoting parents' understanding of their children's work requirements.
- 81 The effective arrangements for the admission of new pupils prepares them for starting school at three years of age. Parents show their appreciation of the school's care of their children.
- 82 Teachers' knowledge of each individual pupil is good and they all receive the same level of required support in accordance with their needs. Each pupil receives access to the personal and social education programme, and appropriate arrangements are in place to secure the support of specialist services as and when required.
- 83 Pupils' behaviour and performance are monitored effectively, but the procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are not sufficiently sound.
- 84 There is a clear emphasis in the science curriculum, as well as in the school's procedures and activities in general, on healthy development. Pupils' safety and well being are of paramount importance to the school in general, and are given a high priority by teachers and other staff.
- 85 The school has a clear policy on child protection, and all members of staff are aware of its requirements and procedures. The school handbook gives due attention to the grievance procedure, and is a useful guide for parents if required.
- 86 Currently, there are no pupils on the register of special educational needs. However, appropriate procedures are in place and a regular audit is undertaken of pupils' needs so that the school is able to take immediate action, if required. Overall, there is adequate space and access inside the school for children with physical disabilities, but attention is required to facilitate better access to the building from the external play area.
- 87 When pupils' behaviour is in danger of affecting a lesson, and on their development as learners, the teachers in general are able to deploy strategies and procedures to control the situation to secure appropriate progress. The school has effective policies and procedures to deal with any instances of aggressive or oppressive behaviour or with any similar situations.

- 88 The school promotes affirmative action to overcome any prejudices and presuppositions based on gender, race, language or social background, and to respect diversity, according to the guidelines contained in the equality policy.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 89 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 90 The headteacher provides a clear and purposeful sense of direction for the work of the school and undertakes her duties effectively. She has high expectations for the school for the future.
- 91 The school has a *Statement of Vision* produced in partnership with parents and there is a good range of appropriate management and curricular policies in place to support the work. The agreed values that are promoted provide equality for all and this is well reflected in the school's daily work and activities.
- 92 Good consideration is given to county priorities and to the guidance received from the Welsh Assembly Government. Everyone involved are aware of the requirements and this is reflected in school practices. The headteacher is well supported by all members of staff.
- 93 The initiative to develop a closer partnership with a nearby school is worthwhile, with sharing of expertise and resources becoming increasingly apparent.
- 94 Self-evaluation procedures and target setting are developing well in the school's management strategies and much has been achieved in a short period under the guidance of the headteacher who is relatively new in post. Curriculum subjects, together with other aspects of the provision, are evaluated regularly and the findings are shared appropriately.
- 95 Performance management has a positive impact on the school and contributes well to the process of identifying staff needs and this in turn has a positive impact on pupils' achievements.
- 96 The governing body, includes members who have given loyal service for many years, is very supportive to the school and meets regularly. The headteacher is primarily responsible for setting the school's strategic direction and there is room for the governing body to further develop its role in terms of monitoring standards and the quality of provision.
- 97 The administration and recording of pupil absences do not fulfil the requirements of Welsh Assembly Government circulars. The school discharges its responsibilities in terms of teaching time requirements and the handbook distributed to parents. There are some minor shortcomings in the annual report.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 98 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 99 The school's self-evaluation arrangements are developing well, reflecting a culture of self-criticism. The contribution of the headteacher in this regard has been crucial in guiding the school towards a better understanding of its performance. Everyone involved is committed to maintaining and raising standards and quality of provision.
- 100 The school has in the last year undertaken a comprehensive audit of the school's position and has begun implementing a programme of evaluating standards achieved by pupils in curriculum subjects as well as the quality of several aspects of provision, including teaching. The arrangements are based on collecting direct evidence, which was done accurately; for example, the school's perceived grades in its subject evaluations correspond to those awarded by the inspection team
- 101 The information emanating from the school's processes is used to identify those priorities and targets that are appropriate for the school to develop.
- 102 The school has begun to work systematically within a balanced three-year cycle of evaluating standards and quality.
- 103 The school development plan is prepared annually and is supported by staff and governors. It contains a useful evaluation of the priorities for the previous year, together with an overview of those to be developed over the longer term. Current priorities are dealt with under a number of suitable headings that facilitate the monitoring process.
- 104 The school sets targets for the core subjects at the end of key stage 1 for a period of three years. The targets set are appropriate, realistic and are achieved on a regular basis.
- 105 Because of the very small numbers of pupils in each of the curricular years, the comparison with county and national performance is not always wholly meaningful. The school therefore places considerable emphasis on the individual qualitative targets set for each pupil. The pupils themselves contribute fully to setting these targets and this in turn contributes to the prevailing climate of high expectations.
- 106 Although there are no formal arrangements in place to consider parents' views, the school operates in a transparent manner; for example, parents receive termly details about the contents of the curriculum and this enables them to evaluate what is presented to their children.

- 107 The school's self-evaluation report presented to inspectors prior to the inspection is based on the agreed views of all staff. It effectively identifies the school's strengths and to a lesser extent the areas in need of development. However, evidence within other documentation relating to self-evaluation supports the view that the school has a good understanding of its shortcomings and that it is planning appropriately to address them.
- 108 The findings of the inspection team correspond to the school's opinions in each of the seven key questions.
- 109 The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The targets in the action plan dealing with key issues identified in the previous inspection have been achieved and the steps taken have had a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 110 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 111 The school operates with fewer than two full-time teachers, including the headteacher. It succeeds in providing a good range of expertise by using part-time teachers who have expertise in various curricular areas, such as the under-fives, history and music. They are all experienced teachers and are well grounded as to what is required to provide effective teaching for each pupil.
- 112 The school makes good use of the part-time nursery assistant who works effectively with the teacher in charge of the under-fives.
- 113 The job descriptions produced for all members of staff have been recently reviewed to give a clear indication of their responsibilities, including the subjects for which they are responsible.
- 114 The daily administrative procedures are undertaken smoothly and to particularly good effect. The current arrangements ensure that there are two adults on the school campus at all times.
- 115 In general, the school has a good supply of good quality resources for the age range of pupils in its care. They are kept neat and tidy, and everyone is aware of their location and takes good care of them. Use is made of Dwyfor Leisure Centre and the nearby village hall as resources for teaching the school's physical education programme. Reference was made in the school's self-evaluation documentation to the need to improve resources in certain areas, and the school, through its priorities, is planning appropriately for this. There is also room to improve the supply of large toys for the under-fives.
- 116 Pupils benefit considerably from the contribution made by visitors to the school and from the educational visits arranged to enhance their learning in areas such as religious education and history. Very good use is made of the local community for geographical studies.
- 117 The school's current supply of computers is adequate for its needs and the pupil:computer ratio is good. They are used effectively, together with the interactive whiteboard.
- 118 There is adequate space for the number of pupils currently on the register and the school building and grounds are well maintained. There is a high standard of cleanliness throughout the building.
- 119 Careful consideration has been given to issues such as classroom colours, and the choice of furniture. The quality of the displays is an outstanding

feature and they make a considerable contribution to a particularly stimulating learning environment.

- 120 Disabled access is provided through one of the school's side entrances, but this is not so for the main entrance because of the steps leading up to the door.
- 121 Teachers and other staff attend a good range of training sessions and this has a positive impact on their skills and understanding. They work well as a team for the purposes of sharing information.
- 122 Decisions relating to expenditure have been effectively linked to the school development plan and the situation is reviewed on a regular basis.
- 123 The budget is particularly tight; it is managed efficiently and the school offers good value for money.
- 124 The school has not received an inspection of its financial arrangements by the County's internal auditors for some time.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh

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

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 125 In general, pupils in both key stages are confident in their oral skills. They respond positively, and at times enthusiastically, to a range of stimuli. They speak clearly and with a degree of accuracy that is appropriate to their age and ability. They use appropriate vocabulary as they address a range of different tasks. They listen attentively, responding appropriately to directions and playing a willing part in class discussions. In key stage 2, they show a willingness to express and justify opinions, using previously obtained information to support their viewpoints.
- 126 Reading standards in both key stages are generally good. All pupils enjoys reading and enjoys the experience of handling books. They read correctly and fluently, using appropriate expression. They are able to discuss the contents of what they have read without difficulty, showing appropriate understanding. They successfully read a variety of printed sources, including works of fiction and non-fiction, work sheets, displays in the school and computer screens. At the upper end of key stage 1 and in key stage 2, the more able pupils can gather implied information from text, as in their portraits of a character in a book based on dialogue rather than on a description or picture.
- 127 In key stage 1, pupils display a growing ability to write independently, using basic punctuation and forming letters, words and sentences to an appropriate standard. In key stage 2, they are able to write extended pieces to a good standard in response to various stimuli. The work they present is neat and tidy and their spelling and punctuation are generally correct. Pupils in key stage 2 write correctly and in extended fashion in a variety of forms across the curriculum, such as letters, diaries, stories and factual pieces.

Shortcomings

- 128 Some Individuals in key stage 1 have difficulty with punctuation and in putting words on paper in an orderly manner.
- 129 Pupils in key stage 2 have not to date sufficiently developed their use of joined up writing.

Science

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

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 130 In key stage 1, the pupils come to be able to make sensible predictions and to ensure that a test is conducted fairly. They write their findings correctly and use diagrams and pictures as required.
- 131 Through investigative work, they have shown that they are aware of the extensive use made around them of electricity. They know how simple circuits work and realise that great care must be taken when using electricity.
- 132 They know about the seasonal cycle and that some animals hibernate throughout the winter.
- 133 They can explain the difference between living and non-living things, and are able to classify them correctly.
- 134 Their current work on the human body is developing well. They have a firm grasp of the correct terms.
- 135 In key stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in the development of their investigative skills by conducting increasingly complex investigations.
- 136 They make good use of various forms, including graphs and tables to correctly record their findings.
- 137 They come to realise that eating the right foods is crucial to keeping healthy. Through investigative work, they have learnt how much sugar is contained in different foods. They can make fair comparisons by measuring accurately.
- 138 The recent work undertaken by pupils on shadows and materials is thorough, and are good examples of scientific investigations. Their mathematical skills have been applied with a fair degree of accuracy to this work.

Shortcomings

- 139 There are no major shortcomings.

History

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

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 140 In key stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of the concept of the passage of time and they have a firm grasp of the periods of development from childhood to old age. They make correct use of a good range of phrases relating to the passage of time.
- 141 By looking at evidence from old photographs, they have come to understand the changes that have occurred in the world of agriculture over the years. They recognise a good number of farm machinery that was used in days gone by.
- 142 They can offer correct answers when observing artefacts and deciding if they are old or new.
- 143 They know about some of the best-known characters from Welsh history and are able to explain effectively why they are famous.
- 144 In key stage 2, pupils have a very sound grasp of the concept of chronology and are able to talk authoritatively about historical events in their proper context. They make correct use of terms such as century and decade.
- 145 They use a good range of sources to discover information about the past, for example by interviewing visitors about their experiences, and looking at old photographs showing how buildings in Abersoch have changed over the years.
- 146 Pupils have made effective use of information and communications technology to assist them in their studies of Llancaiach Fawr House during the Stuart period. Video evidence was seen of effective role-play that shows a good awareness of life and work during the period.

Shortcomings

- 147 In key stage 1, some individuals at times fail to grasp information and improve their understanding because of a lack of concentration.

Art

Key Stage 1 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 2 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

- 148 In both key stages, pupils know a great deal about the work, and the nature thereof, of specific artists from Wales and beyond, such as for example. Clarice Cliff, Kyffin Williams, Kevin Burgess and Monet.

- 149 They are very well informed about artwork from other countries and continents, such as Africa, and from different historical periods, such as the Celtic period.
- 150 They are able to discuss, express opinions and respond practically to a very wide range of works, and they gain great enjoyment from striving to reproduce the patterns, colours, lines and styles of the originals to a particularly high standard in their own work.
- 151 At the lower end of key stage 1, pupils understand and make successful use of a range of techniques, and pupils in key stage 2 create high quality two and three-dimensional work, that is often very impressive and full of expression.
- 152 They are confident when working with a wide range of media such as paint, chalk and oil pastels, clay, printing media such as polystyrene, and silk painting. They are perfectly happy to experiment and they understand the purpose of producing designs before setting about producing the finished article.
- 153 They make creative use of their art books to record their initial ideas in response to various stimuli, and to experiment with techniques.
- 154 Pupils at the lower end of key stage 1 are able to confidently express their views and preferences about their own art works and those of others, using appropriate vocabulary. At the upper end of key stage 1 and in key stage 2, pupils are able to critically discuss their own work and that of others, giving clear reasons why they like or dislike a piece of work.

Shortcomings

- 155 There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

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

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 156 In key stage 1, pupils are able to recall and appropriately build on their prior learning. They understand the terms describing the musical elements of pace and dynamics when discussing specific songs. They understand the effect that these elements have on songs and music, and how they can convey feelings and atmosphere.
- 157 Pupils at the upper end of key stage 1 and in key stage 2 are able to read with ease musical notes at a level appropriate to their age and ability. They are able to play the recorder to an acceptable standard, controlling the power and quality of the notes as required. They develop a growing understanding of all

musical elements, and are at ease as they analyse pieces of music, referring to pace, dynamics and pitch.

- 158 Pupils in key stage 1 are able to compose simple but effective pieces of music, by using a range of musical instruments. Pupils in key stage 2 display considerable skill when composing short musical pieces using a variety of musical instruments, or by using an appropriate software programme on the computer. They select instruments that are suitable for the given task, for example to convey feelings of sadness, happiness or anger, and are able to modify their use of them to produce appropriate musical sounds.
- 159 Pupils in both key stages can evaluate their own compositions and performances skilfully, giving valid reasons to justify their views and suggesting well thought out improvements when appropriate.
- 160 Pupils enjoy performing songs and they do so with discipline and enthusiasm in the school's internal activities, as well as in public performances in the local community.

Shortcomings

- 161 There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

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

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 162 In both key stages, the pupils are well informed about a wide range of Biblical stories.
- 163 They show a very mature awareness of the ritual of worship during the morning services and they participate by singing, praying and reading from the Bible. Their ability to present simple, ad lib prayers makes a considerable contribution to their spiritual development.
- 164 They are able to talk about stories related to the Welsh religious tradition, such as Saint David, the contribution of William Morgan in translating the Bible into Welsh, Mari Jones and the importance of the Bible for her.
- 165 They are aware of the local places of worship, such as chapels and the church, and can talk confidently about their main features and of the rituals conducted within them.

- 166 In key stage 1, the pupils understand the importance of respecting others. They are able to refer effectively to what they respect, including friends and their environment.
- 167 They come to understand that there are religions in the world other than Christianity. Their studies of the Jewish religion has introduced them to some of the practices of that faith and to the artefacts used in services held at the synagogue.
- 168 In key stage 2, pupils display a good understanding of Jesus as a person who used his hands to do good deeds. They know that hands can be responsible for different kinds of deeds, both good and bad.
- 169 In their studies of other religions, they come to know about the Hindu gods, the practices of the temple and what they regard as holy. They know about Jewish festivals, such as the Sukkot.

Shortcomings

- 170 There are no significant shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The staff take pride in the fact that the Inspectors have acknowledged that the school reflects its vision clearly by providing a caring and safe environment and atmosphere.

The school will maintain and build on the good standards achieved in the subject areas by developing the existing culture of self-criticism.

The Governing Body is required by statute to provide an annual report to parents. It is intended to review Circular 14/01 containing the details of the statutory guidelines.

The Governing Body accepts that it needs to develop its role of monitoring standards and the quality of provision. It will consider the skills and knowledge it requires in order that it may target training opportunities so as to effectively undertake its duties.

The school's policy to promote pupil attendance acknowledges the link between attendance and educational achievement. The Governing Body intends to engage the whole school community in the process of promoting good practice in relation to attendance and to discourage the practice of family holidays during school term. Staff have already initiated the process of making contact with the Education Welfare Officer.

The Report confirms that we succeed in promoting pupils' bilingual skills to particularly good effect. We shall maintain and build on this success.

The staff and Governing Body of Ysgol Abersoch wish to convey their appreciation to the Inspection Team for the courtesy, sensitivity and respect which they showed to everyone involved with the inspection.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Abersoch
School type	Community school
Age-range of pupils	3 – 8 years
Address of school	Lôn Gwydryn Abersoch Pwllheli Gwynedd
Post-code	LL53 7EA
Telephone number	(01758) 712764
Headteacher	Mrs J L Hughes
Date of appointment	September 2003
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr W Williams
Reporting inspector	Mr D M Cray
Dates of inspection	28-30 September 2004

Appendix B

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	2.5	5	3	2	4	--	---	---	16.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	1	2	1.7

Staffing information		
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)		9.7
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes		
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes		
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes		8
Teacher (fte): class ratio		1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	N	R	KS1/KS2	Whole School
Summer 2004	85.5%	89%	92.5%	90.75%
Spring 2004	89.75%	88%	92%	90%
Autumn 2003	86%	88.1%	89%	88.55%

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

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 1

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2004	Number of pupils in Y2	2
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was fewer than five, summary information is not included.		

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- The team of three inspectors inspected work in all classes. Between them they spent six full days at the school;
- pre-inspection meetings were held with governors, staff and parents;
- a range of documentation produced by the school was examined, including examples of work by the pupils across the curriculum in the early years and the two key stages;
- Seventeen lessons or sessions were observed;
- morning assemblies were attended;
- pupils were listened to reading and were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum;
- school registers were inspected;
- discussions were held with the headteacher and school staff relating to curricular and management matters;
- minutes of governors' and staff meetings were examined as well as documents relating to the school's financial matters;
- pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school, and during breaks;
- nine parents were present at the pre-inspection meeting and 13 questionnaires were returned;
- a post-inspection meeting was held with the staff and governing body.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspects	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr D M Cray	Rgl	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Annexes; Key questions 1; 5; 6 and 7.	Science; history; religious education.
Mr T Tomos	Team	Key questions 2; 3; 4.	Welsh; art; music.
Mr W Owen	Lay	Contributions to key questions 1; 3; 4 and 7	

Contractwr: Arolygiadau Deheubarth Inspections; Afallon; Heol Llandeilo; Gorslas; Llanelli; SA14 7LU.

Acknowledgement

The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the head and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.