

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

**YSGOL ACREFAIR  
Tower View  
Acrefair  
Wrexham  
LL14 3SH**

**School Number: 665-2149**

**Date of Inspection: 10–13 January 2005**

**by**

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**Date: 14 March 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/117/04P**

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**Ysgol Acrefair** 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 Acrefair** took place between **10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2005**. An independent team of three inspectors, led by **Merfyn D Jones**, 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

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Context</b>	1
<b>Summary</b>	2
<b>Recommendations</b>	6
<b>Standards</b>	7
Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?	7
<b>The quality of education and training</b>	9
Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	9
Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	11
Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	13
<b>Leadership and management</b>	14
Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	14
Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	15
Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	16
<b>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</b>	17
English	17
Mathematics	18
Design and technology	19
Information technology	20
Geography	21
Physical education	21
<b>School's response to the inspection</b>	22
<b>Appendices</b>	23
A Basic information about the school	23
B School data and indicators	23
C National Curriculum assessments results	24
D Evidence base of the inspection	25
E Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	25

## Context

### The nature of the provider

Ysgol Acrefair serves the village of Acrefair, near the town of Wrexham, North Wales. It also attracts pupils from the Plas Madoc estate, which is on the periphery of the village. Currently, there are 169 full-time pupils, aged four to 11 years, and 26 part-time nursery children on roll.

The school, built in 1931, is based on a traditional secondary modern style with large outdoor play areas.

The pupils are from a variety of social backgrounds, with 18 per cent of them eligible for free school meals. Their attainment on entry is variable but many have speaking and listening skills below the local education authority (LEA) average.

Most pupils come from homes where English is the main language. Four pupils speak Portuguese as their first language and one pupil speaks German as a first language. No pupil comes from a home where Welsh is the first language.

Eighteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs (SEN). Twenty-nine are on 'school action', one on 'school action plus' and one has a statement of need.

The school has eight full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers, for eight classes. The average class size is 24.

The school was last inspected in June 1999.

The present headteacher was appointed in September 1997.

The aims of Ysgol Acrefair are:

- to enhance self-esteem and the ability to value each person's worth through a caring, secure environment;
- to develop the natural curiosity that children exhibit about themselves and their world, and use their curiosity to foster positive attitudes to learning;
- to develop each individual to his/her potential through offering a wide range of high quality experiences;
- to develop social awareness, group responsibility and empathy through the social context of learning;
- to provide first-hand experiences which enable children to acquire concepts and skills which will help them to understand themselves, their culture and the world in which they live;
- to develop children's imagination and creativity by offering a wide range of experiences;
- to promote a health-conscious environment;
- to develop positive relationships between home, school and the community;
- to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum for all children.

## The school's priorities and targets

The school's major priorities and targets for 2004 to 2005 are to:

- raise standards in numeracy and literacy;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, and
- complete the Healthy Schools' initiative.

## Summary

1. Ysgol Acrefair is an improving school where headteacher and staff work hard and effectively as a team, for the benefit of all pupils. They ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity and are well cared for, guided and supported.
2. The inspection team agreed with most of the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation document.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

3. Pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects observed in lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
14%	53%	33%	0%	0%

4. In this inspection, six subjects in Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 were inspected. The standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	3	3
Mathematics	3	3
Design and technology	3	3
Information technology	3	3
Geography	3	3
Physical education	2	2

5. The findings of the inspection team agreed with the school's self-evaluation grades for each of the subjects inspected.
6. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
7. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve targets set in their individual educational programmes (IEPs). Pupils with English as a second language (EAL) also make good progress overall.
8. Early years' children make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and using ICT.
9. In both KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening and reading are good. Standards in the key skills of writing, numeracy and using information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory.
10. Bilingualism is not effectively integrated into the life of the school but, considering the strong English background, pupils' bilingual skills are satisfactory.
11. Pupils show good development in their personal and social skills. They also show good development in problem solving and creative skills throughout the school.
12. Analysis of value added data shows that pupils make the expected progress from baseline.
13. Generally, in both KS1 and KS2, compared with similar schools, standards achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science fall into the lower quartile.
14. In 2004, 69 per cent of KS1 pupils attained level 2 or better in English, by teacher assessment, compared with an average of 83 per cent nationally. In mathematics, they attained 73 per cent compared to 87 per cent nationally and, in science, 77 per cent compared to 88 per cent nationally. These were below the targets set.
15. The percentage of KS2 pupils attaining at least level 4 in English, mathematics and science in the 2004 tests was 70.8 compared to a national average of 72.3 per cent. The results were well above the targets set for the pupils by the school. The school reports that this was mainly due to the school's 'Catch-up' initiatives and to 'booster lessons' for Year (Y) 6 during the previous year.
16. Pupils are well behaved and show consideration and courtesy to each other, to adults and visitors. Most pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards work and play.
17. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and what is expected of them.
18. Pupils' average attendance is good with average attendance in the three terms before the inspection being just over 95 per cent. Punctuality is very good.
19. Throughout the school, an understanding of equal opportunities is developing well. Pupils have a good awareness of the diversity of beliefs and cultures.

20. Although pupils have a good understanding of their community, they have had little experience of links to the workplace and of entrepreneurial activities. As such, their understanding of the world of work is underdeveloped.
21. Children in the early years develop their personal, social and basic skills well. They behave responsibly and are polite. Relationships with both staff and peers are good and they show good social development.

### **The quality of education and training**

22. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
16%	57%	27%	0%	0%

23. Seventy-three per cent of lessons observed were graded as 2 or better. The overall standard of teaching is above the Wales target of 95 per cent grade 3 or better.
24. In most lessons, pupils are made aware of the learning objectives and tasks are clearly explained and well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers have a very good relationship with their pupils and there is good teacher/ pupil interaction with plenty of praise and encouragement. Most lessons are of good pace and finish with a valuable plenary session.
25. Overlong lessons sometimes lack pace and rigour and have a negative effect on pupils' concentration and ability to remain on task.
26. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently very good, with a wide variety of exciting activities and experiences that motivate children and clearly linked to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
27. Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developed well in lessons such as mathematics, dance, music and art.
28. Teachers promote equality of opportunity well, ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and equally.
29. Although key skills are planned, there is a lack of focus on writing, numeracy and the use of ICT, and opportunities for their development are missed.
30. The promotion of pupils' bilingual skills and their spiritual awareness is underdeveloped across the school, as are pupils' experience of the world of work, sustainable development and global citizenship.
31. The part-time SEN teacher works closely with the class teachers and provides a variety of well-structured activities, including appropriate ICT programs, to motivate and reinforce learning. Pupils have positive support which ensures that they make good progress.
32. Pupils who have English as an additional language are given appropriate work and language experiences to increase their confidence. They are well supported by a classroom assistant and an EAL support teacher from the LEA.
33. Statutory assessment takes place for the under-fives and at the end of KS1 and KS2. Targets are set for all pupils in mathematics and English at the beginning of the academic year and these targets are monitored on a termly basis. The

schools' progress in Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) is monitored in relation to local and national results.

34. Parents have a meeting with teachers each term to discuss pupils' progress. Annual written reports are of good quality and conform to statutory requirements. They include guidance on how pupils can improve and feedback from parents is welcomed.
35. The school is responsive to individual needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
36. The curriculum for the under-fives is well-planned on a thematic approach and gives a range of stimulating opportunities and experiences both indoors and outdoors, ensuring that children progress steadily towards the Desirable Learning Objectives.
37. The younger pupils in KS1 have a broad and balanced curriculum which has both coherence and progression. Although the older pupils in KS1 and those in KS2 follow a programme, which encompasses all areas of the NC programmes of study, there is a lack of continuity and progression in information technology and geography.
38. A variety of activities within the school and off-site visits enrich learners' experience.
39. Provision for moral, social and cultural education, including *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, is well developed throughout the school. Opportunities are further developed in personal, social and health education lessons which closely follow the Personal and Social Education Framework (ACCAC).
40. Collective worship, which is of a broadly Christian nature, reinforces well-established values, although there is insufficient opportunity for spiritual reflection. Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual experiences at other times are limited.
41. The school environment is secure, friendly and supportive. Pupils are well cared for, and staff liaise effectively with support services.
42. The school works closely with parents and carers, keeping them well informed.
43. The recommendations of the Code of Practice are met in the good provision made for SEN pupils, both in class and in withdrawal situations.
44. There are effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality. The recording of attendance meets the statutory requirements.
45. There is a good range of policies and guidelines to ensure the general safety and well being of pupils.
46. Clear policies exist in relation to behaviour and anti-bullying. An effective behavioural programme is firmly established in the school.

### **Leadership and management**

47. The school has clear aims and objectives that are understood and shared by staff and governors. There is a clear direction for the school's development in terms of teaching and learning, as set and agreed by the senior management team. However, the targets set in the School Development Plan (SDP) lack detail.

48. The headteacher has a broad vision and a determination to continue to improve all aspects of school life for the benefit of all the pupils.
49. Although a self-evaluation culture has been established within the school, the self-evaluation process has not been sufficiently formalised to enable the staff and governors to have a full and clear picture of teaching and learning.
50. The school has set up a self-evaluation process which involves all the teaching staff and the governors. However, the views of non-teaching staff, parents and pupils were not taken into account for the production of the school's self-evaluation document.
51. The school takes reasonable account of national priorities but the provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship is underdeveloped.
52. The headteacher takes the lead in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. However, the role of the curriculum co-ordinators is not yet fully developed in terms of monitoring teaching.
53. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good awareness of their responsibilities.
54. They have a satisfactory involvement in monitoring and evaluating developments in all aspects of school life.
55. The school satisfies statutory requirements and pays due attention to Welsh Assembly Government guidelines. Governors fulfil all their legal and regulatory requirements.
56. There is a sufficient number of well qualified teachers and support staff. They provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with SEN, the under fives and EAL pupils. They work together as an effective team to ensure the delivery of the National Curriculum (NC).
57. The school secretary makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
58. The kitchen staff, led by a hard-working cook, and the playground assistants ensure good order and behaviour during the lunchtime break.
59. The quality and range of resources to support the delivery of the NC are generally good. They are well used to support teaching and learning. However, the high pupil/computer ratio limits the opportunities for regular practice and use.
60. The school buildings are old and need continuous maintenance. The caretaker, staff and governors keep a watchful eye on their condition and act immediately when any health and safety issues emerge.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1. address the shortcomings identified in subject areas and review the length of some lessons;

- R2. increase the opportunities for pupils to use the key skills of writing, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum;
- R3. further develop the role of subject leaders in monitoring and assessment procedures and ensure that individual pupil targets are more specific;
- R4. improve provision to develop pupils' bilingual skills and spiritual awareness;
- R5. review the format and structure of the SDP to enhance its effectiveness as a working document with specific targets, actions, costs and review dates, and
- R6. provide more opportunities for pupils to experience and be aware of the world of work (including entrepreneurial activities), sustainable development and global citizenship.

The governing body 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 3** good features outweigh shortcomings

- 61. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 62. The pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects during lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
14%	53%	33%	0%	0%

- 63. In this inspection, six subjects in KS1 and KS2 were inspected. The standards of achievement were as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	3	3
Mathematics	3	3
Design and technology	3	3
Information technology	3	3
Geography	3	3
Physical education	2	2

- 64. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 65. On-entry baseline assessment indicates that children are below the Wrexham average, particularly in literacy and numeracy skills.
- 66. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve targets set in their IEPs. Pupils with EAL also make good progress overall.

67. Early years' children make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and using ICT.
68. In both KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening and reading are good. Standards in the key skills of writing, numeracy and using ICT are satisfactory.
69. Bilingualism is not effectively integrated into the life of the school but, considering the strong English background, pupils' bilingual skills are satisfactory. The regular use of incidental Welsh is inconsistent across the school.
70. Pupils show good development in their personal and social skills. They also show good development in problem solving and creative skills throughout the school.
71. Analysis of value added data shows that pupils make the expected progress from baseline. Generally, boys perform better than girls in mathematics but not as well as girls in English. There is no significant difference in science.
72. Generally, in both KS1 and KS2, compared with similar schools, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science fall into the lower quartile.
73. In 2004, 69 per cent of KS1 pupils attained level 2 or better in English, by teacher assessment, compared with an average of 83 per cent nationally. In mathematics, they attained 73 per cent compared to 87 per cent nationally and, in science, 77 per cent compared to 88 per cent nationally. These were below the targets set.
74. The percentage of KS2 pupils attaining at least level 4 in English, mathematics and science in the 2004 tests was 70.8 compared to a national average of 72.3 per cent. The results were well above the targets set for the pupils by the school. The school reports that this was mainly due to the school's 'Catch-up' initiatives and to 'booster lessons' for Y6 during the previous year.
75. Children in the early years and pupils in KS1 and KS2, listen attentively and answer questions well. They are motivated workers with the majority sustaining concentration and keeping on task.
76. Pupils are well behaved and show consideration and courtesy to each other, to adults and visitors. A high degree of self-discipline is evident and pupils move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner. Most pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards work and play.
77. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and what is expected of them.
78. Throughout the school, an understanding of equal opportunities is developing well. Pupils have a good awareness of the diversity of beliefs and cultures, which the older pupils are able to discuss in detail.
79. Children in the early years develop their personal and social education and basic skills well. They behave responsibly and are polite. Relationships with both staff and peers are good and they show good social development.

80. Children are able to select tasks, focus on them, working independently and in groups. In both nursery and reception classes, children request help politely when necessary.
81. Children display an outstanding level of self-control. Even when excited by learning opportunities, they are able to take turns, listen to others and follow instructions.
82. Children are learning how to help each other and show increasing concern and respect for the needs of others. Many have a caring attitude and all are willing to tidy up at the end of activity sessions.
83. Pupils' average attendance is good with average attendance in the three terms before the inspection being just over 95 per cent. At times, unauthorised absence is an issue for the school and this is mainly as a result of some parents withdrawing their children from school to take holidays during the school term. Punctuality is very good.
84. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development.
85. Participation in the life of the community and visits to places of historical and cultural interest, help to broaden pupils' understanding of their community. However, they have had little experience of links to the workplace and, as such, their understanding of the world of work is underdeveloped.

## The quality of education and training

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

**Grade 2** good features and no important shortcomings

86. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
87. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	57%	27%	0%	0%
88. Seventy-three per cent of lessons observed were graded as 2 or better. The overall standard of teaching is above the Wales target of 95 per cent grade 3 or better.
89. In most lessons, pupils are made aware of the learning objectives and tasks are clearly explained and well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers have a very good relationship with their pupils and there is good teacher/pupil interaction with plenty of praise and encouragement. Most lessons were of good pace and finished with a valuable plenary session.
90. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently very good with a wide variety of activities and experiences that motivate children and clearly linked to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
91. Where teaching was graded as 1, there were outstanding features which included an awareness of individual needs, the very effective use of open-

- ended questioning to challenge and develop pupils' thinking skills and the very good deployment of support staff.
92. Overlong lessons sometimes lack pace and rigour and have a negative effect on pupils' concentration and ability to remain on task.
  93. Pupils' creative and problem solving skills are developed well in lessons such as mathematics, dance, music and art.
  94. Teachers promote equality of opportunity well, ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and equally.
  95. Although key skills are planned, there is a lack of focus on writing, numeracy and the use of ICT, and opportunities for their development are missed.
  96. The promotion of pupils' bilingual skills and their spiritual awareness is underdeveloped across the school, as are pupils' experience of the world of work (including entrepreneurial activities), sustainable development and global citizenship.
  97. Teachers regularly attend in-service training (INSET) to develop their subject knowledge and teaching techniques. Their understanding of the common requirements of the NC is generally good.
  98. The part-time SEN teacher works closely with the class teachers and provides a variety of well-structured activities, including appropriate ICT programs, to motivate and reinforce learning. Pupils have positive support, which ensures that they make good progress.
  99. Planning takes into account the needs of individual pupils and they receive extra support in class where necessary. Pupils with SEN have work set at an appropriate level and fully participate in class.
  100. Class teachers relate work to targets on IEPs. Procedures in SEN satisfy statutory requirements. Most lesson evaluations monitor problem areas to inform future planning.
  101. Pupils who have English as an additional language are given appropriate work and language experiences to increase their confidence. They are well supported by a classroom assistant and an EAL support teacher from the LEA.
  102. Work is regularly marked and often includes supportive comments and suggestions for improvement. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school in all subjects.
  103. Assessment opportunities are regularly incorporated into planning. This is particularly effective in the early years where on-going assessment directly informs further curriculum planning and enables early identification of special needs and subsequent support.
  104. Statutory assessment takes place for the under-fives and at the end of KS1 and KS2. Targets are set for all children in mathematics and English at the beginning of the academic year and these targets are monitored on a termly basis. The school's progress in SATs is monitored in relation to local and national results.

105. A range of standardised tests enables the school to track pupil progress in core subjects and the school is gradually beginning to introduce assessment in some of the foundation subjects.
106. Pupils are involved in individual target setting and are keen to improve performance.
107. A merit point system is in operation to recognise pupil achievement in subject and extra-curricular activities.
108. Parents have a meeting with teachers each term to discuss pupil progress. Annual written reports are of good quality and conform to statutory requirements. They include guidance on how pupils can improve and feedback from parents is welcomed.

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

<b>Grade 3:</b> good features outweigh shortcomings
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109. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation.
110. The school is responsive to individual needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum which meet legal requirements.
111. The curriculum for the under-fives is well planned on a thematic approach and provides for a range of opportunities and experiences both indoors and outdoors. These stimulate children and ensure that they progress steadily towards the Desirable Learning Objectives.
112. The younger pupils in KS1 have a broad balanced curriculum which has both coherence and progression. Although the older pupils in KS1 and those in KS2 follow a programme which encompasses all areas of the NC programmes of study, there is a lack of continuity and progression in some aspects of design and technology, information technology and geography.
113. Basic skills and key skills are developed well in the under-fives and lower KS1. Basic skills are addressed throughout KS1 and KS2 with booster support in mathematics, but key skills are not addressed in sufficient detail in upper KS1 and KS2.
114. A variety of activities within the school and off-site visits enrich learners' experience. There are also opportunities for extra-curricular sporting and music activities, and instrumental tuition is given in school.
115. Provision for moral, social and cultural education is well developed throughout the school. Opportunities are further developed in personal, social and health education lessons which closely follow the personal and social education framework (ACCAC).
116. The curriculum includes the promotion of healthy lifestyles which is further reinforced very effectively by non-teaching members of staff.
117. Collective worship, which is of a broadly Christian nature, reinforces well-established values, although there is insufficient opportunity for spiritual

- reflection. Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual experiences at other times are limited.
118. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is well promoted through many subjects in the curriculum, including history and geography. In music, pupils listen to a range of Welsh songs and are competent singing in Welsh.
  119. The school promotes pupils' creative and problem-solving development through good art, music and dance lessons.
  120. The school has close links with the parents and this partnership is good. Parents are encouraged to visit and attend the school and they support a wide range of school activities, including listening to pupils reading. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association has been re-formed and has established a timetable of fundraising events.
  121. There are good partnership arrangements with the community. Pupils make very good use of local cultural, historical, recreational and religious facilities as a resource for learning and various musical, voluntary and sporting organisations make effective use of school facilities throughout the year. Pupils visit and perform in the community during festive periods and they raise money for charitable causes.
  122. Members of public agencies, voluntary groups and local organisations meet with and inform the pupils about their experiences. They support the school well in furthering the pupils' knowledge and understanding of their community.
  123. The school's induction programme for nursery and reception pupils and the practice of holding transition days for the pupils when moving from one class to another or from one key stage to another, are very good supportive features. Transition arrangements in preparation for KS2 pupils to join either of two comprehensive schools are well developed. Pastoral arrangements are effective.
  124. There are established curriculum links between the school and the comprehensive schools in language, mathematics and science, with good staff participation.
  125. Effective partnership arrangements exist with University College Bangor for initial teacher training. Two members of staff are trained student mentors and the placements, mentoring and evaluation arrangements are well organised. There is also a close working arrangement with North East Wales Institute for the training of nursery and classroom assistants.
  126. Pupils benefit from a few work-related activities and the school receives good support from local businesses through donations, sponsorship and provision of resources. Although there are links with Careers Wales, no staff member has benefited from placement in a world of work environment and the opportunities for pupils to increase their awareness of work-related issues are limited. Opportunities for learners to develop entrepreneurial skills are lacking. The school recognises that these aspects of work-related education are areas for development.
  127. There is some provision for teaching sustainable development within geography and science. Year 6 pupils have had their awareness raised of issues concerning recycling and protecting the environment from specialists

who have attended the school. Pupils have also participated in environmental studies and workshops. The promotion of recycling opportunities within the school is underdeveloped.

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

<b>Grade 2</b> good features and no important shortcomings
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128. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation.
129. The school environment is secure, friendly and supportive. Pupils are well cared for, and staff liaise effectively with support services. Good working relationships are established with pupils, parents and the community.
130. The school works closely with parents and carers, keeping them well informed. Parents and carers are very supportive and appreciate access to the headteacher and staff. They also appreciate that their views are taken into account. Attendance at parents' evenings is high.
131. An induction programme is in place for new under-fives. There are take-home activity sheets for parents and carers to use with nursery and reception children. There are close links with secondary schools and an induction programme for the Y6 pupils.
132. Pupils receive a high level of personal support and guidance. Booster programmes and access to specialist help are made available.
133. Children are assessed on entry to school and a suitable range of standardised tests, alongside teacher assessment, enables the teachers to quickly identify pupils with SEN. This promotes early intervention. The recommendations of the Code of Practice are met in the good provision made for SEN pupils both in class and in withdrawal situations.
134. A support teacher for SEN provides good support to pupils for six hours per week when small groups are withdrawn from class in order to facilitate their access to the curriculum. Pupils with EAL also receive specialist support and all follow individually designed programmes with extra support from teacher assistants who liaise closely with class teachers. They make good progress relative to their age and abilities.
135. There are effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality. The recording of attendance meets the statutory requirements.
136. Relationships with parents and guardians are good and positive responses were received at the meeting prior to the inspection and in the pre-inspection questionnaire.
137. Communication with parents and guardians is effective and the school responds positively to suggestions. A good feature is the provision of booklets for parents to help them support their child with reading, mathematics and homework. A range of strategies is in place to include parents and guardians in the life of school and they are well informed about school activities through a annual diary of events. The school however recognizes that an area for development is the need to inform parents and guardians of termly themes in each class.

138. There is a good range of policies and guidelines to ensure the general safety and well-being of pupils. The headteacher is the nominated child protection officer but other staff have also participated in twilight training sessions on the subject. All staff are briefed on protocols and procedures as outlined in the school's child protection policy and effective use made of the school nurse in the process.
139. Teachers and support staff are fully aware of their responsibilities relating to the learners' safety and well-being and carry these out well, ensuring a safe and pleasant environment. Day-to-day arrangements relating to the health and safety of staff and pupils are good.
140. Clear policies exist in relation to behaviour and anti-bullying. An effective behavioural programme is firmly established in the school. No evidence of bullying was observed during the inspection.
141. The school has effective policies and procedures for the development of pupils' understanding of sex education, race equality and equal opportunities, and all staff are aware of these and implement them successfully. Teaching and non-teaching staff ensure that there no discrimination as a result of gender, racial or any other differences.
142. Specialist services are used when needed and staff and governors are diligent in monitoring health and safety risks to the welfare of pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

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

**Grade 3**      good features outweigh shortcomings

143. The school has clear aims and objectives that are understood and shared by staff and governors. There is a clear direction for the school's development in terms of teaching and learning, as set and agreed by the senior management team. However, the targets set in the SDP are broad and lack detail.
144. The headteacher has a broad vision and a determination to continue to improve all aspects of school life for the benefit of all the pupils.
145. Although a self-evaluation culture has been established within the school, the self-evaluation process has not been sufficiently formalised to enable the staff and governors to have a full and clear picture of teaching and learning.
146. There are agreed policies and shared values regarding equality of opportunity for all, racialism and personal and social development, which are understood and implemented by staff and governors and which are well promoted across the school.
147. The school takes reasonable account of national priorities but the provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship is underdeveloped.
148. The headteacher and staff work closely with other local schools and join in cluster initiatives to raise standards in subject areas.
149. The headteacher takes the lead in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. However, the role of the curriculum co-ordinators is not yet fully

developed in terms of monitoring teaching. They do monitor provision and guide subject planning through formal and informal discussions with teachers and pupils and through evaluating pupils' work.

150. Pupils' individual target setting is well established but targets are sometimes too broad and lack detail.
151. There is a very effective staff appraisal system which successfully links both teachers' professional development and the priorities set by the school in its SDP.
152. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good awareness of their responsibilities. They help to set the school's strategic direction, which is broad and lacks detail. They have regular meetings with the headteacher and the staff, who keep them informed of new developments.
153. They have a satisfactory involvement in monitoring and evaluating developments in all aspects of school life. However, they do not have a full picture of teaching and learning.
154. The school satisfies statutory requirements and pays due attention to Welsh Assembly Government guidelines. Governors fulfil all their legal and regulatory requirements.

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

<b>Grade 3</b> good features outweigh shortcomings
--

155. Overall, the findings of the team match those of the school in its self-evaluation report.
156. The school has set up a self-evaluation process which involves all the teaching staff and the governors. However, the views of non-teaching staff, parents and pupils were not taken into account for the production of the school's self-evaluation document.
157. Teachers know their pupils well and they are fully aware of the self-evaluation findings which are used to inform the priorities in the SDP. They are fully committed to school improvement and, along with the governors, ensure that priorities are supported through adequate allocation of resources.
158. The self-evaluation report, produced by the school before the inspection, did not fully and clearly identify the school's strengths and areas for development. However, following monitoring of standards by the headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators, priorities were identified and targeted for improvement in the SDP.
159. The school has effective strategies for assessing, tracking and evaluating pupils' standards of achievement in the core subjects. The analysis of assessment results, including end-of-key-stage tests, helps to identify trends and weaknesses, which are well addressed in planning for the future. For example, the 'Catch-up' programme and 'booster' lessons had a significant effect on the improvements in the last national tests results.

160. Performance management of teachers, which is guided by the headteacher, is beginning to have an impact on the school in terms of both teaching and learning.
161. Recent improvements in standards, particularly in the core subjects, are as a direct result of previous actions.
162. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school in five of the seven key questions. Where there was a difference in judgement, the inspection team awarded a higher grade in key question 2 and a lower grade in key question 3.

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

<b>Grade 2</b> good features and no important shortcomings
--

163. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
164. There is a sufficient number of well qualified teachers and support staff. They provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with SEN, the under fives and EAL pupils. They work together as an effective team to ensure the delivery of the NC.
165. The school has a clear and supportive induction policy for newly qualified teachers, which ensures that their confidence and competence are developed quickly. This was apparent during the inspection.
166. Well-planned INSET ensures a balance for the professional development of teachers and the needs of the school as identified in the SDP.
167. The school secretary makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
168. The kitchen staff, led by a hard-working cook, and the playground assistants ensure good order and behaviour during the lunchtime break.
169. The quality and range of resources to support the delivery of the NC are generally good. They are well used to support teaching and learning. However, the high pupil/computer ratio limits the opportunities for regular practice and use.
170. The school buildings are old and need continuous maintenance. The school was originally built as a secondary school and has a large hall and a separate dining room. However, the lack of space in some classrooms limits practical activities.
171. The caretaker, staff and governors keep a watchful eye on the condition of the building and act immediately when any health and safety issues emerge.
172. The school grounds are spacious and well maintained. Security has been improved since the last inspection and is working well.
173. Governors and staff budget for school priorities wisely. Spending decisions benefit all pupils and, overall, the school gives good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### English

**Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation.

#### Good features

Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of purpose and audience is developing in speaking, reading and writing.

Listening skills throughout the school are particularly good. Most pupils take part in discussions with enthusiasm, both as a class, or in a small group, speaking clearly and confidently.

Pupils follow instructions appropriately, sustain concentration and most stay on task. In lower KS1, pupils are beginning to take more responsibility for their learning.

Role-play is a strong feature in lower KS1. Pupils use props appropriately and independently, incorporating new vocabulary into their conversation and engaging in lengthy discussions.

Most pupils have a positive attitude towards reading and writing, which was particularly evident with the younger pupils. Key Stage 1 pupils are developing good phonic awareness and are using a range of strategies in their reading. Most pupils read with fluency and expression, respond appropriately to punctuation and show understanding and enjoyment of reading in general. They are able to make inferences and explain their reasoning. Pupils are able to discuss their favourite books and authors and are generally able to support their opinions.

Pupils are developing the ability to make links between speaking, reading and writing and use terminology accurately. Younger pupils in KS1 have a very good grasp of story language and structure.

In KS1, most pupils begin to write independently, with increasingly correct use of capital letters and full stops. Older KS1 pupils are beginning to use a range of connectives to help structure their writing. The more able use exclamation marks, commas and question marks.

Older pupils in KS1 are able to read non-fiction texts independently and answer challenging questions. Pupils show respect for the views of others.

Pupils attempt spellings in 'have-a-go' spelling books or on wipe-clean boards. Spelling difficulties do not inhibit composition.

Pupils are increasingly able to recognise the features of different genres.

In both key stages, pupils write in a range of styles for a variety of audiences and in KS2, pupils are developing a clearer understanding of how to suit language to purpose. They particularly enjoy writing poetry.

The majority of the older pupils in KS2 are able to plan ideas in note form.

The presentation of writing is progressing appropriately in both key stages.

## **Shortcomings**

Although pupils help to set their own language targets, they are not specific enough. Pupils are not always aware of the strategies that might help them to improve.

Pupils' skills of skimming and scanning when reading for information are underdeveloped in upper KS1 and lower KS2.

Pupils engage in writing tasks willingly but they generally do not produce sufficiently extended pieces of writing.

Although in KS2 grammar exercises are well executed, with marking that promotes further learning, the rules learned are not necessarily generalised in other writing.

## **Mathematics**

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation.

### **Good features**

In KS1, pupils can sort, match and sequence numbers correctly. They identify patterns, including odd and even, and count accurately in twos, fives and tens.

They are developing a good understanding of place value and perform simple sums involving the four rules of number.

They recognise, describe and name a selection of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.

Their understanding of the value of coins is good and they can make small purchases and calculate any change.

They use data to create simple graphs and can draw conclusions from them.

Pupils estimate well before using standard and non-standard units of measure.

In KS2, pupils continue to reinforce their work in numeracy with an increasing understanding of patterns and relations. Good use is made of appropriate language and terminology.

Their understanding of place value is good and older pupils are beginning to master more complex calculations, including the use of negative numbers.

Pupils deal effectively with tasks appertaining to number, shape and measurement. They can calculate the perimeter and area of different shapes.

They are developing a wide range of problem-solving strategies, identifying and using the appropriate operations.

### **Shortcomings**

Pupils' ability to calculate mentally is often slow and uncertain.

Their recall and use of mental strategies are underdeveloped because of insufficient experiences in talking about and explaining their thinking.

Pupils' ability to apply their skills in practical activities and investigations is underdeveloped.

## **Design and technology**

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

The inspectors agree with the school's self-evaluation.

### **Good features**

Pupils in both key stages are aware that they design a product for a specific purpose.

They use their knowledge from other subject areas, particularly art, to aid them.

The older KS1 pupils are aware of the use of scale in designs.

Pupils in KS2 developed their shelter designs in response to a history stimulus, and older pupils used the clocks they had designed to investigate world time zones in geography.

Pupils recognise the value in carrying out research before creating a design. Pupils in KS1 compared a range of different puppets before deciding independently which type of puppet would suit their requirements, taking into account the various methods for joining materials.

Pupils make qualitative judgements and select materials accordingly from an extensive range of resources available for creating products. Most pupils succeed in making a product which meets the original design brief.

Pupils are developing the ability to record their plans and evaluate their designs. Some pupils are able to identify the need for modification and are developing their problem-solving skills imaginatively. Older KS1 pupils are able to discuss products, such as the vehicles they made, with a great degree of objectivity. Pupils are aware of suitability, craftsmanship and aesthetic appeal.

Technical vocabulary is expanding well in both key stages and good use is made of the digital camera to record the various stages of design.

Pupils show an understanding for the need of health and safety rules when using equipment.

Pupils understand how design and technology meet the needs of society.

### **Shortcomings**

There is a lack of progression in the evaluations made by the older KS2 pupils. These can be superficial and the tendency is to concentrate on aesthetics rather than fitness for purpose.

Pupils' ability in using the key skills of measurement and ICT in design sketches is underdeveloped.

## Information technology

**Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation.

### Good features

Pupils are becoming familiar with a range of different uses of information technology equipment, are able to work with a degree of independence and are gaining confidence in applying the skills they are learning.

Throughout the school, a range of cross-curricular CD-ROMs are used confidently by the pupils.

Pupils in both key stages can use word processing, bar charts, paint programs, and application of control and, in KS2, simple data processing, and use of the Internet. The older pupils are confident in their use of search engines when undertaking an investigation.

Pupils use ICT satisfactorily in a variety of subject areas, for instance, recording mathematics and geographical surveys on bar charts, and older pupils are developing the use of data bases in storing research findings in science.

Pupils in KS1 are able to manipulate the mouse, draw a picture and write a label or simple sentence in English and Welsh. Older pupils can open folders and store their work and use a variety of font styles and sizes. They are able to discuss with confidence how to use control and the importance in programming precise instructions.

Pupils in KS2 are able to select fonts, change the size and colour and align work and import clipart. They know how to load, store and retrieve their work. The older pupils have also had experience of using an MP3 player to record interviews. Pupils of all ages are able to use tape recorders when listening to tapes.

Pupils in both key stages use their information technology skills satisfactorily to display art and written work from simple sentences to poetry and newspaper articles.

A computer suite in a local library is used twice a term by each class and older pupils also have an annual residential field trip to extend their experiences and skills. Further experience in creating multi-media presentation was gained by older pupils in KS2 when working on a local project on John Charles.

### Shortcomings

Pupils' ability to apply new knowledge in a real situation, immediately after learning has taken place, is underdeveloped because there are insufficient up-to-date computers available.

Pupils' skills in using information technology across the curriculum are underdeveloped.

Pupils' information technology skills are underdeveloped because of the lack of continuity and progression in its delivery across the school.

## Geography

**Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation.

### Good features

Pupils in KS1 are aware that maps and plans can represent real places and are beginning to use basic mapping symbols and keys.

They can give simple directions and are beginning to follow simple routes. Their understanding of the postal system is good and they are aware of 'near' and 'far-away' places through the travels of Barnaby Bear.

Older pupils in KS1 make comparisons between their own locality and other places, such as the Isle of Struay. They recognise the different physical and man-made features.

They can use simple co-ordinates to locate different places on a simple plan of the local area.

In KS2, pupils contrast their own locality with that of Kenya. They are able to comment on the main reasons for the differences in climate and their economic activities.

They interpret symbols and keys on a local Ordnance Survey map and can use four-figure grid references to find places and to follow a route.

They can identify major towns, cities and physical features of Wales. Following their individual studies of different countries of the world, pupils can talk about their major features and are reasonably knowledgeable.

### Shortcomings

Pupils' geographical enquiry and investigative skills are underdeveloped, partly through the lack of fieldwork experiences and partly through the use of inappropriate worksheets.

Pupils' overall geographical knowledge is underdeveloped because of the lack of continuity and progression.

## Physical education

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

**Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation.

### Good features

Pupils in KS1 are developing good control of their body movements. They are enthusiastic and work hard to improve their performance.

They have a wide range of ideas for moving in different ways and for creating different shapes. Their awareness and use of space is often good.

They demonstrate good hand and eye co-ordination when throwing and catching balls and beanbags, individually and in pairs.

In KS2, pupils further develop their skills of passing and controlling a ball.

They listen and follow instructions well and can sustain energetic activities over a long period.

Pupils plan and evaluate movements and make adjustments to refine and improve their performance.

In creative dance, younger pupils in KS2 respond well to musical stimuli and use their imagination well. They work on several levels and move with increasing sensitivity to the music.

Pupils improve their skills in a broad range of competitive sports out of school hours, and are successful in local competitions.

Records show that standards in swimming are good, with many pupils confident in the water.

### **Shortcomings**

Pupils' evaluation skills are underdeveloped in some classes.

### **School's response to the inspection**

Both staff and governors are pleased with the inspection report. The findings recognise that the school is an improving school where all staff work hard and effectively as a team for the benefit of all pupils. Children are well cared for, guided and supported.

An action plan will be in place to address the recommendations in the report. Where it is possible to do so, staff and governors will address the recommendations as soon as possible. A copy of the school's action plan will be sent to all parents whilst the governors' annual report to parents will highlight on-going progress.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Acrefair
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Address of school	Tower View Acrefair Wrexham
Post-code	LL14 3SH
Telephone number	01978 820 616

Headteacher	Mr Richard Jones
Date of appointment	September 1997
Chair of governors	Mr Clive Austin
Registered inspector	Mr Merfyn D Jones
Dates of inspection	10 – 13 January 2005

## 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	26	18	30	22	27	24	27	21	195

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	2	8.73

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24: 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	14:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Autumn 2004	95	92.9	94.9	94.3
Spring 2004	91.5	95.0	95.6	94.0
Summer 2004	92.8	94.5	95.5	94.3

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	18
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix C

### National Curriculum Assessment Results - End of KS1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y2:						26
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	31	65	4	0	
		National	0	4	14	63	20	0	
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	27	58	15	0	
		National	0	4	14	55	27	0	
En:writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	31	69	0	0	
		National	0	5	14	69	11	0	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	23	73	4	0	
		National	0	3	12	63	22	0	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	27	69	4	0	
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	23	77	0	0	
		National	0	2	10	66	22	0	
Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment									
In the school	69		In Wales			79			

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

### National Curriculum Assessment Results - End of KS2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y6: 24									
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	54	29	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	42	33	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	5	12	38	40	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	50	33	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	50	29	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	18	42	33	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	67	29	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	29	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	1	9	48	39	0

D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum

A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence

F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

### Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)

by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	79.2	In the school	70.8
In Wales	71.9	In Wales	72.3

## Appendix D

### Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of three inspectors, including a lay inspector, inspected the school over three and a half days.
- The headteacher was the nominee and played a supporting role during the inspection.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with staff, parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.
- Forty-three questionnaires were completed by parents and carefully analysed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, teaching staff and support staff.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work and the life of the school.
- Forty-four lessons were observed.
- A sample of pupils' work, practical and written, from across the ability range in each year group, was examined.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed at various times during the school day.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and observed extra-curricular activities.
- All the documentation presented by the school prior to, and during the inspection, was analysed.
- Post-inspection meetings were held with staff and governors.

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Merfyn D Jones Registered Inspector	Context, summary and recommendations, key questions 1, 5, 6 and 7 mathematics, geography and physical education.
Mrs Eva John Team Inspector	Key questions 2, 3, and 4 and contributing to key questions 1 and 2. English, design and technology and information technology.
Mr Gwynoro Jones Lay Inspector	Contributing to all key questions.

***The inspection team would like to thank the headteacher, staff, governors, pupils and parents of the school for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.***

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

**A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS**

**YSGOL ACREFAIR  
Tower View  
Acrefair  
Wrexham  
LL14 3SH**

**School Number: 665-2149**

**Date of Inspection: 10–13 January 2005**

**by**

**Mr Merfyn Douglas Jones  
78185**

**Date: 14 March 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/117/04P**

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**Ysgol Acrefair** 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 Acrefair** took place between **10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2005**. An independent team of three inspectors, led by **Merfyn D Jones**, 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

#### **Basic information about the school**

Name of school	Ysgol Acrefair
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Address of school	Tower View Acrefair Wrexham
Post-code	LL14 3SH
Telephone number	01978 820 616

Headteacher	Mr Richard Jones
Date of appointment	September 1997
Chair of governors	Mr Clive Austin
Registered inspector	Mr Merfyn D Jones
Dates of inspection	10 – 13 January 2005

## Context

### The nature of the provider

Ysgol Acrefair serves the village of Acrefair, near the town of Wrexham, North Wales. It also attracts pupils from the Plas Madoc estate, which is on the periphery of the village. Currently, there are 169 full-time pupils, aged four to 11 years, and 26 part-time nursery children on roll.

The school, built in 1931, is based on a traditional secondary modern style with large outdoor play areas.

The pupils are from a variety of social backgrounds, with 18 per cent of them eligible for free school meals. Their attainment on entry is variable but many have speaking and listening skills below the local education authority (LEA) average.

Most pupils come from homes where English is the main language. Four pupils speak Portuguese as their first language and one pupil speaks German as a first language. No pupil comes from a home where Welsh is the first language.

Eighteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs (SEN). Twenty-nine are on 'school action', one on 'school action plus' and one has a statement of need.

The school has eight full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers, for eight classes. The average class size is 24.

The school was last inspected in June 1999.

The present headteacher was appointed in September 1997.

The aims of Ysgol Acrefair are:

- to enhance self-esteem and the ability to value each person's worth through a caring, secure environment;
- to develop the natural curiosity that children exhibit about themselves and their world, and use their curiosity to foster positive attitudes to learning;
- to develop each individual to his/her potential through offering a wide range of high quality experiences;
- to develop social awareness, group responsibility and empathy through the social context of learning;
- to provide first-hand experiences which enable children to acquire concepts and skills which will help them to understand themselves, their culture and the world in which they live;
- to develop children's imagination and creativity by offering a wide range of experiences;
- to promote a health-conscious environment;
- to develop positive relationships between home, school and the community;
- to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum for all children.

## The school's priorities and targets

The school's major priorities and targets for 2004 to 2005 are to:

- raise standards in numeracy and literacy;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, and
- complete the Healthy Schools' initiative.

## Summary

1. Ysgol Acrefair is an improving school where headteacher and staff work hard and effectively as a team, for the benefit of all pupils. They ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity and are well cared for, guided and supported.
2. The inspection team agreed with most of the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation document.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

3. Pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects observed in lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
14%	53%	33%	0%	0%

4. In this inspection, six subjects in Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 were inspected. The standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	3	3
Mathematics	3	3
Design and technology	3	3
Information technology	3	3
Geography	3	3
Physical education	2	2

5. The findings of the inspection team agreed with the school's self-evaluation grades for each of the subjects inspected.
6. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
7. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve targets set in their individual educational programmes (IEPs). Pupils with English as a second language (EAL) also make good progress overall.
8. Early years' children make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and using ICT.
9. In both KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening and reading are good. Standards in the key skills of writing, numeracy and using information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory.
10. Bilingualism is not effectively integrated into the life of the school but, considering the strong English background, pupils' bilingual skills are satisfactory.
11. Pupils show good development in their personal and social skills. They also show good development in problem solving and creative skills throughout the school.
12. Analysis of value added data shows that pupils make the expected progress from baseline.
13. Generally, in both KS1 and KS2, compared with similar schools, standards achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science fall into the lower quartile.
14. In 2004, 69 per cent of KS1 pupils attained level 2 or better in English, by teacher assessment, compared with an average of 83 per cent nationally. In mathematics, they attained 73 per cent compared to 87 per cent nationally and, in science, 77 per cent compared to 88 per cent nationally. These were below the targets set.
15. The percentage of KS2 pupils attaining at least level 4 in English, mathematics and science in the 2004 tests was 70.8 compared to a national average of 72.3 per cent. The results were well above the targets set for the pupils by the school. The school reports that this was mainly due to the school's 'Catch-up' initiatives and to 'booster lessons' for Year (Y) 6 during the previous year.
16. Pupils are well behaved and show consideration and courtesy to each other, to adults and visitors. Most pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards work and play.
17. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and what is expected of them.
18. Pupils' average attendance is good with average attendance in the three terms before the inspection being just over 95 per cent. Punctuality is very good.
19. Throughout the school, an understanding of equal opportunities is developing well. Pupils have a good awareness of the diversity of beliefs and cultures.
20. Although pupils have a good understanding of their community, they have had little experience of links to the workplace and of entrepreneurial activities. As such, their understanding of the world of work is underdeveloped.

21. Children in the early years develop their personal, social and basic skills well. They behave responsibly and are polite. Relationships with both staff and peers are good and they show good social development.

### **The quality of education and training**

22. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
16%	57%	27%	0%	0%

23. Seventy-three per cent of lessons observed were graded as 2 or better. The overall standard of teaching is above the Wales target of 95 per cent grade 3 or better.
24. In most lessons, pupils are made aware of the learning objectives and tasks are clearly explained and well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers have a very good relationship with their pupils and there is good teacher/ pupil interaction with plenty of praise and encouragement. Most lessons are of good pace and finish with a valuable plenary session.
25. Overlong lessons sometimes lack pace and rigour and have a negative effect on pupils' concentration and ability to remain on task.
26. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently very good, with a wide variety of exciting activities and experiences that motivate children and clearly linked to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
27. Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developed well in lessons such as mathematics, dance, music and art.
28. Teachers promote equality of opportunity well, ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and equally.
29. Although key skills are planned, there is a lack of focus on writing, numeracy and the use of ICT, and opportunities for their development are missed.
30. The promotion of pupils' bilingual skills and their spiritual awareness is underdeveloped across the school, as are pupils' experience of the world of work, sustainable development and global citizenship.
31. The part-time SEN teacher works closely with the class teachers and provides a variety of well-structured activities, including appropriate ICT programs, to motivate and reinforce learning. Pupils have positive support which ensures that they make good progress.
32. Pupils who have English as an additional language are given appropriate work and language experiences to increase their confidence. They are well supported by a classroom assistant and an EAL support teacher from the LEA.
33. Statutory assessment takes place for the under-fives and at the end of KS1 and KS2. Targets are set for all pupils in mathematics and English at the beginning of the academic year and these targets are monitored on a termly basis. The schools' progress in Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) is monitored in relation to local and national results.

34. Parents have a meeting with teachers each term to discuss pupils' progress. Annual written reports are of good quality and conform to statutory requirements. They include guidance on how pupils can improve and feedback from parents is welcomed.
35. The school is responsive to individual needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
36. The curriculum for the under-fives is well-planned on a thematic approach and gives a range of stimulating opportunities and experiences both indoors and outdoors, ensuring that children progress steadily towards the Desirable Learning Objectives.
37. The younger pupils in KS1 have a broad and balanced curriculum which has both coherence and progression. Although the older pupils in KS1 and those in KS2 follow a programme, which encompasses all areas of the NC programmes of study, there is a lack of continuity and progression in information technology and geography.
38. A variety of activities within the school and off-site visits enrich learners' experience.
39. Provision for moral, social and cultural education, including *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, is well developed throughout the school. Opportunities are further developed in personal, social and health education lessons which closely follow the Personal and Social Education Framework (ACCAC).
40. Collective worship, which is of a broadly Christian nature, reinforces well-established values, although there is insufficient opportunity for spiritual reflection. Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual experiences at other times are limited.
41. The school environment is secure, friendly and supportive. Pupils are well cared for, and staff liaise effectively with support services.
42. The school works closely with parents and carers, keeping them well informed.
43. The recommendations of the Code of Practice are met in the good provision made for SEN pupils, both in class and in withdrawal situations.
44. There are effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality. The recording of attendance meets the statutory requirements.
45. There is a good range of policies and guidelines to ensure the general safety and well being of pupils.
46. Clear policies exist in relation to behaviour and anti-bullying. An effective behavioural programme is firmly established in the school.

### **Leadership and management**

47. The school has clear aims and objectives that are understood and shared by staff and governors. There is a clear direction for the school's development in terms of teaching and learning, as set and agreed by the senior management team. However, the targets set in the School Development Plan (SDP) lack detail.
48. The headteacher has a broad vision and a determination to continue to improve all aspects of school life for the benefit of all the pupils.
49. Although a self-evaluation culture has been established within the school, the self-evaluation process has not been sufficiently formalised to enable the staff and governors to have a full and clear picture of teaching and learning.

50. The school has set up a self-evaluation process which involves all the teaching staff and the governors. However, the views of non-teaching staff, parents and pupils were not taken into account for the production of the school's self-evaluation document.
51. The school takes reasonable account of national priorities but the provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship is underdeveloped.
52. The headteacher takes the lead in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. However, the role of the curriculum co-ordinators is not yet fully developed in terms of monitoring teaching.
53. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good awareness of their responsibilities.
54. They have a satisfactory involvement in monitoring and evaluating developments in all aspects of school life.
55. The school satisfies statutory requirements and pays due attention to Welsh Assembly Government guidelines. Governors fulfil all their legal and regulatory requirements.
56. There is a sufficient number of well qualified teachers and support staff. They provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with SEN, the under fives and EAL pupils. They work together as an effective team to ensure the delivery of the National Curriculum (NC).
57. The school secretary makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
58. The kitchen staff, led by a hard-working cook, and the playground assistants ensure good order and behaviour during the lunchtime break.
59. The quality and range of resources to support the delivery of the NC are generally good. They are well used to support teaching and learning. However, the high pupil/computer ratio limits the opportunities for regular practice and use.
60. The school buildings are old and need continuous maintenance. The caretaker, staff and governors keep a watchful eye on their condition and act immediately when any health and safety issues emerge.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1. address the shortcomings identified in subject areas and review the length of some lessons;
- R2. increase the opportunities for pupils to use the key skills of writing, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum;
- R3. further develop the role of subject leaders in monitoring and assessment procedures and ensure that individual pupil targets are more specific;
- R4. improve provision to develop pupils' bilingual skills and spiritual awareness;
- R5. review the format and structure of the SDP to enhance its effectiveness as a working document with specific targets, actions, costs and review dates, and

R6. provide more opportunities for pupils to experience and be aware of the world of work (including entrepreneurial activities), sustainable development and global citizenship.

The governing body 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.

***The inspection team would like to thank the headteacher, staff, governors, pupils and parents of the school for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.***