

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

**Albany Primary School  
Albany Road, Roath,  
CARDIFF CF24 3RR**

**School Number: 681/2005**

**Dates of Inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> December 2006**

**by**

**Mr Rob Isaac  
W170/15942**

**Date of Publication: 26th January 2007**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1105806**

© Queen's Printer 2007: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

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

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

The inspection of Albany Primary School took place between 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2006. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Rob Isaac, undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	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>	
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	7
<b>The quality of education and training</b>	
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	11
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	13
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	16
<b>Leadership and management</b>	
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	19
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	20
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	21
<b>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</b>	
English	23
Science	25
Information technology	26
Design technology	27
Geography	28
Art	29
<b>School's response to the inspection</b>	31
<b>Appendices</b>	
1 Basic information about the school	32
2 School data and indicators	32
3 National Curriculum assessments results	33
4 Evidence base of the inspection	34
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	35

## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Albany Primary is a large school situated in an area close to the city centre of Cardiff. The catchment has a rich social mix and relatively high levels of social and economic difficulty. The school was founded in 1887. There are 345 pupils on roll aged from four to eleven years, and 52 who attend part-time in the nursery. These numbers have increased substantially over the last six years, against a background of falling rolls, nationally. The current head teacher has been in post since January 1999.

2. About 24 per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is above the national average. There are 66 pupils – or 19 per cent – who have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN), which is in line with the national average. Six pupils hold a formal statement of SEN, which is also average. English is the sole or predominant home language in only 46 per cent of pupils' homes. No pupils come from a Welsh speaking home and one is "looked after" by the local authority. About 54 per cent of pupils have a very wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, which include speakers of 30 different languages. The school population is very fluid, due in part to student families living temporarily in Roath, as well as a number of asylum-seeker families from many other countries as well as Czech Roma families who may move to the area at short notice. This significant turbulence affects about 40 per cent of the numbers on roll.

3. The school has 15 classes, 18 teachers, including the head teacher, five full-time and six part-time teaching assistants. Five members of staff are from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. All class sizes are 30 or below and all contain single-age groups. Albany school was last inspected in November 2000. It achieved the Quality Standard of the Basic Skills Agency in November 2006.

### The school's aims, priorities and targets

4. The school's mission statement is "*Working together to give our best in everything we do.*" Its vision is "*to develop each child as a valued and respected individual so that they in turn learn to respect and value other people.*"

5. The school has identified the following priorities for development in 2006–07 in its self evaluation and development plan. They include to:

1. improve the assessment of design and technology;
2. raise standards in science;
3. further improve pupils' data handling skills;
4. improve spelling and handwriting in key stage 2; and
5. improve teaching and learning in mathematics in key stage 2

## Summary

6. Albany Primary is an excellent school that is better than it judges itself to be. It succeeds in helping its pupils to make very good progress and achieve high standards by the time they reach the end of year 6. The quality of its leadership, teaching, curriculum and self-evaluation is outstanding. It cares for and guides its pupils outstandingly well and it gives excellent value for money. It has made outstanding progress since its last inspection in 2000.

### Table of grades awarded

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

7. The findings of the inspection team were in line with three of the seven judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report. In the other key questions, inspection evidence proved that the school was better than it judged itself. Inspectors found evidence to support the judgments on key questions 1, 2, 5 and 6 to be grade 1 because of the many outstanding features seen.

### Standards in subjects inspected in key stage 1 and key stage 2

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 1
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Design and Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 1	Grade 1

8. Standards have improved significantly in many subjects since the last inspection. In the 65 lessons inspected, the grades awarded for standards achieved were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
26%	72%	2%	0%	0%

9. This shows that in 98 per cent of lessons standards are at least good with no important shortcomings. This compares very well with national standards which were judged as 76 per cent at least good in the latest report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales. It also compares very well with standards achieved at the time of the last inspection, which were only 17 per cent at least good. Standards of achievement in 26 per cent of pupils' work have outstanding features, as opposed to 13

per cent nationally. These are high figures, above the current national target of 50 per cent, and the target for 2007 of 65 per cent, of standards to be graded 1 or 2.

10. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT). They also make good progress in all six areas of learning and are well placed to meet the Desirable Outcomes for Learning by the end of the reception year.

11. Overall, pupils' achievements on entry to the school are low, when compared nationally. In 2006, the key stage 1 results, collectively, for the proportion of pupils attaining at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science together was below national averages and those of similar schools. Girls achieved more highly than boys. However, standards have steadily improved over the last six years. This is a considerable achievement given the low achievements of many children on entry. It must be borne in mind that up to 40 per cent of the school's intake arrives at the school at any point from nursery to year 6, often with no previous experience of education and often from very vulnerable backgrounds.

12. In the 2006 key stage 2 English, mathematics and science teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils who achieved at least Level 4 was broadly in line with the national and local averages, but well above that of most similar schools nationally. The proportion that attained the higher Level 5 was also well above the average for similar schools. This is a very significant achievement given the context of many pupils' backgrounds.

13. Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve well by the end of year 6, but start slowly when they have had little or no previous experience of the language. They get good help from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) staff, but they need that help much more often.

14. Learners progress very well in their personal, moral, social and wider development. From nursery to year 6, they make at least good and often outstanding progress in developing their personal and social skills. Many pupils have a sense of ownership and responsibility to the school, its environment, their community and the wider world. The school has a strong sense of *family* and its ethos encourages pupils to care for individuals and to appreciate the values of other people. Because of the very broad range of backgrounds and countries from which many pupils come, they are already citizens of the world and have a deep understanding of global citizenship.

15. Pupils' standards and progress in speaking and listening are good in key stages 1 and 2. Standards in reading and writing across the curriculum are good in key stage 1 and have outstanding features in key stage 2. Standards in the use of numeracy are good in both key stages. Pupils achieve well in the use of incidental Welsh throughout the school, and standards in the use of ICT are good in key stage 1 and outstanding in key stage 2.

16. The school integrates bilingualism well into its work, and, considering the wide variety of languages spoken, pupils' bilingual competence in Welsh and English is good.

17. The majority of pupils enjoy being in school. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Most pupils

understand the school rules and recognise the need to take responsibility for their actions. All adults in the school consistently encourage pupils to understand, manage and develop their standards of behaviour to the best of their abilities.

18. Attendance levels have some good features, but also shortcomings in important areas throughout the school. Despite the considerable efforts of staff, attendance rates average only 89.6 per cent, a figure well below the expected levels of attendance for Welsh primary schools. These impact adversely upon the standards pupils achieve. A significant minority of the school's population is transient and this situation affects attendance figures. Unauthorised absence, however, is low. Lessons throughout the day begin punctually.

19. Most pupils demonstrate a sharp awareness of the principles of equal opportunity and recognise that people should be treated fairly and without favouritism.

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

20. The overall quality of teaching is good with outstanding features. The findings of the inspection team differ from those of the school in its self evaluation report because inspectors found outstanding features in the teaching in a range of classes. In the 65 lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
26%	72%	2%	0%	0%

21. Teaching shows at least good features with no important shortcomings in 98 per cent of lessons observed, comparing well nationally where teaching is at least good in 79 per cent of lessons. Within this proportion, 26 per cent of teaching has outstanding features, as opposed to 18 per cent nationally. This is in excess of the current national target of 50 per cent to be graded 1 or 2. The quality of teaching is also higher now than it was in the last inspection when only 50 per cent was good or better and five per cent had many shortcomings.

22. The outstanding features of teaching include the excellent working relationships between teachers and pupils that promote a high quality ethos in lessons and a strong partnership in learning. Teachers often instil a high but appropriate level of challenge in the tasks they set pupils. They skilfully build and develop imaginative lessons and succeed in catching pupils' attention so that their concentration is sustained for extended periods of time. Teachers also prepare a wide range of good resources and engaging activities to involve pupils fully in their learning.

23. Teachers have good, up-to-date subject knowledge and use this effectively in lessons. This is particularly the case for the teaching of English, art and information technology.

24. The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good with no important shortcomings. The school has established very thorough procedures to assess the progress of all pupils, including those in the early years, and those with SEN or with English as an additional language. Assessments take place regularly in all subjects.

25. Learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the community in an outstanding way. The school's curriculum, in particular, is outstanding.

26. Learning experiences contribute highly effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers are very good role models and work very hard to ensure pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong.
27. Pupils' cultural development is outstanding. They show great respect for the different cultures and faiths of their peers. The school is a beacon of racial harmony and promotes a culture of understanding and respect for diversity. Albany is a school where difference makes no difference.
28. Provision for *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* (the Welsh Dimension) is outstanding. Pupils learn much about their Welsh heritage in English, history, geography, music and art lessons. They sing songs and hymns in assemblies in Welsh. They compare the different weather systems of North and South Wales in geography. They discuss the old photographs on display, which show the school when it was a World War 1 hospital for wounded soldiers. Their understanding is also consolidated through educational visits and studies of the work of Welsh artists such as Sir Kyffin Williams and Nicholas Evans. They have visited centres of culture such as the National Museum of Wales and Albany Art Gallery.
29. The school promotes bilingualism well. Opportunities for the further promotion of Welsh are rarely missed. Members of staff regularly use the Welsh language throughout the day. Pupils in turn initiate and respond to conversations in Welsh with each other, staff and visitors. They are aware of their national heritage and are proud to be in Wales and living in the capital city of Cardiff.
30. The quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding. Teachers place a high priority on the pastoral care of pupils. Pupils feel safe and secure while in school. The provision for pupils with SEN is one of the school's greatest strengths.
31. The school places strong emphasis on equality of opportunity. All pupils, regardless of their background, ability, race, religion or gender have full access to the curriculum and out-of-hours activities.

### **Leadership and management**

32. The overall quality of leadership and management has good features, some of which are outstanding.
33. The outstanding features of leadership include:
- the inspirational, sensitive and very well-organised leadership of the head teacher;
  - the able and innovative support of the assistant head teachers;
  - the skilled leadership of provision for pupils with SEN;
  - the strength of subject coordination;
  - the very good quality of governance provided by the governing body;
  - the active inclusion of pupils in leadership through the school council;
  - and
  - the excellent quality of self-evaluation.
34. The school's self-evaluation processes and planning for improvement are good with outstanding features. The self-evaluation process is outstandingly inclusive of all the school's stakeholders and the self-evaluation report is thorough, incisive, accurate

and of high quality. This school is committed to improving standards. It has successfully developed very good self-evaluation procedures. These have been instrumental in the excellent progress it has made since its last inspection.

35. The organisation of a functioning school council helps pupils gain a good understanding of citizenship as well as leadership. It is supervised well and the school plans to nurture its healthy development. Pupils grasp this opportunity willingly. They benefit from their involvement in the democratic process. The council meets regularly and has delegates from all year groups from year 3 up. However, it does not include any representatives from key stage 1.

36. Leaders and managers ensure there are sufficient qualified and experienced members of staff who are well trained and deployed for the number of pupils on roll. The members of staff work as an effective, strong and close team with a high morale.

37. The school makes outstanding use of its Victorian accommodation, but the aged building is highly unsuited to the needs of a twenty-first century primary school. Leaders and managers have spent money wisely, investing in improvements and repairs, not only to the building but also the school playgrounds. This is a costly and ongoing process.

38. Outstanding use is made of available resources. These are good in quantity, quality and range. Most classes now have interactive white boards and these are used confidently by both pupils and members of staff. The school has a well stocked library, which is used well by many pupils. There are also sufficient computers in the computer suite and classrooms. Very good efforts are made to ensure that available resources are used and reviewed to the maximum effect. Teachers involve pupils in evaluating the value for money obtained in the projects they undertake. Overall, Albany Primary School provides excellent value for money.

## Recommendations

The governors, head teacher and staff should now:

- R1** Further develop ways to raise the achievements in English of pupils who have had little or no experience of the language;
- R2** Continue to seek ways to raise levels of attendance; and
- R3** Improve the opportunities for pupils in key stage 1 to take part in decision-making and the democratic process.

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 1: Good with outstanding features

39. The overall standards pupils achieve are good with outstanding features. The findings of the inspection team differ from those of the school in its self-evaluation report because inspectors found outstanding features in the standards achieved, particularly in English, art and information technology, in a wide range of classes.

#### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 1
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Design and Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 1	Grade 1

40. Standards have improved significantly in many subjects since the last inspection. In the 65 lessons inspected, the grades awarded for standards achieved were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
26%	72%	2%	0%	0%

41. This shows that in 98 per cent of lessons standards are at least good with no important shortcomings. This compares very well with national standards which were judged as 76 per cent at least good in the latest report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales. It also compares very well with standards achieved in the school at the time of the last inspection, which were only 17 per cent at least good. Standards of achievement in 26 per cent of pupils' work have outstanding features, as opposed to 13 per cent nationally. These are high figures, above the current national target of 50 per cent, and the target for 2007 of 65 per cent, of standards to be graded 1 or 2.

42. Overall, pupils' achievements on entry to the school are low, when compared nationally. In 2006, the key stage 1 results, collectively, for the proportion of pupils attaining at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science together was below national averages and those of similar schools. Girls achieved more highly than boys. However, standards have steadily improved over the last six years. This is a considerable achievement given the low achievements of many children on entry. It must be borne in mind that up to 40 per cent of the school's intake arrives at the school at any point from nursery to year 6, often with no previous experience of education and often from very vulnerable backgrounds.

43. In the 2006 key stage 2 English, mathematics and science teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils who achieved at least Level 4 was in line with the national and local averages, but well above that of most similar schools

nationally. The proportion that attained the higher Level 5 was also above the average for similar schools. This is a very significant achievement given the context of many pupils' backgrounds.

44. The key stage 2 collective results for pupils, who achieved at least Level 4 in all three core subjects together, were in line with national averages and well above the average achieved by pupils in similar schools nationally. The fractured lives of a large minority of pupils are a key factor which hinders this pattern of achievement. The poor attendance levels of a tenth of the school have an impact on how well those pupils achieve. That said, many, including those with SEN, make very good progress in that they start their education with low achievements. In the case of asylum seeker children, they have often had no education before coming to Albany.

45. Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve well by the end of year 6 but start slowly when they have had little or no previous experience of the language. They get good help from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) staff, but they need that help much more often.

46. Learners progress very well in their personal, moral, social and wider development. From nursery to year 6, they make at least good and often outstanding progress in developing their personal and social skills. Learning experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. Many pupils have a sense of ownership and responsibility to the school, its environment, their community and the wider world. The school has a strong sense of *family* and its ethos encourages pupils to care for individuals and to appreciate other people's values. Because of the very broad range of backgrounds and countries which many pupils come from, they are already citizens of the world and have a deep understanding of global citizenship.

47. Pupils' standards and progress in speaking and listening are good in key stages 1 and 2. Standards in reading and writing across the curriculum are good in key stage 1 and have outstanding features in key stage 2. Standards in the use of numeracy are good in both key stages. Pupils achieve well in the use of incidental Welsh throughout the school, and standards in the use of ICT are good in key stage 1 and outstanding in key stage 2.

48. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT). They also make good progress in all six areas of learning and are well placed to meet the Desirable Outcomes for Learning by the end of the reception year.

49. The school integrates bilingualism well into its work and, considering the wide variety of languages spoken, pupils' bilingual competence in Welsh and English is good.

## **The development of personal, social and learning skills**

50. The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills is good with outstanding features. At the end of this first term of the school year, the under fives and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have settled well into their new year groups and are making very good progress. Pupils' attitudes towards learning, the interest they show in their work and their efforts to sustain concentration, often for extended periods, are good. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 work well independently and in small groups making effective use of their time. Pupils know and understand what they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

51. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstandingly good and make a real contribution towards the good standards they achieve. Pupils benefit from a positive learning environment that promotes good behaviour. Parents in response to the inspection questionnaire say how pleased they are with the standards of behaviour. Pupils throughout the school are courteous, considerate and interact well with each other, with teachers and visitors. They willingly take on additional responsibilities such as by being class and corridor monitors or school councillors.

52. Pupils understand the school rules which they have helped draw up, and the values the school encourages. Class teachers are very good role models and address any inappropriate behaviour at an early stage. No incidents of bullying or any form of harassment were observed during the inspection and pupils and parents say that such incidents are rare and are dealt with promptly and firmly. There were no exclusions during the 12 months prior to inspection.

53. Attendance levels have some good features, but also shortcomings in important areas throughout the school. Despite the considerable efforts of staff, attendance rates average only 89.6 per cent, a figure well below the expected levels of attendance for Welsh primary schools. These impact adversely upon the standards they achieve. A significant minority of the school's population is transient and this situation affects attendance figures. Unauthorised absence, however, is low. Lessons throughout the day begin punctually.

54. Learners successfully develop the capacity to work independently and in small groups. This is particularly useful with classes of widely differing abilities. Pupils show good social skills as they work together in and out of the classroom, and this helps in creating a firm foundation for their lifelong learning.

55. Pupils' make very good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. Relationships throughout the school are good. There is a strong mutual respect between adults and pupils. This contributes to creating a happy, caring and supportive learning environment. Through initiatives such as the school council and fund raising for charitable causes, pupils are developing positive attitudes to citizenship. Pupils have good moral attitudes. They show fairness and consideration to others. They are happy and wait their turn and apply themselves to the task set for them.

56. Pupils' demonstrate a very good awareness of equal opportunities issues and feel strongly that all people regardless of their background, or circumstance should be treated fairly and with kindness and understanding. Pupils show outstanding respect for each other's beliefs, attitudes and differing cultural traditions. Pupils' close relationships are supported through religious education, collective worship and *circle time* discussions. Through these occasions, they develop an understanding of and respect for the diversity of each other's beliefs, traditions and attitudes.

57. Teachers prepare pupils effectively for participation in the workplace and the community through the personal and social education programme and by visiting places of interest and involvement in major community projects. Teachers use visits to places such as the Big Pit at Blaenavon, the Millennium stadium, community farms, museums and galleries to enhance and add interest to the curriculum and provide an insight into the world of work. Community participation includes such activities as visiting and entertaining residents at a nearby day centre for the elderly.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

58. The overall quality of teaching is good with outstanding features. The findings of the inspection team differ from those of the school in its self-evaluation report because inspectors found outstanding features in the teaching in a range of classes. In the 65 lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
26%	72%	2%	0%	0%

59. Teaching shows at least good features with no important shortcomings in 98 per cent of lessons observed, comparing well nationally where teaching is at least good in 79 per cent of lessons. Within this proportion, 26 per cent of teaching has outstanding features, as opposed to 18 per cent nationally. This is in excess of the current national target of 50 per cent to be graded 1 or 2. The quality of teaching is also higher now than it was in the last inspection when only 50 per cent was good or better and five per cent had many shortcomings.

60. The outstanding features of teaching include the excellent working relationships between teachers and pupils that promote a high quality ethos in lessons and a strong partnership in learning. Teachers often instil a high but appropriate level of challenge in the tasks they set pupils. They skilfully build and develop imaginative lessons and succeed in catching pupils' attention so that their concentration is sustained for extended periods of time. Teachers also prepare a wide range of good resources and engaging activities to involve pupils fully in their learning.

61. Teachers work in very good partnerships with teaching assistants, other teachers, and those with NNEB accreditation, to provide interesting sessions. The school enjoys a series of strong partnerships between teachers, which has resulted in a culture of team teaching.

62. Teachers stimulate and challenge pupils of all abilities well in carefully differentiated activities. They set clear and appropriate time limits for them to complete tasks and this ensures that lessons usually progress at a good pace. They intervene sensitively to support and encourage pupils in their work.

63. Teachers exercise their authority firmly and fairly. They establish high standards for pupils' behaviour and effort in classrooms in a positive way. This has a good effect on pupils' attitudes to learning.

64. Teachers have good, up-to-date subject knowledge and use this effectively in lessons. This is particularly the case for the teaching of English, art and information technology. Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching and use a good range of contexts and resources to capture pupils' interest and assist their understanding. They use questions skilfully to gauge pupils' knowledge and understanding.

65. Many lessons are planned well and have a clear structure and purpose. This is particularly true for the consistent teaching of key skills. Teachers share their objectives with pupils and review them towards the end of lessons to monitor progress. Plenary sessions are often of good quality. Where appropriate, teachers show versatility in adapting lessons to accommodate the needs of all pupils.

66. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, irrespective of their abilities and backgrounds. They provide many rich opportunities for pupils to consolidate their understanding of the Welsh dimension in appropriate contexts.

67. Pupils with SEN play a full part in learning. They are supported outstandingly well by their teachers and teaching assistants. Arrangements for organising pupils with SEN are highly effective. These ensure that they follow the NC closely and are fully included.

68. Teachers' use of the school's interactive whiteboards has a good impact on teaching and learning in most classrooms. Pupils' progress in ICT is significantly enhanced in many subjects when teachers present custom-designed lessons using interactive whiteboards as an integral part of their teaching. Many concepts are made easy to understand in a compelling way through innovative use of state-of-the-art technology.

69. Teachers have a good understanding of the requirements and guidance of the Welsh Assembly and Estyn for cross-curricular aspects of study. The teaching of art, in particular, includes many links to a broad range of other subjects.

70. With regard to the teaching of Welsh, the commitment, effort and remarkable enthusiasm of teachers and support staff, none of whom speak Welsh as their first language, all have a significant impact on the development of pupils' bilingual skills.

71. Where teaching has shortcomings, and this is rare, it is mainly due to an over-reliance on the teacher, rather than the learner, as the instigator of all learning.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

72. The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good with no important shortcomings. The school has established very thorough procedures to assess the progress of all pupils, including those in early years, with SEN and with English as an additional language. Assessments take place in all subjects and are an on-going feature.

73. Statutory assessment takes place for the under-fives and at the end of key stages 1 and 2. The school's progress is monitored by the LEA in relation to the results for local, national and similar schools.

74. Good features of the school's systems are the regularity of assessment and the detailed recording of information on pupils' attainments. Teachers keep 'field notes' on individual pupils and these are used to inform planning and identify targets as well as being a record of progress.

75. Portfolios of annotated and levelled pieces of pupils' work are kept for each subject area and these support teachers' assessment skills, particularly at the end of the key stages.

76. A very detailed analysis is made of assessment records to identify trends and areas for development. A useful tracking system helps identify pupils' progress in the core subjects.

77. The quality of marking of pupils' work is generally good. Work is regularly marked and includes supportive comments and suggestions for improvement.

78. Parents have regular opportunities during the year to meet with teachers to discuss their children's progress. The school has an open day in the summer term. Annual reports to parents are of good quality and conform to statutory requirements.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

79. Learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the community in an outstanding way. The school's curriculum, in particular, is outstanding. The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.

80. The broad, balanced and relevant curriculum has an outstandingly rich and wide range of interesting experiences. It enhances the learning of pupils and also includes French for all in year 6. The curriculum is planned very well to reflect the different cultures and needs of pupils throughout the school. Policies and schemes of work for the National Curriculum and religious education conform to statutory requirements. A number of schemes have been recently revised and others are in the process of being refined to meet the latest recommendations. The school provides a rich, highly creative and innovative programme for English, information technology and art that ensures all the necessary skills and knowledge are delivered in a creative way. This is an outstanding feature.

81. Planning for key skills is well developed and included in the schemes of work. The school ensures that there is an effective balance and that these skills are developed systematically.

82. Long-term and medium-term planning is thorough and flexible and ensures that pupils build systematically on what they already know and can do. Teachers match tasks very carefully to pupils' needs to ensure that they make good progress in all areas of their work.

83. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for pupils is outstanding. These include sport, music, art and drama. Every pupil has the opportunity to join in. The staff, parents, grandparents and parishioners help to run them. These clubs are

well run and popular. They contribute very effectively towards raising the standards pupils achieve in their personal development.

84. Educational visits to places such as Storey Arms in the Brecon Beacons give pupils in year 6 the chance to experience outbound activities and to live with friends away from their home. Year 3 pupils visit the Sherman Theatre to hear poetry and year 2 pupils study the local urban environment to develop their understanding of maps and of local businesses. These are all further enrichments for pupils to experience. The school welcomes a very wide range of visitors. These include specialists from England and Wales in poetry, creative writing, art and music. Instructors from the road-safety centre teach cycling safety. Nursery children enjoy a visit from Santa's reindeers and there are regular visits from storytellers and leaders of different faiths.

85. The school is outstandingly good at initiating innovative projects which captivate the imagination of the school and the wider community. This has a long lasting effect not only on present, past and future pupils, but also the community. The Red Gates project, which involved pupils working with an artist to design and build highly artistic red gates at the front of the school, is a shining example.

86. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and provides appropriate time for thinking and reflection. Pupils have the opportunity to study their own and other cultures and faiths through religious education, geography and history. Although school assemblies and the teaching of religious education are mainly and broadly Christian in nature, much respect is also paid to the other World faiths shared by many pupils.

87. Learning experiences promote positive attitudes in school and contribute highly effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers work very hard to ensure pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. They are very good role models.

88. Pupils' cultural development is outstanding. They show great respect for the different cultures and faiths of their peers. The school is a beacon of racial harmony and promotes a culture of understanding and respect for diversity. Albany is a school where difference makes no difference. Pupils' understanding of global citizenship is outstanding. This is because in many cases they are already citizens of the world. They are able to compare different countries to the United Kingdom because they have lived in those countries.

89. Provision for *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* (the Welsh Dimension) is outstanding. Pupils learn much about their Welsh heritage in English, history, geography, music and art lessons. They sing songs and hymns in assemblies in Welsh. They compare the different weather systems of North and South Wales in geography. They discuss the old photographs on display which show the school when it was a World War 1 hospital for wounded soldiers. Their understanding is also consolidated through educational visits and studies of the work of Welsh artists such as Sir Kyffin Williams and Nicholas Evans. They have visited centres of culture such as the National Museum of Wales.

90. The school promotes bilingualism well. Opportunities for the further promotion of Welsh are rarely missed. Members of staff regularly use the Welsh language naturally and often throughout the day. Pupils in turn respond and initiate conversation in Welsh to each other, staff and visitors. They are aware of their national heritage and are proud to be Welsh and living in the capital city of Cardiff.

91. Partnership with parents, the local community, schools and colleges are strong. Parents are very supportive of the school and teachers keep them well informed. Parents of new children at school appreciate the Language and Play group in which they learn how the school works and how best to continue their child's education at home. Parents are encouraged to assist in school and some do; they listen to children read and help with sports and visits. They respond well to the home-school agreement. An active Parent-Teacher Association raises considerable sums to provide additional resources and facilities and to help with transportation costs.

92. Very effective partnerships have been forged with the local community and teacher-training institutions and effective use is made of the community links for external visits and to encourage members of the community to visit the school. There are regular visits from the community police, the nurse and fire service.

93. With the help of local artists and metal workers, pupils played an active part in the design and creation of the impressive and decorative main entrance gateway – the Red Gates. The gateway with its stylised trees and birds' nests is now a prominent feature of the school and is much appreciated by the community.

### **The extent to which learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community**

94. The school broadens pupils' experience of the world of work through a range of activities, both in and out of school. It has established useful links with the Big Pit Mining museum and the museum of Welsh life at St Fagan's. Pupils have seen how television programmes are made when a film unit used the school for location work. Visitors include the community police officer and road safety team. They talk to children about their work and help them understand their roles in the community. The school supports worthy causes and by so doing help pupils appreciate the plight of those less fortunate than themselves.

95. Pupils are prepared very well for life in the United Kingdom and the sharing of many different traditions. The school population is made up of pupils from a very wide range of differing cultures, traditions and faiths. This mix adds to the richness of life at school. Teachers ensure all pupils have equal access to all the school has to offer regardless of background or circumstance. Pupils confirm that no one is excluded from any of the school's activities.

96. Understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship are promoted throughout the curriculum. Pupils understand the need to be responsible and protect the environment, to save energy and recycle waste products. There is a 'paper bank' in school for the collection of paper for processing.

97. The school endeavours to promote the development of pupils' entrepreneurial skills. Younger children through role-play 'buy and sell' products in the classroom, and begin to understand coinage and value. Older children, of their own volition, organised a number of fund raising initiatives to raise money for earthquake relief work in Pakistan.

98. The school endeavours to lay the foundations of lifelong learning and community regeneration by encouraging pupils to be responsible for their own actions and to be sympathetic to the needs of others. Pupils acquire good study habits. They co-operate well when working in pairs and small groups, helping and supporting each other. Pupils develop qualities such as kindness, truthfulness and forgiveness through circle-time discussions and assemblies. From the early years on, pupils get the opportunity to take on responsibilities by undertaking tasks to help their teachers. Older pupils act as monitors and councillors. These activities help prepare pupils for lifelong learning and for living in the community.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
--

99. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

#### **Care, guidance and support**

100. The quality of care, support and guidance for the pupils of Albany Primary is outstanding. Teachers place a high priority on the pastoral care of pupils. Pupils feel safe and secure while in school. Very good procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' academic progress, their social development and their personal welfare. Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. All pupils benefit from the school's determination to include them fully in its academic and social life.

101. The school makes effective use of the support services that are available. Language support and education welfare services are consulted as and when required and are used effectively.

102. The school is successful in its endeavour to develop a strong partnership with parents and carers in caring for, supporting and guiding their children. Parents are kept very well informed of events in school through several channels including newsletters, reports and a well designed and informative web site. Formal parent-teacher consultations occur twice each year and at other times by arrangement. Informal contact with staff occurs daily. The school prospectus is detailed and meets statutory requirements. It gives parents a good overview of the schools aims, objectives and procedures.

103. The induction arrangements for settling in children when they start school are good, and pupils feel safe and secure in their new surroundings. Pupils who join the school at a later stage are warmly welcomed and soon settle. On the playground, pupils interact well. The infant playground 'Friendship Stop' ensures all young children are included in play and that no child is left feeling friendless or unwelcome.

Older pupils care for younger children. Arrangements for transferring pupils to Cathays' High school are sound and effective and ensure a smooth transition.

104. The school provides high quality personal support and outstanding guidance for learners. Teachers and teaching assistants have excellent relationships with pupils and are fully aware of their individual needs. There is very good provision for personal and social education. This permeates all areas of the curriculum with pupils freely discussing issues of concern in circle-time discussions and in lessons. The very good relationships between pupils and staff facilitate very frank discussions.

105. Attendance registers are neatly maintained, and completed in accordance with statutory requirements. The head teacher and school secretary review them regularly. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is on call to investigate any prolonged or regular absences where there are concerns.

106. Despite the efforts of the school, attendance levels at 89.6 per cent remain significantly below the national average for Welsh primary schools. Travels to other countries or time off for religious observance account for many absences. The school acknowledges and rewards good or improved attendance. Most parents co-operate by informing the school if their child is unable to attend. A first-day response is invoked if a child is absent without explanation.

107. All pupils are aware of the system of consequences for unacceptable behaviour and members of staff are consistent in their approach.

108. The school's provision for ensuring the healthy development, safety and well being of all pupils is another of its outstanding features. Members of staff are trained in first aid and there are procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have an accident. Pupils' contact details are regularly reviewed and updated. Safety checks are carried out on all electrical appliances and fire safety equipment is tested. Fire drills are carried out each term. Health and safety audits are also conducted and risk assessments are undertaken before any educational visit takes place.

109. Good procedures and systems, based on LEA and Estyn recommendations, are in place for child protection. The head teacher is the nominated child protection officer and ensures regular training of all staff. The school is vigilant and able to recognise the signs that a child may need protection. It has a good system to record the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosures of all adults who have contact with pupils. The very effective child protection arrangements are well documented and known to all who work at the school. The head teacher ensures that members of staff receive regular training to enable them to recognise possible signs and symptoms of abuse.

### **The provision for pupils with special educational needs**

110. The provision for pupils with SEN is one of the school's greatest strengths. The effective early identification, assessment and monitoring of pupils contribute significantly to raising their achievements. Just over a fifth of pupils at the school are on the SEN register. They have a range of difficulties and disabilities. All of the pupils on the SEN register are very carefully cared for and given their own programmes for learning and targets for success. The SEN coordinator is an excellent role model.

She devises work and games for these pupils that are fun and pitched at precisely the right level for them to learn and achieve successfully.

111. Teachers and support staff work very well with pupils in a caring and supportive manner to ensure their inclusion in all studies. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN are well supported by experienced and effective staff. They also benefit from help provided by outside agencies such as the occupational therapy or educational psychology service. The school's work with parents and carers is outstanding.

### **Child Protection Procedures**

112. Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to the staff of the school. The members of staff know pupils and their families well and provide excellent pastoral care and guidance.

113. Very good day-to-day systems operate to deal with any pupils who have specific medical needs. This includes those who become unwell or who injure themselves during the school day.

114. The security of pupils while at school is given a high priority by members of staff and governors. They have ensured that the school building and its surroundings are very secure, thus ensuring pupils' safety at all times.

115. There are outstanding procedures to ensure children are suitably protected. There is a delegated governor and two named child protection officers, one of whom is the head teacher. They ensure that all members of staff receive appropriate training in child protection matters and are fully aware of protocols to follow.

116. Members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities if an incident occurs. First aid qualifications and resources are regularly updated. Risk assessments and health and safety audits are undertaken prior to any educational visits.

### **The provision for equality of opportunity**

117. The school places very strong emphasis on equal opportunities. All pupils, regardless of their background, ability, race, religion or gender have full access to the curriculum and out-of-hours activities.

118. The school has very effective racial equality and equal opportunities policies which promote pupils' understanding of equality very well.

119. Through the overall supportive and caring nature of the school, and through aspects of the PSE programme, pupils gain an excellent understanding of racial equality. In discussion, pupils reflect this understanding maturely and stress the importance of treating everyone without discrimination.

120. Diversity is celebrated boldly. Other beliefs and traditions feature in the school curriculum. Parents' comments at the pre-inspection meeting, and in the returned questionnaires, confirm that the school promotes diversity very well.

121. The school makes good provision for pupils with disabilities. Such pupils have access to all educational and recreational activities.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

122. The overall quality of leadership and management has good features, some of which are outstanding. The findings of the inspection team disagree with those of the school in its self-evaluation report because the report was over cautious.

123. The outstanding features of leadership include:

- the inspirational, sensitive and very well-organised leadership of the head teacher;
- the able and innovative support of the assistant head teachers;
- the skilled leadership of provision for pupils with SEN;
- the strength of subject coordination;
- the very good quality of governance provided by the governing body;
- the active inclusion of pupils in leadership through the school council;
- and
- the excellent quality of self-evaluation.

#### How well leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards

124. The school has a clear sense of its own educational direction and high standards are promoted with great persistence. The essence of the school's effectiveness is in the excellent teamwork between teachers and learners, teaching assistants, senior managers and governors.

125. The inspirational leadership provided by the head teacher is outstanding. She has successfully led the school through a period of change and improvement. Her management is inclusive and highly sensitive. She has succeeded in reshaping and retaining a team with a high morale. The head teacher gives a clear sense of direction to the school's work, is closely involved in its life at many levels, and shares with other teachers and pupils a commitment to improvement.

126. The assistant head teachers provide excellent support to the head teacher in managing the school. They play an active and effective part in planning, supporting, monitoring and evaluating the work of colleagues. Senior managers support student teachers very well and induction procedures for members of staff new to the school are good. The school has a long-standing role as a mentoring school for students from a teacher-training facility at the University of Wales Institute at Cardiff. This means that student teachers are often involved in class teaching under the close tutelage of the school's staff. The school takes very good account of national priorities, local partnerships and cluster arrangements.

127. The school helps develop the expertise of both teachers and teaching assistants in a highly inclusive way. Performance management procedures successfully promote teachers' continuing professional development. The school's leaders keep a good balance between meeting the professional needs of individual teachers and achieving its educational priorities.

128. The overall quality of subject coordination is good with no important shortcomings. The subject leadership of English, art and information technology is outstanding. The good work of subject coordinators is reflected in the good standards pupils achieve. Subject coordinators have been closely involved in policy-making and have designed and implemented good schemes of work.

129. The organisation of a functioning school council helps pupils gain a good understanding of citizenship as well as leadership. It is supervised well and the school plans to nurture its healthy development. They grasp this opportunity willingly. They benefit from their involvement in the democratic process through the school council. This body meets regularly and has delegates from all year groups from year 3 up. However, it does not include any representatives from key stage 1.

### **How well governors meet their responsibilities**

130. The governing body is very committed to the school and the chair of governors provides a strong lead. All governors are well informed of the needs of the school through their own involvement and by regular meetings with both professional and support staff. Governors recognise and support the role of the school council. They are successful in helping to set the school's strategic direction through their work in setting and costing targets for improvement in the school development plan.

131. Governors make regular visits to the school and have formal links with subject coordinators and members of staff with other areas of responsibility. Some governors take a very close interest in their particular areas, such as for pupils with SEN. Newly elected governors are developing their roles in liaising with relevant subject leaders and monitoring the quality of education and standards of achievement. The governing body meets all regulatory and legal requirements.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.</b>
---

132. The school's self-evaluation processes and planning for improvement are good with outstanding features. The findings of the inspection team differ from those of the school in its self-evaluation report in this key question as inspectors felt that the school's self-evaluation had outstanding features and upgraded the judgment accordingly.

### **How effectively the provider's performance is monitored and evaluated**

133. The self-evaluation process is outstandingly inclusive of all the school's stakeholders and the self-evaluation report is thorough, incisive, accurate and of high quality.

134. This school is committed to improving standards. It has successfully developed very good self-evaluation procedures. These have been instrumental in the excellent progress it has made since its last inspection.

135. The findings of the inspection team were in line with or above all of the judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school is better than it judges itself to be. The self-evaluation report is honest and thorough and all governors, staff and LEA advisers were involved in its development. Self-evaluation arrangements are rigorous, systematic, and based on first-hand evidence. Pupils often have opportunities to make their views known through their representative on the school council.

136. The head teacher, assistant head teachers and subject coordinators regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Coordinators also take in pupils' work to assess the outcomes of teaching on a regular basis.

137. Performance management and appraisal procedures are of good quality. Teachers receive in-service training of high quality.

### **The effectiveness of planning for improvement**

138. The quality of planning for improvement is good as shown by the school's improvement since its last inspection. The school assesses its strengths and its areas for improvement through a clear and well-composed school development plan. This notes the school's needs and responsibilities well. Financial implications and timescales are stated clearly. It is a very useful working document with specific, measurable success criteria. The head teacher and governing body ensure that good resources are provided to achieve key targets. Governors, teachers and teaching assistants are closely involved in planning for improvement and their views are carefully considered.

139. The head teacher and assistant head teachers monitor teaching carefully and have an accurate picture of the staff's many strengths and few areas for improvement. The school has put in place a good system which ensures that pupils get good specialist teaching in important areas. Teachers get appropriate time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). The implementation of workforce remodelling has been very effective in helping to raise standards further.

140. Since its last inspection, the quality of teaching is now often outstanding, the overall standards pupils achieve are consistently at least good, the quality of care and guidance is outstanding as is the quality of leadership and management.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.</b>
---

141. The findings of the inspection team match those of the school in its self-evaluation report.

142. Leaders and managers ensure there are sufficient qualified and experienced members of staff who are well trained and deployed for the number of pupils on roll. The members of staff work as an effective, strong and close team with a high morale. This is an outstanding feature of the school. Arrangements for planning, preparation and assessment time are most effective. The school has employed an experienced musician as the PPA teacher and his appointment has ensured that music is not only creative but fun.

143. Teaching assistants give good support throughout the school. They are well trained and motivated. They have clear specific duties and provide support throughout the day. They contribute to an exciting, vibrant environment with rich, fresh displays. Pupils really appreciate these stimulating interactive displays.

144. Members of the administrative staff make all visitors most welcome to Albany and they contribute very effectively to smooth daily organisation. The caretaker gives valuable support. He keeps everything in good order and cleaning staff ensure that the school is scrupulously clean for the start of each new day. Canteen staff and mid day supervisors have a special relationship with the pupils. During busy lunch-times, they ensure that pupils eat healthily, that they are safe and ready for afternoon sessions.

145. The school makes outstanding use of its Victorian accommodation, but the aged building is highly unsuited to the needs of a twenty-first century primary school. Leaders and managers have spent money wisely, investing in improvements and repairs, not only to the building but also the school playgrounds. This is a costly and ongoing process. The building is of another era and poses great problems for modern education. The school is on two floors and there are 33 steep steps dividing the upper juniors from the rest of the school. The hall is far too small for physical education and school assemblies. It is also used as a dining area, for large school gatherings and as a thoroughway to the infant department. There is no playing field. Pupils have to go to the nearest public park, which must be checked before use for health and safety reasons. Games are also taught in the playgrounds, which are beautifully decorated, but have limited space. The pupils respect their school highly and value all the improvements made.

146. The head teacher has been inspirational in the way she has developed the playgrounds for the pupils. She invited artists to create murals that gave pupils and all who walk through the impression of space, colour and a feeling of harmony and happiness. The members of staff display pupils' work carefully and interestingly across the school so that younger children can see what older pupils achieve. The displays celebrate the achievement and successes of many pupils and show visitors the rich varied curriculum offered by the school.

147. Outstanding use is made of available resources. These are good in quantity, quality and range. Most classes now have interactive white boards and both staff and pupils use these confidently. The school has a well-stocked library, which is used well by many pupils. There are also sufficient computers in the computer suite and classrooms.

148. Expenditure is closely matched to SDP targets. An outstanding feature of the school's budgetary planning lies in the way that the head teacher looks for funding initiatives and assesses their suitability for Albany, and then successfully bids for them. Very good efforts are made to ensure that available resources are used and reviewed to the maximum effect. Members of staff also involve pupils in evaluating the value for money provided in exciting projects.

149. Overall, Albany Primary School provides excellent value for money.

## **Standards achieved in subjects**

### **English**

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

#### **Key Stage 2: Grade 1 Good with outstanding features**

##### **Outstanding features**

150. Pupils write outstanding and very evocative poetry about subjects such as the school's Red Gates.

151. They write very creatively and passionately about a range of topics.

152. Pupils' writing is in a wide range of forms and covers many genres.

##### **Good features**

153. Many pupils enter the school with limited skills in reading, writing and speaking. About 40 per cent enter in years other than the nursery with little previous education. Their language abilities are well below those expected for their age. However, because of consistently good teaching they make good progress from year to year.

154. Pupils in key stage 1 listen carefully to their teachers' explanations and the contributions of other pupils. They listen carefully to stories, sequence events and retell stories using their own words. They make good progress in speaking for different purposes and audiences and collaborate well in discussions. They speak in a variety of contexts with increasing confidence.

155. Standards in reading in key stage 1 are good. Pupils display a good understanding of the characters, settings and structure of stories. Some identify grammatical conventions, such as an exclamation mark or a question mark in a big book. Most Year 1 pupils recognise full stops and capital letters. By the end of key stage 1, the more-able pupils read unfamiliar texts with growing confidence. Other readers have a positive attitude to reading and use a range of reading strategies to help them understand the text. Many pupils develop a good knowledge of the alphabetical order of letters.

156. Pupils in key stage 1, including those with SEN, make good progress in learning to write. By the end of key stage 1, many write creatively using some of the key features of narrative. Year 2 pupils suggest good, creative ideas for the endings to stories read aloud to the class. A few more-able key stage 1 pupils write at length. Their writing is well organised and they plan and revise their work well.

157. Most pupils in key stage 2 listen respectfully to their teachers and to others. In lessons, they remain focused for a sustained time. When answering questions, most give answers in writing and orally in phrases or full sentences. They make good

progress in speaking for different purposes and audiences and collaborate well in discussions.

158. Pupils in key stage 2, including those with SEN and those in very vulnerable circumstances, read aloud with good expression. Many make good progress from a low starting point. They ask questions about the topics they investigate and suggest and use appropriate sources of information. Most have a good understanding of the basic skills in reading, and develop strategies to deal with unfamiliar words. Most can identify types of words such as nouns or verbs.

159. Most key stage 2 pupils identify various descriptive figures of speech, such as similes and metaphors. They have good strategies to understand figures of speech and they use them aptly. Pupils with SEN make rapid progress, when they attend school, because of the support they get from very good specialist teachers and teaching assistants, both in mainstream as well as in withdrawal groups. They use phonic strategies well to read unfamiliar words.

160. By Year 6, pupils' skills in reading have many good features. They have a number of favourite authors. They are confident in discussing plot and character and have benefited greatly from visits to the school by poets and actors. The more-able readers read with expression, using different voices for different characters.

161. Pupils in key stage 2 understand some of the characteristics of myths and legends and, as a result, when they write creatively, they recall important aspects and find appropriate adjectives well. Many make good use of the school library, and the choice of reading books on offer is broad. Most pupils in key stage 2 show a good awareness of different degrees of formality in writing. Their handwriting is usually neat and well formed.

162. Pupils in upper key stage 2 write well. Their work shows a command of the characteristics of creative, persuasive and informational writing. They have a good understanding of how to write for different audiences. Many understand how to use punctuation and develop a sound vocabulary.

163. Teachers' use of an interactive whiteboard for literacy lessons has a positive impact upon pupils' understanding. Older pupils in key stage 2 use computers skilfully for word-processing or presenting their stories and poems and combine suitable images and text very well.

164. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well by the end of year 6 in learning English.

### **Shortcomings**

165. Pupils who have English as an additional language start slowly when they have had little or no previous experience of the language. They get good help from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) staff, but they need that help much more often.

166. Pupils in years 4 and 5 often still use pencils when their handwriting is good enough to benefit from the use of pens to write with.

## Science

### Key Stages 1 and 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

#### Good features

167. In key stage 1, pupils examine and correctly sort a variety of materials carefully, identifying similarities and differences. They understand the importance of 'senses' and how they help us to be aware of the world around us. They recognise the difference between living and non-living things.

168. Pupils have a good understanding of changes caused by heat and cold and that some changes are irreversible. They correctly choose the best position in the school, where ice cubes can melt at a slow pace.

169. In key stage 1, they demonstrate a good understanding of a 'fair test'.

170. They are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and the effect of exercise on the body.

171. Their understanding of simple forces and electrical circuits is developing well.

172. In key stage 2, pupils develop their understanding and knowledge through investigations and observations. They appreciate the importance of fair testing when evaluating the evidence gained. They make reasoned predictions, and observe, measure and record their findings carefully.

173. They have a good understanding of the function of the major parts of the human body and of the need for a varied diet. Their understanding of life cycles is good and they know that plants need light and water for healthy growth.

174. Pupils make good progress in their study of forces through a variety of investigations, including the uses of friction in daily life. They create electrical circuits and correctly explain how they work.

175. Most pupils know that light travels in straight lines and how shadows are formed. They explain the relationship between the earth, the moon and the sun.

#### Shortcomings

176. Pupils' use of ICT to collect, store, retrieve and present scientific information is under-developed.

**Information technology**

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

**Key Stage 2: Grade 1 Good with outstanding features**

**Outstanding features**

177. Older key stage 2 pupils are outstandingly fluent in using the advanced features of PowerPoint so that their tourism slideshows of Wales use transition effects and hyperlinks skilfully. They expertly insert sounds, still and moving images, maps, cartoons and text in different fonts and sizes. They download a wide range of clipart from the Microsoft website. The more-able pupils have created impressive PowerPoint presentations about the American artist, Edward Hopper, in their spare time and of their own volition.

**Good features**

178. Pupils learn to use computers to communicate and handle information, to some degree, in a range of subjects. They occasionally use a digital camera well to record their work.

179. In key stage 1, pupils program a robotic toy to move backwards and forwards and make right-angled turns. They develop their understanding of mathematics as well as ICT through learning how to control this robot.

180. Key stage 1 pupils develop a number of basic skills such as executing program commands, saving their work, using the mouse and pointer, and operating a number of facilities on the tool bar such as the airbrush, the spray, the borders tool, the fill tool and the pen to create Christmas cards of good quality.

181. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress when they receive the help of specialist teachers, but they need more time with such staff.

182. Pupils in key stage 1 use a digital mouse, icons and the screen pointer competently. They draw themselves using electronic imaging software to replicate images in patterns to good effect. They have also developed skills in word-processing, creating and printing simple sentences.

183. Year 2 pupils use Welsh incidentally in their digital biographies of Welsh sports stars to very good effect

184. Pupils with SEN make good progress with good support from teaching assistants. In year 2, they know that people communicate via the telephone or electronic mail as well as by writing. They are competent when highlighting blocks of text and change the colour, type and size of font carefully.

185. In key stage 2, pupils research the internet for information about social or educational conditions in the past. They access appropriate sites on the internet and manipulate digital imagery skilfully.

186. Pupils find appropriate files on a hard disk and open and use them. They use computers well to support their research, for example, by using digital encyclopaedias on compact discs.

187. Pupils in key stage 2 improve their capability in information technology. In their word-processed writing, for example, they use a range of fonts and styles of text in poetry and letters. They use computers to combine text and images of good quality. They manipulate sounds and explore simulations dextrously.

188. Pupils in key stage 2 explain the meaning and purpose of different file commands such as edit and print. They use the CAPS LOCK key to type a capital letter or CTRL key combinations to type shortcuts. They suggest appropriate names for different fields in setting up a file to store information about themselves.

189. Year 6 pupils create a database which has field names in the Welsh language. They find it easy to add fields or records to their databases and design the attributes of fields to receive either colour or text input. They input data in records to build up their databases.

190. Many pupils are adept at traversing the internet to use a variety of educational websites.

## **Design technology**

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

#### **Good features**

191. Across both key stages, pupils discuss and draw different designs when preparing to create a variety of models and items. They identify the appropriate equipment and materials needed and make any necessary research before starting.

192. They test and evaluate their finished product carefully and consider possible improvements. Pupils understand the processes of designing, making and evaluating because these are firmly established across the school.

193. All pupils are well aware of the importance of hygiene when handling food and of safety when handling tools.

194. In key stage 1, pupils select, cut, stick and assemble a variety of materials, showing good levels of skill and independence.

195. They are imaginative when designing and making their own biscuits and make sensible comments when discussing the appearance, texture and taste of the finished article.

196. They research the shapes and sounds of different musical instruments before attempting to recreate them using the appropriate materials.

197. In key stage 2, pupils are highly imaginative and very careful when measuring a variety of items, often for a specific purpose. They use numeracy skills when designing and making flip-flops for a four year old or a picture frame to display a photograph.

198. They bring their knowledge of healthy eating to bear when designing and making sandwiches and pizzas. Older pupils write interesting and lively poetry about their pizzas and design eye-catching posters to promote the sale of pizzas.

199. Pupils create effective movements in a range of different toys, such as fairground rides. They employ their knowledge of cams and cogs, simple pneumatics and electric circuits to good effect.

200. They use measuring skills well in designing, making and evaluating a variety of board games.

## **Geography**

### **Key Stages 1 and 2 - Grade 2 Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

201. Pupils develop a secure knowledge of their own environment and are aware that they are part of a wider world. They really enjoy learning about their locality and feel proud to be in Wales and living in the city of Cardiff.

202. Key stage 1 pupils study their immediate environment and name some of the physical features. Their understanding of mapping begins early. They draw a plan and know how to interpret maps of their school and its play areas. They draw a ribbon map of Albany road and later draw the route they take to school on a street map.

203. They know the different forms of transport in the area and carry out surveys of how they get to school. They record the information using good computer generated graphs. Pupils are becoming aware of the basic services in their locality and visit Albany road, the library and Roath Park.

204. Pupils in key stage 2 continue to develop their geographical knowledge with a wide range of visits in the locality and surrounding Cardiff. Year 6 pupils work on an extensive project about the Cardiff Bay area, making visits to it during the year. They speak confidently about land use in the locality.

205. Most pupils are familiar with specialised geographical vocabulary. They name many different countries of the world and know the location of their countries of origin. Pupils use a range of resources such as artefacts, photographs and the internet to compare and contrast their lives and their environment with those of

Chembakolli in India. They work independently or in groups to write accounts using good geographical vocabulary

206. Pupils are keen to look after the environment inside and outside the school. They have a mature approach as to how they can contribute to the community by looking after it. No litter was seen during the inspection and pupils reported that, this is usually the case. Pupils have a growing awareness of environmental issues and of the negative effect that some changes can have. They are studying the effect of changing the café on top of Snowdon from various different points of view. They value the wildness of Snowdonia and the natural world and hope that they will soon be successful in gaining the eco school award.

## Art

### Key Stages 1 and 2: Grade 1 Good with outstanding features

#### Outstanding features

207. Standards in art are outstanding throughout the school. Pupils have been involved in large-scale projects which are proudly displayed in many areas inside and outside the school. The artistic outcomes show excellent use of colour, pattern, texture, size and contrast. Pupils have worked with teachers and visiting artists in metal, textiles and paint to create a living gallery around the school of very high quality work.

208. Year 2 pupils greatly enjoyed their visit to the National Museum of Wales and learned much about Renoir's *Blue Lady*. They have recreated her in a striking collage and the outcome is outstanding. Their work shows character and boldness.

209. Year 4 pupils have helped visiting artists to create a series of excellent batik hangings, which depict the tragic journey of those who have to flee their country. Their work is of artistic merit as well as being emotive and evocative.

210. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of Welsh artists. They regularly visit local galleries to see original works. Year 6 pupils have marvelled at the work of Sir Kyffin Williams when they went to the Albany Gallery in Roath. They enjoy using and applying some of his techniques in their own work with considerable success.

#### Good features

211. Across the school, pupils work effectively with a wide range of media, tools and sizes to create, vivid, bold, innovative and imaginative artwork. They develop the skills needed very early. They take risks and are courageous in experimentation.

212. Pupils learn about many other subjects through their artwork. In key stage 1, they learn more about mathematics when they study different patterns in their environment and the effects of different textures. They make wrapping paper after first making shape stencils. The outcomes are not only colourful but also compelling to look at. Pupils talk knowledgeably about Bridget Riley.

213. In key stage 2, pupils work well in two and three dimensions. They gain their inspiration from Welsh artists and those of the wider world. They investigate, experiment with and develop techniques of their own. Year 4 pupils study the work of Nicholas Evans and try to see what the miners are thinking about and how they are feeling in the picture *Am Y Tro Olaf*. Pupils have developed a deep empathy with these miners as they go down the pit for the last time. They work in three dimensions to create a mask and then think about how they would feel when detailing facial wrinkles and expressions with string and paint.

214. Pupils use sketchbooks consistently and effectively to experiment with different techniques for drawing, shading, tone, pattern and effect. Their sketchbooks become a record of experiment in art and a map of achievement.

215. Pupils benefit from the visits of contemporary artists and these make a significant contribution to their creative development. Pupils realised how much preparation and refinement goes into art activities when a visiting metalwork artist came to the school. The Red Gates project took several months before the final product was erected outside the school. In designing the gates, pupils decided they wanted to have a focus on nature, as Albany is an urban school. They made many sketches before coming up with the ideas of trees and the life that trees support for their final sketches. They experimented with clay casts, which were used in the actual gates and designed leaves in copper. They coloured and embossed their sculptures with special tools. These gates now stand at the entrance to the school beckoning visitors to step inside. They have become a local landmark and are much admired by the community.

## School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors of Albany Primary School are delighted with the report resulting from our recent inspection.

The staff and governors are particularly proud that the inspection team recognised Albany as an excellent school with outstanding qualities in leadership, teaching, the curriculum and self evaluation. We are pleased with the recognition of the outstanding care and guidance given to pupils at Albany. The report acknowledges the great respect pupils demonstrate for their peers and states that the school is a beacon of racial harmony which promotes tolerance of and respect for cultural diversity. "Albany is a school where difference makes no difference." The report also gives credit to the outstanding provision for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig (the Welsh Dimension) and pupils' understanding of their Welsh heritage.

We have great pride in Albany and are uplifted by the many outstanding features recognised by the inspectors:

- the outstanding features of teaching which include the excellent working relationships between teachers and pupils resulting in a strong partnership for learning;
- excellent use of good quality resources;
- the high proportion of pupils' work which shows outstanding features;
- outstanding progress in developing personal and social skills;
- the many concepts made easy to understand in a compelling way through innovative use of state-of-the-art technology.

The report states, 'standards in Art are outstanding throughout the school.' This reflects the school's strong and successful drive to give pupils an appreciation and understanding of art.

The school's achievement in attaining such outstanding praise will be cherished and nurtured by all staff, governors, parents and pupils and contribute to the school's future improvement.

On behalf of Albany school, we would like to thank the inspection team for their courtesy, professionalism and their knowledgeable understanding of our school community. That understanding will encourage the whole school community to shape an educational agenda, which will equip our pupils to meet the challenges they will face in their individual futures.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Albany Primary School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Address of school	Albany Road, Roath, CARDIFF
Postcode	CF24 3RR
Telephone number	02920 499520

Headteacher	Mrs Angela Lepore
Date of appointment	January 1999
Chair of governors	Mr Eric Hadley
Registered inspector	Mr Rob Isaac
Dates of inspection	11 <sup>th</sup> to 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2006

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total (inc. nursery)
Number of pupils	26	45	42	49	52	59	38	60	371

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	16	4	18

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20.2 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24.6
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Spring 2006	87%	85%	89%
Autumn 2005	88%	89%	90%
Summer 2005	90%	87%	92%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	22%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	Nil

### Appendix 3

#### National Curriculum Assessment Results (compared with national averages for 2005) End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2006			Number of pupils in Y2:					37
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	2+
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	2	0	17	57	24	81
		National	0	4	12	64	20	84
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	2	0	19	57	21	78
		National	0	4	14	56	26	82
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	2	2	7	67	21	88
		National	0	5	14	69	12	81
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	2	0	12	62	24	86
		National	0	2	11	64	23	87
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	2	0	14	64	19	83
		National	0	2	10	63	24	87
Science	Teacher Assessment	School		0	19	52	29	81
		National	0	2	9	65	24	89

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science by teacher assessment			
In the school	74%	In Wales	81%

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

#### National Curriculum Assessment Results (compared with national averages for 2005) End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006			Number of pupils in Y6									55
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	W	1	2	3	4	5	4+
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	7	9	56	27	83	
		National	0	0	1	0	1	4	15	47	32	79
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	7	7	49	36	85	
		National	0	0	1	0	1	3	15	47	32	79
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	7	64	29	93	
		National	0	0	1	0	0	2	11	51	35	86

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in English, mathematics and science by Teacher Assessment		
In the school	80%	
In Wales	74%	

- D Pupils who are excepted 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

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

Five inspectors spent a total of 18 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection started.

The inspectors visited:

- 65 lessons or parts of lessons;
- all classes;
- three acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began; and
- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils, including the school council, during the inspection.

The team considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- responses from 49 parents to a questionnaire;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- a range of pupils' past and present work.

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

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr Rob Isaac	Registered inspector	Key Question 1 Key Question 2 Key Question 5 Key Question 6	English Information Technology (ICT)
Mrs Angela Lepore	Nominee & Headteacher	Contributing to all key questions	N/A
Mr Charles Brentnall	Lay Inspector	Contributing to: Key Question 1 Key Question 3 Key Question 4 Key Question 5	None
Mr Merfyn Douglas Jones	Team Inspector	Contributing to: Key Question 1 Key Question 2 Key Question 4	Design Technology Science (Welsh)
Mrs C Gail Robertson	Team Inspector	Key Question 3 Key Question 7 Key Question 4	(Early Years) Art Geography
Mr Alan Smith	Peer Assessor	Key Question 2	English / ICT

### Acknowledgement

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

### Inspection Contractor:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd.,  
Oaks Lea,  
Higher Knolton,  
Overton, Wrexham LL13 0LF  
Wrexham Office: 01978 710332  
Lydney Office: 01594 510414