

**REPORT**

**on the**

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF  
THE SCHOOL INSPECTION ACT 1996**

**ARCHBISHOP ROWAN WILLIAMS  
CHURCH IN WALES (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL  
CRICK ROAD  
PORTSKEWETT  
MONMOUTHSHIRE  
NP26 5UL**

School Number: 679/3327

Date of Inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> June – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2003

**By**

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Under Estyn contract number: T/243/03P

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13 the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key stage 1 of the national curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some of them outstanding.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features outweigh shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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## 1. CONTEXT

### **The school and its priorities**

The Archbishop Rowan Williams Voluntary Aided Church-in-Wales Primary School was opened in 2001, after the closure of Portskewett Infants' and Sudbrook Primary School. It is located in the Monmouthshire coastal village of Portskewett, and is maintained jointly by Monmouthshire County Council and the Monmouthshire Diocese of the Church in Wales. The school serves the surrounding local villages and hamlets. There are 182 pupils on roll, aged from four to 11. Children first start their education when they reach the age of four in the Reception class, as the school does not have a nursery class. There are links with a private playgroup operating in the village. The school's numbers on roll are approaching its maximum capacity; numbers have built steadily over the last two years, and are now substantially more than those catered for by the two previous schools together. The headteacher was appointed in 2001 and has been in post for two years.

- The school reports that most pupils come from homes which are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is eight per cent, which is low when compared with the national average. The pupil population is mostly English-speaking and white. One per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, but none receive tuition in speaking English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language and two pupils are cared for by the Local Authority.
- There are 27 pupils on the register of special educational needs (SEN), which at 14.8 per cent is below the national average. Two pupils have formal statements of SEN. There are eight full-time teachers, including the headteacher and no part-time teachers, plus two classroom support assistants, and one NNEB-trained assistant. The school has seven classes from YR to Y6.
- The school's aims are reflected in its mission statement, namely, "to provide a caring environment which educates the whole person and develops potential to the full." Governors have also set out their core philosophy in the school's vision statement, which is "to nurture confident individuals who value themselves and have high expectations and a positive attitude to learning which enables them to take the challenges of living within the community."
- The school has prioritised the further enhancement of ICT resources, and use of ICT in many subjects, as key to its development. It has also focused upon the improvement of teaching quality by introducing innovative and effective strategies to enable pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### The main findings of the report

The Archbishop Rowan Williams Church-in-Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School is a good and improving new school, where overall standards and the quality of teaching are good.

#### Standards of achievement

- Overall, standards of achievement are good. Standards were satisfactory or better in almost all the work seen, being very good in 20 per cent, good in 52 per cent, satisfactory in 26 per cent, and unsatisfactory in two per cent.

#### Standards of achievement for children aged under five

- Initial assessments show that the standards of many children on joining the school are about average with a minority being above average. Standards for children aged under five at the Reception Stage are good in their language, literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, satisfactory in mathematical and creative skills but unsatisfactory in their social and personal development.

The six areas of learning for children under five	Standards of achievement Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Mathematical development	Satisfactory
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Personal and social development	Unsatisfactory
Creative development	Satisfactory
Physical development	Good

#### Standards of achievement for pupils by the age of 7 and 11

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh second language	Good	Satisfactory
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Very good with outstanding work in Y5 and Y6.
Information and communications technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Very good with outstanding work in Y6.
Music	Good	Satisfactory

Physical education	Good	Good
Religious Education	Inspected under Section 23 of the Act	Inspected under Section 23 of the Act

- In the 2002 National Curriculum (NC) teacher assessments, in KS1, pupils' achievements were above LEA and national results in mathematics and science, and above the national average but below the County average in English. No pupils achieved the higher NC Level 3 in writing, speaking or listening, but 32 per cent attained Level 3 in reading. The proportion achieving Level 3 in mathematics or science was in line with national results. The proportion of pupils who gained NC Level 2 or higher in all three core subjects at 86 per cent was higher than the all-Wales figure and in line with that of the LEA. The results achieved by boys and girls in KS1 have been broadly similar.
- In the KS2 2002 NC test results, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 4 or higher, were above national results in English and science and in line with the national average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher NC Level 5 was in line with national averages in English and mathematics, but below national results in science. The results achieved by boys and girls in KS2 have been broadly similar. The school's KS2 results were in line with County averages in English and science but below average in mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in KS1 and KS2 achieve good standards, and make good progress, relative to their ages and abilities.
- Standards in the key skill of writing in many subjects are very good, and in listening, speaking, reading, numeracy and ICT are good.

### **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The overall quality of assemblies and acts of collective worship is also good. Pupils' responses to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

### **Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning**

- Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work and play. They co-operate with staff and their fellow pupils, settle quickly to tasks and sustain concentration. Many enjoy their work and are keen to do their best. In a number of year-groups, however, there are pupils who find it difficult to listen and concentrate for any length of time. They become restless, lose interest and sometimes disturb the learning of other pupils. Teachers and classroom support assistants work diligently with these pupils to promote understanding and acceptance of school rules and conventions but the flow and pace of lessons are sometimes impeded.
- Activities planned for Reception children are not always sufficiently well focused or challenging to ensure good progress, and this sometimes results in poor behaviour.

- The school has a good policy to promote racial equality, and has good measures to prevent racism, bullying, sexism and other forms of discrimination.
- Attendance rates are satisfactory, averaging 90.6 per cent for the past three terms. Instances of unauthorised absence are minimal. Pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.
- The governing body is, however, rightly concerned about the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education and on overall rates of attendance for the school. During this academic year, the school has calculated that a total of 650 school days have been taken as holidays during term time.

### **The quality of education provided**

- The quality of teaching is good or better in 75 per cent of lessons. Teaching was satisfactory or better in virtually all lessons observed, very good in 27 per cent, good in 48 per cent, and satisfactory in 23 per cent. About two per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory.
- The quality of assessment is very good, being precise, thorough and well-informed. The extent to which assessment is used to promote higher standards is very good. The arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements are very good. The reports issued to parents are satisfactory. The extent to which the school analyses assessment data about English, mathematics and science in order to improve pupils' performance is very good.
- The educational provision for children aged under five has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right. The Early Years curriculum is planned in accordance with the six areas of learning for children of this age, but the range of activities sometimes lacks variety or challenge.
- The quality of the curriculum for pupils in KS1 and KS2, is good, being interesting and full of challenge. The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the NC. The quality of planning for the teaching of key skills is very good. The arrangements for personal and social education in KS1 and KS2 are very good. Planning for the Welsh Dimension is good. Through work in classes, as well as by the visits they make, pupils gain a well-informed understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales.
- There are clear policies and comprehensive schemes of work for all subjects. All are at least of good quality and some, such as those for English, mathematics and art, are of high quality.
- The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Teachers and other adults run a good range of extra-curricular clubs for pupils to improve their skills.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a broad range of visits within the locality and further afield, including residential visits to field studies centres, such as those at Tal-y-bont and Hilston Park. Teachers organise interesting visits by a range of specialists to the school.

These experiences enrich the curriculum, benefit pupils' learning and help raise standards.

- The quality of support and personal and educational guidance are good, particularly for pupils with SEN and for the more able. The procedures for promoting pupils' health and safety are good.
- The school has adopted the policy of the local education authority (LEA) to guide practice in health and safety issues. The headteacher, staff and governors monitor and implement the policy carefully.
- Pupils of all abilities and aptitudes have equal access to the whole curriculum and there is a separate policy to promote equality of opportunity but not for the provision of English as an additional language (EAL). Good provision is made for pupils with SEN in mainstream classes as well as in withdrawal groups.

#### **The partnership with parents and the community and the school's links with industry**

- The overall quality of the school's partnership with parents is good. The quality of liaison arrangements with other schools and institutions are satisfactory. The school places particular importance on its partnership with parents, other schools and the local community and is working hard to build good relationships. The school has drawn up a home/school agreement which it distributes to parents annually, and most parents return this. The school keeps parents well-informed about its life and work. The quality of the school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

#### **The management and efficiency of the school**

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. The school has identified its priorities and targets which provide appropriate challenges for improvement. These are supported by good strategies. The school monitors progress made towards achieving each target; problems are identified early and solved where possible. However, the range of priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) is too wide and unmanageable to be fully effective. Also, the SIP is not shared enough in its authorship by teachers and governors.
- The quality of leadership is good. Management systems are effective. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers lead school development well. Governors provide good leadership and work well with the headteacher and his colleagues to identify, monitor and evaluate the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- The quality of subject leadership is often good and in English and art very good. Co-ordinators have monitored the quality of provision in all subjects, and schemes of work are reviewed and updated in a planned cycle of improvement.
- Financial management is good. The school's managers have reduced an initial budget deficit of £28,000 to a small surplus in its first two years of operation. The school's routine administration and organisation are very effective and efficient and the statutory requirements and guidelines of the National Assembly for Wales are complied with well.

- The quality of staffing is good. There is a sufficient number of well-qualified and experienced teachers, who work very industriously as a team. Some, however, have been deployed ineffectively by being given too much responsibility at too early a stage in their career. Teachers are helped to develop professionally with a planned programme of INSET, although problems caused by the school's computer equipment have hindered staff training in the use of ICT. Support staff, including the school secretaries, the caretakers, classroom support assistants, lunchtime assistants and cleaners, make a good contribution to the quality of school life.
- The classroom support assistants are valuable and valued members of staff, who do a good job in helping teachers and pupils, but there are not enough of them, particularly for children aged under five.
- The adequacy of the accommodation for the number of pupils on roll is excellent. The classrooms are large and airy, with many useful spaces for storage, the toilets are well-designed and clean, the hall is an impressively spacious, multi-purpose room and the corridors are wide enough for safe use. The school's surrounds have a welcoming ambience, and are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. The internal accommodation is very well-designed, with many excellent displays of the work of pupils, teachers and visiting artists.
- The quality and range of learning resources are very good and they are used very well by teachers. The new computer equipment, however, has presented an ongoing series of problems, which the school has continually attempted to address. Some of the problems with the hardware remain although the overall situation is improving quickly.

**The effectiveness with which the issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed**

As this is the first inspection of this new school, no judgment can be made about its progress in relation to a previous inspection. However, very good progress has been made in establishing a new, and very attractively designed, school and in combining and improving provision for children from Portskewett, Sudbrook, and beyond, to the extent that the new school is already catering for about 50 more children than were on the combined roll of the two previous schools.

<p><b>3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b></p>
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**3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

Overall, standards of achievement were good in the 50 lessons observed. Standards were satisfactory or better in almost all the work seen, being very good in 20 per cent, good in 52 per cent, satisfactory in 26 per cent, and unsatisfactory in two per cent.

- Initial assessments show that the standards of many children on joining the school are about average with a minority being above average. Standards for children aged under five at the Reception Stage are good in their language, literacy, knowledge and

understanding of the world and physical development, satisfactory in mathematical and creative skills but unsatisfactory in their social and personal development.

- In the 2002 National Curriculum (NC) teacher assessments, in KS1, pupils' achievements were above LEA and national results in mathematics and science, and above the national average but below the County average in English. No pupils achieved the higher NC Level 3 in writing, speaking or listening, but 32 per cent attained Level 3 in reading. The proportion achieving Level 3 in mathematics or science was in line with national results. The proportion of pupils who gained NC Level 2 or higher in all three core subjects at 86 per cent was higher than the all-Wales figure and in line with that of the LEA. The results achieved by boys and girls have been broadly similar.
- In the KS2 2002 NC test results, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 4 or higher, were above national results in English and science and in line with the national average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils, who achieved the higher NC Level 5, was in line with national averages in English and mathematics, but below national results in science. The results achieved by boys and girls at KS2 have been similar. The school's KS2 results were in line with County averages in English and science but below average in mathematics.
- Standards of achievement are very good in English in KS1 and KS2, particularly in writing. Standards are also very good in KS2 art, and KS2 design and technology, with outstanding work in Y6 and Y5. Standards of achievement in KS1 are good in all the other subjects. Standards of achievement in KS2 are good in mathematics, science, ICT, history, geography and physical education. Standards of achievement are satisfactory in Welsh and music in KS2. Religious Education was inspected separately under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in KS1 and KS2 achieve good standards, and make good progress, relative to their ages and abilities.
- The achievements of boys and girls are similar. Standards achieved by the more able are very good in writing and many pupils have a very good vocabulary. Their oracy skills are good, but could be better, given their achievements in writing. The achievements of pupils of differing ethnic backgrounds are similar.

### **3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum**

Pupils' overall standards of achievement and progress in key skills across the curriculum are good generally, and very good in writing.

- The majority of pupils concentrate and listen well in lessons. They carry out instructions accurately and listen attentively to their teachers. However, there are a significant number of younger pupils who have poor listening skills.
- They build their speaking and listening skills through discussions and good questioning and encouragement from their teachers. They are encouraged to use the appropriate vocabulary, especially when describing or explaining events, outcomes or findings.

- Pupils' reading skills are used effectively to extend their learning, especially when researching topics in other subject areas, from books or computers.
- Pupils' writing across the curriculum is very good. Pupils express themselves using language of a high standard when writing poetry, creating stories, writing descriptions and undertaking extended research.
- Numeracy skills are satisfactorily applied in subjects such as science and design and technology, where pupils use graphs and tables to illustrate their work, and estimate and measure when designing or making various items. From an early age, pupils gather data, for example, following a traffic survey in geography, and present their findings clearly.
- Pupils apply their skills in information and communications technology successfully in several areas of the curriculum. They are aware that information can be gained from CD-ROMs and the Internet, and make confident use of computers to enhance the presentation of their work with pictures and graphs. They use art programs to produce colourful and imaginative pictures, and reinforce literacy and numeracy skills by carefully reading and following instructions. Older pupils successfully produce colourful pamphlets to promote the good features of different holiday destinations.

## **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

- The school is successful in promoting clear principles and values based on Christian teachings, which are reflected in its aims, mission and vision statements.
- Daily assemblies are happy occasions that offer guidance on moral and spiritual issues, and promote a strong sense of community, especially in the celebration of pupils' achievements. Visiting clergy make a valuable contribution to school assemblies.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop an understanding and respect for the teachings of the Church in Wales. Pupils in Y5 attend weekly celebrations of the Eucharist at the parish church, which are led very well by the Parish Priest. The half-termly celebration of the Eucharist at the school helps all pupils to develop a better understanding of spiritual matters and is supported well by parents and members of the church community.
- The aims of the school promote positive values and attitudes. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is good. The school works diligently to establish a climate where teachers and pupils exhibit mutual respect. Values such as honesty, fair play and kindness are fostered and staff ensure pupils have a clear understanding of the principles which distinguish right from wrong. The school's approach is personified in the arrangements at lunchtime where children have a daily choice of healthy, nutritious food of good quality.

- Pupils realise that there are others less fortunate than themselves and contribute to a number of local and national charities.
- Pupils' social development is good, particularly for those at the upper end of KS2. Pupils are given many opportunities to use their initiative and work collaboratively with others in their learning. Most respond well to this, acting responsibly and maturely and displaying good social attitudes and self-discipline.
- The school provides a good programme of extra-curricular activities and educational visits, including residential visits, which contribute well to pupil's social and cultural development.
- Pupils recognise, and increasingly understand, the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and social traditions of other faiths and cultures.
- The school successfully promotes a Welsh ethos and pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their locality. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is planned into many subject areas and visits to places of interest such as St. Fagan's Museum of Welsh Life and the Roman settlement at Caerleon, help pupils develop a good understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales.
- Racial equality is promoted successfully through the supportive and caring nature of the school, through aspects of the personal and social education (PSE) programme and through the school's effective equal opportunities and racial equality policies.
- Pupils, including a small number who are looked after by the Local Authority, respond well to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

Overall, standards of behaviour are at least satisfactory with the majority of pupils showing good attitudes towards learning. The school is a supportive and happy community.

- The headteacher, teaching and support staff recognise the importance of good behaviour as a foundation for pupils' learning and all work diligently to promote good behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning.
- The school has a useful policy and set of procedures to promote good behaviour. School rules are simple, relevant and clearly understood by the majority of pupils.
- Most pupils are polite and friendly and relate well to each other, to staff and to visitors. The behaviour of pupils at the upper end of KS2 is consistently good. They display an appropriate level of self-discipline when they are undertaking individual and collaborative work both within and outside the classroom.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work and play. They co-operate with staff and their fellow pupils, settle quickly to tasks and sustain concentration. Many pupils enjoy their work and are keen to do their best.

- In a number of year groups there are a few pupils who find it difficult to listen and concentrate for any length of time. They become restless, lose interest and sometimes disturb the learning of other pupils. Teachers and classroom support assistants work diligently with these pupils to promote understanding and acceptance of school rules and conventions but the flow and pace of lessons are sometimes impeded.
- The school succeeds in emphasising the inclusion of all pupils in learning, but a small minority of pupils fails to respond adequately to teachers' attempts to deal with their unsatisfactory behaviour.
- The good behaviour of many pupils is evident in assemblies, in the dining room and in the playground. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion where pupils display good manners and enjoy positive relationships with mid-day supervisors.
- Good, and improving behaviour, is celebrated in the classroom and in whole school assemblies. Pupils enjoy the weekly celebrations-assembly and are keen to gain house points for good behaviour and effort.
- The school actively promotes the values of tolerance, kindness and fairness. The headteacher and staff take the issues of bullying and all other forms of discrimination seriously, and effective procedures are in place to deal with the very few incidents brought to the attention of staff. No incidents of bullying, sexism or racism were observed during the inspection.
- The headteacher has established procedures to deal with pupils whose behaviour is giving cause for concern and who might be at risk of exclusion. Pupils are counselled, parents are involved at an early stage and support is sought from the local education authority (LEA) and other external agencies when necessary.
- Two pupils have been excluded on a temporary basis during the past twelve months. These exclusions were carefully considered by the headteacher and appropriate procedures were followed.
- In the pre-inspection meeting with parents and in the questionnaires returned to the inspection team, a significant number of parents expressed concerns about the behaviour of a minority of pupils and the impact of their behaviour on the learning of others. These concerns are shared by inspectors.
- The behaviour and inattention of a few pupils has an adverse impact on the standards they achieve and on their personal and social development. However, the positive behaviour and attitudes of many pupils contribute not only to the efficient functioning of the school, but also to the standards pupils achieve.

### **4.3 Attendance**

Attendance rates are satisfactory and instances of unauthorised absence are minimal.

- Attendance rates for the past three terms average 90.6 per cent.

- Attendance rates for the reception class are lower than the rest of the school, averaging 89 per cent for the past three terms. Absence is, almost without exception, due to illness or holidays taken during term time.
- The majority of pupils are punctual and keen to attend school. Registration sessions and lessons start promptly.
- The governing body is rightly concerned about the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education and on overall rates of attendance for the school. During this academic year, the school has calculated that a total of 650 school days have been taken as holidays during term time.
- The headteacher and school clerks monitor attendance and punctuality carefully. Effective procedures are in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure pupils' absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations where necessary.
- During the autumn term of 2002, attendance rates fell below satisfactory levels, due to seasonal illnesses.
- Registration is conducted efficiently and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Regular and effective liaison also takes place with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- The school has set no formal target for the improvement of attendance rates but the high priority afforded to attendance and punctuality is frequently made known to pupils and parents. The headteacher has also written to parents expressing concern about holidays taken during term time.
- The school complies with attendance requirements set out in the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99, *Pupil Support and Social Inclusion*.

## 5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

### 5.1 Teaching

The overall quality of teaching is good or better in 75 per cent of lessons. Teaching was satisfactory or better in virtually all lessons observed, very good in 27 per cent, good in 48 per cent, and satisfactory in 23 per cent. About two per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory.

#### **Good features**

- Teachers often have high expectations of pupils in lessons, use a good range of techniques, plan excellently, make very effective use of resources, introduce many cross-curricular links between subjects, and celebrate pupils' work in well-mounted displays. They are supported well in their work by an effective team of classroom support assistants, although there are not enough of them. They have good relationships with pupils.

- Teachers know their pupils well, value them as individuals and establish good relationships with them. They display a caring attitude towards them and offer a consistent approach to discipline.
- Teachers often demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. This is particularly true for English, art and design and technology. A new approach to teaching and learning, which involves kinaesthetic learning and much self-evaluation, has been introduced in a number of year-groups in a pilot exercise. There is evidence that this is increasingly effective in improving the quality of learning.
- Teachers plan effectively for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Much has been done in a short time to establish good, new planning arrangements and procedures in many subjects.
- Teachers make clear what they expect of pupils in terms of achievement and behaviour. Many use praise judiciously and often, and help build pupils' self-esteem.
- Teachers use a good range of organisational strategies. They provide pupils with opportunities to work as a whole class, in groups, pairs and as individuals.
- Teachers match work well to pupils' abilities. They also make good provision for pupils with special educational needs as well as those who are more able. The help and guidance of well-informed and caring classroom support assistants means that pupils with SEN do well.
- Teachers provide pupils with exemplars of the standard of work expected of them. Pieces of work are read aloud to the whole class and pupils focus upon various good features. Teachers have collected and assembled pupils' work in a comprehensive series of attractive, well-presented portfolios. These serve not only to celebrate achievements but also to help and guide colleagues in assessing and recording pupils' work.
- In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to develop an enquiring attitude to learning by asking, as well as answering, searching questions. Most vitally, teachers inspire pupils with their enthusiasm and skill to learn much at a rapid rate.

### **Shortcomings**

- Where teaching is only satisfactory, this is due to two main factors: lessons are badly timed and a minority of children are ill-behaved.

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

The quality of assessment and recording is very good, and that of reporting to parents is satisfactory.

- The school adopts a very effective but manageable approach to assessment and recording based on a sound policy, which is implemented consistently throughout the school.

- As well as the NC tests, teachers make continuous assessments and organise tests in different areas of the curriculum, usually at the end of a topic or unit. All results are recorded and carefully analysed for weaknesses and trends. Teachers set pupils targets for future NC levels in the core subjects and specific short-term areas for improvement.
- Teachers' assessment skills are continuously developed through regular sessions, levelling pupils' work. The school monitors the achievements of boys and girls in order to refine planning further.
- Baseline assessments in the Reception class inform the planning for the Desirable Learning Outcomes and also help identify pupils with SEN.
- The marking of pupils' work is generally positive and encouraging and provides indicators for improvement. Teachers and pupils regularly ascribe NC levels to pupils' work and this helps develop their skills of assessment in English and mathematics.
- Arrangements for the assessment of pupils with SEN are good with records well kept and maintained.
- Parents are formally invited to discuss pupils' work and progress on a regular basis. Parents appreciate this and also the willingness of the teachers to meet informally if there are any problems.
- Annual reports to parents give useful information regarding the pupils' progress but sometimes they focus on attitudes rather than on what pupils know and can do. Targets for raising standards of achievement are not consistently identified in the reports. There is an opportunity for parents to meet teachers in order to discuss the report soon after they are distributed.

### **5.3 Curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum for pupils in KS1 and KS2 is good. The educational provision for children aged under five has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right.

- Many pupils gain enjoyment from their studies. The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the NC. Teachers ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity to learn, with the exception of access to the celebrations of the Holy Eucharist held in St. Mary's Church. These good opportunities for spiritual development are only provided for two year-groups in KS2.
- There are clear policies and good schemes of work for all subjects; some are of high quality.
- Most lessons are planned well with work which helps pupils develop the skills they need at that time as well as in later life. Teachers often make lessons enjoyable.

- The quality of planning for the teaching of key skills is very good. Teachers use many opportunities in lessons to focus upon the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, which are written into schemes of work.
- The school uses ESTYN guidance to manage the amount of time spent on teaching the KS1 and KS2 curriculum each week and ensures that pupils get a balanced amount of time on each subject. Teachers plan the curriculum carefully.
- The arrangements for pupils' personal and social development, including health and sex education, in KS1 and KS2 are very good. Pupils are given, for example, wise guidance on the evils of drug abuse.
- The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Teachers and other adults run good extra-curricular clubs for pupils to improve their skills in English, drama, athletics, rugby football, netball, choral and instrumental music.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a broad range of visits within the locality and further afield, including residential visits to field studies centres, such as those at Tal-y-bont and Hilston Park. Other activities include visits to places of educational interest, such as the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagan's, the Roman remains at Caerleon and the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor House of Llancaiach Fawr. These visits not only enhance and extend pupils' learning about history, but also reinforce Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. The Welsh Dimension, generally, is promoted well in subjects such as art, music, history and geography.
- Teachers organise interesting visits by a range of specialists to the school. During recent months, for example, many classes had specialist art and design and technology lessons where teachers taught in partnership with visiting artists and artisans. In these lessons, pupils benefited from the use of excellent resources, as well as many chances to think for themselves and work out their own independent solutions to technical problems.
- Teachers promote racial equality well. This is formalised through a policy to promote racial harmony and enshrined in the attitudes of staff and pupils. There is, however, no policy for the teaching of English as an additional language.
- Teachers make good use of homework to extend learning opportunities. Pupils get more homework to reinforce learning as they grow older. Pupils who are gifted or talented are catered for well with interesting and challenging project-work in subjects such as design and technology. All pupils have equal opportunities to learn.
- The curriculum for Reception children is satisfactory, in that, although the planning aims to promote the Desirable Outcomes for Learning, the teaching is based for half the week on the Literacy and Numeracy strategies adopted in KS1 and KS2. Activities planned for Reception children are not always sufficiently well focused or challenging to ensure good progress, and this sometimes results in poor behaviour.
- Good provision is made for those few pupils for whom the NC is modified or disapplied.

## **5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

The quality of support and guidance and the attention paid to pupils' welfare throughout the school are good.

- The school promotes positive attitudes and values within a caring and supportive environment.
- Most pupils are happy in school and feel confident in seeking the help and support of staff when they need it. They readily turn to adults for guidance and are listened to and treated with respect.
- The headteacher and staff know their pupils well. Pupils' individual needs are clearly identified and staff effectively monitor and support their academic progress, their social development and their personal welfare.
- The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is good and this contributes significantly to pupils' confidence, self-esteem and positive attitudes towards learning.
- The school has a detailed policy and set of procedures to promote hygiene, health and safety, which are monitored carefully by staff and the governing body.
- Aspects of hygiene, health, personal and emotional well-being are incorporated into an effective personal and social education (PSE) programme.
- Pupils are well supervised at all times, with teachers and support staff taking all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. During the lunch breaks, mid-day supervisors make a valuable contribution to the care and welfare of pupils.
- The school has a clear policy and set of procedures for dealing with child protection issues, which are known and understood by staff.
- Procedures for dealing with illness, accidents and emergencies are well established and effective. All incidents and accidents are recorded appropriately, and several members of staff are qualified to administer first aid to pupils.
- The school's policy for equal opportunities is generally effective. Teachers place a high priority upon the inclusion of all pupils in learning, including those looked after by the Local Authority.

## **5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)**

The quality of the provision for pupils with special needs is good and the standards they achieve are good, relative to their ages and abilities. There are 27 pupils on the register of special educational needs (SEN), which at 14.8 per cent is below the national average. Two pupils have formal statements of SEN.

- The school conforms to the requirements of the new SEN code of practice.

- The SEN coordinator, teachers and classroom support staff provide help of good quality for pupils with SEN. They work closely together to provide well-structured activities and positive support.
- Pupils are identified at an early stage and are well supported by well-written individual education plans (IEP's). These are matched well to pupils' abilities and have clear and achievable learning targets. They are regularly reviewed and new targets set if needed.
- Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into the life and work of the school and receive a broad and balanced curriculum.
- They make good progress due to the additional help, and some make sufficient progress to be removed from the SEN register completely.
- Progress is regularly monitored and parents are kept informed at all stages.
- The SENCO provides good leadership. She manages the workload efficiently and co-ordinates the various outside agencies, teachers, support staff and parents, to ensure good provision for individual pupils.

## **5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions**

The overall quality of the school's partnership with parents is good. The quality of liaison arrangements with other schools and institutions are satisfactory. The school places particular importance on its partnership with parents, other schools and the local community and is working hard to build good relationships.

- Many parents are warmly supportive of the school; they recognise the challenges and difficulties the headteacher and staff have faced during the amalgamation of the two previous schools, and they appreciate the efforts made to ensure the education of their children has not been unduly disrupted.
- Approximately ninety per cent of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaires, expressed satisfaction with the school. A small minority of parents expressed some dissatisfaction resulting from the amalgamation. In the questionnaires returned to the inspection team, a significant minority of parents stated they would like more information about their children's achievements and they also expressed dissatisfaction with the work their children are expected to do at home.
- The headteacher and staff continue to work diligently to enhance all aspects of the school's partnership with parents and the further development of a strong partnership with parents is a priority identified in the school improvement plan (SIP).
- Parents are kept informed by regular newsletters, an informative annual report of the governing body and by regular opportunities to discuss their children's work and progress with staff. The school prospectus is currently being updated to ensure all statutory information is included.

- A home/school partnership agreement has been drawn up and is readily accepted by the majority of parents.
- A small number of parents and friends give freely of their time helping out in the school, supporting extra-curricular activities and accompanying pupils on educational visits. Their commitment is greatly valued by staff and they make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school's active Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) provides a good link between home and school and makes a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. The association organises fund-raising and social events, which enhance links with the local community and provide the school with a vital source of additional income. Funds raised are used purposefully to enhance learning resources even further for all pupils.
- Productive links have been established with the pre-school playgroup that meets in the village.
- The school enjoys close pastoral and administrative links with the main receiving secondary school but curriculum links are underdeveloped as yet.
- The school has developed close partnerships with several institutes of higher education and regularly provides training facilities for student teachers. Pupils from local secondary schools also regularly undertake work experience placements at the school. Students are well supported by staff and they make a positive contribution to the life and work of the school.
- The school and its various activities are well supported by the local community and good use is made of the community as a learning resource. Educational visits and the expertise of members of the local community make a positive contribution to pupils' standards of achievement in a number of curriculum areas.
- The school enjoys a successful partnership with the parish church. The clergy and parishioners hold the school in high regard and appreciate the contribution that staff and pupils make to the life and worship of the church community.
- Overall, these positive partnerships make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, motivation and standards of achievement.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

The school's partnership with industry is at least satisfactory.

- The school has no formal policy for industry links but some strategies are in place to enhance the economic and industrial understanding of pupils and give them insight into the world of work.
- The newly appointed co-ordinator for the development of a partnership with industry has made a good start by undertaking an audit of the links already in place. There is no policy

for the improvement of links with industry but plans are in place to enhance working relationships with relevant agencies such as the Education and Business Partnership (EBP).

- The school has established links with Education and Learning, Wales (ELWa) through its successful involvement in gaining the Investors in People (IIP) award. A small number of teachers have undertaken relevant placements, which have enhanced professional development and curriculum provision for pupils.
- Teachers encourage personnel from different occupations and professions to speak to pupils about their work. The contribution of personnel from the police and fire service, together with professional artists and writers, has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and understanding of the world of work.
- The school enjoys a productive partnership with a major, local newspaper. Pupils have visited the newspaper office and personnel have helped pupils to design and edit the school newspaper, *The Rowan Mail*.
- Pupils are keenly aware of environmental issues that impact upon their school and local community; they understand the problems of litter and pollution. They are proud of their new school and local community and want to contribute to the care and development of their surroundings. They have worked hard to enhance their school grounds, and many pupils are helped by the headteacher to develop a love of gardening. The school is justly proud of winning an environmental award for its work in the development of its delightful external environment.
- The school is developing a good partnership with Forest Enterprise. Pupils have entered a competition to design improvements to their school grounds and the school is actively seeking funding to finance a number of exciting projects.
- Local businesses view the school in a positive light and are supportive of the school. Sponsorship has been received from a number of local organisations and businesses.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement**

The overall quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement are good.

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the curriculum, possesses the administrative skills needed to plan programmes of improvement and evaluation, and sees that they are carried out. The school's self-assessment report is extremely detailed and fully focused on school improvement. A great deal of good work has been done by the headteacher and the other teachers over the last two years in establishing this new school.
- The scope and effectiveness of the school's procedures for its evaluation of standards achieved and the quality of its provision are very good.

- A self-critical culture has been established amongst teachers, who share common values about learning, standards and behaviour. Staff and governors contribute to the process of self-evaluation and are committed to the school's improvement.
- There is a clear timetable for monitoring by subject leaders, who effectively evaluate quality by observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' books, looking at teachers' planning documents and evaluating lesson objectives. This represents a planned cycle of improvement.
- The school has very effective strategies for assessing and evaluating pupils' standards of achievement. A detailed analysis is carried out of pupils' test results, including NC assessments. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and targets are set for classes and individuals. A tracking system is in place to monitor individual pupil's progress in English and mathematics.
- National and local data are used to compare aspects of the school's performance with that of other schools.
- The school has identified its priorities and targets which provide appropriate challenges for improvement. These are supported by good strategies. The school monitors progress made towards achieving each target; problems are identified early and solved where possible. However, the range of priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan is too wide and unmanageable to be fully effective. Also, the School Improvement Plan is not shared enough in its authorship by teachers and governors.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

The school is well-led and managed. Its resources are managed very well and routine administration is very good.

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers, provide a purposeful direction for the work of the school. They have fostered good partnerships with the Church in Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. LEA advisers and the clergy have been instrumental in providing good on-site INSET and other guidance for teachers. Liaison between the headteacher, senior management team, subject coordinators and the governing body is constructive.
- The deputy headteacher is closely involved in overall curriculum management, subject leadership of mathematics, assessment, record-keeping and reporting. As class-teacher in Y5, she is closely involved in the improvement of standards and provides classroom teaching of a high order.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors are in school often and keep in close touch. They give considerable time to supporting the school's staff in a range of curriculum and personnel issues and provide good, critical friendship. They also ensure that the statutory requirements of the National Assembly for Wales are met.
- The overall quality of subject coordination is good. Subject coordinators work very hard: advising colleagues, scrutinising planning, looking at pupils' work, and observing and

feeding back on the quality of subject teaching. Subject coordinators have been closely involved in revising schemes of work and have developed a rich and exciting curriculum in KS1 and KS2.

- The school budget is managed very well. An initial deficit of £28,000 has been reduced in two years to a small surplus. Decisions on expenditure are closely linked to the priorities identified in the SIP.
- The school runs smoothly. Routine administration and organisation are very good. Appropriate systems are in place and the school secretaries ensure that administrative routines are very efficient.

### **6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

The overall quality of staffing is good. The school's accommodation is excellent and most of its learning resources are very good.

- There are a sufficient number of well-qualified and experienced teachers, and they work very industriously as a team. Some, however, have been deployed ineffectively by being given too much responsibility at too early a stage in their career.
- Professional development for staff is linked to the school's development objectives and the knowledge and expertise gained by staff through INSET are effectively disseminated to other teachers to enhance their skills. Teachers also seek to improve their professional expertise further with appropriate evening class studies. Problems, however, caused by breakdowns in the school's computer equipment have hindered staff training in the use of ICT.
- The classroom support assistants are valuable and valued members of staff, who do a good job in helping teachers and pupils, but there are not enough of them, particularly for children aged under five.
- The amount and overall quality of learning resources are very good. Some of the new computer equipment, however, has presented an ongoing series of problems, which the school has continually had to address. Some of the problems with the hardware remain, although the overall situation is improving.
- Resources are stored efficiently, labelled clearly, made easily accessible and are used well.
- The adequacy of the accommodation for the number of pupils on roll is excellent. The classrooms are large and airy, with many useful spaces for storage, the toilets are well-designed and clean, the hall is an impressively spacious multi-purpose room and the corridors are wide enough for safe use. There are also sufficient specialist rooms for the library, a computer area and for specialist teaching of pupils with SEN.
- The school's surrounds have a welcoming ambience, are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness, and its internal accommodation is very well-designed with many excellent

displays of the work of pupils, teachers and visiting artists. Teachers make good use of all the available spaces.

- The quality and use of the accommodation and learning resources have a significant, very positive impact on pupils' learning in many subject areas.

## **7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING**

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

#### **Provision for the under-fives**

The educational provision for the under fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right. The school has no provision for children aged three to four, and children enter at the age of four into the Reception class. The Early Years curriculum is planned in accordance with the six areas of learning for children of this age, but the range of activities sometimes lack variety or challenge.

Standards for children aged under five at the Reception Stage are good in their language, literacy and communication studies, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, satisfactory in mathematical and creative development but unsatisfactory in their personal and social development.

#### **Standards of language, literacy and communication are good.**

##### **Good features**

- Role-play in different situations, such as a Chinese Restaurant and with games, help to foster children's speaking and listening skills.
- Children make good progress in learning to read. They talk about characters in stories and recognise simple individual words. Able pupils make good progress and are coping well with simple texts. Many recognise the initial sounds of words.
- They form letters well and begin to copy words accurately. Early skills in writing are well developed. Some make good efforts to spell words using phonic clues and are beginning to use capital letters and full stops appropriately.
- Children understand a range of instructions in Welsh and can ask and answer simple questions about themselves. Standards in Welsh are good.

#### **Standards of mathematical development are satisfactory.**

##### **Good features**

- Children confidently sort and match objects according to size, colour and shape.

- They recognise, name and order numbers to 10 correctly. They look for and create simple patterns.
- Children are developing a good vocabulary for comparing objects by size and shape. They understand the concepts of: bigger/smaller, more than/ less than, add/take away, lighter/heavier, and longer/shorter. They describe flat and solid shapes and name them. Their understanding of simple symmetry is developing well.

**Standards of personal and social development are unsatisfactory.**

**Good features**

- Most children take care of their personal hygiene and change appropriately in preparation for physical activities.
- Most of the children help to tidy up at the end of a session.
- Most children listen attentively and behave appropriately in whole-school assemblies.

**Standards in knowledge and understanding of the world are good.**

**Good features**

- All the children have developed good basic investigative skills. They make simple deductions and ask sensible questions when sorting materials and looking at changes, for example, when making jelly.
- They have a good understanding and knowledge of the roles of adults who work in the school and in the community.
- Children are aware of the buildings locally and the different types of houses people live in. Their awareness of other countries, such as China, is developing well.
- They are developing a sense of chronology through looking at old and new things. They correctly sequence pictures of the life cycle of humans, frogs and butterflies.

**Standards of physical development are good.**

**Good features**

- Children show good body control and balance. They are beginning to appreciate that exercise affects the body.
- They handle various tools and construction toys with developing skill and use scissors and brushes with increasing precision. Children work with pliable materials and create simple shapes.
- While working on the computer and the inter-active white board, children handle the mouse well, make suitable choices and activate some commands.

- They are developing good hand and eye co-ordination with a bat and ball.

### **Standards of creative development are satisfactory.**

#### **Good features**

- Children confidently cut, stick, model and decorate various items, making appropriate choices about colours and medium.
- They enjoy role-play and creating music.
- Children express their feelings through painting, drawing and model making. They are beginning to understand the difference between warm and cold paint colours.

#### **Shortcomings**

- About 50 per cent of children aged under five are unsure of directions such as left or right.
- The attitudes and behaviour of a minority of children prevent others from learning. They find it difficult to take turns, argue back, ignore instructions and often call out.

## **English**

Standards of achievement are very good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Most pupils display average standards in language and communication skills when they join the school in Reception, and about a third are above average.
- Most pupils in KS1 listen attentively to their teachers' explanations and to other pupils' contributions. They listen well to and enjoy stories and make good progress over the two years.
- They speak in a variety of contexts with increasing confidence and are keen to answer teachers' questions and offer their own comments and observations.
- Standards in reading are very good in KS1. Pupils display a sound understanding of the characters, settings and structure of stories. Some can identify grammatical conventions such as an exclamation mark or an ellipsis in a Big Book.
- By the end of KS1, abler pupils read unfamiliar texts with confidence and fluency. Other readers have a positive attitude to reading and use a range of reading strategies to help them understand the text. They generally apply their knowledge of letter and sound correspondences effectively when they meet an unfamiliar word.

- Standards in spelling are good and many can differentiate correctly when spelling synonyms.
- Pupils make very good progress in their writing during KS1 from emergent to independent writing. They write for a range of purposes and audiences and by the end of the key stage most pupils can write a story using some of the key features of narrative. The handwriting of most pupils is legible, printed and fairly regular.
- More able pupils write at some length. Their writing is well organised and they are beginning to plan, draft and revise their work. Their writing is very good when they write in response to a stimulus that has inspired them.
- Pupils in KS2 listen respectfully to their teachers and to others. In lessons, they remain focused for a sustained time. When answering questions, most are able to give answers, in writing and verbally, in full sentences. They are particularly confident in discussing their ideas and opinions with their peers.
- They make good progress in speaking for different purposes and audiences and collaborate effectively in discussions. Pupils understand that *alliteration* involves words which sound the same and start with the same letter and they use similes and metaphors powerfully.
- Pupils in lower KS2 read aloud clearly and confidently to a good standard. This was evidenced in a particularly good lesson involving reading poetry to a musical rhythm.
- Pupils in Y3 understand and use the conventions for writing letters, and many show an awareness of different degrees of formality in writing.
- Y6 pupils ask questions about a topic they are investigating and suggest and use appropriate sources of information. They skim the pages to find the answers to their questions and use dictionaries and glossaries well to find the meaning of unfamiliar words. Most pupils read fluently and discuss plot and character with some insight.
- Standards in writing are very good in KS2, for example in project work on Rap poetry. Their writing shows a very good command of the characteristics of persuasive and informational writing as well as very good use of punctuation.
- Pupils achieve high standards in the use of ICT for writing and presentation.

### **Shortcomings**

- A small minority of younger pupils have only satisfactory standards in speaking and listening.

## **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils quickly become familiar with number symbols, recognise number sequences and start to identify patterns, including odd and even. They are confident at simple addition and subtraction and are developing a good knowledge and use of number with increasing knowledge of number bonds.
- They add and subtract to 10 briskly, count to 100 confidently and count forward in 10s from any given number to 100.
- Pupils recognise the value of coins and are able to 'buy' items and calculate the necessary change.
- They correctly identify and name a good range of 2D and 3D shapes and are developing a good understanding of their properties. They confidently use simple standard and non-standard measures, recognise simple fractions and are starting to tell the time.
- In KS2, pupils gradually develop a very good understanding of place value to 1000 and beyond, show good levels of recall of mathematical tables and are confident in the computation of number. They have a good understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.
- They choose and use appropriate operations to solve word problems involving number, money and measures.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss their work and many are able to clearly explain the procedures used and to express their own way of thinking. Pupils develop a good vocabulary of mathematical terms.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations, and their ability to tackle problems and apply their mathematical knowledge is good.
- Pupils collate data, which is often based on class questioning or on investigations in other subjects, and they draw and analyse graphs with growing confidence.
- They deal effectively with tasks appertaining to shape and measurement. They understand that some shapes have complex lines of symmetry, including rotational and reflective, and can use co-ordinates to find or fix a position.
- Most pupils use computers well to support their mathematical work.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## Science

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### Good features

- In KS1, pupils develop good observational skills. When looking at different materials, for example, they observe and carefully record findings. They learn to use their senses for developing an awareness of the world around them and make sensible predictions before an investigation.
- Pupils have a basic knowledge of the properties of different materials and fabrics, and use the correct terminology to describe them. They distinguish between natural and man-made materials and can sort them correctly, using different criteria, such as magnetic or non-magnetic.
- They can recognise and name the various parts of a plant and are beginning to understand their different functions. They know that plants, like animals and human beings, need food, water and care for healthy growth and development.
- Through regular investigative work, pupils have an increasing understanding of the concept of a fair test.
- They are developing a good understanding of simple electrical circuits, forces, sound and light.
- Pupils communicate and justify their findings orally using scientific language.
- In KS2, pupils further develop a firm understanding of fair testing and appreciate its importance in evaluating the evidence gained.
- They further develop their knowledge of the properties of different materials and fabrics through investigations and observations. When testing the thermal insulation qualities of different fabrics, they make reasoned predictions, observe, measure and record their experiments carefully.
- They know the requirements of a healthy diet, the importance of exercise and the harmful effects of smoking and drugs on the body.
- Having observed plants in different conditions, pupils know what they need for healthy growth.
- Good use is made of the school grounds to develop pupils' knowledge of mini beasts and their habitats and to develop their interest in growing and caring for a wide range of plants.
- Pupils know that light travels in straight lines and how shadows are formed. They confidently explain the relationship between the earth, the moon and the sun.
- They display good standards in the use of ICT in their scientific studies.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Welsh second language**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Most pupils show a positive response to learning Welsh. The enthusiasm of the teachers, all of whom are also learners, is a major contribution to the development of the language.
- In KS1, the emphasis on oral work enables pupils to have a good grasp of simple greetings, comments, commands and questions.
- They sing simple Welsh songs, count to 20 and beyond, name colours, make comments about their personal likes and dislikes and can talk about different weather situations. Pronunciation is generally good.
- Pupils have good standards in reading and writing short phrases and sentences.
- In KS2, pupils further develop their knowledge and understanding of the language through repeating and extending set phrases about themselves, characters from books such as Wil Wiwer and the weather.
- Workbooks show that written tasks are completed neatly, with confidence and accuracy.
- They enjoy stories in Welsh and read clearly with generally correct pronunciation.
- Older pupils use the past tense when questioning each other about places they have visited and things they have seen.

#### **Shortcomings**

- The use of incidental Welsh by pupils and teachers in other subjects is limited.
- Pupils in KS2 have an insecure mental recall of vocabulary and set phrases, and often require the support of the written word.

### **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2, with outstanding work in Y5 and Y6.

## **Good features**

- In Y1, pupils have made good greetings cards with pop-up mechanisms. They cut and shape, stick and glue, fold and twist various items, using a range of materials and components effectively. They also gain a better understanding of the design process in designing a salad and are thoughtful and articulate in discussion.
- Pupils in Y2 have reached good standards in their design and manufacture of a range of articulated figures. They are inventive and cooperative when designing and making, and use very good resources well.
- In Y3, pupils achieve very good standards in designing and making land yachts. Pupils have developed good standards in evaluating their products, and self-evaluation is a strong feature of many lessons.
- Pupils in Y4 can design, choose the appropriate materials and tools, and make photograph frames; the frames on display were of good quality. They are adept in building working circuits with bulbs and switches to make torches for specific purposes. Their sketches and products of chairs they have designed are of good quality.
- The ability of Y5 pupils to join different materials together in different ways is very good, as is their ability to make stable structures. These skills are used very effectively in their construction of a model theatre with working stage lights. Pupils paid very good attention to detail, for example, in mitring the corners of the base. They also used their numeracy skills well in measuring very accurately.
- Pupils in Y6 consider fitness for purpose and what materials and tools to use in designing and making repeating patterns in wallpaper and fabric. In discussion, pupils are articulate and sensible. They cooperate well with each other and their teachers in group work.
- Pupils achieve high standards because teachers enable opportunities for kinaesthetic, or three-dimensional learning, in many lessons.
- Their knowledge of reciprocating movement, using linkage, guides, handles, levers, pivots and split pins, is growing.
- Pupils in Y6 test their emerging and finished products, discuss their merits and defects, and look for possible ways of improvement. They have developed a good understanding of aspects of control technology, for instance, by writing and running LOGO programs.
- Standards have been further improved through pupils working with artists and artisans to make woodcarvings and willow-tree structures.

## **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## Information and communications technology (ICT)

Standards of achievement are at least good in KS1 and KS2.

### Good features

- Pupils learn to use ICT to communicate and handle information, to a good degree, in a range of subjects. They have occasionally used a digital camera well to record their work.
- In KS1, concepts of control technology are introduced when pupils have learned how to program a robotic toy. Pupils develop their understanding of mathematics as well as ICT through learning how to control this robot.
- They have developed 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 and the pen.
- Pupils in Y1 have developed pictograms from tallies they have made. They are capable in the use of a mouse, icons and the screen pointer.
- They have drawn themselves using electronic imaging software, replicating images in patterns to good effect. Pupils have also developed skill in word-processing, creating and printing simple sentences.
- Pupils with significant SEN make good progress with good support from the classroom support assistants. Problems in understanding only occur when pupils have to work alone because the amount of classroom support is insufficient.
- Pupils in Y2 know that people communicate via the telephone, sign language or electronic mail. They could highlight blocks of text and change the colour, type and size of font. They have produced good quality posters.
- In KS2, pupils have had some experience in conducting Internet research, for example, about Victorian working conditions. Most pupils can access appropriate sites on the Internet and some have manipulated digital imagery.
- Pupils can find appropriate files in their own directories on a hard disk, and can open and use them. Pupils are encouraged to use computers to support their research, for example, by using digital encyclopaedias on multimedia compact discs.
- Pupils have improved their ICT capability in their wordprocessed writing, for example, by using a range of fonts and styles of text in poetry and letters.
- They have used computers to combine text and images of good quality. They have manipulated sounds and explored simulations.
- Pupils understand terms such as *field* and *database*. They can explain the meaning and purpose of different file commands such as edit and print. They can describe how to use

the shift key to make a capital letter. They suggest appropriate names for different fields in setting up a file to store information about themselves. They have used ICT to create their own musical compositions.

- Pupils in Y4 have written for different audiences using WordArt and developed images using repeating patterns. They have also explored branching databases, collected and presented information and modelled effects on screen.
- Y5 pupils have a good understanding of ICT built up over a number of years. They know, for example, how to format cells in a spreadsheet and how to use cell addresses in formulae.
- Y6 pupils have created some good PowerPoint presentations. They have also used the Internet effectively to research and gather information. They use and compare a small range of search engines for fitness for purpose. They have good standards in writing LOGO programs including some which are discrete and have repeating functions. Pupils have also created very good maze puzzles for Y2 pupils using computers. This work included use of features such as *insert, fill, linedraw, colour change* and *add text*.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils have a limited understanding of the standards they achieve because the school's assessment and recording of ICT standards are not yet formalised.
- The raising of standards has been hindered a little by the many breakdowns in computer resources, although this situation is slowly beginning to improve.

### **History**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2 with very good research skills in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils develop the idea of chronology by looking at changes in their own lives and in the lives of their family and friends.
- Pupils listen to stories about people and events in the past and understand that they portray life and living conditions different from those of today.
- They are developing the skills of interpreting history through describing and recording differences between artefacts and by comparing buildings and places.
- They know that evidence can be gained from different sources.
- In KS2, pupils use their research skills to find information about different periods in history. They skim and scan documents, books and newspapers, look closely at pictures, photographs, artefacts and videos and select the relevant information.

- Pupils' use of primary and secondary source evidence is well used in the different topics. They recognise similarities and differences and appreciate that sources contain different views and opinions.
- They have a good knowledge and understanding of historical changes in the local area and communicate these effectively.
- They have a good recall of previous experiences, especially visits to historical places and role-play activities that reflect people's lifestyles in the past. They sequence events correctly with a good understanding of chronology.
- Pupils' extended writing shows expressions of empathy with people who lived in the past, such as the Romans and the Celts.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales, through projects on Tredegar House, Newport, work on the Romans in Caerleon and the revolt of the Celts under Queen Boudicca, and visits to places such as Abergavenny Museum and the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagan's.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Geography**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils begin to develop an appropriate basic geographical vocabulary.
- Pupils are able to give simple directions and they are beginning to follow and devise simple plans and routes.
- They have a good knowledge of the contribution of other people in the local community and of local features in Caldicot, Sudbrook and Portskewett. In their study of safety in the school they have become aware of road signs and markings, traffic and road users and how they affect the locality.
- They are aware of places beyond their local environment and have compared their home area with that of a village in Mexico. They can locate Mexico on a map and have a good recall of people who live there and of Mexican art.
- They discuss the dangers of pollution to the environment and strategies for improvement.
- In KS2, pupils can identify the location of hot, cold and temperate regions of the world. They locate and name a number of countries and describe the climate there, following research to find holidays to suit different people.

- Pupils develop good mapping skills. Many appreciate the significance of keys and symbols, and can interpret simple information. They can identify major landmarks and physical features and find places using co-ordinates correctly. Good use is made of maps and aerial photographs.
- Pupils make good use of investigative skills in studying the life of people in other contrasting parts of the world such as India and the Caribbean. They make comparisons between what they have learnt and their own experiences. They have a good understanding of the Welsh dimension through local studies in geography.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Art**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2, with outstanding work in Y6. Their standards are raised further because of the rich and vibrant art curriculum coupled with the high quality of specialist art teaching.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 confidently use a very wide range of materials, tools and techniques, including use of ICT, to make images and artefacts. They make good progress in developing the skills of drawing, painting and modelling. Their work often reaches a good standard.
- Pupils know the difference between warm and cool colours and mix them carefully to make different shades. They discuss work in progress using appropriate vocabulary. They pay particular attention to line, shape and colour and ensure that their drawings are in proportion.
- After using a variety of reference materials to investigate natural materials, pupils in KS1 develop their own ideas for collages and sketches. They sketch representations proportionately, chalking, colouring, gluing, painting, and experimenting practically and imaginatively with various forms of decoration. They review work in progress, which is well-proportioned and lively, modifying it as their ideas develop.
- Y2 pupils explore the visual qualities of a range of patterns observed in the school's environs. They apply their understanding to their own pencil drawings and represent the shapes, patterns and textures they have observed and discussed in some detail. Some of them use lighter and darker tones to represent the shades they have observed.
- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 use sketchbooks regularly to record information and develop ideas. They also use a wide range of techniques and materials and create images from observation, memory and imagination.

- Pupils in KS2 experiment successfully with ‘altered images’ using small cuttings from magazines as a stimulus to imagine and create a scene. They also explore the use of pattern and tone using paint, pencil, charcoal and pastels.
- Pupils have good standards in creating models using clay and modroc. Pupils in Y5 achieve high standards in painting and sketching.
- Pupils have explored the work of a wide range of artists such as Andy Warhol, Klee, Dali, and Georgia O’Keefe.
- Pupils, throughout the school, have gained a very good knowledge about artists working in Wales, such as Tim Pugh, William Morris, Kyffin Williams, and Joseph Turner.
- Many pupils in Y6 achieve very high standards in painting, with extremely colourful, imaginative, sensitive and proportionate work because they have had much exposure to high quality specialist teaching.
- Work of a high standard which combines ICT with art has been produced using digitally altered imagery in repeating patterns.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Music**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils’ standards are good in singing. They enjoy exploring ways of creating sounds with their voices and with instruments. They are articulate in giving extended answers to questions. Some are able to conduct other pupils in performance using percussion instruments.
- In KS2, pupils can clap a steady beat in time to the music. Most of them recognise and can perform changes in pitch and dynamics. They speak in rhythm with clarity. They listen carefully to instructions and this pays dividends in their ensuing performances. They rehearse diligently, putting layer upon layer on their compositions, concentrating first on rhythmic chanting, then on singing. Their timing is good. Most can follow quite complex percussive patterns using hands and feet. Some have developed a musical vocabulary.
- Pupils recognise and can control differences in pace and dynamics in response to the teacher’s signals. Some use computers to compose music. They sing tunefully with good attention to pitch and diction. Pupils understand musical terms such as piano, sotto voce and crescendo. They compose imaginative playground songs with actions, working well together in groups. They use evaluation techniques very well.

- In upper KS2, pupils have a good sense of rhythm and diction, and compose pieces using the Rap poetry they have written in English lessons. Their singing is usually in tune.
- Peripatetic music specialists, and visits from musicians, help a small number of pupils appreciate and learn a broad range of music, including instruments such as brass, woodwind and keyboards.
- Pupils sing soundly in regularly held school assemblies as well as in services at St. Mary's Church.
- Standards in general are assisted by the school's very good musical resources, which are well-organised and well-used by teachers and pupils.

### **Shortcomings**

- The behaviour of a minority of younger pupils is sometimes unsatisfactory and inhibits their learning about musical composition.
- Pupils do not use ICT enough in musical composition, and their knowledge of famous composers is limited.
- Pupils' standards in singing in KS2 are satisfactory. A minority are uncertain and hesitant in their singing.

### **Physical education**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 appreciate the importance of exercise for developing a healthy body and know the effect it has on their bodies. They are enthusiastic, work hard and make a determined effort to improve their performance in all aspects of physical education. They listen well to the teacher's instructions and collaborate sensibly in pairs or in groups.
- They all dress appropriately for lessons and understand the importance of warm-up activities. They are willing and eager to demonstrate and are developing very good evaluating skills.
- In KS1, pupils develop effective control of their body movements and their awareness and use of space is good. They create different shapes and movements, on both floor and apparatus, showing good balance and control.
- They can develop and maintain body shapes to percussive music from starting points on the floor.

- In KS2, pupils show good hand and eye co-ordination when passing and catching balls. They are developing good skills and techniques in throwing, jumping and running.
- Pupils undertake swimming lessons from Y2 and records show that the great majority are competent swimmers and gain certificates by the end of Y6. Standards in swimming are further enhanced by the input of the headteacher who has very high specialist expertise in this aspect of physical education.
- The school regularly engages in a number of sporting activities at local level and opportunities for further development of pupils' skills are given through a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Religious education**

Religious education was inspected separately under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act 1996.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress since the last inspection**

As this is the first inspection of this new school, no judgment can be made about its progress in relation to a previous inspection. However, very good progress has been made in establishing a new, and very attractively designed, school and in combining and improving provision for children from Portskewett, Sudbrook, and beyond, to the extent that the new school is already catering for about 50 more children than were on the combined roll of the two previous schools. Very good progress has also been made in helping pupils to achieve good standards in most subjects, in establishing a good quality of teaching, and good leadership and management.

### **8.2 Key issues for action**

The governors, headteacher and teachers now need to:

1. raise standards in Welsh as a second language and music in KS2;
2. raise standards achieved by children aged under five in personal and social development, mathematical development and creative development;
3. continue efforts to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance;

4. continue to improve the quality of teaching where it is only satisfactory, and the resources and training for the teaching of ICT;
5. improve the school improvement plan to ensure its authorship is shared by all stakeholders, and that its goals and timescales are realistic and achievable; and
6. ensure that responsibilities for curriculum subjects and aspects of school life are equitably and appropriately distributed.

*Acknowledgement*

*The registered inspector and team wish to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.*

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Archbishop Rowan Williams Church-In-Wales
School type	Voluntary Aided Primary
Age -range of pupils	4 – 11
Address of school	Crick Road Portskewett Monmouthshire
Post-Code	NP26 5UL
Telephone Number	01291 420526
Headteacher	Mr Graham Murphy
Date of appointment	May 2001
Chair of Governors	Canon Derek Jones
Registered Inspector	Mr Robert Alun Isaac
Dates of inspection	30 <sup>th</sup> June – 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2003

### B. School data and indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	0	27	23	26	25	37	24	20	182

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	0	8

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22.75:1
Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/A
Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	26:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Spring 2003	92	93	93	93
Summer 2002	87	91	91	90
Autumn 2002	87	90	90	89

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	8%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	2

## C. Results of National Curriculum assessments and public examinations

### END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y2: 32					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	86	0	0
		National	0	4	13	63	20	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	55	32	0
		National	0	4	14	54	28	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	18	82	0	0
		National	0	5	13	71	10	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	95	0	0
		National	0	2	11	64	22	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	68	27	0
		National	0	2	9	61	26	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	82	14	0
		National	0	2	10	68	20	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	86	In Wales:	81

**END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2002**

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results:2002										No. of pupils in Y6: 30		
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	0	0	0	4	12	62	23	0
		National	0	0	1	0	1	5	16	45	29	0
	Test/Task	School	2	0	0	0	0	4	7.7	50	35	0
		National	0	2	0	1	0	4	12	41	38	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	0	0	0	4	15	54	27	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	46	27	0
	Test/Task	School	2	0	0	0	0	4	19	42	31	0
		National	0	2		0	0	4	19	43	30	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	0	0	0	4	8	65	23	0
		National	0	0		0	0	2	13	49	33	0
	Test/Task	School	2	2	0	0	0	0	8	62	27	0
		National	0	3		0	0	1	10	47	38	N

CORE SUBJECT INDICATOR: Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and English			
By Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	73	In the school:	73
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

- 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

## D. Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection team of three inspectors, including the lay inspector, was at the school for a total of nine inspector days.

- During this time, all teachers were visited and all classes were seen. A total of 50 sessions, part sessions or interactions were inspected and a wide range of pupils' work was scrutinised. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and life in the school, and listened to them reading their own work and extracts from class reading books.
- The full range of documentation made available by the school was scrutinised. Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors, teachers, pupil support assistants, other staff and pupils. Pre- and post-inspection meetings were held with governors and staff, and nine parents attended a pre-inspection meeting with inspectors. Questionnaires completed by 86 parents were also analysed.

## E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R A Isaac Registered Inspector	English Design and technology Information and communications technology History Art Music	Context Main findings Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning Teaching Curriculum Leadership and efficiency Progress since the last inspection Key issues for action
Mrs J Warr Lay Inspector		Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Behaviour and attitudes Attendance Support, guidance and pupils welfare Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry
Mr M D Jones Team Inspector	Early years Welsh second language Mathematics Science Geography Physical education	Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum Assessment, recording and reporting Provision for pupils with special educational needs Quality of self evaluation and planning for improvement Staffing, accommodation and resources for learning