

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

**YSGOL BETWS Y COED
BRO GETHIN
BETWS Y COED
CONWY
LL24 0BP**

School Number: 662/2012

Date of Inspection: 5 – 7 October 2004

by

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

Date: 7 December 2004

Under Estyn contract number: T/02/04/P

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Ysgol Betws y Coed was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Ysgol Betws y Coed took place between 5-7 October 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr D M Cray undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 This primary school maintained by Conwy Local Education Authority primarily serves the village of Betws y Coed and the area of Capel Curig. It is a rural, close-knit community, and pre-inspection documentation suggests that the area is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Pupils reflect the full ability range.
- 2 Currently, there are 86 pupils between 3 and 11 of age on the school register and they are admitted on a full-time basis in the September following their third birthday and on a part-time basis in the September following their fourth birthday. Over the years, there has been a slight reduction in pupil numbers.
- 3 Four per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals – a figure considerably lower than county (16%) and national (19%) averages - and 14 (16%) are designated as having special educational needs. Only 12% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken as a first language. Welsh is the everyday language of the school and the main medium of teaching and learning.
- 4 The school was last inspected during the autumn term of 1998 and there have been a number of staffing changes since then, including one newly appointed teacher who took up her post in September 2004.

The school's priorities and targets

- 5 The school's aims include:
 - creating an environment and atmosphere that allows the pupil to grow, develop and mature into a confident individual, aware of the well-being of others and a responsible member of society;
 - providing education of the highest possible quality in order to allow the child to develop to his or her full potential;
 - enabling each pupil to develop in Welsh and English so that they may play a full part in the social and cultural life of the bilingual community of which they are a part, and nurturing their understanding of their Welsh heritage;
 - nurturing in the children sensitivity in their relations with others by ensuring that they understand the nature of their community, being aware of the rights of others and their own responsibilities, respecting their fellow citizens and realising their value and place in that society and their personal contribution to its well-being.
- 6 The priorities for the current year include:

- induction for a newly-appointed teacher;
- holding structured staff meetings;
- raising teachers' confidence in their use of laptops;
- monitoring the quality of work in art;
- evaluating the use of assessment to raise the standards of work of individual pupils;
- monitoring the quality of work in design and technology;
- analysing SATs results and convening a meeting to discuss the main details.

7 The following targets have been set for 2004/5:

Percentage of key stage 1 pupils attaining level 2 or above

Subject	Welsh	English	Mathematics	Science
Target	91%	83%	83%	83%

Percentage of key stage 2 pupils attaining level 4 or above

Subject	Welsh	English	Mathematics	Science
Target	62.5%	75%	75%	75%

Summary

- 8 The inspection team agreed with the majority of the school's judgements about the standards and other aspects of its work.

Table of grades awarded

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

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

Standards

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

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 11 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 12 Overall, the under-fives and the pupils in both key stages make generally good progress in the development of their key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy, and in their use of information and communications technology across the curriculum.

- 13 Bilingualism is effectively promoted in the life of the school and pupils show increasing development as they work in Welsh and English across the curriculum.
- 14 Pupils with special educational needs make generally good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
- 15 In key stage 1 in 2004, the school's results for 2004 were considerably higher than county and national averages in Welsh and slightly lower in mathematics and science. In key stage 2 in 2004, the results were considerably higher than county and national averages in Welsh, mathematics and science and were slightly higher in English.
- 16 In relation to comparator schools in Wales, the school's performance in key stage 1 over recent years has in the main been amongst the 50% lowest performing, but above the 25% lowest. In key stage 2, its performance has in the main been amongst the 50% highest performing, but outside the 25% highest.
- 17 The majority of pupils display good attitudes towards learning and they work conscientiously, concentrating on the tasks set for them. They behave well inside and outside their lessons.
- 18 Some children in the under-fives' class, together with individuals in key stage 2, find it difficult to concentrate for reasonable periods of time and have not yet succeeded in practising the expected levels of self-control.
- 19 Average levels of attendance over the last three full terms are approximately 92%. There are a number of examples of unpunctuality at the beginning of the day and it is also commonplace for some parents to withdraw their children from school for holidays during the school term.

Quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	67%	22%	---	---

- 21 A number of good lessons were observed across the school. The working relationship between teachers and pupils is very good.
- 22 The school fulfils the requirements of the desirable outcomes for under-fives' learning, national curriculum programmes of study, and the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education.
- 23 The school makes equal provision and experiences for all its pupils. It nurtures and promotes pupils' bilingual skills to particularly good effect.

- 24 Pupils' progress is assessed on an ongoing basis and teachers have a good awareness of their ability. However, there is room to further develop the school's assessment procedures.
- 25 Pupils' personal and social development is promoted through their involvement with extra-curricular activities and the school plays an active role in a number of local events.
- 26 Overall, pupils' moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Not all morning services succeed in creating a sufficiently devotional atmosphere and neither do they provide sufficient opportunities for quiet reflection.
- 27 Pupils are aware of the need to show respect for others regardless of their racial background. Their awareness of global citizenship is promoted effectively.
- 28 The planning and management of care arrangements and support services are good. Teachers are aware of the different needs of each pupil and they make supportive provision in that respect. Support staff make a good contribution.
- 29 Pupils feel happy and safe in a caring environment. They talk freely with staff and are happy to approach them for support and guidance.
- 30 There is a lack of effective communication between parents and the school. A number of parents made reference to this in the questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting. The school has failed to develop communication strategies that are both consistent and clear to all.
- 31 The school does not have effective procedures for setting targets to monitor attendance and punctuality. The monitoring of behaviour is good, including behaviour during lunchtime.
- 32 The school has comprehensive policies and clear procedures for child protection, and for safeguarding their well-being, health and safety.
- 33 The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. However, there are no current individual education plans available for some individual pupils on the register.

Leadership and management

- 34 All members of staff at the school are involved with the process of drawing up the school's values, aims and objectives. Full-time teaching commitments, without non-contact time, together with the shortage of administrative support makes it difficult for the headteacher to provide clear guidance and leadership for the work of the school.

- 35 Performance management is beginning to have a positive impact on the school and it makes a valuable contribution to identifying staff needs and ultimately, pupils' achievements.
- 36 The school has very good arrangements in place for the provision of support and early development of newly qualified staff.
- 37 The governing body meets at least on a termly basis and has a number of sub-committees in place. The governors have a good awareness of the performance of the school, but there is room for them to play a more prominent role in monitoring standards and the quality of provision.
- 38 There are shortcomings under certain headings in the school prospectus which means that it does not fully satisfy requirements. There are also some shortcomings in the last annual report distributed to parents and in the manner in which attendance registers are administered.
- 39 The school sets appropriate and realistic targets for its pupils.
- 40 The self-evaluation report presented to the inspectors prior to the inspection was produced collectively by staff. It is an evaluative document and is very open in terms of identifying shortcomings as well as good features.
- 41 The school has a three-year programme for evaluating standards and quality of provision, but to date, there is little evidence to suggest that the implementation of the processes related to self-evaluation has been of a sufficiently comprehensive nature to be able to guide to full effect the efforts towards improvement.
- 42 The majority of targets in the action plan relating to the key issues in the previous inspection have been fulfilled, including those relating to raising standards of pupils' achievement in mathematics and information technology.
- 43 The school is adequately staffed to enable it to teach the curriculum effectively for all pupils.
- 44 Overall, the school has a good supply of resources for the age range and interests of its pupils. They are also of good quality.
- 45 There is adequate space for the number of pupils on the school register and the building is well maintained. The standard of cleanliness throughout the building is good. There is no separate play area for the under-fives.
- 46 The budget is managed efficiently and the school offers value for money.

Recommendations

- 47 In order to improve the areas inspected at the school, the staff and governors need to:

- raise pupils' standards of achievement in Welsh;
- set specific targets to improve punctuality and pupils' attendance levels;
- improve the quality of communication with parents;
- improve the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation processes;
- develop more comprehensive procedures to assess pupils' progress than are currently in place, and implement them consistently across the school;
- fully satisfy requirements in relation to:
 - administering registers;
 - the school prospectus;
 - the annual report of the governing body.

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

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

- 49 Overall, the findings of the inspection match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 50 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 51 Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 52 Overall, the under-fives and the pupils in both key stages make generally good progress in the development of their key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy, and in their use of information and communications technology across the curriculum.
- 53 Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 also achieve good standards in the development of their key skills across the curriculum. This is particularly true in terms of their bilingual competence, in view of the fact that English is the first language of the majority of pupils. Bilingualism is effectively promoted in the life of the school and pupils show increasing progress as they work in Welsh and English across the curriculum.
- 54 Pupils with special educational needs make generally good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
- 55 In key stage 1 in 2004, according to teacher assessments, 75% of pupils attained 2 or above in the core subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science at the end of the key stage. In 2003 the figure was 90% (Wales 79%; Conwy 78%) and in 2002 it was 86% (Wales 80%; Conwy 82%). The school's results for 2004 were considerably higher than county and national averages in Welsh and were slightly lower in mathematics and science. There are no obvious patterns of difference in the performance of boys and girls.
- 56 In key stage 2 in 2004, 86% of pupils at the school attained level 4 or above, as determined by test/task results in the core subjects of Welsh, English, mathematics and science. In 2003 it was 71% (Wales 71%; Conwy 72%) and

in 2002 the figure was 83% (Wales 68%; Conwy 69%). The results for 2004 were considerably higher than county and national averages in Welsh, mathematics and science and were slightly higher in English. There are no obvious patterns of difference in the performance of boys and girls in this key stage.

- 57 In relation to comparator schools in Wales, the school's performance in key stage 1 over recent years has in the main been amongst the 50% lowest performing, but above the 25% lowest. In key stage 2, its performance has in the main been amongst the 50% highest performing, but outside the 25% highest.
- 58 Across the school, pupils make regular progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills. The majority work at the peak of their ability and they achieve their potential. Through talking to pupils, it was seen that they have a good awareness of their strengths and of the action required to make further improvement.
- 59 The majority of pupils display positive attitudes towards learning and are willing to contribute and to respond to their teachers' questioning. They work conscientiously, concentrating on the tasks set for them. They make effective use of their time and they enjoy their educational experiences.
- 60 They behave well inside and outside their lessons, playing and socialising happily during break periods. They are courteous and respectful of school staff and visitors.
- 61 Some children in the under-fives' class, together with individuals in key stage 2, find it difficult to concentrate for reasonable periods of time and have not yet succeeded in practising the expected levels of self-control.
- 62 The majority of pupils display good skill levels as they work together, independently of their teachers. They are happy to wait for their turn and to work in a mature fashion to solve the problems they have set for each other, as in the case of practical tasks seen in mathematics in key stage 1.
- 63 Average levels of attendance over the last three full terms are approximately 92%. The averages for the nursery group are considerably lower than this, and this does not lay a good foundation for the children's compulsory education at the age of five. There are several examples of unpunctuality at the beginning of the day and it is also commonplace for some parents to withdraw their children from school for holidays during the school term. This has an adverse effect on attendance levels.
- 64 Teachers have a good awareness of equal opportunities issues and the school's accreditation as an international school and its links with schools in countries outside Wales make an important contribution to pupils' understanding of diversity.

- 65 Pupils' awareness of the world of work is developed through their local links which contribute effectively to the range of community activities in which they are involved.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 66 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 67 In the lessons observed, it was adjudged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	67%	22%	---	---

- 68 A number of good lessons were observed across the school. Lessons are well planned and teachers use an appropriate range of strategies to challenge pupils and to encourage them to dedicate themselves to the tasks in hand. The tasks set are appropriate in terms of pupils' ability and understanding.
- 69 The working relationship between teachers and pupils is very good. They support and control the pupils effectively, intervening according to the individual needs of pupils. The under-fives' teacher deals effectively with situations where individuals' noisy behaviour has an adverse effect on the teaching.
- 70 The school fulfils the requirements of the desirable outcomes for under-fives' learning, national curriculum programmes of study, and the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education.
- 71 Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and they provide stimulating work that fulfils the needs of each pupil. The school takes advantage of the opportunity to make effective use of this through the practice of teachers in both key stages exchanging classes.
- 72 Teachers' mid and short term planning is effective and well structured. There is a commitment to maintain and raise teaching standards. The plans identify differentiated activities and they ensure that the resources and learning tasks fulfil the needs of individual pupils, including those with special needs. The learning objectives are recorded, and they are shared with pupils at the beginning of each activity. Clear instructions are given and there is good questioning in order to encourage pupils to respond appropriately and to extend their understanding of their work.
- 73 The school offers equal provision and experiences for all pupils. It nurtures and promotes pupils' bilingual skills to particularly good effect. Teachers' commitment and sensitivity to pupils' linguistic needs ensure success. Teachers use good quality language, regularly setting a good example for pupils.

- 74 The teachers have developed effective and well-organised strategies for the work of the nursery assistant and the classroom assistant. They make a valuable contribution in the classes and succeed in supporting teachers in fulfilling pupils' individual needs.
- 75 Pupils' progress is assessed on an ongoing basis and teachers have a good awareness of pupils' abilities. However, there is room to further develop the school's procedures, including the use of assessment findings to set individual targets for pupils.
- 76 The procedure for levelling work has been well developed in a number of subjects and effective examples have been included in some of the schemes of work. Pupils' progress files give a full and clear picture of their development during their time at school. They contain a sensible range of the pupil's work, every piece having been carefully annotated.
- 77 Pupils' work is marked regularly. Teachers provide comments that offer guidance and encouragement. They seek to motivate pupils to develop self-discipline and to accept responsibility for their own learning. Pupils are encouraged to self-assess their own work in a limited number of subjects. There is room to establish more consistent and formal methods across the school.
- 78 The results of national tests are analysed and effective use is made of the findings in order to modify the teaching.
- 79 The annual report to parents on their children's progress conforms to statutory requirements. They provide a clear description of pupils' development, showing a sound knowledge of individual pupils. Parents respond very positively to the annual arrangement of holding three open evenings and they appreciate the opportunities to discuss their children's progress and achievements.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweighing shortcomings

- 80 The findings of the inspection team do not correspond to the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 81 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. They receive rich and stimulating experiences, leading naturally to the national curriculum programmes of study.
- 82 The school provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. It offers a good range of appropriate experiences and responds well to pupils' learning needs. It fully satisfies all legal requirements. Effective support is provided for pupils with special needs.
- 83 With the exception of the schemes of work for history and geography, the schemes are of good quality. The curriculum is introduced in a thematic manner on a cyclical basis. Teachers' short term planning outlines a clear structure and continuity between classes and key stages.
- 84 Teachers' awareness of the need to use a range of teaching methods in addition to the effective use of their expertise and interests has a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils.
- 85 The school does not have a system for co-ordinating and monitoring the provision for developing key skills. However, during the inspection it was seen that opportunities are provided for pupils to develop them in all aspects of the life and work of the school.
- 86 Pupils' personal and social development is promoted through their involvement with extra-curricular activities such as the soccer and netball clubs, Urdd tournaments and their residential visit to Glan Llyn. The school plays an active part in a number of local events. The local environment is used to promote pupils' curricular experiences, for example in art and religious education.
- 87 Overall, pupils' moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. The morning services conform to statutory requirements. They make a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of moral issues, encouraging them to respect truth and justice. Although the periods of collective worship make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual development, not all services create a sufficiently devotional atmosphere and neither do they offer opportunities for quiet reflection.
- 88 Although the school has a range of effective partnerships, there is room to improve the partnership with parents. A new and comprehensive version of the prospectus has been distributed recently. However, it does not satisfy in

full the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government. A considerable number of parents have not returned the home-school agreement which has been distributed to them.

- 89 The majority of pupils show initiative and they develop an understanding of what it means to live in a community.
- 90 Emphasis is placed on the Welsh dimension within the curriculum, especially in subjects such as art, music and religious education. The provision for promoting pupils' bilingual skills is sound.
- 91 The school has policies on racial equality and equal opportunities. Pupils are aware of the need to show respect for others, regardless of their racial background. Their awareness of global citizenship is promoted through their curricular work and through their participation in the Comenius project. The school has been accredited as an International School.
- 92 There are arrangements for promoting personal and social education at the school but there is no co-ordinator to support teachers and to ensure that the programme is tied in to thematic work across the school.
- 93 Pupils study some issues relating to sustainable development, but on the whole the provision does not include taking part in initiatives based on promoting environmental enhancement.
- 94 Although the school has begun to develop entrepreneurial skills with the older pupils, this aspect of its work needs to be formalised and developed. Currently, the school does not have a policy statement to guide the development of links with the world of work.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweighing shortcomings

- 95 The findings of the inspection team do not correspond to the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 96 The planning and management of care arrangements and support services are good. Teachers are aware of the different needs of each pupil and they make supportive provision in that respect. Support staff make a good contribution.
- 97 There is a lack of effective communication between parents and the school. A number of parents made reference to this in the questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting. The school has failed to develop communication strategies that are both consistent and clear to all.
- 98 The pupils that have come to the school as latecomers feel that they are welcomed and supported as the pupils and teachers help them to settle in to the life and ways of their new school.
- 99 The induction programmes for the nursery children have not been sufficiently developed.
- 100 Pupils feel happy and safe in a caring environment. They talk freely to staff and are happy to approach them for support and guidance.
- 101 The school does not have effective procedures for setting targets to monitor attendance and punctuality. The monitoring of behaviour is good, including behaviour during lunchtime. The teachers and support staff, including the lunchtime supervisors, work together to provide constant support.
- 102 The school has comprehensive policies and clear procedures for child protection, and for safeguarding their well-being, health and safety. One member of staff possesses current first aid qualifications. There are good links between the school and services such as the police and fire brigade. The parish priest is also supportive of the life and work of the school.
- 103 The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This enables them to play a full part in every aspect of the work of the school. The pupils are very well supported by the special education teacher, class teachers and classroom assistants. The individual education plans provide clear guidance to teachers on how best to focus their work in order to fulfil the needs of each individual pupil. However, there are no current individual education plans available for some individual pupils on the register. Overall, the evaluations of pupils' achievements and progress are carefully monitored and they give clear guidance on the next steps to be taken.
- 104 Reviews of the individual education plans are held twice yearly, to which parents are invited to contribute. The daily diaries are an effective resource,

but they are not used by all parents. The school funds additional provision for special education, for which it is to be commended.

- 105 The school is a welcoming and friendly community and its policies and practices nurture positive attitudes amongst pupils on issues such as acknowledging diversity and promoting equality regardless of race, background or gender. This view was supported during the inspectors' discussions with pupils. During the inspection, no evidence of unacceptable or aggressive behaviour was seen.
- 106 The school takes reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils would not suffer from being treated less favourably.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweighing shortcomings

- 107 The inspection findings match the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 108 All members of staff at the school are involved with the process of drawing up the school's values, aims and objectives. Full-time teaching commitments, without non-contact time, together with the shortage of administrative support makes it difficult for the headteacher to provide clear guidance and leadership for the work of the school.
- 109 The agreed values that the school promotes ensure equality for all and this is reflected effectively in its day-to-day work. There is a wide range of appropriate management and curricular policies in place, several of which were reviewed recently.
- 110 Appropriate consideration is given to county and national priorities, and these are reflected in school practices, such as the recent initiative to considerably increase the availability of information and communications technology resources, with a view to assisting pupils to achieve higher standards of learning.
- 111 Self-evaluation processes are developing satisfactorily within the school's management strategies.
- 112 Performance management is beginning to impact positively on the school and is making a valuable contribution towards identifying staff needs, and ultimately pupils' achievements. The school has gained *Investors in People* status.
- 113 The school has very good arrangements in place for the provision of support and early development of newly qualified staff.
- 114 The governing body meets at least on a termly basis and has a number of sub-committees in place. A number of new governors have been appointed recently and they are gradually familiarising themselves with their duties, including helping to set a strategic direction for the school. Through the reports of the headteacher, they have a good awareness of the school's performance in the end of key stage assessments conducted on pupils. There is room for the governing body to further develop its role, playing a more prominent part in monitoring standards and the quality of provision.
- 115 The latest version of the school prospectus that has recently been distributed to parents is well-designed and produced, and contains a range of useful information about the provision and procedures to be followed, including the course of action to be taken by those wishing to lodge a complaint or appeal

against a decision. However, there are shortcomings under certain headings which mean that it does not fully satisfy the requirements of Welsh Assembly Government circular 14/01. There are also some shortcomings in the last annual report distributed to parents and in the manner in which attendance registers are administered.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweighing shortcomings

- 116 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 117 Teachers are well informed about pupils' performance in the various areas for which they are responsible. The arrangements for monitoring pupils' work assists them in this regard.
- 118 The school sets targets for the core subjects at the end of key stages 1 and 2 for a period of three years. These are appropriate, realistic and on the whole they are achieved.
- 119 The school development plan is produced on an annual basis and is supported by staff and governors. It is a comprehensive document that highlights a number of priorities that are appropriate to the school's situation. The priorities are carefully costed, in terms of the required funding, time and in-service training needs.
- 120 The self-evaluation report presented to the inspectors prior to the inspection was produced collectively by staff. It is an evaluative document, and is very open in terms of identifying shortcomings as well as good features.
- 121 The school has a three-year programme for evaluating standards and quality of provision, but to date, there is little evidence to suggest that the implementation of the processes related to self-evaluation has been of a sufficiently comprehensive nature to be able to guide to full effect the efforts towards improvement.
- 122 The procedures for self-evaluation include the views of staff at the school and to a lesser extent those of the governing body, which contains a good representation of the local community, employers and parents.
- 123 The findings of the inspection team correspond to the school's judgements in five of the seven key questions.
- 124 The majority of targets in the action plan relating to the key issues in the previous inspection have been fulfilled, including those relating to raising standards of pupils' achievement in mathematics and information technology. However, as has been referred to earlier in this report, there are shortcomings in the school prospectus and in the last annual report distributed to parents.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no major shortcomings

- 125 The inspection findings correspond to the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 126 The school is adequately staffed to enable it to teach the curriculum effectively for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Good use is made of teachers' expertise in areas such as music and physical education.
- 127 The job descriptions that all members of staff have received give a clear indication of their duties, including the subjects for which they are responsible. There is a balanced distribution of responsibilities.
- 128 The school makes good use of the part-time nursery assistant who works effectively with the teacher in charge of the under-fives. This is also true of the assistant who provides support to a pupil with special educational needs.
- 129 Very few hours have been allocated for administrative support for the headteacher. This hampers the smooth running of the school and the quality of its communication.
- 130 Overall, the school has a good supply of resources for the age range and interests of its pupils. They are also of good quality. They are kept in an orderly manner in individual classrooms and in the central areas that are accessible to all. These arrangements work effectively.
- 131 The pupil:computer ratio is very good. A number of laptops were purchased recently, and as the pupils become familiar with them, they are used increasingly. Effective use is made of the interactive whiteboards.
- 132 There is adequate space for the number of pupils on the school register and the building is well maintained. The standard of cleanliness throughout the building is good. There is no separate play area for the under-fives. The playing field is a little uneven and the use made of it is limited because of its soggy state. Overall, the building provides suitable disabled access, although the main entrance has two low steps.
- 133 Teachers attend a good range of training sessions and this has a positive impact on their skills and understanding. They all have detailed records of their development and training needs. There is room to improve information-sharing arrangements by formalising the procedures adopted for reporting back to each other.
- 134 Expenditure decisions are effectively linked to the school development plan and the situation is reviewed at meetings of the governing body.
- 135 The budget is managed efficiently and the school offers value for money.

- 136 Following the latest audit of the school's financial procedures by the County's internal auditors, they were found to be of a very high standard. The school has implemented the recommendations made.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh

Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweighing shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweighing shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 137 Pupils' oral skills are developing well throughout the school, and by the time they reach the upper end of the school the majority are able to speak fluently and clearly. They can express their views in response to various experiences and visual and audio stimuli. Pupils in key stage 1 enjoy listening to a range of stories. In key stage 2, they display the ability to listen attentively to teachers' presentations and to each other's contributions.
- 138 In key stage 1, the majority of pupils have a good grasp of basic reading skills. A number of pupils read fluently and expressively. They are able to answer questions relating to the characteristics and content of their books. They refer meaningfully and enthusiastically to the main characters and events of their reading books or their favourite storybook.
- 139 Pupils' writing skills are satisfactory. They use a variety of sentence patterns and adjectives. They exhibit an increasing understanding of the need to write in various forms for specific requirements, such as writing signs for the classroom. They are aware of the characteristics and features of a story. They succeed in writing and recording their news, using capital letters and punctuation with a fair degree of consistency.
- 140 In key stage 2, a large number of pupils make good progress in their reading skills. The majority read fairly fluently and with appropriate intonation, paying due attention to punctuation marks. They are able to talk about their favourite authors and they know the difference between works of fiction and non-fiction and are also familiar with the basic conventions of books. They use a range of sources to retrieve and collate information.
- 141 Pupils write to a satisfactory standard in a range of styles, including producing scripts out of the old tale, 'Chwedl yr Afanc' and the book 'Ta, Ta, Tryweryn'. They realise that the form of language depends on its purpose and intended audience. They are able to write in compact form, as evidenced in their work to produce slogans opposing the drowning of Cwm Celyn. They are also able to use appropriate forms of language for persuasive purposes when writing letters of complaint. They make effective use of similes, adjectives and idioms in their written work.
- 142 Across the key stage, pupils make good use of dictionaries, and a range of printed sources.

Shortcomings

- 143 In both key stages, some pupils' spelling reflects a lack of care.
- 144 Although pupils understand the purpose and process of discussion, drafting, re-drafting and editing, these elements are not apparent in their current work.
- 145 Pupils' ability to write in extended fashion has not been sufficiently developed.

Mathematics

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

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

Good and outstanding features

- 146 In key stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of bonds and number patterns, including odd and even numbers. They come to be able to use addition and subtraction processes with increasing accuracy.
- 147 Through practical experiences, they have come to handle money well. They can name and correctly count all the items of coinage.
- 148 They recognise a variety of two and some three-dimensional shapes.
- 149 Evidence was seen of pupils moving on quickly to be able to correctly use standard measures.
- 150 They come to be able to gather data, as in the case of the weather and the colours of pupils' eyes, and to be able to record them correctly in block graph format on the computer.
- 151 In key stage 2, pupils' grasp of the four rules of number and their understanding of the relationship between them are developing well. They can handle large numbers with confidence.
- 152 They understand the relationship between decimal, fractional and percentage forms.
- 153 It was seen from pupils' earlier work in this key stage that they make good progress in their work on the measures.
- 154 Younger pupils in key stage 2 recognise a good range of three-dimensional shapes, together with their geometric characteristics. Through practical work, their understanding of nets of various shapes is developing well.
- 155 Across the key stage, pupils handle data well, correctly arranging and classifying according to the criteria set for them. They successfully produce a range of different graphs.

156 The work of the older pupils shows that they are beginning to develop an understanding of probability.

Shortcomings

157 There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

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

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

Good and outstanding features

158 In key stage 1, pupils exhibit good independent skills in their use of computers.

159 They make good use of art programmes to produce colour pictures related to their studies.

160 They produce effective graphs to record the data they have gathered on the weather, modes of transport and eye colours.

161 They can plot and correctly programme a journey for the Turtle.

162 They make effective use of CD-ROMs to reinforce their basic skills.

163 In key stage 2, pupils make effective use of word processing features when creating, editing and improving their work.

164 In their work on *Logo*, they come to be able to write a list of instructions to accurately create a shape similar to a pre-designed robot's head.

165 The younger pupils in this key stage have used an art package to imitate the artwork of others to particularly good effect.

166 They use e-mail for various purposes.

167 They effectively handle data gathered on different world religions, correctly presenting it in graphical form.

168 They are able to effectively create simple spreadsheets on foods.

Shortcomings

169 There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

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

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

Good and outstanding features

- 170 In key stage 1, pupils are able to recall and perform a range of rhymes, Welsh melodies and simple hymns. They display the ability to successfully keep in tune. Their wording is good.
- 171 They are able to use non-percussion instruments to imitate and create rhythmic patterns, maintaining a regular beat. They are able to follow rhythm cards and to create simple graphic scores in their work on the weather. Pupils listen carefully and respond to high and low, quiet and powerful sounds, using appropriate signs. They use non-percussion instruments to create a musical story in response to a stimulus such as the story "Heddwch o'r Diwedd".
- 172 Pupils in key stage 2 sing tunefully, giving attention to breathing and the quality of sound. Their work on Welsh melodies reflects their ability to arrange and structure sounds to produce simple ostinato in order to create and convey an appropriate atmosphere.
- 173 They are able to compose and perform ad lib patterns, using various sources of sound. They are familiar with performing and evaluating their own work for the purpose of improving it. They are aware of musical elements and they discuss them in mature fashion, using appropriate vocabulary.
- 174 They make effective use of computer programmes to compose and record their work. They study an extensive variety of musicians, conducting good quality evaluations of their work.
- 175 They are able to discuss various styles and can identify their main features, as seen in their study of the work of the composer George Gershwin.
- 176 They exhibit confidence and enjoyment as they take part in musical activities.

Shortcomings

- 177 There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical education

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

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

Good and outstanding features

- 178 In both key stages, the majority of pupils work energetically. They listen attentively to instructions, concentrating well as they work.
- 179 They have a good awareness of the need to work safely.
- 180 In key stage 1, pupils make good use of space, filling it effectively as they move about.
- 181 They exhibit good skills as they handle beanbags. When working individually, they are able to throw and catch the beanbags as they move, and when working in pairs they are able to successfully throw and catch from distance.
- 182 In key stage 2, pupils work well as individuals and in pairs.
- 183 They have learnt to work in a disciplined manner within the limits set for them on the yard.
- 184 Pupils' tennis skills are developing well across the key stage and they exhibit the ability to conduct effective hand to eye co-ordination when batting the ball with their hands or racket. They come to learn to use their forehand or backhand, as necessary.
- 185 Their attitudes towards the subject are positive; they exhibit enthusiasm and enjoyment and are able to sustain good levels of effort when practising their skills.
- 186 They keep the equipment at the end of the lesson with ease.
- 187 From discussions with pupils, it was seen that they have a good awareness of why exercise is important and of its effect on the body.

Shortcomings

- 188 There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

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

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

Good and outstanding features

- 189 Pupils in key stage 1 have discussed a range of celebrations. They have an understanding of the importance of celebrations in their own lives and in the lives of others. They are also familiar with the main Christian festivals.
- 190 They are aware of other world faiths, such as Judaism, and are able to talk about some of the rituals associated with it, such as Shabbat.

- 191 They express their opinions confidently, identifying the things that make them happy or sad.
- 192 They know the story of creation as it is told in the Bible and are aware that they must take care of their world.
- 193 In key stage 2, pupils have visited a chapel in order to perform a mock baptism. They are able to talk intelligently about the artefacts seen in the chapel, and can also discuss the main characteristics of the Christian baptism. Effective use is made of artefacts in order to promote and develop their understanding of the service.
- 194 They understand the need for rules in order to create a civilised society and have produced their own rules on how to behave in class and at school.
- 195 Pupils have produced a questionnaire in order to learn more about the role and daily work of the leaders of the local places of worship.
- 196 Their study of charities such as Christian Aid and Barnardos has raised their awareness of the need to think of and to help less fortunate members of our own community and further afield.
- 197 The older pupils understand the meaning and purpose of pilgrimages. They are able to discuss some of the ones related to the Christian faith and also those related to other faiths such as Islam.
- 198 They are aware of the contribution of people such as Mari Jones to religion in Wales. They are able to record her journey and efforts in contemporary formats, such as a strip cartoon and a newspaper article.
- 199 Pupils regularly visit the local church and they are well informed about the forms of worship used within it.

Shortcomings

- 200 There are no significant shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The findings of the Inspection confirm that we have primarily maintained high standards since our previous inspection in music, religious education, physical education and that we have improved standards in subjects such as information technology and mathematics. We shall strive as a team to raise standards in Welsh in order to achieve consistency. We appreciate the fact that the inspectors acknowledged the good work undertaken by the school in Welsh, given that over 90% of our children come from non-Welsh speaking homes.

We were glad that the Inspectors found that pupils' attitudes to learning are good and that they show interest in their work, although some pupils at the lower end of the school and in key stage 2 need to improve their behaviour and become more self-disciplined.

One of the school's aims is to help pupils to become bilingual by the time they leave, and we take pride in the fact that the inspectors acknowledge the impact of our efforts in the report. The skill and commitment of our teachers is recognised, together with the care shown by support staff, recognition that they fully deserve. The report confirms our aim, which is to create a happy and safe school that enables our pupils to develop their self-confidence and sense of independence.

We shall produce an action plan to address the recommendations made in the report.

Improving links between the school and parents will be a key priority, and this will be included in the school development plan.

A copy of the school's action plan produced in response to the report recommendations will be sent to all parents. The annual report of the governing body to parents will report on the progress made in relation to the report recommendations.

The governors, staff and children at the school would like to thank the inspection team for their professionalism and courtesy during their time at the school and for the clear sense of direction provided by their visit.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Betws y Coed
School type	Community school
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Bro Gethin Betws y Coed Conwy
Post-code	LL24 0BP
Telephone number	(01690) 710581
Headteacher	Mr Ifan Wyn Jones
Date of appointment	1997
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Janet Charlton
Reporting inspector	Mr D M Cray
Dates of inspection	7-9 October 2004

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	5	16	9	12	11	11	6	16	86

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	3	3	4.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	19.5:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	4:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	19
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Summer 2004	94.8%	-----	----	94.9%
Spring 2004	87.8%	----	-----	87.8%
Autumn 2004	94.8%	-----	-----	93.6%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	4%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 1

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y2:		12			
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School			8	92		
		National	1	1	11	64	23	
We: oracy	Teacher Assessment	School			8	92		
		National	1	2	12	63	22	
We: reading	Teacher Assessment	School			42	58		
		National	1	3	17	59	21	
We: writing	Teacher Assessment	School			58	42		
		National	1	3	20	65	10	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School			17	50	33	
		National		2	11	63	24	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School			17	75	8	
		National		2	10	66	22	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	75%	In Wales	79%

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

National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 2

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004	Number of pupils in Y6	7
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 in was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	85.7%	In the school	85.7%
In Wales	70%	In Wales	71%

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- The team of three inspectors inspected work in all classes. Between them they spent six full days at the school;
- pre-inspection meetings were held with governors, staff and parents;
- a range of documentation produced by the school was examined, including examples of work by the pupils across the curriculum in the early years and the two key stages;
- twenty lessons or sessions were observed;
- morning assemblies were attended;
- pupils were listened to reading and were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum;
- school registers were inspected;
- discussions were held with the headteacher and school staff relating to curricular and management matters;
- minutes of governors' and staff meetings were examined as well as documents relating to the school's financial matters;
- pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school, and during breaks;
- twenty three parents were present at the pre-inspection meeting and 32 questionnaires were returned;
- a post-inspection meeting was held with the staff and governing body.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspects	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr D M Cray	Rgl	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Annexes; Key questions 1; 5; 6 and 7.	Mathematics; information technology; physical education.
Mrs SA Taylor	Team	Key questions 2; 3; 4.	Welsh; music; religious education
Mr W Owen	Lay	Contributions to key questions 1; 3; 4 and 7	

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

Acknowledgement

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