

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
THE EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) ACT 1996**

Birchgrove Primary School

**Birchgrove Road
Heath
Cardiff
CF14 1RR**

SCHOOL NUMBER: 681/2011

DATE OF INSPECTION: 10 – 13 March 2003

BY

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REGISTERED INSPECTOR No: W043/15698

DATE: 1 April 2003

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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 some 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

Birchgrove Primary school is situated towards the north of the centre of Cardiff and serves the area of Birchgrove and Heath. The school, built towards the end of the last century, is typical of the period and is supplemented by a modern new hall and several external buildings housing five classes. During the inspection there were 321 pupils on roll. Pupil numbers have fallen in the past year and are 12% less than the numbers on roll at the time of the last inspection in November 1997.

The school considers that the residential area from which pupils are drawn is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Seven per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals; this is the same as that at the time of the last inspection and below the all Wales figure of 20%.

The school describes its intake as covering the full range of ability. Twenty-three pupils (14%) are identified by the school as having some degree of special educational need (SEN), including three pupils who have statements of educational need. None of the pupils come from a home where Welsh is the first language. Pupils are taught in thirteen classes.

The school's aim is: 'to provide the best possible education for all the pupils so that they can achieve their full potential in all aspects of school life and become valued individuals with self-esteem. All pupils will be given equal access to a suitably differentiated curriculum in a stimulating and caring environment driven by a genuine commitment to move forward and improve.' The school priorities for development in 2002 – 2003 include the quality of teaching and learning, race equality, improving the school site and key skill development.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

Birchgrove Primary School provides a good standard of education for all its pupils. There are many very good aspects to its work and pupils make good progress. It has managed to improve on the high standards achieved at the time of the last inspection. The efforts and activities of all have been well focused on improving standards of achievement and providing pupils with a high quality of teaching and learning experiences.

- The educational provision for the under fives successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning and is appropriate to their needs. Standards of achievement in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Language, literacy and communication	Good
Personal and social development	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Creative development	Good
Physical development	Good

- Standards of achievement in the subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) area as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Very good
Science	Good	Good
Welsh second language	Good	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Very good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Satisfactory
Art	Good	Good
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	Good	Satisfactory
Religious education	Very good	Very good

- When compared with similar schools in Wales, the 2001 teacher assessment results in key stage 1 are significantly above the average in English, mathematics and science. In key stage 2 in 2002, test results are at the average in all three subjects but were significantly above the average for 2001. Overall the school is meeting its challenging targets and continues to show substantial improvement in both key stages.
- Standards and progress in key skills across the curriculum achieved by children in the reception class are good. In both key stages standards in speaking and reading are very good, in listening they are good and in writing are satisfactory. Standards in numeracy and in information and communications technology (ICT) are good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The values of caring and mutual respect encouraged and developed by the school are clearly evident. Pupils' personal and social skills are well developed and sensitively promoted through a range of appropriate learning experiences. Pupils are well aware of the linguistic and cultural heritage of Wales and of other faiths and cultures. Daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements but opportunities for pupils to explore their own thoughts, ideas and concerns through quiet, focused reflection, are under-developed.
- The standard of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good. The school is a happy and supportive learning environment, based on good relationships and respect between adults and pupils. The school has very effective procedures for promoting good behaviour.
- Attendance levels and punctuality are good. There are appropriate procedures in place to monitor and follow up absences.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all the lessons observed. In nearly 70% of the lessons the teaching is good and it is very good in a further 16%. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the desirable outcomes for children's learning, the statutory curriculum and religious education. They know their

pupils well and establish good relationships with them. They provide good individual support and offer praise and encouragement.

- Teachers use a good and appropriate range of teaching approaches and strategies that reflect the needs of the pupils and the nature of the subject. A particularly strong feature is the extent to which pupils are enabled to work collaboratively and independently and take more responsibility for their own learning. Good questioning techniques by teachers allow pupils to provide extended responses to develop their oral skills and extend their understanding of the work studied. The development of pupils' oracy skills through a variety of procedures adopted by teachers is a key strength of the school.
- The overall quality of assessment, recording and reporting is very good. Teachers are accurate in their assessment of pupil performance and assessment is used very effectively to support the promotion of higher standards. The quality of teachers' marking is consistently good and often very good. Teachers provide positive comments and indicate clearly the strength of the work and how improvements can be made. Comments are linked clearly to learning objectives and pupils are involved in the evaluation of their own work and in the setting of personal targets. There is clear and systematic monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic achievements to identify areas for improvement.
- The school effectively provides a good quality broad and balanced curriculum which meets the requirements of the NC and the agreed syllabus for religious education. Staff achieve ownership of very good quality and comprehensive schemes of work. An extensive programme of visits to places of interest including weekend visits, outdoor pursuits, visiting speakers and links with the local community provide an enriching and enlightening web of experiences for pupils and contribute substantially to the educational standards achieved. Pupils achieve good learning skills through well structured opportunities to work independently and take more responsibility for their own learning.
- The quality of provision for the support and welfare of pupils is very good. The school provides a safe and secure environment where all pupils are equally valued and treated with understanding and respect. Pupils' personal and social development is effectively supported through the curriculum and all aspects of school life. The school has very good arrangements to monitor pupils' progress.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. Pupils made good progress and achieve good standards relative to their ability.
- Partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is very good. This is a strength of the school. Parents are kept well informed and value the approachability of the school staff. A significant number of adults in the community make positive contributions to pupils' learning. The school has very good links with local schools. Partnership with industry is good.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good. The headteacher, staff and governing body have a clear and shared vision for developing and improving the school and have established an effective culture of self-improvement. The school makes very good use of assessment data, the

headteacher's views of pupil achievements and class teachers' evaluations of the standards achieved by the pupils to identify targets for improvements. These are supplemented by the views of the subject leaders, through their monitoring and evaluation and expressed in subject action plans and evaluation of inset experiences. The school development plan (SDP) is a comprehensive document and a model of clarity.

- The leadership and efficiency of the school is very good. The school is well led. The headteacher sets high standards and tackles her tasks conscientiously with a sense of purpose and pride and giving a clear direction to the work of the school with a strong emphasis on school improvement. Her leadership and management skills are very good. The deputy provides strong support to the headteacher and has contributed significantly to the high standards achieved by the school. With other staff, they are successful in creating an environment that is conducive to learning. The staff of the school operate as a very professional team and support one another; a good team spirit exists.
- The governing body is well informed and fully involved in the life and work of the school. Its members are fully committed to their role and they have a positive impact on the school's progress and development.
- The budget is well managed and controlled and financial priorities are identified. Expenditure is carefully monitored and financial planning is thoughtful and well targeted.
- The provision for staffing and learning resources is good. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school benefits from a newly constructed hall which is well utilised. Accommodation is adequate in size to meet the number of pupils on roll, with the exception of accommodation for the Y1/2 class, which is inadequate for pupils' needs. There are, however, significant shortcomings in the condition and fabric of the hawser classrooms and the adequacy of toilet and access facilities in the demountable classrooms which need to be addressed.
- The school has made very good progress in addressing the key issues identified in the previous inspection report.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY THE PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Pupils' standards of achievement are very good in 16% of lessons, good in 69% and satisfactory in 15%. There are no unsatisfactory standards.

- Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards in language, literacy and communication, personal and social development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.
- In KS1, standards are very good in English and religious education. They are good in mathematics, Welsh as a second language, design and technology, information technology, history, geography, art, music and physical education.

- In KS2, standards are very good in English, mathematics, information technology and religious education. They are good in science, design and technology, history, art and music. They are satisfactory in Welsh as a second language, geography and physical education.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their ability.
- Over the past six years, the school's results in the National curriculum assessments have shown year on year improvement, except for last year at KS2 the result of a larger than usual number of pupils identified as having special educational needs.
- When compared with similar schools in Wales, the 2002 teacher assessment results in KS1 are well above the average in English and science and at average levels for mathematics. The core subject indicator for KS1 i.e. the percentage of pupils attaining level 2 or above in English, mathematics and science is significantly higher than the local authority and all Wales averages.
- When compared with similar schools in Wales, the 2002 assessment results in KS2 are at an average level in English, mathematics and science, similarly with the core subject indicator. When 2001 results are examined the scores are well above the average values for Wales and the local authority in all three subjects.
- Overall the school is meeting its challenging targets and continues to show substantial improvement in both key stages.

In KS1 boys and girls perform equally well. In KS2, boys attain higher results than girls in mathematics and science though lower in English; boys start from a lower baseline. The school has enabled all pupils to achieve their potential, irrespective of gender, through its use of a wide range of appropriate teaching approaches.

3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum

Standards and progress in key skills across the curriculum achieved by children in the reception class are good. In both key stages standards in speaking and reading are very good, in listening are good and in writing are satisfactory. Standards in numeracy and in information and communications technology (ICT) are good.

- In the reception class, children make good progress in applying and improving their developing skills in early literacy, early numeracy and in their use of information technology across the curriculum within and across the six areas of learning.
- Relating to their stage of development, pupils with special educational needs in both key stages make good progress in the key skills when undertaking work across the curriculum.
- Pupils in both key stages develop very good speaking skills. They effectively use language in a range of contexts across the curriculum and are enabled through

purposeful questioning and focused discussions to develop an appropriate range of subject specific vocabulary.

- Pupils in KS2 enter sensibly into meaningful dialogue by expressing opinions relating to text and pose questions of their own during plenary sessions. Extended responses are evident during discussions and debate in history lessons and when reporting back to peers on mathematical tasks.
- In both key stages the majority of pupils develop good listening skills. They listen with attention, concentration and understanding to stories or class presentations and are able to reflect and respond. Younger pupils listen to oral instructions and to each other and respond appropriately. In KS2, pupils listen to their peers' responses in group projects and older pupils are appropriately attentive during class debates.
- Pupils in both key stages develop very good reading skills. They read with accuracy and understanding and utilise books appropriately for research investigation and study. Older pupils make very good progress in developing higher order reading skills through locating information from a variety of sources including the internet.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing across the curriculum. In KS1, pupils write logically and clearly. They write stories, record findings in science, label drawings and record their own experiences linked to topic related visits. Older pupils in KS2 evaluate designs, present arguments in history and develop a range of writing techniques to suit a variety of purposes. This aspect, however, could be further developed in the foundation subjects with pupils being enabled to analyse and reflect in depth on the conclusions and findings of investigations and research.
- Pupils in both key stages make good progress in developing numeracy skills across the curriculum. They can apply and interpret data, calculate dates in time lines, count beats in music, measure in design and technology, record liquid measures in their investigations into plant growth and identify 3D shapes in their models of Tudor houses.
- Good practice is evident in the use of ICT across the curriculum in both key stages. Pupils utilise facilities in the recently established ICT suite to support their understanding and reinforce their work across the curriculum. This aspect could be further utilised in classrooms in the drafting and revision of written work. Pupils make good progress in the use of spread sheets in obtaining information from CD-ROMs and in the use of the digital camera to support their work in history and geography. Pupils in Y2 produce their own work in the style of the artist Mondrian as a result of their research on the internet.
- Opportunities for the development and application of key skills across the curriculum are clearly identified within teachers short term planning and pupils develop their skills systematically through a wide range of related contexts. The quality of whole school planning for the delivery of key skills is very good.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

- The school's aim of providing a "stimulating and caring environment" sustained by a commitment to progression and improvement is successfully achieved through a range of relevant learning experiences across the curriculum. Staff and pupils work purposefully and energetically together within an ethos of co-operation and mutual respect to achieve established objectives.
- Relationships within the school are supportive and pupils feel confident, valued and secure within a happy school community. The acceptable standards of behaviour and motivation shown by pupils in everyday lessons result from the clear expectations of staff and contribute substantially to the positive working environment. Pupils are courteous to visitors and engage them confidently and willingly in their class activities.
- Within group and paired activities pupils display a sense of fairness, are considerate to others' viewpoints and co-operate well with each other. Older pupils show developing self-reliance and self-discipline; this is evident in the thoughtful way in which Y6 pupils support Y3 pupils in reading initiatives and in their supervision of KS1 pupils during lunchtimes.
- Daily acts of collective worship are varied and meet statutory requirements. Pupils reinforce moral messages through role play and participate through prayer and singing hymns. Further consideration, however, needs to be given to enabling pupils to explore their own feelings through participation in moments of quiet contemplation.
- Pupils' personal and social skills are well developed and are sensitively promoted through a range of learning experiences. During class discussions and circle time pupils express their views honestly and coherently, and show an appreciation of others' opinions. Opportunities given to enable pupils to develop these skills are a strength of the school.
- Social skills are further enhanced through contact with the wider community. Pupils participate in a wide range of topic-linked visits and extra-curricular activities. Contributions made by visiting artists, performers, adult volunteers and speakers greatly enrich the experiences of pupils and contribute to the standards achieved.
- A policy for Racial Equality is in place and aspects of cultural diversity and racial harmony are promoted positively through the curriculum. Through their fund-raising activities for charities and discussions with visiting speakers as witnessed during the inspection, pupils develop a clear understanding of others less fortunate than themselves and the significance of equality issues.
- Pupils respect and appreciate their own cultural tradition alongside those of others; awareness of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is fostered through annual celebrations, educational visits and cross-curricular studies.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

The standards of behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall.

- The vast majority of pupils listen attentively, concentrate for substantial periods and have positive attitudes to their work. They behave appropriately around and inside the school sometimes in confined areas. They are respectful and caring of each other and adults. The quality of life in the school is good.
- There are a small number of pupils in every class who have the potential to present challenging behaviour. They are managed effectively by their teachers.
- The school has a comprehensive positive behaviour management policy and code of behaviour. The anti-bullying and race equality policies contain clear procedures. Circle Time and assemblies are used effectively and there are very clear modification techniques for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Incidents and outcomes are recorded. Parents are supportive of the discipline procedures that are clearly explained in the school prospectus. No incidents of anti social behaviour were noted during the inspection and there have been no exclusions for many years.
- Pupils know and understand the classroom rules they help to devise. They respond well to initiatives designed to improve behaviour such as the Pyramid club and to the reward system; all aspects of good behaviour and achievements in and outside school are celebrated in the weekly Achievers Assemblies.
- Older pupils are sensitive to the needs of the younger ones. Y6 pupils are monitors. They willingly give up their time to help the younger pupils at lunchtimes and wet playtimes. The Y6/Y3 paired reading sessions are mutually beneficial. The older pupils take their responsibilities seriously and provide good role models.
- Trained midday supervisors help to maintain acceptable standards of behaviour; they have a role in the reward system. However, there are insufficient planned activities to prevent some boisterous behaviour during lunchtimes.

4.3 Attendance

The level of pupils' attendance is good.

- At 94.48% the average rate of attendance over the last three terms is above that for schools in the local authority but in line with the average for Wales.
- Absences are caused mainly through illness but attendance rates are adversely affected by the extended absence of a very small number of pupils and family holidays in term time.
- Almost all the pupils arrive promptly at the start of the day. Individual lessons and sessions start on time.

- Procedures are in place to monitor and follow up absences. Registers are completed meticulously at the beginning of each session and comply with regulations in the NAW Circular 3/99.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all the lessons observed. In nearly 70% of the lessons the teaching is good and it is very good in a further 16%.

Where the quality of teaching is good or better:

- Teachers have a sound knowledge of the desirable outcomes, the statutory curriculum and religious education.
- Teachers show an enthusiasm for their work, know their pupils well and establish good relationships with them. They act as good role models, provide valuable individual support and offer frequent praise and encouragement.
- Lessons are very well prepared, with clear learning objectives and outcomes that are made clear to the pupils. Targets and success criteria are clearly established at the commencement and end of the lessons. Work is suitably differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers use a good and appropriate range of teaching approaches and strategies that reflect the needs of the pupils and the nature of the subject. A particularly strong feature is the extent to which pupils are enabled to work collaboratively and independently and take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Good questioning techniques by teachers allow pupils to provide extended responses to develop their oral skills and extend their understanding of the work studied. The development of pupils' oracy skills through a variety of procedures adopted by teachers is a key strength of the school.
- Lessons are well structured with appropriate whole class introductions which commence with a recapitulation of previous work to assess understanding. Direct teaching is well focused and well paced.
- During plenary sessions, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to report back on their work and share their findings, clearly indicating how pupils could improve their work.
- Classroom routines are well established and operate smoothly. Teachers make good use of a variety of resources.

Where teaching has shortcomings:

- In several curriculum areas pupils have insufficient time or opportunity to express their ideas, knowledge and understanding through their writing.

- On occasion a few pupils with limited self- discipline affect the pace and direction of the lesson.
- While classroom assistant and support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and welfare and undertake their responsibilities conscientiously, further consideration needs to be given to their deployment and use to maximise their effectiveness.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

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

- The school's assessment and marking policies establish clear guidelines for staff; there is a whole school approach to assessment.
- The school uses a combination of statutory test, assessment data and commercial materials very effectively. Information is carefully documented and used analytically to inform the target setting process. There is an appropriate balance of approaches to assess pupils' progress and they are well supported; arrangements and targets are continually reviewed in the light of their progress.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They are accurate in their assessment of pupil performance and assessment is used very effectively to support the promotion of higher standards. This is achieved through providing appropriate levels of challenge, in informing their planning and in working with pupils to set new challenges and targets.
- The quality of teachers' marking is consistently good and often very good. Teachers provide positive comments and indicate clearly the strength of the work and how improvements can be made. Comments are linked clearly to learning objectives and pupils are involved in the evaluation of their own work and in the setting of personal targets.
- Focused assessments are maintained at regular intervals in the core subjects alongside on-going records and tracking sheets. Individual pupil target sheets are maintained and these provide a useful and well-used indication of pupil achievement. Field notes contain useful information on progress and attainment in the non-core subjects and religious education. Samples of retained work are well annotated and levelled and give a very clear and continuous record of progress.
- Subject leaders for all subject areas have begun to develop portfolios of exemplar material, using school samples and drawing on ACCAC exemplification material, to ensure consistency in teachers' understanding of what constitutes success at various levels of the National Curriculum (NC). Those that have been completed are already having a very positive effect on standards.
- The school analyses NC test results and benchmarks these results against previous school results, and against local authority and all Wales data, for all pupils and to identify possible gender issues. Subject leaders have used this information

effectively to identify areas for improvement alongside the results of monitoring and evaluation of standards.

- Reports to parents are of a good quality. They give a clear indication of pupils' achievements and provide targets for future attainment. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress on formal occasions and informally with teachers. They are actively encouraged to be involved in supporting their children's learning.

5.3 Curriculum

The school effectively provides a good quality broad and balanced curriculum which meets the requirements of the NC and the agreed syllabus for religious education.

- The curriculum for the children in the early years is planned to ensure continuity and progression in the six areas of learning and adequately supports the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children enjoy a balanced range of activities and a diversity of experiences which are matched appropriately to their stage of development and particular learning needs.
- The breadth and balance of learning opportunities identified in termly curriculum maps ensures a coherent progression across both key stages. Staff achieve ownership of very good quality and comprehensive schemes of work through systematic key stage and year group planning. The teaching and learning opportunities identified within the schemes of work are successfully translated into weekly short term planned activities to provide effective and enriching learning experiences for pupils. Differentiated and possible extension tasks are identified within planning. The emphasis placed on enabling children to be life-long learners is successfully achieved and appropriately promotes the aims of the school.
- The planning for key skills is very good and is clearly identified within medium and short term planning. They are sufficiently detailed to enable teachers to plan effectively to ensure consistency in pupils' development across the curriculum.
- The school has a homework policy with clear guidelines on implementation. Homework is differentiated and is introduced in a simplified form from the early years onwards. Homework tasks, including a home-school reading diary to facilitate dialogue between parent and teacher are provided regularly and by the end of KS2 encompass a range of activities and curriculum content in the core subjects to purposefully support pupils learning.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities are enthusiastically supported by pupils. An extensive programme of visits to places of interest including weekend visits, outdoor pursuits, visiting speakers and links with the local community provide an enriching and enlightening web of experiences for pupils and contribute substantially to the educational standards achieved.
- The school's policy on personal, health and social education, complies with the ACCAC framework 2000 and is successfully promoted in all areas of the curriculum. The policy on sex education is incorporated into this aspect of school

life. Opportunities for pupils to partake in sessions of circle-time have a positive impact on pupils awareness of personal and current issues.

- The school demonstrates a sensitive awareness of the needs of all its pupils and ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils. This aspect is supported by the appropriate policy. The curriculum for pupils with SEN is wholly appropriate and provides a good level of support; all have full access to the NC.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The quality of support, guidance and pupils' welfare is very good overall.

- Pupils' personal, educational and social development is effectively supported through the curriculum and all aspects of school life. There are well-documented procedures for ensuring pupils health, safety and general well being which are implemented effectively. Children receive good guidance in fire-safety, road safety, sex education and drug awareness.
- Pupils in reception are well settled, secure and independent; routines are well established.
- Class teachers, support staff and a range of adult helpers, know and care for the pupils well and ensure they are effectively supported. The school has very good arrangements to monitor pupils' progress and a high level of consultation with parents who are kept well informed.
- The school considers issues of inclusion carefully and ensures all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated in all aspects of school life.
- The implementation of the school's policy for PSE is developing well. Focused activities such as circle-time contribute very positively to pupils' understanding of issues and behaviour and fully exploit opportunities to reinforce the value of the contribution made by each individual within the school.
- The head teacher and deputy head share responsibility for child protection and ensure staff are well briefed on procedures.
- The main school entrance has a controlled access system to ensure the safety of pupils and staff; CCTV and a digital telephone network enhance site security.

5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN

The overall quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good.

- Three pupils have statements of SEN and a further twenty are on a graded approach of action and intervention.
- The school's clear, coherent policy and documentation is in line with the new Code of Practice; the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) oversees its

implementation and provides sound guidance and INSET for staff. Provision is very well co-ordinated. The monitoring of pupils' progress is effective and thorough. Review and statementing procedures comply with the Code of Practice.

- During well-planned withdrawal sessions for language and in-class support for mathematics, pupils are well supported by the SENCO. There is a clear understanding of the individual and group needs of pupils and of the learning strategies necessary. The quality of this support is very good. Liaison between the SENCO and class teachers is good.
- Clear and helpful individual education plans (IEPs) are targeted to meet individual or group needs: they are reviewed on a regular basis. Parents receive copies of plans, which include advice on how they can help at home. They are kept fully informed at all stages. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in setting and reviewing their targets for improvement.
- Pupils with SEN are well integrated into the life of the school and make good progress. Class teachers plan effectively to meet pupils' varying needs and work hard to consider targets and strategies outlined in the IEPs. One of the strong features of the school is its on-going monitoring and evaluation of the provision and processes adopted to support pupils with SEN; this includes consultation and feedback from staff, parents and pupils and through the developing links with the governor responsible for SEN.
- The school has established links with external support agencies and good working relationships have been established; regular weekly support is currently provided from a visiting teacher for the visually impaired. Links with the local comprehensive school are good and have a positive effect on the transition from KS2 to KS3.
- ICT is used effectively to support pupils with SEN.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

The quality of partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is very good and is a major strength of the school.

- The quality of written information provided to parents is a strength of the school. Termly newsletters and other communications keep parents well informed about school activities and events. Termly topic sheets provide parents with useful information about subjects being taught and ways in which they can help their children.
- The prospectus issued to new parents is of very good quality and is regularly updated; together with the annual GB report it provides valuable information.
- Transition arrangements for children in the Early Years are thoughtfully planned and implemented. The literacy evenings are well attended and beneficial; parents of new children receive useful information about routines and guidance on reading and letter formation.

- There is very good daily informal contact particularly in KS1; all parents have signed the home/school agreement.
- A significant number of adults make positive contributions to the life of the school. They provide good quality support in the classroom that contributes significantly to the high standards achieved by the pupils. The very active Parents Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA) organises a wide programme of fundraising and social events that provides substantial financial support. Their involvement enhances the community atmosphere in the school. Monies raised are used to enhance resources.
- The school plays an active part in the community. A wide variety of educational visits and visitors help to enrich the curriculum and pupils' learning. Pupils are successful in competitions such as the annual Peace Festival competition.
- The school has very good links with surrounding nursery and primary schools and frequently shares expertise and documents for example the SDP and Quality Mark submission are used by the LEA. The school's work on assessment and curriculum planning is shared with education inspectors from overseas.
- Pastoral links with the receiving secondary school are very well established. The school is currently involved in a LEA initiative to improve transition between KS2 and KS3. Schools share INSET with feeder schools and Y6/Y7 teachers make reciprocal visits to observe mathematics and ensure familiarisation and continuity; curriculum links are well established. Firm plans are in place to start French lessons. KS2 and KS3 co-ordinators collaborate on individual pupils' progress and needs.
- The school is in partnership with an initial teacher training institution and provides training and work experience for student teachers. The school has good links with surrounding secondary schools and colleges and the nearby teaching hospital and provides work experience for secondary and nursery nurse students and student nurses.

5.7 Partnership with industry

Partnership with industry is good.

- The school has a written industry policy and the headteacher has benefited from an industrial placement.
- Visits and visitors help to raise the pupils' awareness of the world of work both past and present. Their experiences include working with authors and poets, musicians, actors and scientists. They benefit from working with local international athletes and receive professional sports coaching in rugby and football.
- Children in the Early Years worked with the site foreman on a project during the construction of the new hall. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is enhanced through projects involving visits to a nearby fish and chip shop and supermarket.

- Pupils in Y5 and Y6 are involved in mini enterprise projects throughout the year that help to raise their awareness of people less fortunate than themselves and broaden their business acumen. Funds raised are donated to nominated charities.
- The school benefits materially from sponsorship from a number of local businesses.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

The quality of self-improvement and planning for improvement is very good. The school is a very effective self-evaluative community.

- The headteacher, staff and governing body have a clear, shared vision for developing the school. There is an effective culture of self-improvement. The efforts and activity of all have been focused on achieving a school with good and very good standards where pupils acquire learning skills that they will take with them for life.
- Teachers are fully involved in the self-improvement process; they have created a self-evaluative community. They are keen to take on new initiatives and work hard for success. The governing body is well informed and has a good knowledge of the school's aims, achievements and educational provision. Staff and governors work closely together towards making necessary improvements.
- The school makes very good use of assessment data, the headteacher's views of pupil achievements and class teachers' evaluations of the standards achieved by the pupils to identify targets for improvements. These are supplemented by the views of the subject leaders, through their monitoring and evaluation and expressed in subject action plans and evaluation of inset experiences.
- The school development plan (SDP) is a comprehensive document and a model of clarity. It reviews the success of earlier targets and places the current priorities of the school into a well structured and meaningful context. It identifies appropriate priorities, action to be taken, timescales and a schedule of activity, criteria for success and personnel involved, resource and staff implications. Staff training, budget allocations and the SDP are very clearly linked.
- Progress in implementing the SDP is monitored and evaluated by staff and governors. Priorities and progress towards targets are kept under review. Information gained from subject leaders and the whole staff of the school informs and monitors the SDP. New priorities for action are identified as part of this on-going process of self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

The quality of leadership and management by the headteacher, staff and governors is very good.

- The school has appropriate aims and a commitment to providing a full and positive educational experience for all its pupils and a strong sense of purpose. The orderliness of daily routines and the quality of relationships are strong features and in particular the sense of community identified by all involved in the school.
- The school is very well led. The headteacher sets high standards and tackles her tasks conscientiously with a sense of purpose and pride and giving a clear direction to the work of the school with a strong emphasis on school improvement. Her leadership and management skills are very good and she has delegated responsibility effectively and supported staff in developing their management roles. She has ensured that all staff are valued and enabled; a very good team spirit exists.
- The deputy provides strong support to the headteacher and has contributed significantly to the high standards achieved by the school. Staff are enabled to develop new initiatives and are supported fully by the management of the school. The senior management team (SMT) meet on a regular basis to discuss new initiatives and formulate policy. Key stage and year group staff work well together to institute change rapidly and ensure a coherent whole school approach. Staff operate as a very professional team, support one another and give freely of their own time.
- The governing body is well informed and fully involved in the life and work of the school. Governors are fully committed to enhancing their own skills to aid their role in the management of the school and have a positive impact on the school's progress and development. All members have clearly defined links with specific curriculum areas and are active in a range of school improvement initiatives.
- The headteacher and subject leaders are involved in regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, standards and educational provision. This has been organised through planned release time for subject leaders and is managed well with regular, informative and analytical staff meetings for the dissemination of ideas and information.
- Available resources are used effectively and the school's finances are well managed; the school gives very good value for money.
- Administrative procedures are clear and operate effectively. The school secretary undertakes her tasks efficiently; the school runs smoothly.
- The school complies with statutory requirements and takes note of Welsh Assembly Government guidelines.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The provision for staffing and learning resources is good. Accommodation is satisfactory overall.

- The school is appropriately staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teachers are well qualified and provide the school with a broad spectrum of skills and experience. All staff have clear job descriptions and are very productively involved in whole school approaches to planning, implementation, monitoring and review.
- Subject leaders make a substantial contribution to on-going development within the school; their contribution is valued. Action plans are of a very good quality and form an important aspect of whole school decision-making. Subject leadership and teamwork between staff is a very strong feature of the school.
- An effective and well-directed programme of INSET supports both individual needs of teachers and identified whole-school initiatives. Staff regularly disseminate information and experiences to other members of the teaching team.
- Support staff are generally well deployed and effectively serve the needs of the pupils. Currently, however, there is no specific in-class support for pupils experiencing language difficulties or behavioural problems.
- The main building provides adequate accommodation for those classes located within its precincts. However, there is water penetration at several points including an area within proximity of the new computer suite. Communal teaching areas, including the small halls are well utilised, particularly by the reception classes whose classroom accommodation is somewhat constrained. The latter have no direct access to outdoor play.
- With the exception of accommodation for the Y1/2 class, which is inadequate for pupils' needs, outside hawser and demountable classrooms provide pupils with adequate space. There are, however, significant shortcomings in the condition and fabric of the hawser classrooms, which include structural floor movement crumbling masonry, flaking plaster, ill-fitting windows and doors and lack of drains for stormwater. There is no disabled access to the demountable classrooms, toilet facilities in the hawser classrooms are inadequate and there are no facilities for the demountables. Storage is inadequate.
- Some attractive displays of pupils' work enhance the school's interior but these are variable. Those for design and technology, for example, place learning in context and clearly reflect progression in pupils' achievements. In one Y4 class pupils' work is thoughtfully displayed and clearly celebrated. In other instances, however, there is a clear need to clarify further the purpose, content and context of display.
- A good range of resources, which are very effectively utilised by staff, supports teaching and learning; subject leaders regularly audit provision in their curricular areas. The IT suite is fully utilised and pupils have access to additional computers in the classrooms. There is no internet access in the demountable or hawser accommodation.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The educational provision for the under-fives successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning and is appropriate to their needs. Reception children make good progress in the six areas of learning.

Good features

Children's personal and social development is good.

- Children are developing a good level of independence and are eager to explore new learning. The majority concentrate and persevere well to complete their tasks. During shared activities and discussion they are becoming aware of the need for rules and do their best to comply. Children organise themselves well during role-play and the majority take turns and share resources readily.

Children's language, literacy and communication development is good.

- Most children listen attentively to adults; they speak confidently when sharing their thoughts and ideas with the class. Children understand how books work and enjoy sharing aspects of their texts with adults; several have made a positive start with reading. During their imaginative play children write with enthusiasm for themselves and each other and are moving positively towards independence. They understand the importance of correct letter formation and adults positively reinforce appropriate strategies.
- Children make a positive start with learning Welsh: they count confidently and respond well to greetings and commands.

Mathematical development is good.

- Many children have a sound early mathematical vocabulary, which is developed through a good variety of practical experiences shared with adults. During constructional activities they demonstrate a good understanding of directional vocabulary and are able to confidently interpret and sequence a series of movements made by a central character in a favourite story. Children can count and match accurately to 10 or more; some show a good practical awareness of number operations such as addition and subtraction. When creating, copying and describing patterns, they demonstrate a good degree of accuracy and understanding.
- Children can recognise and name a variety of 2D shapes in different settings in their classroom or when exploring the immediate school environment; a few children are beginning to identify 3D objects.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

- Through their investigation and sorting activities, children are developing an increasing understanding of the differences between natural and man-made materials. They understand the pattern of their day and can talk with confidence about the effects of the weather. Many show good development in their skills of observation when examining the school environment and use the digital camera purposefully to assist their learning. When constructing models of the school, children exhibit a good degree of co-operation and independence; they talk competently to the class about aspects of their completed work.
- Children use computer programmes independently to support their work in the classroom. They enjoy experimenting with colour and testing the possibility of different backgrounds for their pictures; some can print out their own work unaided by adults.

Children's creative development is good.

- Children paint, draw, sketch and print with a variety of media and tools: they experiment confidently with colour, shape, line and form and create increasingly detailed representations. Their ability to listen, make decisions and observe carefully develops well. Children's sketches of the school's ornamental gates are of a good quality; they enjoy talking about their work and having it appreciated by others.

Children's physical development is good.

- Children select and use equipment and tools effectively and sensibly. During their physical education lessons in the hall, children listen carefully and respond well to sounds, signals and commands. They demonstrate good spatial awareness, work together well and create some imaginative movements when, for example, interpreting the action of wind on kites and windmills. A large number of children are independent in their dressing skills and they are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies.
- Although children have no direct access to outdoor play they demonstrate good control and co-ordination during the opportunities currently being created for them to use of wheeled vehicles.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

English

Standards of achievement in English are very good in both key stages.

Good features

- The majority of pupils in both key stages are developing good listening skills. They demonstrate that they can listen with attention, concentration and understanding in different contexts. In KS1, pupils listen to and are responsive to teachers' questions, they interpret instructions well and are making good progress in listening to each other. Pupils in KS2, indicate the ability to listen well during sustained whole class debates and discussions.
- Pupils in both key stages make good and frequently very good progress in their speaking skills. In KS1, they are responsive to questions from visitors; they give reasons and explanations logically and confidently relating to first hand experiences and when recalling the main events of a story. They use appropriate vocabulary when talking about their technology activities and history topics; they can explain what they are doing when involved in a task and ask relevant questions.
- Pupils in KS2 , develop very good speaking skills within a range of contexts. In Y5, pupils formulate questions to seek information and conduct interviews during their history lessons. In Y6, pupils contribute constructively to shared discussions related to literary text and develop good persuasive debating skills. They are developing a clear understanding of how speech facilitates the exchange and evaluation of ideas and information and the expression of feelings during circle time activities, role play in assemblies and collaborative group activities.
- Pupils make very good progress in their reading skills. In KS1, pupils use an increasing number of strategies to help them identify unfamiliar words. They are eager to make observations about aspects of stories and characters in books; they comment on illustrations and convey the content of what they read accurately. They read their own work confidently.
- When reading aloud from class based texts related to history topics, older KS2 pupils involve themselves in purposeful discussion and communicate meaning from the text coherently and effectively. They are able to recall favourite books and authors. Many are reflective readers and respond personally and critically to what they have read. They read for research purposes and retrieve information from a range of sources to support their work across the curriculum. Younger pupils being supported by older pupils in reading initiatives, input by adult volunteers and home school reading diaries impact positively on standards in reading.
- Pupils make good progress in their writing skills. In KS1, pupils can sequence sentences and extend ideas logically. Most apply simple punctuation appropriately. In Y2, pupils use dictionaries to assist with their spelling. Related to a shared writing activity pupils in Y1/2 achieve good standards in producing a story based on the style of a familiar tale and give examples of alliteration.
- By the end of KS2, pupils write in a range of forms and for different purposes. They achieve very good standards of content, style and accuracy in their written work. Pupils in Y4 examine the structure, characters and setting of a Welsh legend to plan their own stories, while older pupils in Y5/6 demonstrate a very good understanding of the elements of diary writing when recounting an incident from another's viewpoint. Punctuation is generally used accurately and

appropriate attention is given to spelling. Attention is given by pupils to handwriting and to the presentation of work in books.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Mathematics

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

Good features

- In both key stages pupils are making good and often very good progress and are developing their understanding of number. In KS1 pupils understand number bonds, recognise different number patterns and can sequence a set of numbers. Pupils in Y1 are able to add a set of number, while pupils in Y2 have a secure understanding of place value and can add and subtract two digit numbers. They are developing skills in mental calculations and use number lines to support their work. More able pupils explain their work using relevant terms.
- In KS2, pupils are developing very good skills in mental calculations. In Y6, pupils use a good range of strategies and are developing their own mathematical strategies and ideas in looking for ways to overcome difficulties and are able to explain their reasoning clearly.
- Throughout KS2 pupils show a very good understanding of number. They have a very good understanding of place value and decimal notation. They understand and can use in context fractions and percentages to compare proportions of a whole, while Y6 pupils recognise the equivalence between decimal, fraction and percentage forms. Older pupils are able to show very good understanding when using inverse operations to check the accuracy of answers.
- Pupils in both key stages are able to describe the properties of two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) shapes. In KS1, pupils use appropriate language to describe and discuss shapes and recognise the geometrical features of shapes. Pupils in KS2 transform shape by rotation and later use degrees to measure the amount of rotation.
- In both key stages pupils are developing a good knowledge of standard measures and applying their developing knowledge in problem-solving activities.
- In both KS1 and KS2 pupils are able to present and interpret data using diagrams, tables and graphs appropriate to their age and ability. This aspect of mathematics is a strength of the school and pupils achieve very good standards. In KS1 pupils construct block graphs and can collect and interpret data effectively. In KS2 pupils collect, represent and interpret data for a variety of purposes and use computers effectively as a tool for representing and exploring data. By the end of KS2, pupils have a good understanding of measures of average and when interpreting graphs recognise why some conclusions can be uncertain.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings

Science

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Throughout both key stages pupils have a good recall of previous learning and are able to share their understanding. They are able to use appropriate equipment sensibly and make observations about their tasks. They show a keen interest in their scientific work and show a good understanding of the need for a fair test. They are able to make careful measurements and record their work carefully using tables and graphs.
- In both KS1 and KS2, teachers ensure that pupils describe their work in speech and writing using relevant scientific vocabulary.
- In KS1, pupils show good skills in sorting and classifying scientific information, for example by sorting objects into groups based on common characteristics such as transparency or whether they are attracted by a magnet.
- In their study of materials, pupils at the end of KS1 recognise that objects made from some materials can be changed in shape, for example by stretching or twisting. Pupils are able to describe the changes taking place when objects are heated or cooled. More able pupils recognise that some changes are permanent while some are reversible.
- Throughout KS1 pupils are enabled to make predictions, make observations and use results to say what they found out.
- In KS2, pupils become increasingly aware of the need for fair testing. They can vary one factor correctly while keeping the others the same. For example in Y4, while investigating the preferred habitat for woodlice, pupils show a good range of investigational skills, they are able to predict, make careful observations and measurements and to check their results by repeating them to ensure reliability. They can draw valid conclusions and give reasons for them.
- Pupils in Y3 show a good understanding of food chains and food webs and the relationships between prey and predators. They recognise that nearly all food chains start with a green plant and that human activity and especially pollution can disrupt the operation of feeding relationships in an ecosystem.
- In Y5, pupils show a good understanding of the functions of the external and internal parts of a plant. They are able to design an experiment to investigate the effect on plant growth of changes in conditions, for example the availability of light and its impact on food production for growth.

- At the end of KS2 pupils achieve a good understanding of forces through a range of experiments. They understand that through sieving and filtering, mixtures of materials can be separated and that solids that have been dissolved can be recovered by evaporation.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings, though further work could be undertaken to enhance pupils' skills in considering information, in reviewing their work and suggesting how investigations and data could be improved.

Welsh second language

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

Good features

- Pupils in both key stages respond enthusiastically to the variety of visual stimuli introduced, including big books. Recall of previous work is generally satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils understand simple instructions and commands, respond to greetings and make progress in learning basic vocabulary.
- In KS1, pupils make good progress in learning phrases associated with themselves and their surroundings. They know their colours and can relate these to various toys. They can substitute words in familiar patterns relating to their likes.
- In Y2, pupils develop their reading skills through sharing big books and respond enthusiastically to the repetitive patterns encountered. They recall their colour vocabulary and relate this to the colours of clothing in their story book. In situations of role-play they develop confidence in speaking and make good progress.
- Pupils in KS2 begin to use an increasing range of words, phrases and sentences when speaking. In Y3, pupils contribute sensibly to dialogue relating to a visit to a hairdresser and use words and patterns appropriately suited to the purpose. Pupils in Y4 participate in lively language games to reinforce vocabulary and phrases linked to parts of the body.
- Pupils in Y5/6 make good progress with their reading skills. They create a dialogue of the presented text relating to features of Cardiff and read with appropriate expression. They respond to a variety of related questions and can answer in the past tense. Pupils recall days of the week and months of the year and can insert these into their own replies to questions.
- Throughout both key stages pupils make progress in their writing skills. They undertake labelling and sentence completion and use familiar vocabulary and patterns to express simple factual and personal information. In Y4, pupils produce attractively bound class books based on Welsh stories and legends.
- Cross-curricular work, displays, the inclusion of Anglo- Welsh stories in their literacy lessons, the singing of Welsh songs and Welsh prayers contribute

significantly towards creating a Welsh ethos in the school. The assistance of the athrawes fro in supporting and encouraging teachers in the delivery and organisation of the subject programme has a positive effect on pupils' progress.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' writing skills, particularly independent writing while showing progression needs to be further developed.
- The use of incidental Welsh is not consistently applied in other subject areas in all classes in order to enable pupils develop confidence and spontaneity in conversation.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils make good progress in design and make activities. They measure accurately, chose suitable materials and tools and are developing appropriate techniques.
- Pupils in KS1 make sensible choices when assembling, joining and combining materials, they demonstrate an understanding of estimation and measure when cutting and joining and appreciate that designers often use a prototype to develop their ideas.
- In Y1/2 pupils understand that materials behave in different ways and are beginning to apply this knowledge sensibly when constructing playground amusements. Collaborative work is well developed. Pupils are encouraged to engage in meaningful dialogue and in this way extend their knowledge and understanding of the applicable technical vocabulary.
- Pupils extend their design and making skills in KS2. They use a variety of materials and components and consider the function and reliability of their products. Y3 design photograph frames and consider their stability, while pupils in Y4 devise appropriate alarm systems for chosen settings. Pupils in Y5 implement changes to their master builder project in the light of working discoveries. They apply their knowledge of shape well to their working designs.
- In all classes pupils are encouraged to draw plans and sketches of what they wish to make. They list materials, discuss their products and evaluate their work. Tasks grow in complexity as pupils move through the school and they apply a variety of techniques.
- Cross-curricular links are developed in several subjects, for example, pupils in Y5 design and make musical instruments, while in Y6 pupils consider the insulating properties of materials when designing and making slippers. Younger pupils

apply their knowledge and observations of the local environment purposefully when designing activities for younger children.

Shortcomings

- There is insufficient progression in pupils' written evaluations; the school has identified this as an area for development.

Information technology

Standards of achievements are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

Good features

- Throughout the school pupils use IT equipment, whether in class or the computer suite, competently and confidently in a range of curriculum contexts. The use of such equipment, including electronic whiteboards is embedded in the teaching and learning situations in all classes.
- Pupils are able to work independently and exercise a high degree of autonomy in their work. They use the equipment to process and present information and enhance its quality. Pupils are able to modify and improve their work and present it in a variety of formats.
- Pupils are able to input, sort, search and access information from a variety of sources, including databases, and are able to use a spreadsheet to support their work in a range of subjects and retrieve data in a graphical form, for example in Y5 when exploring an hypothesis concerning the relationship between height and pupils' jumping distances. Pupils can insert, change and copy formulae, select an appropriate graph and interpret accurately; they show very good skills.
- In Y2, when exploring the style of the artist Mondrian, pupils are able to use art based software to create a picture in the style of the artist and use a range of line, shape and colour fill procedures through click and drag procedures effectively and confidently.
- Pupils throughout the school are adept at using the computer to search for information through CD-ROMs and through the Internet. Pupils in Y2 are able to use a search engine to find information related to their work on William Burges and architects when designing a floor plan for a building. Pupils at the end of KS2 are able to search for information related to their topic on the rainforest and show very good skills.
- Pupils in KS2 are able to use IT equipment and digital cameras to communicate, share and exchange ideas and information in a variety of forms, including text and pictures and showing awareness of the needs of an audience, for example in school newspapers and in presentations.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Standards in history are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 are able to distinguish between aspects of their own lives and the lives of people in the past. They are enabled to develop early skills in historical enquiry through using artefacts, photographs, stories and asking questions.
- Pupils in Y1 can correctly sequence events and are developing a good sense of chronology through personal time lines and identifying changes in transport over time. They question adults about journeys to school and record their findings on pictograms.
- Pupils in Y1/2 recall factual detail and make clear comparisons between their life and the lives of famous individuals such as Susan Rees through observing pictures and reading stories.
- In Y4, pupils make good progress in identifying the different ways in which the past is represented in their studies on the lives of Roman children and on the schools of the period. Using appropriate skills, they select information from books, use reproductions of objects and research information on the internet to support their learning. They ask and answer questions with developing confidence.
- In Y5/6, pupils show a growing ability to identify the causes and consequences of events when relating to children in WW2 affected by evacuation. They utilise discussion and debate to further their empathy and understanding and make good progress.
- Pupils respond well as historians when handling information from different sources including books and information technology. They develop good enquiry skills and make good progress in independent learning.
- In both key stages, pupils' historical knowledge and understanding is enriched through the purposeful use of visits to places of historical interest, including a weekend visit linked to their topic on WW2. Pupils are enthusiastic in their responses and have good recall of the knowledge they have gained.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings although opportunities for pupils to communicate their understanding in writing could be further developed.

Geography

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

Good features

- In KS1 pupils can identify where they live and describe the area around the school. Through a study of the local area pupils are able to observe, collect information and to ask and answer geographical questions. They show a good ability to communicate their own opinions and express their likes and dislikes.
- Through an exercise in redesigning their own school environment, pupils in Y2 are able to further develop their mapping skills in their use of a large scale plan and use of mapping keys and are able to use their knowledge of the area, aspect and needs of pupils to arrive at some interesting designs. They show good skills in communicating their reasons for the various elements of their designs to their fellow pupils.
- In Y2, pupils can locate main towns and areas on a map of the United Kingdom and Wales. They show good skills in the interpretation of aerial photographs and can record a route to school and the various forms of land use in the local area.
- By the end of KS1, pupils are able to compare life in a contrasting locality to their own. They recognise important differences in daily life and are aware of climatic differences and their impact on people's lives and the way they live.
- In KS2, there is good progression in the development of pupils' mapping skills in a range of appropriate contexts. Pupils can follow directions, make and use maps at a variety of scales.
- Pupils in Y4 are able to collect and record information when undertaking a survey of land use along a local shopping street and can draw some conclusions from the evidence obtained on the reasons for the range of services identified.
- Pupils at the end of KS2, in their study of the Amazon rainforest are able to investigate the affect on the environment of human activity. Through their studies on the town of Manaus, pupils show a good awareness of the impact of change on the local inhabitants as well as the forest ecosystem. Pupils use a range of sources, including the Internet to obtain their information.

Shortcomings

- In KS2 pupils' ability to pose relevant questions, identify geographical patterns and offer explanations for them through a through understanding of geographical processes needs further development. Pupils would benefit from a greater

emphasis on the development of analytical skills when explaining such patterns in order to deepen their understanding of places.

- Pupils in KS2 have a limited understanding that people have different views about changes made to the environment and of the differing attempts people make to safeguard the environment for future generations. Further work needs to be undertaken on sustainability.
- While pupils show good skills in debating ideas they insufficiently express those ideas and their developing knowledge through their writing.

Art

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Although comparatively few lessons were observed in art, evidence from samples of work in class portfolios, sketchbooks and display, indicates appropriate attention is paid to designing, sketching, drawing, painting and printing. Pupils use a variety of media.
- Pupils are able to successfully emulate the style of famous artists. They have a good knowledge of the way in which artists use colour, pattern, shape and texture to create effect. Pupils' representations in the style of Richard Wilson, Van Gogh and Paul Klee, for example, and their work based on that of Matisse and Missouri Jenkins, reflect thought and imagination and are of good quality.
- Throughout the school pupils make good progress in their sketching and drawing skills. Younger pupils experiment successfully with line, shape and pattern when recording their observations of the school environment; they use pencil and charcoal to good effect. Older pupils' drawings of the school demonstrate an increasing ability to include fine detail.
- In their pastel work, inspired by William Morris, Y6 use viewing frames to good effect to create intricate patterns and designs of a good quality.
- At the end of the key stage, pupils' interpretations of landscapes demonstrate a good knowledge of the structure of paintings. By varying their application of colour and texture, pupils are beginning to produce paintings that display depth and balance. They apply technical vocabulary competently when discussing techniques and evaluating their work and achieve good standards in their description of background, contrasts and use of space.
- Throughout the school pupils' use of ICT to support their work in art is a particular strength. Pupils in both key stages effectively research information on the work of a variety of artists and apply this appropriately.
- In KS1 pupils use computers competently in their study of line, shape and colour and produce good quality geometric designs in the style of Mondrian; they make interesting comparisons with the work of other artists.

- Older pupils in KS2 use a variety of fonts to good effect to create designs, which they skilfully transfer onto fabric; their completed work is of a good standard.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings. There is a need, however, for further development of good quality display, which reflects pupils' work well and encourages appreciation and respect for the work of others.

Music

Standards in music are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 perform a wide repertoire of hymns, songs and rhymes in both English and Welsh. They sing in tune with clear diction and are able to vary pitch and rhythm appropriately. There is evident enjoyment of singing in assembly and in lunchtime singing sessions when pupils sing songs related to their history topics on WW2.
- In KS1, pupils listen carefully to music inspired by the sea and respond appropriately through discussion and drawings. They correctly identify the relevant instruments and make good progress in using specifically varied vocabulary to describe the effectiveness of the music.
- Pupils in Y3 understand the significance of timing and concentration when exploring the possibilities of accompanying a song with chime bars using a limited range of notes. They can follow instructions and perform with confidence in groups.
- Working in groups, pupils in Y6 select instruments to devise their own compositions focusing on duration and rhythm. They correctly identify note values by name and make good progress in imitating rhythmical patterns. Tape recorders are used purposefully for the purpose of evaluations.
- Younger pupils in KS2 make effective use of percussion instruments to arrange music in response to their story telling language activities. They handle instruments confidently and sensibly.
- Participation in extra-curricular instrumental tuition, annual school concerts and celebrations have a positive effect on pupils' standards in music.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings although more use could be made of ICT to develop pupils' skills in composition and aid progression.

- Opportunities for pupils to engage in instrumental performances in morning worship could be further developed.

Physical education

Standards of achievement are good in KS1; in KS2 standards achieved are satisfactory overall.

Good features

- Throughout the school pupils have a good understanding of the need to participate in appropriate warming up and cooling down activities. They are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies and can correctly describe changes that occur during physical activity.
- At the commencement of KS1 younger pupils travel confidently and use space well when performing sequences that involve change of direction. Pupils work well in pairs and plan and organise themselves well. They demonstrate good body tension and co-ordination when balancing on different parts of the body and are eager to share their performance with others.
- In their traditional dance session in KS1, Y2 pupils' control and operate movements well; they work hard to count and maintain a constant rhythm and some good standards are achieved.
- In KS2 pupils' control and co-ordination when performing travelling actions and sequences of movement in dance is further developed. In Y4 pupils show a willingness to practise, modify and repeat their sequences for a calypso-style dance. They are able to evaluate their performance and make suggestions for improvement: some good standards are achieved.
- During gymnastic activities in KS2 younger pupils work with increasing confidence to transfer weight when travelling on apparatus; some are beginning to link movements effectively when climbing, hanging and swinging.
- Y5/6 pupils successfully extend, adapt and transfer movements onto apparatus. Their synchronised sequences involving rolls and jumps are of a good quality. Pupils work competently and enthusiastically and demonstrate a good level of co-operation when planning and working together in small groups.
- In games sessions, younger pupils in KS2 work hard to develop their throwing and catching skills; most achieve well over a short distance and recognise how their skills can be developed.
- A good range of extra curricular sporting activities is well supported by pupils and makes a valuable contribution to their skills and fitness; equal opportunities are afforded for pupils to compete in team games and sports days. The school has

a developing programme of sporting initiatives and has established links with local rugby and football clubs.

Shortcomings

- In games lessons in KS2 pupils demonstrate limited progression in their development of specific skills for example, throwing and catching. When participating in outdoor games a small, but significant minority, find difficulty responding appropriately to instructions and controlling and co-ordinating their movements.
- There is a need to ensure that all pupils, particularly in KS2, are reminded of and implement appropriate dress code and safety procedures at the commencement of lessons.

Religious education

Standards of achievement are very good in both key stages.

Good features

- Throughout the school pupils are very aware of the importance of rules and of the need for their lives in and out of school to be governed by a code of conduct. They recognise the importance of appreciating and respecting the views of others.
- In both key stages pupils develop a very good awareness of Christian practices alongside those of other faiths.
- Throughout KS1 pupils have a very good recall of significant stories from the Bible. In Y2, pupils' oral and written interpretations of the parables are of a very good standard; they talk with assurance about the messages portrayed and respond well to questions about relationships and responsibilities. Pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of forgiveness and of caring for others.
- As a result of meeting local religious leaders and learning about significant celebrations, artefacts and sacred books, pupils' awareness of religious authority develops well. Prayer leaflets devised by older pupils reflect a good understanding of the symbolism associated with Islamic prayer. Pupils recall of Islamic traditions and customs and of the significance of the Qu'ran is very good.
- Through their studies of food laws, traditions and celebrations within Judaism, younger pupils in KS2 develop a very good understanding of the ways in which people's lives are directed by their faith.
- Older pupils in KS2 have a very good understanding of the importance of the Bible to Christians and are beginning to make comparisons between Muslim and Christian beliefs about their Holy books. Pupils are able to relate important messages from the Bible to their own lives and can provide examples in a modern context. The quality of their explanations and oral responses reflect a sound understanding and are of a very good quality: pupils research information competently and record their work well.

- Pupils experience a wide range of well-planned experiences, which contribute substantially to their understanding of the distinctive characteristics of tradition, worship and life in different communities. Pupils in KS2, for example, learn effectively about Buddhism and reflect on their experiences during circle time. Those in Y6 visit craftsmen in an art and Hinduism workshop and share their preparations for Divali.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

Following an inspection in the autumn term 1997, the previous inspection report identified four key issues for action. The school has made very good progress in addressing all aspects.

- 1. Integrate information technology more fully into planning in order to reinforce and extend pupils' subject knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.**

Very good work has been undertaken to ensure all the key skills, including information and communications technology (ICT), have been fully addressed. ICT planning is an integral feature of schemes of work and short term planning and standards attained by pupils in ICT are good and in some aspects of the curriculum, for example art, are very good. Pupils' subject knowledge and understanding has been substantially improved through their access and involvement in information technology.

- 2. Complete the scheme of work for music.**

This has been accomplished and the scheme of work is of a good standard. Standards of achievement in both key stages have improved from satisfactory to good.

- 3. Further develop the role of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning strategies and disseminating good practice.**

Through the effective use of release time, structured classroom observation and a range of additional procedures the effectiveness of the subject leaders across the school in establishing strengths and areas for improvement has been very good. Detailed subject action plans are generated and the range of appropriate and effective teaching and learning strategies adopted by all teachers is impressive. Well focused school based inset ensures that new ideas, good practice and conclusions drawn from evaluations are swiftly implemented throughout the school. The staff of the school operate as a very professional and coherent team ensuring that change is swiftly implemented.

4. Continue to implement the initiatives identified in the school development plan.

The school evaluation report and associated school development plan are of a very good standard. Clarity of purpose and integration of strategies is a strong feature. Examination of previous priorities and an analysis, by the school, of success criteria show a clear process in place ensuring that initiatives once identified are swiftly and successfully implemented.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order to further develop the current high standards that exist within the school, the school needs to:

- raise standards in those subjects judged satisfactory, namely Welsh as a second language, geography and physical education in Key Stage 2;
- work towards creating a better balance between writing as a key skill and the other elements of language across the curriculum;
- work in collaboration with the local education authority to address the shortcomings identified in accommodation.

The inspectors wish to thank everyone associated with the school, especially the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.

APPENDIX

A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Birhgrove Primary
School type	Primary
Age -range of pupils	4 - 11
Address of school	Birchgrove Road, CARDIFF
Post-Code	CF14 1RR
Telephone Number	02920 628204

Headteacher	Mrs. Alice Griffiths
Date of appointment	May 1997
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Cllr. Graham Hinchey
Registered Inspector	Mr. Allan Fear
Dates of inspection	10-13 March 2003

B. School data as 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	na	43	46	51	47	42	41	51	321

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	13	3	14.8

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22 :1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	na:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	na :1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1 :1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Spring 2002	94	95	94	94
Summer 2002	95	94	94	94

Autumn 2002	92	96	96	96
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Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	0
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C. Results of national curriculum assessments and public examinations

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS
END OF KEY STAGE 1 : 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2002		Number of pupils in Y2: 47							
Percentage of pupils at each level									
		D	A	W	1	2	3	4	
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School			0	0	69	31	0
		National			4	13	63	20	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School			0	0	65	35	0
		National			4	14	54	28	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School			0	8	65	27	0
		National			5	13	71	10	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School			0	0	67	33	0
		National			2	11	64	22	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School			0	6	52	42	0
		National			2	9	61	26	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School			0	0	42	58	0
		National			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:	94	In Wales:	80
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- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1
A pupils who were absent from the tasks

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS
END OF KEY STAGE 2 : 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2002											Number of pupils in Y6: 51			
Percentage of pupils at each level														
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	
English	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0		0	0	4	15	37	33	13	
		National	0	0	3		0	1	5	16	45	29		
	Test/Task	School	3	2	0	0			6	6	35	53		
		National	0	2	2	0			4	12	41	38		
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0		0	0	5	13	47	35		
		National	0	0	3		0	1	4	19	46	27		
	Test/Task	School	3	2	0	0			7	13	46	33		
		National	0	2	1	1			4	19	43	30		
Science	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0		0	0	2	11	42	46		
		National	0	0	3		0	0	2	13	49	33		
	Test/Task	School	3	0	0	0			0	9	47	44		
		National	0	2	0	0			1	10	47	38		

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:	76.4	In the school:	72.7
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
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

D. The evidence base of the inspection

Before the inspection, meetings were held with the staff, the governing body and the parents of pupils registered at the school. Nineteen parents were present at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. Documents supplied by the school were scrutinised and 42 questionnaires returned by parents were analysed. A team of four gave 14 inspector days to the inspection, in the course of which formal observations were made of 76 lessons or part lessons. In addition, 58 formal notes were made of aspects

of pupils' work and provision. Discussions with pupils from all age groups and abilities were undertaken, both inside and outside the classroom. A representative sample of pupils' work from all classes and for the whole academic year was scrutinised. Teachers' plans and records were examined. Inspectors considered the site, fabric and resources of the school. Discussions were held with the Head and with teachers, particularly about their subject management roles. Still within the context of the inspection, reporting back meetings took place with the Head, the staff and the governing body.

E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

NAME	ASPECTS	SUBJECTS
Mr. A.D.Fear	1.0 The School and its Priorities; 2.0 Main Findings; 3.1 Standards achieved in the subjects and Areas of Learning; 5.1 Teaching; 5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting; 6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement; 6.2 Leadership and Efficiency; 8.1 Progress since the last inspection; 8.2 Key issues for action.	Mathematics Science Information Technology History
Mrs. P.Williams	5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare; 5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs. 6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources;	Early Years Design & Technology Art Physical education Religious education
Mrs G. Rees	4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development; 3.2 Standards achieved in the Key Skills across the Curriculum; 5.3 Curriculum;	Welsh second language English Geography Music
Mrs. C.Lewis	4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes; 4.3 Attendance; 5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions; 5.7 Partnership with industry.	

