

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Blaen-Y-Cwm C.P. School
Blaenafon Road
Brynmawr
Blaenau Gwent
NP23 4BR**

School Number: 6772306

Date of Inspection: 04 June 2007

by

**Merfyn Douglas Jones
78185**

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

The inspection of Blaen-Y-Cwm C.P. School took place between 04/06/07 and 07/06/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Merfyn Douglas Jones undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Blaen y Cwm Primary School is located on the outskirts of the town of Brynmawr in the borough of Blaenau Gwent.
2. The school has places for 450 pupils plus 52 full-time nursery places. The purpose built Nursery also provides part-time places for three year olds.
3. The catchment area, with an unemployment rate higher than the national average, is considered to be economically disadvantaged. The school's intake has a large proportion of less able pupils.
4. Currently, there are 293 pupils on roll, 33 per cent of whom are entitled to free school meals. This is well above the national average.
5. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN), 75 are on 'school action' and 16 on 'school action plus' levels of SEN.
6. Twelve pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority and there is a large 'traveller' community within the school.
7. Nearly all pupils (99 per cent) come from homes where English is the main language. No pupil speaks Welsh as a first language.
8. At present, there are 16 teachers, including the head teacher, 6 Nursery Nurses and 3 teaching assistants as support staff.
9. The head teacher was appointed in January 2007.
10. The school was last inspected in June 2001 and was awarded the Basic Skills Agency's Quality Mark in 2007.

The school's priorities and targets

11. The school's main aims are to:
 - provide quality of education within a framework of quality life;
 - raise standards of achievement;
 - create a family of community where positive attitudes prevail, and
 - promote co-operation and understanding of parents.

12. The school's motto is: "Excellence through Endeavour"

13. The school's vision statement is: "High Expectation, High Standards"
 - raise standards in literacy, numeracy, science, RE, ICT, Welsh as a second language, history, geography, music and art;
 - adapt planning to account for the new Foundation Phase;
 - maintain clear management structure and continue professional development of staff.

Summary

14. Blaen y Cwm Primary is an improving and inclusive school where pupils are well cared for and where the head teacher and staff work hard to provide a good range of interesting experiences.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

Subjects and/or areas of learning for under-fives

Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

15. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

16. On-entry assessment indicates that children's standards in communication and numeracy skills are low. However, analysis of assessment results over the last three years indicates that pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential from their entry into school to the end of key stage 2.
17. Early Years children make good progress and achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT).
18. Pupils in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 achieve good standards and make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and ICT. Their use of writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum is inconsistent.
19. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and achieve well, relative to their abilities.
20. 'Looked after' and 'traveller' children also make good progress.
21. Pupils' creative skills are good but their bilingual skills are underdeveloped. They have a good knowledge of the heritage and culture of Wales.
22. Over the last three years, end of key stage 1 assessment results show pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science has been below the Local Education Authority (LEA) and national averages.
23. In 2006, the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected level 2 in English, mathematics and science was 59 per cent compared to 70 per cent in Blaenau Gwent and 80.6 per cent in Wales.
24. Over the last three years, end of key stage 2 assessment results show pupils' attainment in English and mathematics has been above the LEA averages and above or close to national averages. In science however, it has been consistently below LEA and national averages.
25. In 2006, the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science was 71.4 per cent compared to 68 per cent in Blaenau Gwent and 74 per cent in Wales.
26. Compared to similar schools, based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, results are above average and occasionally well above average in key stage 2 but below average in key stage 1 over the last three years.
27. Girls consistently outperform boys in all three subjects. There is little difference between the performance of other identified groups such as 'looked after' and 'traveller' children.
28. Pupils make good progress in their moral, social and cultural development. Their spiritual development is not as strong.

29. Nearly all pupils behave very well throughout the school day.
30. Pupils treat each other and adults with the utmost respect and courtesy and are willing participants in any conversations with visitors.
31. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning; they are interested in their work and are keen to do their best. However, their independent learning skills are underdeveloped.
32. Attendance has risen over the last year. At 90.5 per cent it is below the LEA average but reflects the circumstances concerning the school's intake. A few pupils regularly arrive late in the morning causing disruption to the first lesson.
33. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the workplace and the local community is good but their entrepreneurial skills are underdeveloped.
34. The example set by the school, in promoting the equality of opportunity for all, is understood by its pupils, who demonstrate the same principles in their relationships with each other.
35. Pupils from different backgrounds within the school mix very well. However, pupils' understanding and appreciation of the diverse nature of beliefs and lifestyles in the wider society are limited.

The quality of education and training

36. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
2%	79%	19%	0%	0%

37. Teaching shows good features with no important shortcomings in 81 per cent of lessons observed. This is higher than the national average indicated in The Chief Inspector of Schools most recent annual report.
38. Teaching in the Early Years is consistently good.
39. Teachers have good working relationships with their pupils and most demonstrate good pupil management.
40. Consistent use of praise and encouragement helps to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially those with special educational needs.
41. Features of outstanding teaching include:
 - Purposeful and clear use of open-ended questioning to develop pupils' observation and communication skills;
 - Tasks that are closely matched to pupils' abilities and which challenge and stimulate learning, and
 - Pace and rigour with set time-scales.

42. Some of the shortcomings in the 19 per cent of lessons graded as 3 include:
 - Too much teacher intervention or direction and not enough opportunities for independent learning and problem solving;
 - Over-use of inappropriate worksheets and workbooks which lack challenge and restrict pupils' ability to develop their own ideas.
43. Learning support assistants and Nursery Nurses are generally deployed well and used effectively. They are extremely capable and are making a significant impact on pupils' learning.
44. Although the use of incidental Welsh during the day is varied, pupils are praised and rewarded for using Welsh phrases and vocabulary during the day. Most teachers encourage and promote bilingualism.
45. The overall quality of assessment and its use in planning for pupils' learning is good.
46. Useful portfolios of levelled work have been developed in the core subjects. These help to guide teachers' judgements on standards and to guide consistency of assessment.
47. More able and talented pupils have been identified but are not given enough challenge in lessons.
48. Annual reports to parents fully comply with statutory requirements for commenting on attainment in each of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education.
49. The school's aims are well reflected in the curriculum offered to pupils. They receive a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum, with a wide range of interesting experiences enhancing the quality of learning in most subjects. It fully meets all legal requirements and the needs of the age range of pupils. All pupils have equal opportunities and full access to each area of the curriculum.
50. In key stage 1, good provision is made for personal and social education. However, this area is less well developed in key stage 2 due to the lack of a structured programme.
51. A wide range of extra-curricular activities promotes skills in areas such as sport, music and drama.
52. Collective worship actively promotes moral and cultural development, but too little emphasis is placed on spiritual development. In key stage 1, good provision is made for personal and social education. However this area is less well developed in key stage 2 due to the lack of a structured programme.
53. Good attention is given to promoting healthy lifestyles: the school is involved in a good range of activities to promote well-being, personal safety, healthy eating and exercise.

54. There is good provision to develop pupils' awareness of the traditions and heritage of Wales and regular opportunities for pupils to develop their bilingual skills across the school.
55. The promotion of pupils' awareness of global citizenship and diversity is underdeveloped. The school council introduces pupils to the democratic process and allows them to play an active part in developing their school. But there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their entrepreneurial skills.
56. The school has good and positive links with parents, the local community and other schools and colleges.
57. Pupils benefit from an interesting programme of visits and visitors that enhance their awareness of the world of work.
58. The school has very good arrangements for enabling its pupils to make a smooth transition to secondary education.
59. The school provides a high level of support for its pupils' personal development with teachers and other staff knowing them well as individuals.
60. Parents are very content with the support their children receive and the pupils themselves feel confident there is always someone for them to turn to.
61. The head teacher's commitment to the safety of all within the school has been demonstrated in the prompt way he addressed the car parking issue. Good arrangements are in place to ensure the well being of pupils whilst in the school's care.
62. The head teacher is the fully trained child protection officer with a member of staff to act as a deputy and a governor with responsibility in this area. Together they administer a system in accordance with LEA guidelines.
63. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with many notable features. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo), along with the head teacher and staff, ensure good procedures are in place for the early identification of learners with additional needs.
64. The school has appropriate and effective procedures to discourage oppressive behaviour and all forms of harassment, and to ensure good race relations. As a result, the school is a calm, friendly, and welcoming place.
65. The school has taken all reasonable measures to ensure that disabled pupils, parents and visitors have the same treatment as all others.

Leadership and management

66. The very experienced head teacher provides a high quality of leadership. His management is very purposeful and knowledgeable.

67. In a very short period of time, by virtue of his own industry, he has gained the respect and loyalty of staff, governors, parents and pupils alike.
68. Some of the recent Welsh Assembly Government initiatives, including global citizenship and diversity, have not yet been fully adopted as priorities.
69. The governors' understanding of pupils' achievements, especially in comparative terms, is rather limited, as is their involvement in the production of the school's self-evaluation report and development plan. Plans to resolve these issues are already in place.
70. The Governing Body ensures all regulatory and legal requirements are met.
71. The new self-evaluation report, based on the seven key questions, correctly identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, some of the major areas for development have not been prioritised as targets in the school's development plan. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress made since the last inspection.
72. The views of all those involved in providing education, parents and pupils had previously been gained through relevant questionnaires.
73. Co-ordinators monitor the standards in their subject areas through scrutiny of samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning. However, regular monitoring of teaching and learning is not fully established.
74. There are enough qualified teaching staff to teach every aspect of the curriculum, with a good blend of new and experienced teachers. There are also sufficient support staff who are effectively deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
75. General resources to support teaching and learning in subjects have also improved and for most subjects are now adequate. However, musical instruments and large climbing equipment for the under fives are still barely adequate.
76. The overall quality of the accommodation is good and provides an attractive setting for the teaching and learning process. The outside areas, which include a playing field, and grassed and paved areas, are well maintained and spacious.
77. Together with subject co-ordinators, and the school governors, the head ensures that economic and effective use is made of all new resources purchased. Overall, the school now gives good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to further improve, the school now needs to:

- R1 raise standards in using and applying mathematics in key stage 1 and address the gender gap in attainment across the school;
- R2 build on good practice in teaching to remove inconsistencies and create more opportunities for challenging and independent learning;
- R3 continue to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning across the school;
- R4 take more account of national priorities to develop global citizenship, diversity and entrepreneurial skills, and
- R5 further extend the governing body's role in strategic management and in monitoring developments.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

78. The judgements of the inspection team differ from those made by the school in its self-evaluation. One grade lower was awarded on the basis of some identified shortcomings.
79. Pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects inspected during lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
2%	76%	22%	0%	0%

80. These figures compare well with the WAG targets for 2007 that 98 per cent of lessons should be grade 3 or better and 65 per cent should be grade 2 or better.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Mathematics	3	2
Science	2	2
Art	2	2
Music	2	2
Physical education	2	2

81. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
82. On-entry assessment indicates that children's standards in communication and numeracy skills are low. Baseline assessments indicate that standards are generally below the LEA averages for many children.
83. However, analysis of assessment results over the last three years indicates that pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential from their entry into school to the end of key stage 2.
84. Early Years children make good progress and achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT).
85. Pupils in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 achieve good standards and make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and ICT. Their use of writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum is inconsistent.

86. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well, relative to their abilities.
87. 'Looked after' and 'traveller' children also make good progress.
88. Pupils' creative skills are good but their bilingual skills are underdeveloped. They have a good knowledge of the heritage and culture of Wales.
89. Over the last three years, end of key stage 1 assessment results show pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science has been below the LEA and national averages.
90. In 2006, the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected level 2 in English, mathematics and science was 59 per cent compared to 70 per cent in Blaenau Gwent and 80.6 per cent in Wales.
91. Over the last three years, end of key stage 2 assessment results show pupils' attainment in English and mathematics has been above the LEA averages and above or close to national averages. In science however, it has been consistently below LEA and national averages.
92. In 2006, the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science was 71.4 per cent compared to 68 per cent in Blaenau Gwent and 74 per cent in Wales.
93. Compared to similar schools, based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, results are above and occasionally well above average in key stage 2 but below average in key stage 1 over the last three years.
94. Girls consistently outperform boys in all three subjects. There is little difference between the performance of other identified groups such as 'looked after' and 'traveller' children.
95. Targets set by the school are consistently achieved and sometimes exceeded.
96. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress pupils make in acquiring new knowledge and skills but their problem-solving are underdeveloped and their independent learning skills have important shortcomings. Their understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve is inconsistent. However, most pupils are achieving well and making good progress.
97. Nearly all pupils behave very well throughout the school day. They are quiet and attentive in assemblies and move around the school in a calm and orderly manner. In lessons, a very few pupils cause disruption but such instances are generally dealt with effectively by teachers so the education of others does not suffer. Only one pupil was excluded during the past year.
98. Pupils treat each other and adults with the utmost respect and courtesy and are willing participants in any conversations with visitors. The seeds for this

are sown in the nursery. The immaculate behaviour of its children in the dining hall is testament to this.

99. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning; they are interested in their work and are keen to do their best. The majority listen carefully to their teachers, settle quickly to their tasks and sustain concentration. Pupils approach tasks with confidence and when asked, collaborate successfully with each other.
100. Attendance has risen over the last year as result of a combination of incentives, including the contacting of parents on the first day of absence and the good working relationship with the Educational Welfare Officer. At 90.5 per cent it is below the LEA average but, reflects the special circumstances of the school's intake. A few pupils regularly arrive late in the morning causing disruption to the first lesson.
101. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the workplace and the local community is good but their entrepreneurial skills are underdeveloped. They are aware of the work people do and of the ways in which people look after and care for their community.
102. Pupils make good progress in their moral, social and cultural development. Their spiritual development is not as strong.
103. The example set by the school, in promoting the equality of opportunity for all, is understood by its pupils, who demonstrate the same principles in their relationships with each other. They react well to the inclusive ethos of the school and it is to their credit that no racial incidents have ever been recorded. Pupils from different backgrounds within the school mix very well. However, pupils' understanding and appreciation of the diverse nature of beliefs and lifestyles in the wider society are limited.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

105. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
2%	79%	19%	0%	0%

106. Teaching shows good features with no important shortcomings in 81 per cent of lessons observed. This is higher than the national average indicated in The Chief Inspector of Schools most recent annual report.

107. Teaching in the Early Years is consistently good; with a wide variety of activities that motivate and challenge children and which are clearly linked to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The teaching effectively promotes the skills, understanding and attitudes necessary for learning.

108. Teachers have good working relationships with their pupils and most demonstrate good pupil management. They all actively address the issues of gender, race and ability and promote equality of opportunity for all. Their lessons are well planned with clear objectives. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the national curriculum is good.

109. In most lessons, pupils are made aware of the learning objectives at the start and are given opportunities to discuss or demonstrate how close they are to achieving the objectives at the end; this is good practice.

110. Consistent use of praise and encouragement helps to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially those with special educational needs.

111. Outstanding features of teaching include:

- Purposeful and clear use of open-ended questioning to develop pupils' observation and communication skills;
- Tasks that are closely matched to pupils' abilities and which challenge and stimulate learning, and
- Pace and rigour with set time-scales.

112. Some of the shortcomings in the 19 per cent of lessons graded as 3 include:

- Too much teacher intervention or direction and not enough opportunities for independent learning and problem solving;
- Over-use of inappropriate worksheets and workbooks which lack challenge and restrict pupils' ability to develop their own ideas.

113. Learning support assistants and Nursery Nurses are generally deployed well and used effectively. They are extremely capable and are making a significant impact on pupils' learning.
114. Although the use of incidental Welsh during the day is varied, pupils are praised and rewarded for using Welsh phrases and vocabulary during the day. Most teachers encourage and promote bilingualism.
115. The overall quality of assessment and its use in planning for pupils' learning is good.
116. A concise assessment policy, outlining clear procedures for the monitoring of pupils work and achievements, enables teachers to keep accurate records of pupils' progress. Pupil involvement in self assessment activities is being developed.
117. Pupils are generally aware of targets set for them in the core subjects, although details are not always clearly displayed in their books. Some inconsistency exists in the practice across the school and further developments are needed to enable pupils to assess their own performance and to strive for improvements.
118. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are examples of good practice where teachers' marking relates to lesson objectives and include positive comments and suggestions for improvement. However not all marking reflects this good practice.
119. A useful pupil tracking system exists to enable teachers to keep records of pupils' achievements, including baseline assessments and performance in national tests and other standardised assessments. End of key stage results in the core subjects are analysed well and used to inform teaching the following year. However, the procedures for tracking pupil's progress from baseline assessments in the reception classes to the end of key stage could be clearer.
120. Useful portfolios of levelled work have been developed in the core subjects. These help to guide teachers' judgements on standards and to guide consistency of assessment.
121. The progress of all pupils, including those with Additional Learning Needs, 'looked after' children and 'travelers', is carefully monitored.
122. More able and talented pupils have been identified and placed on the Additional Learning Needs register. This has raised the quality of teachers' assessment of the particular needs of these pupils. However, more work needs to be carried out in planning appropriately challenging tasks for them.
123. Annual reports to parents fully comply with statutory requirements for commenting on attainment in each of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The reports provide general information about a child's

achievements but lack practical recommendations for parents on the ways pupils can move forward.

124. There are formal parent consultation meetings twice a year and an opportunity is given for parents to discuss the annual written report if they so wish. Many informal opportunities exist for parents to visit and discuss their child's progress.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

125. The judgements of the inspection team match those made by the school in its self-evaluation.
126. The school's aims are well reflected in the curriculum offered to pupils. They receive a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum, with a wide range of interesting experiences enhancing the quality of learning in most subjects. It fully meets all legal requirements.
127. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
128. Within an ethos of inclusion promoted by the school, the provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good and is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo).
129. Learning experiences generally ensure that pupils acquire a suitable range of skills. Emphasis is placed on basic skills and the school has recently been awarded the Quality Mark for the third time, recognising its work in this area.
130. Appropriate emphasis is placed on continuity and progression. Tasks, on the whole, are differentiated to ensure that pupils make progress. However, there is often a lack of challenge for the more able pupils.
131. All pupils have equal opportunities and full access to each area of the curriculum. Outcomes are well reflected in pupils' behaviour, attitudes and willingness to work and play harmoniously with each other.
132. In key stage 1, good provision is made for personal and social education. However this area is less well developed in key stage 2 due to the lack of a structured programme.
133. A wide range of extra-curricular activities promotes skills in areas such as sport, music and drama. These provide opportunities for pupils to meet socially outside the classroom. For example, year 6 pupils spend a week at Hilston Park, enjoying a wide range of sporting and team building activities,

which contribute significantly to pupils' self-esteem and confidence. This is a good feature of the school.

134. Provision made for pupils personal development, including Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural, has good features that outweigh shortcomings. Collective worship actively promotes moral and cultural development, but too little emphasis is placed on spiritual development. In key stage 1, good provision is made for personal and social education. However this area is less well developed in key stage 2 due to the lack of a structured programme.
135. There is good provision to develop pupils' awareness of the traditions and heritage of Wales and regular opportunities for pupils to develop their bilingual skill across the school.
136. The school council introduces pupils to the democratic process and allows them to play an active part in developing their school. The promotion of pupils' awareness of global citizenship and diversity is underdeveloped and there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their entrepreneurial skills.
137. The school has good and positive links with parents, the local community and other schools and colleges.
138. Pupils benefit from an interesting programme of visits and visitors that enhance their awareness of the world of work. For example they work closely with the local police, local ministers and St. John's Ambulance and visit museums and the local library; these help to enrich pupils' learning experiences.
139. The school provides good training facilities for student teachers and other students undertaking vocational qualifications.
140. Links with commercial organisations are rather limited, although a working relationship is being formed with a nearby supermarket, but the school is not involved with an Education Business Partnership or similar organisation.
141. The school is aware of its role in the education of its pupils on the importance of ensuring the sustainable development of the world's resources, but is in the early stages of its development. It has introduced a range of recycling initiatives that are well supported by pupils, as is the after-school Eco-club.
142. The school has very good arrangements for enabling its pupils to make a smooth transition to secondary education. Year 7 teachers at the two main receiving secondary schools are regular visitors and Year 6 pupils take part in a number of activities at the schools, such as a science day and weekly steel band sessions. Joint projects also exist in nearly all subjects. These contacts ensure pupils arrive at their new schools familiar with the teachers and the work they initially undertake.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

143. The judgements of the inspection team match those made by the school in its self-evaluation.
144. The school provides a high level of support for its pupils' personal development with teachers and other staff knowing them well as individuals. Parents are very content with the support their children receive and the pupils themselves feel confident there is always someone for them to turn to.
145. The school has a very good relationship with its parents and carers; this is reflected in the overwhelmingly positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the generous support provided by the Parents Association.
146. They have many opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Consequently, most agree they are well informed about their children's level of achievement. The views of parents and carers are also sought and valued.
147. Most pupils enter the school through the nursery where they are introduced to school life in a sensitive fashion. Parents are very supportive of this. Arrangements for pupils entering at other times are appropriate and enable them to settle-in and become fully involved in the life of the school as quickly as possible.
148. There have been many improvements in the provision for personal and social education since the time of the previous inspection, but the school acknowledges that it still has some way to go and provision is still patchy across the school.
149. Good quality personal and social support and guidance is provided in the early years and key stage 1 through strategies such as "circle time". Pupils respond well to discussion of issues that affect their own and others' lives, such as bullying and fair play. Outside agencies, such as the police, school nurse and Crucial Crew, make a regular and useful contribution to pupils' learning in key stage 2.
150. Those pupils whose attendance falls below 85 per cent are actively monitored in co-operation with the educational welfare officer who visits the school weekly. Also, the contacting of parents on the first day of non-attendance helps to reduce unauthorised absence.
151. The school is working with parents to try and reduce the number of children who take the occasional day off for unauthorised activities or go on holiday during school-time. It is also putting in measures to improve the punctuality of its pupils in the mornings.

152. The school has a very good system for encouraging good behaviour amongst its pupils, which is respected by pupils and appreciated by parents. Most teachers deal effectively with any disruptions in lessons and issues outside the classroom are handled well; the head teacher was seen dealing with a situation that arose between two pupils promptly and sensitively.
153. The head teacher's commitment to the safety of all within the school has been demonstrated in the prompt way he dealt with the school's car parking issue. He and the governor responsible carry out an annual health and safety audit of the school buildings and grounds, which have been described as 'excellent' by the LEA Health and Safety manager.
154. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out for all trips out of school. All teaching staff and nursery nurses have received first aid training and there is a suitably resourced medical room. The school has appropriate systems and procedures in place that contribute to pupils well being whilst in the schools care.
155. Good attention is given to promoting healthy lifestyles: the school is involved in a range of activities to promote well-being, personal safety, healthy eating and exercise. The well-attended breakfast club provides a healthy start to the day, which is reinforced by the varied menu at lunchtime. Pupils actively use the water bottles provided for them in the classroom and are learning about health issues through subject lessons and from visitors. The school encourages physical activity during PE lessons, through its after-school clubs and in its support for the Dragon Sport and Physical Education and School Sport schemes. A 'walking bus' is about to be introduced to encourage pupils to walk to school.
156. The head teacher is the fully trained child protection officer with a member of staff to act as a deputy and a governor with responsibility in this area. Together they administer a system in accordance with LEA guidelines. All members of staff receive training as part of their induction and on an ongoing basis. They are fully aware of the signs to look for, how to respond to any concerns, and to whom they report them.
157. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with many notable features. The SENCo along with the head teacher and staff, ensure good procedures are in place for the early identification of learners with additional needs. They monitor pupils' progress very carefully and work closely with parents to modify learning objectives to take account of the progress made. The quality of support provided for pupils with Additional Education Needs and the liaison between staff is very good.
158. The governor with responsibility for SEN is actively involved with reviewing individual education plans and supporting pupils. The educational psychologist and other professionals work closely with the school to support pupils very effectively.
159. The school is sensitive to issues of inclusion and this enables learning support assistants to assist staff in providing good quality support for pupils with

special needs and allow them to fully access the curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the partnership between home and school in reviewing specific needs and in enabling pupils to make good progress within a positive and encouraging learning environment.

160. Very detailed information on pupils is gained from a range of commercially produced materials and teachers' day-to-day assessments. This information is very carefully analysed to identify and ensure the best possible support for pupils. For example, a number of pupils receive extra support through effective intervention programmes such as the 'reading reflex' initiative. Their progress is carefully monitored and tracked by teachers and support staff.
161. The quality of provision for equal opportunities is good overall and the high priority that is given to the full inclusion of all groups of pupils, including traveller children, "looked after" children, minority ethnic children, and those with special educational needs, is highly commendable.
162. All groups of pupils blend harmoniously together because the diversity of pupils' backgrounds is recognised and all staff work hard to ensure that all pupils make good progress, are equally valued, and treated fairly and with respect. Boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum and all activities of the school, and a substantial effort is being made to close the gender gap in boys' and girls' achievement.
163. The school has a suitable policy and procedures for promoting good race relations to ensure that pupils are free from racial discrimination and harassment. The different cultures and faiths of the wider world are celebrated appropriately in subjects such as religious education, and assemblies. Overall, however, the issue of diversity is promoted less well.
164. Pupils have limited experiences where they are helped to discuss and understand the differences, opinions and contributions of others, and therefore, they have a limited awareness and understanding of multi-culture issues, particularly in modern Wales.
165. Arrangements to eliminate oppressive behaviour are appropriate and, as a result, the school is a calm, friendly, and welcoming place. Pupils who have come new to the school say that they were supported and helped to settle in.
166. Pupils are keen to point out that bullying is rare. They say the School Council plays its' part by having specific roles at break times, such as helping children who are lonely. They say their views are taken seriously and they are listened to.
167. The school has taken all reasonable measures to ensure that disabled pupils, parents and visitors have the same treatment as all others. Although there are currently no pupils with physical disabilities attending the school, the comprehensive disability plan of the governing body states that the school is committed to providing an environment that is conducive to all, and assures that arrangements are in place to accommodate these pupils, should the need arise.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

168. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report because it was felt that targets set in the school's latest development plan are not specific and not fully understood by staff and governors. Also, the school has not been taking enough account of national priorities.
169. However, the school has definite aims and values that are clearly supported by staff and governors regarding learning, behaviour and relationships. A strong commitment to the care of pupils and to equality of opportunity is reflected in the school's work.
170. The head teacher, who was appointed very recently, following a period of uncertainty, provides the school with a clear vision. He is very experienced and provides a high quality of leadership. His management is very purposeful and knowledgeable and he is determined to raise standards in teaching and learning across the school. He has already brought about changes that are having a positive effect on all aspects of school life, including staff moral.
171. In a very short period of time, by virtue of his own industry, he has gained the respect and loyalty of staff, governors, parents and pupils alike.
172. There is an effective staff appraisal system and the head teacher is very proactive in encouraging all members of staff to achieve higher qualifications and accreditations. Induction programmes for newly appointed staff are supportive and effective.
173. Although there are good features, there are important shortcomings in how the school takes account of national priorities. The head teacher and staff work closely with other local schools and take good account of local partnerships. Promoting pupils' awareness of global citizenship and diversity is at an early stage of development.
174. Targets and goals have not been realistic and have not been monitored effectively.
175. The governors are committed and enthusiastic in their support of the school. Most attend the school regularly, have specific responsibilities and visit classrooms to gain an awareness of the quality of teaching and learning.
176. Their understanding of pupils' achievements, especially in comparative terms, is rather limited, as is their involvement in the production of the school's self-evaluation report and development plan. Plans to resolve these issues are already in place.

177. The Governing Body ensures all regulatory and legal requirements are met.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

178. The judgements of the inspection team differ from those made by the school in its self-evaluation. One grade lower was awarded on the basis of some identified shortcomings.
179. The present head teacher produced a new self-evaluation report in a very short period of time. Using information gained from the previous self-evaluation report and more recent information from the staff and governors, a more evaluative report was prepared.
180. The views of all those involved in providing education, parents and pupils had previously been gained through relevant questionnaires and were incorporated.
181. The new report, based on the seven key questions, correctly identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, some of the major areas for development have not been prioritised as quantifiable targets in the school's development plan.
182. The inspection team agreed with the school's self-evaluation in four out of the seven key questions. Although the school identified important shortcomings in key questions 1, 5 and 6, they were not graded correctly.
183. The schools self evaluation process has good features that outweigh shortcomings. Teachers know their pupils well in terms of their academic and social progress. They regularly monitor their progress in the core subjects. The analysis of assessment results, including end of key stage teacher assessment, helps to identify trends and weaknesses, which are then addressed in future planning.
184. Co-ordinators monitor the standards in their subject areas through scrutiny of samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning. However, regular monitoring of teaching and learning is not fully established.
185. The governors and staff arrange that adequate resources are provided to ensure that objectives are met. Recent measurable improvements in standards in English and mathematics, particularly in key stage 2, are as a direct result of previous plans supported by the LEA.
186. Progress made since the previous inspection has good features that outweigh shortcomings. Not all of the key issues identified in the previous inspection report have been fully addressed. The one regarding the monitoring of teaching and learning remains as a recommendation.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

187. The judgements of the inspection team match those made by the school in its self-evaluation
188. The overall provision for staffing and accommodation is good. The overall provision for resources has good features that outweigh shortcomings
189. There are enough qualified teaching staff to teach every aspect of the curriculum, with a good blend of new and experienced teachers. There are also sufficient support staff who are effectively deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
190. Newly qualified teachers are welcomed and well supported. There is a clear structure in place to support initial teacher training and other students who work at the school.
191. The school has a clear approach and commitment to the professional development of all staff, but in recent years there have been very severe constraints on budgetary provision due to a very substantial budget deficit.
192. This issue has now been resolved and recently the school has successfully forged ahead with a new programme of staff training to meet school and personal priorities. In particular, literacy training has been supporting the schools' efforts to raise standards.
193. The school has effectively organised and implemented the statutory requirements for planning, preparing and assessing time for teachers. This is having a positive effect on teachers' moral and on the standard of teaching.
194. Ancillary staff, including the school secretary, dinnertime supervisors and caretaker, make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
195. Funding is being provided for materials and equipment that will enable the school to move smoothly and purposefully into the new Foundation Phase, and in particular, equipment that will enable teachers to fully develop children's physical skills of balance, co-ordination and control.
196. General resources to support teaching and learning in subjects have also improved and for most subjects are now adequate. However, musical instruments and large climbing equipment for the under fives are still barely adequate.
197. The library is spacious, well stocked and well used, although older pupils say they have had little chance to use the information books for independent research.

198. The overall quality of the accommodation is good and provides an attractive setting for the teaching and learning process. The outside areas, which include a playing field, and grassed and paved areas, are well maintained and spacious. The school is clean and litter free and the general environment is enhanced by colourful displays of pupils' work, which pupils are proud to talk about.
199. The head is striving to ensure that careful and accurate budgeting is well linked to the schools' priorities for development. Together with subject co-ordinators and the governing body he ensures that economic and effective use is made of all new resources purchased. Overall, the school now gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

200. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under fives is appropriate to their needs, and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
201. All children now attend the nursery full time. Baseline and other assessments show that the attainment of children when they enter the nursery is below the expected level for children of that age. Baseline assessments carried out at the beginning of the reception class indicate that children make good progress and their attainment is now level with expectations for the local area, although still below national averages.
202. Children in both the nursery and reception classes get a good start to their school life and by the end of the reception class standards of achievement are good in all areas of learning.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

203. Children in both the nursery and reception classes make good progress in their language, literacy, and communication skills and their standards of achievement are good. Bilingual skills are well developed in all the classes.
204. In the nursery, most children speak clearly and confidently because they are given plenty to talk about. They are eager to tell a visitor about their activities. They listen well. They enjoy books and stories and confidently engage in early writing and drawing activities to record their views and ideas.
205. In the reception classes, most children talk expressively and ably retell a story from pictures. They make sensible suggestions about what is going on, giving their own opinions. They use appropriate adjectives to describe items in the pictures. They listen attentively.
206. Reception children have made a good start to reading. Many already have a small bank of known words and some good attempts were seen at word building. A similar number write their names independently and, with support, can form discernible letters and numbers in their writing.

Shortcomings

207. There are no important shortcomings but a small number of children in the nursery do not speak clearly and are not confident when speaking to visitors.

Personal and social development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

208. Children's good personal and social development is a notable feature in both the nursery and reception classes. This enables children to make good progress in this area and to attain good, often very good standards of achievement.
209. Children in all the early years' classes show a high degree of involvement in their activities and behave very well. The positive relationships observed enable them to be secure and happy in their learning. Personal hygiene skills are developing well.
210. In all classes, children readily share equipment and generally take turns well, co-operating in their play. The very good provision for a variety of exciting role play helps to nurture this, ensuring that children become confident and enthusiastic learners, making choices of activity and persevering at their tasks for long periods.
211. When nursery children move large pipes into position in the "builders' yard" they are very careful about personal safety.
212. Children in both the nursery and reception classes begin to sensitively examine human relationships and discuss feelings of love, friendship, happiness and sadness, and explore the need for rules. This contributes very well to their personal development.

Shortcomings

213. Although there are no important shortcomings, children in the early years have under developed multi-cultural knowledge and awareness.

Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

214. In both the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress with their mathematical development and standards of achievement are good.

Children are enthusiastic mathematicians and really enjoy counting and ordering numbers.

- 215. In the nursery, children count confidently to 10 in both English and Welsh. They identify numbers on a number line and successfully clap and tap how many. They indicate the tallest and shortest pile of bricks.
- 216. When they sequence things they do during the day, and sort items into day/night objects, they begin to learn about the passage of time. They create and can name patterns of colour, number and shapes.
- 217. In the reception classes, children build well on these skills, the majority counting well beyond 10 and adding on and subtracting confidently. In their stories they correctly match the size of characters to their garden tools and count out spoonfuls of ingredients they need for their cooking.
- 218. When they weigh and measure they show some understanding of heavy/light and tall/short. Their understanding of money is also developing well when they buy and give change in the class shop.

Shortcomings

- 219. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

- 220. Children in the nursery make good progress from a low baseline in this area of their learning because they are helped to become curious and inquisitive about the world around them. In the reception classes, they build well on skills already understood and standards of achievement are good.
- 221. Nursery children experience a moment of “awe and wonder” when they closely examine a butterfly that has landed on the flowers they have planted, ready to sell, in their “garden centre”.
- 222. Scientific skills are enhanced when they enjoy counting out, tasting and smelling the ingredients for their cooking. They observe good hygiene.
- 223. Investigative skills are developing well when they explore freezing and melting, and pushing and pulling.
- 224. They start to learn about the world around them when they carefully observe and record changes to the seasons and the weather.

- 225. In the reception classes, when they plant beans, peas, potatoes and other items, they observe them carefully and come to understand what they need to grow well.
- 226. When they construct a car for teddy, they investigate to see which car will travel the furthest down the ramp.
- 227. They sort items correctly into living/not living and into rough and smooth. They learn about change over time when they sequence events in their own lives from birth and learn "All about me".
- 228. Computer skills are developing well.
- 229. They recognise aspects of their locality and know many of the signs and symbols of Wales.

Shortcomings

- 230. There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

- 231. Children in all the early years' classes make good progress in this area of their development and standards of achievement are good overall. Of note is the good quality of the role-play observed, where children are encouraged to play creatively and expressively.
- 232. Children in the nursery sing songs and rhymes with great enthusiasm and gusto. They know many of the words in both English and Welsh and tap and clap, using various body parts to keep a steady beat.
- 233. Reception children carefully choose from a range of paper, plastic and other materials to create soft and loud songs to illustrate and accompany parts of their "Hungry Caterpillar" song.
- 234. In both the nursery and reception classes, children create pattern, print and weave, and create collage and models in 3 dimensions, such as bees and butterflies.
- 235. Colour mixing skills are starting to develop and paintings are bold and colourful. Drawings are very detailed, with some evidence of shading and smudging.

Shortcomings

236. Although there are no important shortcomings, sometimes children's creativity is limited when they are asked to colour, stick and cut within given lines prepared by the teacher. In these instances, children cannot fully express their own ideas and show the best of their creative skills.

Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

237. Children make good progress in developing their physical skills and standards of achievement are generally good. In both the nursery and reception classes fine dexterity skills are well developed. This enables children to manipulate blocks, pencils, brushes and other small tools and generally develop good hand/eye co-ordination.
238. In the nursery, most children move purposefully and with a good degree of control. They confidently move along a beam balance without support.
239. Reception children enjoy spontaneous movement and dance in the hall and demonstrate good spatial awareness. They stretch tall, curl small and find and hold a new space well. They move imaginatively and with pleasure and confidence.
240. They respond well to the rhythm of a tambourine and change direction to avoid obstacles. They show good co-ordination and control when they balance on two and four body parts.

Shortcomings

241. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematics

Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Good features

242. Pupils in key stage 1 quickly become familiar with number symbols and start to recognise sequences and patterns. They confidently undertake simple addition and subtraction sums and show a growing knowledge and recall of number bonds.

- 243. Pupils count to 100 and beyond in ones, twos, fives and tens. They recognise, name and order numbers correctly, with older pupils managing up to a hundred, and they are developing a good understanding of place value.
- 244. In year 2, pupils recognise the value of coins and calculate simple change when making purchases.
- 245. Most can identify a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes and make sensible use of standard and non-standard units of length and mass.
- 246. In key stage 2, pupils develop a good understanding of place value to 1,000 and beyond. They have a good recall of mathematical tables and are confident in computation using the four rules of number.
- 247. Pupils' knowledge and use of mental strategies are developing well.
- 248. Older pupils understand the relationship between fractions and decimals and can correctly state the equivalent values.
- 249. They can find or fix a position using co-ordinates, measure accurately using standard units and find the area or perimeter of rectangles. They recognise acute and obtuse angles and can measure these correctly with a protractor.
- 250. Pupils are developing a good vocabulary of mathematical terms.

Shortcomings

- 251. In key stage 1, pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge is underdeveloped.

Science

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

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

Good features

- 252. Across both key stages, pupils overall make good progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding of science.
- 253. By the end of key stage 1, pupils are beginning to show a good understanding of the concept of fair testing. They make predictions, a few with logical reasons, and enthusiastically carry out investigations with help. They include correct scientific vocabulary when presenting their findings in a variety of suitable ways, such as drawings, writing and tables, and sometimes using ICT.
- 254. By the end of key stage 1, pupils' understanding of physical forces is developing well. They describe different ways to move objects and are

beginning to understand, for example, how factors may affect the speed and distance that a toy boat may travel. Higher attaining pupils draw conclusions, such as 'the larger the sail, the faster the boat travels'.

255. In lower key stage 2, pupils generally have a good understanding of the relevant topics in the scheme of work. For instance, they recall the basic principles of electricity and magnetism. They talk about teeth, naming the different types, and how to look after them and can confidently discuss ideas about healthy eating. Overall, pupils make good use of the school environment for many of their investigations, for example, when looking at habitats and when classifying different plant life.
256. Throughout key stage 2, pupils make good progress in developing their practical skills and carry out experiments confidently. They can make sensible predictions, explain the need for fair testing and present their findings clearly. They generally record their work using worksheets, graphs and bar charts.
257. In Years 5 & 6, pupils have a good recall of knowledge gained from previous science work to underpin their investigations. Pupils are encouraged to use everyday problems to launch into scientific investigations. On such occasions, pupils use their problem solving skills effectively. For example, whilst investigating why objects fall to the ground at different speeds, pupils offered some very good reasons for their predictions and by the end of the lesson showed a very good understanding of the key concepts involved.

Shortcomings

258. There are no important shortcomings.

Art

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

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

Good features

259. Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the main art elements such as colour mixing, shading, line and tone. Work in 3 dimensions is of a particularly high quality across the school.
260. Pupils are proud and keen to discuss their artwork, which is attractively displayed around the school. Sketchbooks are well used by pupils across the school to practice and develop their art skills.
261. In key stage 1 pupils successfully explore the art elements of tone and colour mixing when studying the work of Van Gogh and after produce their own colourful work in the same style.

262. After working with a local artist they create very good quality landscape pictures with some creditable attempts at perspective.
263. Their mini-beast clay tiles are detailed, delicate, and intricate. They use small tools confidently to squash, roll, and squeeze the clay.
264. Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy their artwork and say that art is one of their favourite activities. They make good progress because they are so well motivated and keen to learn and overall standards of achievement are good with some outstanding work at the end of the key stage.
265. When they create a printing plate in the style of Aboriginal art, younger pupils show a good sense of pattern because they have experienced many chances to experiment with shade and pattern. They evaluate their work carefully and explain clearly why they choose certain tools and how effective they are.
266. After investigating and evaluating examples of Pop art, older pupils' comments are sensible and thoughtful, expressing lots of good ideas. Their pencil sketches of everyday household items are detailed and interesting and show evidence of shading and tone.
267. Pupils in years 5 and 6, in their study of "Art in the Valleys," are inspired by landmarks in the local community and the mining industry to create artwork from direct observation, digital photography and sketching from photographs. Their detailed drawings in pencil are of an exceptional quality.

Shortcomings

268. There are no important shortcomings.

Music

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

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

Good features

269. Standards of achievement in music are good across both key stages because pupils thoroughly enjoy their musical activities, and as a result, they learn well. They are keen musicians. The standard of singing across the school is often outstanding.
270. In key stage 1, pupils listen carefully to a piece of music that is typical of India and identify a number of instruments they can hear. Later they work well with a range of un-tuned instruments to create the soft sounds they have heard, illustrating the sun and the rain.

271. They practice different ways of striking and tapping to create the desired effect. They sing in English and Welsh with great enjoyment and enthusiasm. Singing is tuneful, with a good sense of rhythm and beat.
272. Younger pupils in key stage 2 represent a steady beat in their movements around the room. They maintain the beat while accommodating a change of tempo as the beat slows and speeds up.
273. Older pupils offer some sensible suggestions as to meaning of metre in music, and with practice, readily identify groups of 3, 4 and 5 beats and can explain the sequence of where they occur in the music. They represent these groupings in their own compositions, which they perform confidently to the rest of the class, accompanied by body and other percussion.
274. They evaluate each other's work thoughtfully.

Shortcomings

275. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical Education

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

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

Good features

276. In both key stages, pupils are developing good control of their body movements. They are very enthusiastic and work hard to improve their performance in all aspects of physical education.
277. Pupils make sensible and pertinent comments when appraising their own or other children's performances.
278. They listen and follow instructions very well and can sustain energetic activities over a long period. Their knowledge of the effect of exercise on their bodies is good and they are well aware of the benefits of regular exercise.
279. In key stage 1, pupils demonstrate good body control and balance when moving around the hall making high, medium, and low level shapes.
280. Their awareness and use of space is often good and they move appropriately to musical stimuli linked to the story of "The Rainbow Fish".
281. In key stage 2, pupils demonstrate good co-ordination, control and balance when moving and their hand and eye co-ordination is developing well through a variety of dribbling, receiving and striking activities.

282. Their games and athletic skills are also developing well. They recognise the need to move into space and to change speed and direction to pass an opponent and they also appreciate the need for co-operation in team games.
283. Pupils' gymnastic skills are of good quality. They select, practice and refine their movements to create their own sequence and collaborate well in pairs to share ideas.
284. Records show that the majority of pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in swimming skills
285. A range of extra-curricular activities and regular support from specialist agencies has a significant impact on raising pupils' skills and self-esteem.

Shortcomings

286. There are no significant shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The inspection findings recognise that we have worked hard to maintain high standards in both work and behaviour. All systems and strategies that we have in place to underpin our curricular provision and care and support of the children are seen as appropriate and effective.

The report confirms that we are achieving our aim of helping pupils to achieve well in a secure, caring and stimulating environment.

An action plan will be put into place to address the recommendations in the report and we are confident that we can address these aspects. Additionally, the governor's annual report will report on the progress we are making on the inspections recommendations.

The school would like to thank the inspection team for their professionalism throughout the week of the inspection.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Blaen-Y-Cwm C.P. School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Blaenafon Road, Brynawr, Blaenau Gwent
Postcode	NP23 4BR
Telephone number	01495 313524
Head teacher	Mr Roger Roberts
Date of appointment	1 st January 2007
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr John Hopkins Blaenau Gwent
Registered inspector	Mr Merfyn Douglas Jones
Dates of inspection	4 th – 7 th June 2007

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	26.5	31	35	35	39	39	43	41	289.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	11	6	14

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	21:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.3:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Autumn 2006	90.7%	90.3%	90.9%
Spring 2007	83.9%	85.0%	89.3%
Summer 2007	87.0%	86.8%	89.2%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	33%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2006			Number of pupils in Y2:					40
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	8	25	68	0	
		National	0	4	12	64	20	
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	8	33	55	5	
		National	0	4	14	56	26	
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	10	28	63	0	
		National	0	5	14	69	12	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	8	88	0	
		National	0	2	11	64	23	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	8	15	75	3	
		National	0	2	10	63	24	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	18	68	10	
		National	0	2	9	65	24	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	59%	In Wales	81%

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

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006							Number of pupils in Y6		49		
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	5	20	55	20
		National	0	0	1	0	1	4	15	47	32
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	59	21
		National	0	0	1	0	1	3	15	47	32
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	55	25
		National	0	0	1	0	0	2	11	51	35

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	71%	In the school	N/A
In Wales	74%	In Wales	N/A

- D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
- A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
- F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

A team of four inspectors, and a peer assessor, inspected the school over twelve inspector days.

The head teacher was the nominee and played a supportive and active role during the inspection.

Pre-inspection meetings were held with staff, the governing body and parents to discuss the life and work of the school.

Sixty-six questionnaires were completed and returned by parents, and carefully analysed by the inspection team.

During the inspection, discussions were held with the head teacher, teachers, support staff and pupils about their work and the life of the school.

Forty-eight lessons were observed.

Samples of pupils' work, practical and written, from across the ability range in each year group, were examined.

Pupils' behaviour was observed at various times during the school day.

Inspectors attended acts of daily worship.

Any documentation presented by the school prior to, and during the inspection, was analysed.

Post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and the governing body to discuss the outcomes of the inspection.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Merfyn Douglas Jones Registered Inspector	Key Questions 1, 2, 5 and 6 Subject: Mathematics
Mr Jeff Beecher Team Inspector	Key Question 3 and supporting key questions 2 and 4 Subject: Science
Mrs Kay Andrews Team Inspector	Key Question 4 and 7 Supporting key question 2 Subjects: Early Years, art and music
Mr Ted Tipper Lay Inspector	Supporting key questions 1, 3, 4 and 5
Mr Roger Roberts Nominee	Providing evidence and support
Mrs Paula Bugler Peer Assessor	Contributing to subjects and aspects.

The contractor was

Evenlode Education Ltd
Little Garth
St John's Close
Hawarden
Flintshire
CH5 3QJ

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, head teacher, members of staff, parents, other members of the community and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.