

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
THE SCHOOLS INSPECTIONS ACT 1996**

**BLAENFFOS COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL
BLAENFFOS
BONCATH
PEMBROKESHIRE
SA37 0HU**

School Number: 668/ 2224

Date of Inspection: 17 – 18 September 2002

By

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Registered Inspector WO 92/16768

Date: 19 November 2002

Under Estyn contract number T/60/02P

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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(KS) 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

Ysgol Gymunedol Blaenffos is a small rural school serving the agricultural areas of Blaenffos, Boncath and Capel Newydd in North Pembrokeshire. The area enjoys a rich historical and literary heritage and the school campus offers wonderful views of the Preseli hills.

There are currently 27 pupils between 4 and 11 of age on the school register representing the full range of abilities. Six per cent of them are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals and five pupils (18%) are designated as having special educational needs (SEN). Blaenffos is a Category A school, which means that Welsh is the main medium of teaching in Key Stage 1 (KS1), with English and Welsh being used in KS2. Some 60% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main spoken language, compared to the figure of 68% found in the Summer of 1997 at the time of the last inspection. According to the school, part of the area is relatively prosperous whilst the remainder is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.

The future of the school is under consideration by the Local Education Authority (LEA). As a result, staff contracts are temporary, including that of the headteacher.

The pupils begin their education at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday.

The school's aims and objectives are outlined in the prospectus and the School Development Plan (SDP) refers to several areas of focus, including raising standards in language and information and communications technology (ICT).

Targets are set on a whole school and individual pupil basis.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

- The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Personal and Social Development	Good
Mathematical Development	Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good
Physical Development	Good
Creative Development	Good

- In KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) and religious education are as follows:

	KS1	KS2
Welsh	Good	Good
English	-----	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
History	Good	Good
Geography	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Art	Good	Good
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	Good	Good
Religious education	Good	Good

- Only one pupil was of assessment age at the end of KS1 this year and it is not therefore appropriate to refer to any results. In 2001, 100% of pupils at the school attained Level 2 (L2) or above in the core subjects in the end of key stage NC assessments (Wales 81%; Pembrokeshire 79%). In 2000 the figure was again 100% (Wales 80%; Pembrokeshire 79%) and likewise in 1999 (Wales 78%; Pembrokeshire 78%).
- In KS2 this year, 79% of pupils at the school attained L4 or above, as determined by the task/test results in the core subjects. In 2001 the figure was 63% (Wales 68%; Pembrokeshire 70%); in 2000, the figure was 67% (Wales 63%; Pembrokeshire 67%) and in 1999 it was 100% (Wales 58%; Pembrokeshire 60%).
- The under-fives, together with the pupils in both key stages make good progress in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. They make satisfactory progress in ICT across the curriculum.
- The morning assemblies exude a homely and devotional atmosphere and pupils are given opportunities for reflection and participation. The teachers' presentations promote the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. The good relationship between staff and pupils means that the pupils are aware of the high expectations in terms of behaviour. The older and younger pupils interact well. Their levels of attendance are also good.
- The quality of teaching was very good in 16% of lessons observed; it was good in 48% and satisfactory in 36%. No instances of unsatisfactory teaching were observed during the inspection.

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- The arrangements for assessment, reporting and recording are good, although the reports for KS2 pupils do not currently treat Welsh and English as two separate subjects as is required. Whole school curriculum planning arrangements are satisfactory. The quality of long-term schemes of work is uneven. The mid and short term schemes also display shortcomings and as a result it is not apparent how the school ensures the development of skills and continuity and progression in pupils' learning experiences. The school does not have a policy for Personal and Social Education (PSE), although many of the key elements are promoted within the hidden curriculum, including global citizenship.
 - Good provision is made for pupils with special needs and they make sound progress according to their ability.
 - Overall, the quality of the support and guidance provided for pupils is very good. All members of staff are caring of the safety and personal welfare of pupils and the school is a very happy community. Although the school has produced a brief statement of policy on child protection, it is not sufficiently comprehensive to give clear guidance on how to respond to any allegations that might arise.
 - The school continues to familiarise itself with the processes relating to self-evaluation. A certain amount of monitoring work has been undertaken and this has been completed thoroughly, but thus far insufficient attention has been given to this matter. The SDP is presented under a number of recognised headings. It notes priorities for development within the current year, all of which are appropriate and clearly focussed on issues relating to raising standards. Nevertheless, the Plan is not a sufficiently comprehensive reflection of the school's position and its needs and the fact that it operated for a period of time without a development plan, together with the current lack of long-term priorities, are factors that hamper development.
 - An annual analysis is undertaken of SATs results, and the school makes every effort to ensure that there is no gap between the attainments of boys and girls.
 - The partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions are generally good. In the pre-inspection consultation, parents expressed overwhelming satisfaction with the level of communication between the school and pupils' homes. The parents are kept well informed about the life and work of the school through a regular flow of letters, contact books and the easy access to staff afforded to them at the beginning and end of the school day.
 - The headteacher and staff are totally conscientious and dedicated. Although the absence of the former headteacher through illness, together with the fact that current members of staff are employed on temporary contracts and the uncertainty about the future, have not adversely affected the pupils' achievements, they have contributed to a lack of long-term strategic thinking and planning. The administrative procedures and daily routines are all undertaken effectively. The length of the school day makes it difficult to conform to the requirements in respect of teaching time. Neither the prospectus nor the annual report of the governing body conforms fully to statutory requirements.
 - Since the last inspection, the school has made every effort to raise standards of achievement amongst the under-fives, together with standards in both key stages in

Welsh, English, mathematics, design and technology and physical education. Pupils are able to work independently of their teachers, although it was found over time that they are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their investigative skills. Arrangements for assessment and recording have been reviewed, but shortcomings in curriculum planning mean that assessment results are not achieving the greatest possible impact. Within the current SDP, the prioritised curricular developments are appropriately linked to financial issues. Nevertheless, certain shortcomings remain in terms of planning for development, reference to which has already been made elsewhere in this report. English is given appropriate prominence as a medium of instruction within the curriculum for KS2 pupils.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

- Of the lessons observed, pupils' standards of achievement were found to be good in 64% and satisfactory in 36%.
- The standards achieved by the under-fives are good in all six areas of learning.
- In KS1 and in KS2, standards of achievement are good in Welsh, mathematics, design and technology, history, art, music, physical education and religious education. English is introduced formally in KS2 and standards here are again good. Standards in science, information technology and geography are satisfactory in both key stages.
- Only one pupil was of assessment age at the end of KS1 this year and it is not therefore appropriate to refer to any results. In 2001, 100% of pupils at the school attained Level 2 (L2) or above in the core subjects in the end of key stage NC assessments (Wales 81%; Pembrokeshire 79%). In 2000 the figure was again 100% (Wales 80%; Pembrokeshire 79%) and likewise in 1999 (Wales 78%; Pembrokeshire 78%).
- In KS2 this year, 79% of pupils at the school attained L4 or above, as determined by the task/test results in the core subjects. In 2001 the figure was 63% (Wales 68%; Pembrokeshire 70%); in 2000 the figure was 67% (Wales 63%; Pembrokeshire 67%) and in 1999 it was 100% (Wales 58%; Pembrokeshire 60%).
- Over recent years, the school's performance in KS1 has been consistently within the highest quartile of comparable Welsh schools. In KS2, the performance has varied from the highest quartile to the lowest quartile.
- Over time, the progress made by boys and girls is broadly comparable.
- The school succeeds in meeting its targets.

3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum

- The under-fives make good progress in the application of their developing skills in early literacy and numeracy across the six areas of learning. The progress they make in the application of their ICT skills across the areas of learning is satisfactory.

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- In KS1 and in KS2, the pupils listen attentively to their teachers' presentations across the entire curriculum. They are able to express themselves confidently through the medium of Welsh and English. The opportunities given to the pupils to contribute through discussion have a significant impact on the development of their oral skills.
 - In Welsh in KS1 and in Welsh and English in KS2, pupils read well in a range of contexts across the curriculum. They appreciate reading as a source of information and pleasure.
 - Pupils' writing skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum in both key stages in Welsh and in KS2 in English are developing well.
 - In KS1 and in KS2, pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum.
 - The progress made by pupils in ICT across the curriculum in both key stages is satisfactory. Insufficient use is made of the medium as a cross-curricular tool.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The school succeeds well in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The relationship amongst pupils and between pupils and all members of the school staff is very good. Pupils are courteous to each other, their teachers, other staff and visitors.
- The morning assemblies exude a homely and devotional atmosphere and pupils are given opportunities for reflection and participation. The teachers' presentations promote the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Positive attitudes are consistently nurtured and pupils are encouraged to show respect to their peers, property and to the environment. The school has a policy on racism that provides guidance on showing respect to each other, irrespective of background.
- Welsh culture and heritage are given a prominent place in the life and work of the school. Appropriate attention is also given to nurturing an awareness of pupils from other cultures.
- Older pupils are happy to undertake various responsibilities such as caring for the younger pupils. With the support of parents, pupils contribute towards local and national charities.
- The school is an integral part of the local community and pupils take part in a range of activities arranged within the locality.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good.

- The relationship between staff and pupils ensures that pupils are aware of the high expectations in respect of behaviour. Pupils' behaviour responds positively to the family atmosphere that permeates the entire school. Older and younger pupils interact well with each other.
- Pupils are happy, courteous and conscientious. They respect adults, fellow pupils and the environment of the whole school.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and they exhibit positive attitudes towards learning. They listen attentively and respond without hesitation to their teachers. They are able to concentrate well and they work diligently at the tasks set for them, either in groups or individually. Pupils support each other and they work sensibly together in groups.
- The friendly relationships between pupils, together with the close supervision they receive, ensure that no bullying behaviour exists.

4.3 Attendance

Overall, levels of attendance are good.

- Levels of attendance in two of the last three terms are good. During the spring term of 2002, due to the small number of pupils on the school register, a period of extended sickness suffered by a few individual pupils had a marked effect on the percentages. Nevertheless, attendance levels for the whole school continued to be above 90%.
- There are no instances of unauthorised absences.
- All pupils are known to the staff and the close relationship that they have with the homes of pupils mean that they are able to effectively monitor absences.
- School registers conform to the requirements of National Assembly of Wales (NAW) Circular 3/99.
- Punctuality is good.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

- The quality of teaching was very good in 16% of lessons observed; it was good in 48% and satisfactory in 36%. No instances of unsatisfactory teaching were observed during the inspection.
- Evidence was found of good quality teaching across each of the classes.

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- The working environment is supportive of all pupils. This, together with the delightful inter-relationships that exist, has positive effect on pupils' achievements.
 - A good balance is achieved between whole-class presentations and group work. Classroom organisation enables the teachers to concentrate effectively on groups and individuals.
 - Effective use is made of resources, including in KS2, the multimedia white board.
 - The teachers listen carefully to the pupils, analysing their replies and responding positively to them. Suitable opportunities are also provided for discussion.
 - The tasks set are explained clearly and the work is undertaken smoothly and without undue delay.
 - There is occasionally a tendency to over-direct the pupils and there is insufficient planning for developing their independent investigative skills. Also, some of the tasks set are not sufficiently challenging.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

The arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting are good.

- The school has a comprehensive policy document that gives clear guidance for assessment, recording and reporting.
- The progress made by the under-fives is closely monitored. Appropriate records are kept of their development in the six areas of learning and the information contained in the reports to parents is clear and precise.
- Baseline assessments are undertaken on the four year olds in accordance with the requirements of the LEA and appropriate use is made of the results in order to provide early identification of pupils with specific needs.
- In both key stages, individual profiles are kept of each pupil that give a complete picture of the academic, personal and social development of the individual.
- A range of assessment techniques is used including standardised tests and discussions with pupils. This helps to raise standards.
- One aspect of the programme of study for the core subjects is assessed every half term. Levels are set for these tasks and the next steps to be taken by each pupil are also clearly identified.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and positive and constructive comments on the work produced are provided.

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- Targets are set for each pupil and the individual is expected to take responsibility for achieving his or her targets within a specific timescale.
 - The arrangements for the assessment of pupils with SEN are wholly appropriate.
 - Annual reports to parents conform to the statutory requirements with the exception of language in KS2. The reports do not currently treat Welsh and English as two separate subjects.

5.3 Curriculum

The school provides a curriculum that contains all NC subjects and religious education. Whole-school curriculum planning arrangements are satisfactory.

- A good range of experiences is provided for the under-fives, which give attention to the six areas of learning. The scheme of work is currently being revised.
- The school has policies for all subjects with the exception of art. These are useful documents.
- The quality of the long-term schemes of work is variable and the majority have not been updated to conform to the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The mid and short-term schemes also suffer from shortcomings and as a result it is not apparent how the school ensures the development of skills and continuity and progression in pupils' learning experiences.
- Homework is set regularly and it is monitored through the use of contact books. The homework reinforces and extends pupils' learning.
- The curriculum is enhanced by visits to several places of interest linked to the termly themes.
- Appropriate emphasis is placed on the Welsh dimension by means of themes and specific lessons in history, geography, art and craft.
- The school does not have a policy for PSE, although many of the key elements are promoted within the hidden curriculum, including global citizenship.
- The language policy of the LEA is reflected in the school's own language policy and pupils are able to understand and speak both languages by the age of 11.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

Overall, the quality of the support and guidance provided to pupils is very good.

- All members of staff are caring of the safety and personal welfare of pupils, and the school is a very happy community.

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- All members of the school staff, both teaching, administrative and support, know the pupils well. Pupils are appropriately supervised during lunch breaks and at play times.
 - Pupils are able to approach their teachers without any hesitation.
 - Equal opportunities are provided for all aspects of the life and work of the school.
 - The school has a number of appropriate policies relating to pupils' safety and welfare.
 - The headteacher is responsible for procedures relating to protecting children from abuse. Although the school has produced a brief statement of policy, it is not sufficiently comprehensive as to give clear guidance on how to respond to any allegations that might arise

5.5 Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- Five pupils are designated as having special needs. None are statemented. They are well provided for and they make sound progress according to their ability.
- The school's policy was revised recently to reflect the guidance contained in the 2002 Code of Practice.
- The headteacher is the co-ordinator and procedures are followed so as to provide for the early identification of the needs of individual pupils. Appropriate records are kept.
- The member of the governing body with designated responsibility for SEN is aware of the responsibilities related to this area.
- Teachers know their pupils well and overall the work they are given is appropriate to their needs.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are reviewed each term and parents are invited to school to discuss them. The targets they contain are clear and appropriate.
- Pupils are fully integrated into the life and work of the school.
- The governing body has allocated additional funding to support pupils with special needs. The quality of the support provided by the classroom assistant and the specialist teacher who visits the school each week is good.
- The relationships with parents are good and the support provided by the various external agencies is also good.

5.6 Partnerships with parents and community, schools and other institutions

The partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions are generally good.

- In the pre-inspection consultation, parents expressed overwhelming satisfaction with the level of communication between the school and pupils' homes. The parents are kept well informed about the life and work of the school through a regular flow of letters, contact books and the easy access to staff afforded to them at the beginning and end of the school

day. More formal opportunities are provided to discuss pupils' progress in an open evening at the end of the year.

- The home-school agreement conforms to statutory requirements.
- Parents respond positively to any request for assistance from the school. Several parents assist with tasks such as painting the school building and some individual parents provide valuable assistance with cricket coaching and preparing pupils for the Urdd eisteddfodau.
- Parents also respond well to the fund-raising activities arranged by Friends of Ysgol Blaenffos. These are social activities to which members of the local community are warmly welcomed.
- The school and individual pupils contribute to local festivals, including local religious celebrations. Local ministers of religion are regular visitors to the school and they contribute to the services of collective worship.
- There is some co-operation with the staff of local primary schools, such as the preparation of schemes of work and IT initiatives. The transfer arrangements for Year 6 (Y6) pupils to the local comprehensive school are well organised.

5.7 Partnership with industry

The relationship with industry is satisfactory.

- The school welcomes all contributions from local businesses when they relate to the current study themes. Local artists and representatives from craft centres have visited the school and pupils have benefited from the workshops held in art and pottery.
- A presentation given by an employee of a local haulage company and visits to the local port have enhanced pupils' awareness of the world of work.
- The school lacks a formal strategy to develop links with industry so as to enhance teaching and learning and to extend pupils' experiences.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

The school continues to familiarise itself with the processes relating to self-evaluation. The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory.

- A useful policy for self-evaluation was produced earlier this year, together with a programme for the evaluation of different elements of the provision. A certain amount of monitoring work has been completed and this has been done thoroughly, but thus far insufficient attention has been given to this matter.
- The SDP is presented under a number of recognised headings. It notes the priorities for development within the current year, all of which are appropriate and clearly focussed on

issues relating to raising standards. Nevertheless, the Plan is not a sufficiently comprehensive reflection of the school's position and its needs and the fact that it operated for a period time without a development plan, together with the lack of long-term priorities that currently exists, are factors that hamper development.

- An annual analysis is undertaken of SATs results and the school makes every effort to ensure that there is no gap between the attainments of boys and girls.
- In accordance with requirements, whole-school targets are set for the core subjects for a three-year period. These are based on the school's knowledge of its pupils and of what is expected of them.
- For some time, the school has set targets for individuals that are kept in mind through being available for reference within the covers of pupils' books.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

The quality of leadership and efficiency at the school is satisfactory

- The headteacher and staff are totally conscientious and dedicated.
- Although the absence through illness of the former headteacher, together with the fact that current members of staff are employed on temporary contracts and the uncertainty about the future, have not adversely affected the achievements of the pupils, they have contributed to a lack of long-term strategic thinking and planning.
- The administrative procedures and daily routines are all quietly effective.
- The membership of the governing body reflects a wide and useful range of experience and all members are supportive of the school. Individual governors are responsible for overseeing curriculum subjects and they keep in close contact with the school. They also receive regular reports from the headteacher.
- The majority of current policies provide clear guidance and direction.
- The school does not have a policy on issues of sustainability, but it has an understanding of its responsibilities in this respect.
- The headteacher and governors keep a close eye on the working budget from month to month. The school's financial position is fairly tight and deficits have been incurred in recent years. There is willingness to vire funds from one budget heading to another and the available funding is used prudently.
- Several sub-committees have been established, and they meet as and when required.
- Good use is made of the LEA's in-service training (INSET) programme for governors.
- The practice of arranging explanatory sessions on the curriculum for parents, such as in the case of numeracy, is praiseworthy.
- The risk assessment of buildings and equipment, together with the fire risk assessment conducted earlier this year, were thoroughly undertaken.

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- The length of the school day makes it difficult to conform to the requirements in respect of teaching time. The time allocated for some of the breaks during the day is limited and difficult to administer.
 - Neither the prospectus nor the annual report of the governing body fully conforms to statutory requirements.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- The school employs two full-time teachers. The temporary headteacher was appointed to her post in September 1999 and the assistant teacher, who is also employed on a temporary contract, has also been in post since September 1999. The headteacher is released for a period of 0.1 of a week to undertake administrative duties. The teachers possess the necessary qualifications to teach the age ranges in their care.
- The teachers have attended an appropriate range of INSET courses and they and the school in general have benefited from their attendance.
- The athrawes fro, the SEN teacher and the music peripatetic teacher who visit the school all make a good contribution to the educational development of the pupils in their care.
- The classroom assistant treats the pupils in a highly caring and sensitive manner.
- The cleaner and members of staff who undertake supervisory duties during the lunch break contribute inconspicuously but effectively to the smooth everyday running of the school.
- Overall, the buildings are in a satisfactory condition and they are kept particularly clean. The schoolhouse is the subject of some concern to the governing body, as evidenced by the ongoing correspondence with the LEA. The entrance through the school gate and to the cabin located on the yard is difficult for disabled persons.
- Overall, the school has a satisfactory supply of resources to teach the NC. The Friends of the School contribute generously towards the provision of additional resources for pupils.
- The school makes good use of the leisure centre at Crymych in order to provide physical education experiences for all pupils.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. They are provided with a balanced curriculum and the standards achieved in the six areas are good.

Standards of achievement in language, literacy and communication skills are good.

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- The children listen well to stories and they are happy to respond to questions at their expected level of maturity. The learners gradually get a grasp of and come to use the Welsh language.
 - The older children are able to use simple vocabulary and sentence patterns with ease and they can talk about their experiences and their involvement in classroom activities freely and confidently.
 - They understand that the printed word conveys meaning and they come to recognise the letters of the alphabet. Many of the most able children come to read the early books confidently and with meaning.
 - They come to be able to correctly form letters and after a period of underwriting they are able to write simple sentences with a fair measure of independence.

The children's mathematical development is good.

- The children are able to count up to 20 and can also add and subtract numbers up to 10. They are able to link simple numbers to objects and can recognise shapes such as circles, triangles and squares.
- They understand many of the concepts related to measurements such as largest/smallest, heavy/light, longest/shortest and full/empty. They recognise odd and even numbers up to 10.

The children's personal and social development is good.

- The children settle in quickly at school. They learn to share and to play together and to learn to wait their turn when playing games.
- They behave well and are always courteous in their involvement with each other.

The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good.

- They recognise farm animals and are able to say what cows and sheep produce.
- They are able to talk about their experiences when making butter and sandwiches and can talk in general terms about dyeing wool.
- They have an understanding of the life cycle of a butterfly and can talk about the differences between Brynblodau farm in the present and past.
- They are able to talk about bees producing honey and about their experiment with cress.
- They use computers to supplement their classroom activities.

The children's physical development is good.

- They are able to move about confidently inside and outside the school. They can walk, run and jump as and when required.
- They have good control of the beanbags when throwing and catching them.
- They are able to use pencils, crayons and scissors and can complete jigsaws with great dexterity.

The children's creative development is generally good.

- The children are able to sing simple songs and rhymes with a great deal of enjoyment.
- They are also able to create pictures and models using paint, crayons and clay.
- They are able to engage in role-play activities in the Wendy house/café.

Welsh

Standards of achievement in oracy, reading and writing are good in both key stages.

Good features.

- Pupils in both key stages listen well to teachers' presentations and the most able display confidence when responding orally in group and whole-class discussions. Many of the most able pupils are able to express opinions and to engage in discussion with a fair degree of confidence.
- In KS1, the pupils display an understanding of basic reading skills and there are examples in Y2 of pupils reading clearly and expressively. The most able pupils can talk about the content of the story and can offer brief comments about the characters.
- In KS2, the majority of pupils develop into more independent readers and the most able can read accurately and with expression and fluency. They exhibit the ability to use dictionaries and reference books to look for information. Good examples were seen of this in their individual project books where they had collated information about their favourite animal from a variety of sources.
- In KS1, pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of different purposes. The most able pupils can produce work of a high standard using a variety of vocabulary and sentence patterns. They make regular use of basic punctuation.
- In KS2, pupils write regularly in a range of different formats including poetry. The most able pupils produce extended pieces of imaginative and creative writing. From time to time they make appropriate use of the word processor to produce a final copy.
- Overall standards of handwriting and presentation of work are good.

Shortcomings

- In KS2, the reading range of some of the less able pupils is limited and occasionally they have difficulties in reading unfamiliar words.

English

English is introduced formally at the beginning of KS2 and overall pupils' standards in oracy, reading and writing are good.

Good features

- Pupils' listening and speaking skills are developing well and they are happy to contribute to class discussions with enthusiasm and interest.
- In reading, pupils achieve varying degrees of fluency and expression and the most able can read confidently, displaying an understanding of what they have read. They read a good range of fiction and the most able can express opinions about the content of the book.
- In their written work, the majority of pupils make good progress in terms of content and accuracy. They exhibit an increasing ability to spell more correctly, to punctuate and to

make appropriate use of paragraphs. The most able can write extended pieces of creative writing, making good use of their imagination. They enjoy poetry and their own poems on the jungle are full of wonderful imagery and similes.

Shortcomings

- Some of the less able pupils have difficulty in reading fluently and expressively.

Mathematics

Pupils' standards of achievement are good in KS1 and in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils have a good awareness of number patterns and their understanding of place value is developing. They can correctly calculate addition and subtraction problems.
- Their mathematical vocabulary is developing well.
- They can name a range of two-dimensional shapes and can also describe some of their characteristics.
- They are beginning to develop their understanding of simple fractions.
- They are able to correctly collect data and to transfer it to a simple bar graph.
- Their previous work shows that pupils have a clear grasp of reading the time to the hour, half hour and quarter hour.
- In KS2, pupils use different strategies to handle numbers successfully.
- The majority are able to use their understanding of money to correctly solve everyday problems.
- They know that decimal, fractional and percentage forms can be of equivalent value.
- Their previous work shows that they have a good understanding of work on shape and measurement.

Shortcomings

- On the inspection of pupils' work over a period of time, it was found that their use of ICT skills in mathematics has not been developed sufficiently.

Science

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, by toasting bread, the pupils' understanding of materials changing is developing appropriately.
- They use correct terminology to describe what they have seen.
- They are able to classify living and non-living things into categories correctly.
- They know that some animals hibernate through the winter.

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- By studying the life cycle of a caterpillar, they understand that animals grow.
 - Their previous work on a survey of small creatures seen on the schoolyard, together with the record of their work kept on the computer, was completed by pupils to a good standard.
 - In KS2, pupils' knowledge of materials and their characteristics are developing satisfactorily. They are able to correctly classify certain materials into categories of solids, liquids and gases.
 - Their understanding of green plants as organisms is developing satisfactorily.
 - They possess a good range of facts about the animals of the rainforest. They know of the threats to wildlife and of the importance of protecting them.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' skills of scientific investigation are under-developed.
- They do not make sufficient use of ICT to support their scientific activities.

Design and technology

Standards are good in KS1. No lessons were observed in KS2, but on the basis of discussions with pupils and inspection of their work, it was adjudged that standards are also good in this key stage.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils have the ability to exchange and to discuss ideas and to consider how they might be developed.
- With the assistance of their teacher, their investigations into different types of biscuits are thorough and they extend their knowledge and understanding of various ingredients.
- They know of the importance of hygiene when handling foodstuffs.
- They are able to discuss the steps taken to accurately produce clay animals and can also undertake simple evaluations of their work. The models produced are of good quality.
- Their previous work completed on sandwiches is of a high standard.
- In KS2, pupils have effectively collected information before they set about designing masks.
- Their designs are of good quality and are clearly labelled.
- They use a good range of materials in their projects. They take pride in their finished products.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

Pupils' standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and in KS2.

Good features

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- In KS1, pupils are able to make quite effective use of the computer for word processing purposes.
 - They are able to work independently in front of the screen and they display good mouse control skills.
 - They are beginning to record data in graphical form.
 - Their previous work shows that pupils have used the computer to design effective posters on the importance of collecting refuse and recycling materials.
 - They have used an art package to create colourful pictures of butterflies.
 - In KS2, the pupils are able to make good use of the word processor to draft and present their work.
 - Some pupils know how to import images from various sources to enhance the presentation of their written work.
 - Some use is made of CD-ROMs and the Internet to search for information.
 - They undertake some graphical and data handling work.

Shortcomings

- The pupils do not develop their ability in a sufficiently wide range of ICT skills.
- They do not make sufficient use of computers as a cross-curricular tool.

History

Pupils' standards of achievement are good in KS1 and in KS2.

Good features

- Early in CA1, pupils develop a good awareness of chronology. They are able to place the diary of a sheep farmer in correct chronological order and they also make correct use of time-related terminology.
- They take great interest in historical artefacts and are anxious to express their opinions about them.
- By looking at and interpreting old photographs, they have a firm grasp of how farming has changed over time. They are able to correctly identify the main differences.
- In KS2, the work undertaken by pupils builds effectively on what they learned in the earlier key stage.
- They have begun to trace the history of castles throughout the ages and know of some of the developments in building techniques.
- The work completed recently on life in the age of Beca is thorough. Pupils are knowledgeable about living conditions during the period in question, including the contrast between rich and poor.

Shortcomings

- There is little evidence that pupils use ICT to facilitate their historical investigations.

Geography

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils understand and use some simple geographical terms correctly.
- They are beginning to develop their idea of location. They are able to follow directions and to correctly place labels on a map and can also use simple co-ordinates.
- They have a rough idea of the location of Blaenffos on a map of Wales.
- In KS2, they keep daily temperature records and they recognise some of the main symbols relating to weather.
- They understand terms such as upland and lowland in the context of the landscape of Pembrokeshire.
- They possess factual information about the Antarctic, and they also know the names of the oceans of the world.
- They have a basic knowledge of a contrasting area in India.
- Through their study of the rainforest, the pupils come to appreciate the importance of sustainable development.

Shortcomings

- Overall, pupils' geographical investigative skills have not developed sufficiently.
- They do not make sufficient use of ICT to convey and facilitate their work in geography.
- The study undertaken by the older pupils of contrasting areas is somewhat superficial and their work on recording the weather is not sufficiently extensive.

Art

Pupils' standards of achievement are good in KS1 and in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 use an appropriate range of various media to produce good quality paintings and drawings.
- They have an awareness of the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh and Acinboldo and they are able produce good quality reproductions of the works of these artists.
- They are able mix colours with ease and when using pastels to paint a picture of a fruit bowl, they are aware of the effect of shade on the object. Their observational skills are developing effectively.
- In KS2, pupils' skills are further developed by means of the experience of working and experimenting with various media.
- Their reproductions of the work of Rousseau are very effective and when studying one of the works of Cézanne they display their observational skills at their very best. They are

fully aware of the visual language of art and of the meaning of colour, tone, line and texture.

- Their three-dimensional models, their decoupage, and their fabric painting are all very effective and their work is attractively displayed throughout the school. Pupils greatly enjoy talking about their work.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils know a number of songs and they sing them with enjoyment and pleasure. Their tonality is good and their pronunciation is clear.
- Pupils in KS1 are able to name a number of percussion instruments and can explain how they are played. They are able to make good choices of instruments in order to convey the sound of rain, and can offer opinions as to their suitability. They can maintain rhythm when following the music.
- In KS2, pupils have created their own instruments and they exhibit significant invention when producing sounds to convey the sounds of wind, rain, sleet and thunder. They display great maturity in their discussion of the effectiveness of the sounds they have recorded.
- Pupils learn to play the recorder and as a result they come to be able to read music.
- They are given opportunities to compose music and also to evaluate the music of famous composers such as Vivaldi and Saint Saens.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical education

During the educational year, the school offers a full programme of physical education lessons. It avails itself of the facilities available at the leisure centre at Crymych to develop pupils' skills in this respect.

During the inspection, two games lessons were observed – one in each KS. Standards of achievement in both key stages are good.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 make appropriate use of the space available to them during the warm-up session as well as in the main activity. They are able to walk, run and change direction, and they exhibit good body control. They can throw, aim and catch a ball effectively.

They are aware of the importance of keeping an eye on the ball and their hand to eye co-ordination is developing well.

- In KS2, pupils' ball dribbling and kicking skills are developing well. The majority understand the basics of ball control and the most confident pupils exhibit good ball control when dribbling, aiming and kicking. They are able to devise simple games to practise their skills. They are also aware that performances must be evaluated and improved upon.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils know several stories from the Bible. They know of the Christian festivals and are able to discuss the events of the first Christmas and the significance of Easter.
- They can refer to local places of worship and know that people attend them on Sundays. They have an understanding of the function of prayer and of the purpose of the services held at the school. Their awareness of values such as friendship and kindness to others is developing well.
- In KS2, pupils are able to talk at greater length about the main Christian festivals and they know that the Bible is a sacred book to Christians and they can talk about several characters found in the stories of the New Testament and in the Old Testament.
- They are aware that religions other than Christianity are practised in Wales today.
- They are aware of the function of prayer and they prepare their own prayers to be read in the morning services.

Shortcomings

- Some of the pupils have an uncertain understanding of other world religions.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

The report produced following the last inspection held in the Summer Term of 1997 identified the following key issues for action.

- raising standards in those subjects found to be satisfactory;
- nurture pupils' sense of innovation and their ability to work independently so that they are able to work for longer periods without the support of teachers;

-
- ensure that the detailed assessment and recording methods developed have a greater impact on the process of planning for the range of age and ability found in both classes;
 - prepare a detailed and prioritised school development plan that links curricular developments with financial considerations;
 - increase the use made of English as a medium of teaching in KS2.

Since the last inspection, the school has made every effort to raise standards of achievement amongst the under-fives, together with standards in both key stages in Welsh, English, mathematics, design and technology and physical education. Pupils are able to work independently of their teachers, although it was found over time that they are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their investigative skills. Arrangements for assessment and recording have been reviewed, but shortcomings in curriculum planning mean that assessment results are not achieving the greatest possible impact. Within the present SDP, the prioritised curricular developments are appropriately linked to financial issues. Nevertheless, certain shortcomings remain in terms of planning for development, reference to which has already been made earlier in this report. English is given appropriate prominence as a medium of instruction within the curriculum for KS2 pupils.

8.2 Key issues for action

There is a need to:

- continue with the efforts to raise standards found to be satisfactory, including paying particular attention to the need to more effectively develop pupils' investigative skills, particularly so in science, and to make better use of ICT as a cross-curricular tool;
- ensure that curriculum plans offer better guidance for the various years and in respect of the ability ranges found in individual year groups;
- strengthen the SDP so that it more fully reflects the school's current needs and position and so that it contains priorities beyond the current year end;
- ensure that the school's programme for self-evaluation is implemented without delay;
- prepare a policy for PSE, and offer greater guidance within the existing document on child protection;
- ensure that the school prospectus, the reports on KS2 pupils for parents and the annual report of the governing body all fully satisfy the requirements of NAW circulars.

APPENDIX

A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Blaenffos
School type	Community Primary School
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Address of school	Blaenffos Boncath Pembrokeshire.
Post-Code	SA37 0HU
Telephone Number	(01239) 841469
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Jones (Temporary)
Date of appointment	September 1999
Chair of Governors / Appropriate Authority	Mr Tudor Harries
Registered Inspector	Mr D M Cray
Dates of inspection	17 –18 September 2002

B School data and indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils		5	1	4	1	4	8	4	27

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	1	2.1

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	12.8:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	13.5
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.05:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
1 Spring	87.1%	87.7%	92.2%	90.7%
2 Summer	97.0%	92.2%	96.5%	95.9%
3 Autumn	97.2%	96.5%	97.1%	97%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	6%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	0

C. Results of National Curriculum assessments.

END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2002	Number of pupils in Y2: 1
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was fewer than five, summary information is not included.	

END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2002

National Curriculum Assessments KS 2 Results: 2002							Number of pupils in Y6: 6						
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher Assessment	School							17		83		
		National					1	1	6	19	48	25	
	Test/Task	School							17		83		
		National		2	1	1			5	14	47	30	
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School							17	17	17	49	
		National	1					1	4	24	49	21	
	Task/Test	School							17	17	17	49	
		National	1	2		1			3	22	48	23	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School								17	83		
		National						1	4	20	47	28	
	Task/Test	School								17	83		
		National		2	1	1			4	18	42	32	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School								17	83		
		National	1						3	15	52	29	
	Task/Test	School								17	66	17	
		National		2		1			2	13	51	31	

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:	79%	In the school:	79%
In Wales:	68%	In Wales:	68%

- D Excepted or disapplied under Sections 364 or 365 of the Education Act 1996.
A Pupils who have failed to register a level due to absence.
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.
B Pupils not entered for the tests because they are working outside the set levels of the tests.
W Pupils who are working towards level 1.

D. The evidence base of the inspection

- The team of three inspectors inspected work in all classes. Between them they spend five full days at the school;
- pre-inspection meetings were held with governors, staff and parents;
- a range of documentation produced by the school was examined, including examples of work by the pupils across the curriculum in the early years and the two key stages;
- twenty seven lessons or sessions were observed;
- morning assemblies were attended;
- pupils were listened to reading and were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum;
- school registers were inspected;
- discussions were held with the headteacher and school staff relating to curricular and management matters;
- minutes of governors' and staff meetings were examined as well as documents relating to the school's financial matters;
- pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school, and during breaks;
- eleven parents were present at the pre-inspection meeting and 17 (81%) questionnaires were returned;
- a post-inspection meeting was held with the staff and governing body.

E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr D M Cray	RgI	1; 2; 3.1; 3.2; 5.1; 5.5; 6.1; 6.2; 8.1; 8.2	Mathematics; science; design and technology; information technology; history; geography.
Miss B J H Davies	Team	4.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 6.3;	The early years; Welsh; English; art; music; physical education; religious education.
Mr JE James	Lay	4.2; 4.3; 5.6; 5.7	

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