

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

***BODNANT INFANT SCHOOL
MARINE ROAD
PRESTATYN***

School Number: 663-2034

Date of Inspection: 14-17 January 2002

by

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Registered Inspector

Date: 18 March 2002

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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.

CONTENTS

1. CONTEXT	1
THE SCHOOL AND ITS PRIORITIES	1
2. MAIN FINDINGS	1
THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT	1
3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	4
3.1 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	4
3.2 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN KEY SKILLS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM.....	5
4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL	6
4.1 PUPILS’ SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	6
4.2 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES	7
4.3 ATTENDANCE	7
5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION	8
5.1 TEACHING	8
5.2 ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING	10
5.3 CURRICULUM	10
5.4 SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PUPILS’ WELFARE.....	12
5.5 PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SEN	13
5.6 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS	13
5.7 PARTNERSHIP WITH INDUSTRY	15
6. MANAGEMENT	15
6.1 QUALITY OF SELF-EVALUATION AND PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT	15
6.2 LEADERSHIP AND EFFICIENCY	16
7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	18
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	18
PROVISION FOR THE UNDER-FIVES	18
ENGLISH	21
MATHEMATICS	22
SCIENCE.....	22
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY	24
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	24
HISTORY	25
GEOGRAPHY	25
ART	26
MUSIC	27
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	27
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.....	28
8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	29
8.1 PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION.....	29
8.2 KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION	30
APPENDIX	31
A. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL	31
B. SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	31
C. RESULTS OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS AND PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS	32
D. THE EVIDENCE BASE OF THE INSPECTION	32
E. COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSPECTION TEAM	33

1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Bodnant Infant School is situated in Prestatyn, a seaside town in Denbighshire. It draws the vast majority of its pupils from the immediate area surrounding the school. There are currently 225 pupils on roll in full-time education. Additionally, there are 60 children who attend the nursery part-time. The pupils represent the full range of academic abilities and social backgrounds. Most pupils enter the nursery with social and mathematical skills that are well below average. Their language skills are poor, many have speech and language difficulties. Most pupils transfer to the reception classes in the year they will become five to begin their full-time education. Pupils from the nursery and from elsewhere enter the reception classes with personal, social and mathematical skills that are overall below average. A significant minority have well below average language skills. Twenty-seven per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are 29 per cent of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN). All pupils speak English as their first language. Pupils learn to speak Welsh as a second language in school.

The school was last inspected in April 1997.

The main aim of the school is that pupils come first and are part of a 'Family in School'. The school is working towards becoming an Early Excellence Centre (EEC). These centres bring together high quality early learning, childcare and family support services for the children and parents who need them. They act as catalysts for the innovation and development of good practice and ideas, and help to train others in good practice. The school has many good features and some that are outstanding that support this aim. The governors are working hard to improve the accommodation. The main area that the school has been working to improve this year is the quality of pupils' writing.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

Bodnant Infant School is a good school with some outstanding features. There is very good improvement in the standards and the quality of education since the previous inspection in April 1997.

- Overall the standards of achievement are good. In the lessons observed, 19 per cent were very good; 60 per cent were good and the remaining 21 per cent were satisfactory.
- The overall quality of provision for the pupils in the nursery is very good and it is good in the reception classes. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Very good	Good
Personal and social development	Very good	Very good
Mathematical development	Very good	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Very good	Good
Physical development	Very good	Good

Creative development	Very good	Good
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- Pupils' standards of achievement in Key Stage (KS)1 in the different subjects of the National Curriculum are as follows:

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

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection when standards in the majority of subjects were judged to be satisfactory.
- In the 2001 NC tests and assessments for pupils in KS1, pupils achieved well at the expected level 2 in reading and mathematics compared with all other pupils. In reading, the pupils exceeded the national results by eight per cent in reading and five per cent in mathematics. In science, their achievement almost matched the national standard. In writing however, the pupils achieved 23 per cent lower than the national standard. This is a particular focus for school improvement this year.
- In comparison with pupils' standards of achievement in schools within similar contexts, the pupils' performance overall was above average.
- In work across the curriculum, pupils achieve good standards in reading, listening, numeracy and information technology. Standards are satisfactory in writing and speaking skills. Pupils do not write enough at length for a variety of purposes and audiences or use sufficient adventurous vocabulary. Pupils do not speak fluently at length about their work.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good and a strength of the school. Pupils are taught well to reflect on their own lives and those of others around them. Pupils are taught well the difference between right and wrong. There are well-planned opportunities which contribute to pupils' social development and they respect the traditions and cultures of others. There is very good improvement since the last inspection for pupils to use their initiative.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils behave well, sometimes very well. They have good attitudes to learning which are reflected in their enjoyment in school activities. Pupils are happy, lively and confident learners.
- Attendance is good. Expectations are clearly communicated to parents for good attendance. Registration is efficient and fully computerised and is very well monitored. Efficient procedures promote a good start to the school day. There have been no exclusions. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

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- The quality of teaching is good. In 19 per cent it is very good, in 60 per cent it is good and in the remaining 21 per cent it is satisfactory. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection, where there was a lower proportion of very good teaching and some lessons had some unsatisfactory features.
 - In the best teaching, clear objectives are shared with pupils. Learning is matched well to the needs of the pupils and the pace of learning is brisk. An effective plenary consolidates pupils' knowledge and understanding. Most of the best teaching was observed in the nursery and some Year (Y)2 classes where it was very good. When teaching is satisfactory, some introductions led by teachers were too long, slowing the pace of learning or some work was not matched as well as it could be to the individual needs of the pupils. There is a lack of opportunity for pupils to write at length which is limited by the worksheets they complete. The closed questions often asked in lessons, demanding one or two words as an answer, prevents pupils from speaking at length.
 - The quality of assessment, recording and reporting on pupils' progress and achievement is very good. The staff continuously make very good use of their assessments of pupils' work to raise the standards achieved by the pupils. Pupils are involved in the assessments of their work. There are very good procedures for evaluating pupils' progress, recording it and setting targets for improvement. Parents are very well informed of their children's progress.
 - The school provides a balanced, relevant and rich curriculum which meets the statutory requirements for teaching religious education and all the subjects of the NC. The pupils' creativity in subjects such as art and design and technology has improved significantly since the last inspection.
 - The curriculum for children under the age of five is very good. It is based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes and leads into the NC programmes of study.
 - The quality of the support, guidance and concern for pupils' welfare is very good with many outstanding features. There is a very successfully implemented policy for social inclusion. The school successfully promotes the personal development and welfare of each child.
 - There is very good provision for pupils with SEN. The Code of Practice is fully implemented and there is good liaison with parents and outside agencies to give these pupils maximum support. They make good progress on their individual targets and achieve well.
 - The school has a very good partnership with parents and the community, local schools and a range of external agencies. A significant and notable feature is the significant number of parents and voluntary helpers from the community who provide daily support in the classrooms. The infant school community and the active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) raises large sums of money from fund-raising and social events each year for both the infant and junior schools. The school is fully involved in community life and makes a good contribution to local events. There are good links with the local churches, the clergy of which regularly visit the school and take assemblies. The school is a focal point for the community and many parents have benefited from the advice and help of the staff or from attending basic skills courses for literacy, numeracy and information technology. Parents appreciate the response of the school in meeting their needs, in day care, for example, for children from two and a half years, or the before and after school clubs.

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- The partnership with industry is very good. Local businesses and industries provide very good support by fundraising and donations. The local services are regular visitors to the school. This benefits the children in school as they learn about the work of people in the community and it also benefits the parents as regular surgeries and workshops are held to give help and advice to parents.
 - The school constantly seeks to move forward and the quality of self-evaluation is very good. There are very good strategies in place for continuous assessment and improvement.
 - The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. The success of the school is largely due to the hard work of all involved in its development but primarily because the aims and values of the school are shared and supported by the staff, pupils, governors and the community. Central to the ethos of the school is that the children come first. The headteacher is both diligent and tenacious in seeking improvement and moving the school towards developing into a centre for early years care and education.
 - The knowledgeable governing body is very supportive and takes carefully considered financial decisions and seek best value for money before committing to expenditure. The finances are efficiently managed and the School Business Plan is correctly centred on raising standards of achievement and meeting the needs of the pupils and the community. The school gives very good value for money.
 - Good use is made of the very good learning resources to help pupils learn. The support staff and voluntary helpers and parents who support individual pupils and small groups of pupils make a significant contribution to their learning.
 - The quality of the accommodation overall is unsatisfactory. The improvement of the accommodation remains a key issue from the previous inspection despite the best efforts of the governing body to resolve these issues.
 - The school is cramped and hinders the implementation of the curriculum. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Pupils cannot work on a large scale in art or design and technology for example. In the nursery, the development of pupils' physical skills in skipping, balancing and throwing and catching are limited by inclement weather. The hall or 'canteen' is some distance from the main building and valuable teaching time is lost, as reception pupils have to cross the playground to reach it. The playground has rough and uneven surfaces which pose a risk to the health and safety of the pupils especially when they have no option but to step in puddles in wet weather before entering a mobile classroom.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

From the observations of all classes, standards of achievement were judged to be very good in 12 per cent, good in 67 per cent and satisfactory in 21 per cent of lessons.

- The educational provision for the under-fives successfully promotes the nationally expected Desirable Learning Outcomes. Standards overall are very good in the nursery and good in the reception classes. In the nursery, the pupils achieve very good standards in language, literacy and communication skills, personal and social

development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. In the reception classes, pupils' achievement is very good in their personal and social development. In the other areas of learning they achieve good standards in the reception classes.

- In KS1, standards are good in Welsh, mathematics, science, design and technology; information technology, history, geography, art, music, physical education and religious education. Standards in English overall are satisfactory. Listening and reading skills are good. In writing and speaking skills, achievement is satisfactory. Writing is a particular focus in the school for improvement.
- Compared with all schools nationally, the pupils achieve well in the 2001 national tests to gain the expected level 2 in reading, and mathematics where the proportion achieving the expected level is above the national levels. However, in writing, the proportion is well below average.
- In recent years, the school has improved its performance and has moved from the medium to the upper quartile in comparison with schools in similar contexts. There has been some variation in results. Last year the results were lower because the proportion of pupils with SEN in the group taking the tests were higher than in previous years. This adversely affected the overall percentage achieved by the group of pupils who took the tests. The overall attainments of the pupils taking the tests is below average. Most of the pupils have attainments which are average or below average. There are few higher attaining pupils.
- The school takes great care to set challenging but achievable targets for pupils. Those set for English and mathematics in 2001 were met and exceeded.

3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum

The standards achieved by the pupils are good in listening and reading, numeracy and information technology. They are satisfactory in speaking and writing.

- Pupils answer well in discussions to the teachers' questions. When asked, or prompted, they speak at length about their work. However, opportunities in lessons for speaking are limited when the teachers' questioning demands a one-word answer. In the best lessons, in mathematics, for instance, teachers ask pupils to explain their thinking. This helps pupils to organise their thoughts and solve problems and they explain their thinking fluently and rationally.
- Pupils listen well. They follow instructions accurately and have a good understanding of what they are asked to do. For instance, during lessons, they often concentrate for long periods of time and respond well to the teachers in class and group discussions.
- Pupils read well. They enjoy looking at books and talk enthusiastically about their favourite stories and characters. They read worksheets in a number of subjects and follow their instructions correctly. Pupils use books in their classrooms to research their topics and understand the differences between fiction and non-fiction books. However, the central library is underused to develop pupils' library skills as it is situated in the main building. Pupils in the mobile classrooms have limited access to the library during lesson times. This limits their library skills to a satisfactory level.
- Pupils' writing is satisfactory. Their writing is generally satisfactorily presented, evenly sized and spaced. Pupils' spelling and punctuation is of a good standard. However, they do not consistently practise their writing for a range of purposes and

audiences across the curriculum. The use of worksheets often excludes pupils from writing their own accounts. Their use of imaginative and adventurous vocabulary is not well-developed and their achievement is not as good in writing compared with reading.

- Numeracy skills are good across the curriculum. They feature well in pupils' science, geography and information technology work as they construct graphs, tables and charts to record findings of experiments and their favourite foods. They find places on maps and use a programmable floor robot to change directions along a given path.
- Pupils use information technology well to support other subjects and achieve good standards. For instance, in English, pupils use simple language programs to help them with reading skills. However the computers are not used frequently to help pupils develop their writing. In mathematics and science, pupils can make simple graphs and print them. In art, pupils use a graphics program to support their work in drawing and symmetry. In geography, pupils use the Internet to research a village life in Mexico.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school has a clear vision about the ethos and values it seeks to establish, which results in an atmosphere where young individuals are special and this is reflected in practice in the school's moral and social ethos and quality of life generally in the school.

- The school meets the statutory requirements for the provision of a daily act of collective worship. The quality of the assemblies is very good and they make a significant contribution to the pupils' development and to the family ethos of the school. The pupils and the staff participate fully in all aspects of the service. The local clergy, who are regular visitors to school, often take assemblies and talk to the pupils, contributing well to their spiritual understanding.
- Planning for the development of the pupils' spiritual development is included in all subject areas. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own and other people's lives and beliefs, today and in the past, and to develop a sense of curiosity and wonder about their environment. Pupils know that there are other faiths where the followers have different ways of worshipping and of celebrating special occasions. The pupils understand that their individual ideas are valued by the teachers and other adults in the school.
- There is great emphasis on the development of pupils' moral and social development. In religious education lessons, they learn how the Christian faith affects the life of many people in this country and how belief affects the way people behave as individuals and as a community.
- The pupils show very good standards in their care of others and of their environment and they collaborate well in all their activities. The 'friendship club' and 'circle time' have a beneficial effect on pupils' progress, achievement and personal development. They act as a forum for the discussion of issues such as relationships and help to promote the school values of equal opportunities and respect for others. Pupils understand the importance of fairness and honesty and of showing kindness to the other pupils, particularly towards younger members of the school.

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- The pupils at this school are given many opportunities to show leadership and to take on responsibilities, not only within the classroom but also as members of a school community. Year 2 pupils are appointed as counsellors and meet with the staff and with governors to decide on ways of ensuring that all pupils are happy and feel valued within the school, particularly during play times. This gives pupils a genuine voice in school affairs.
 - Pupils' cultural development is very good and covers a broad spectrum of experiences provided by the school. Their appreciation of aspects of art and craft, of music and dance and of children's literature is enhanced through visitors to the school and through visits to galleries, through various drama performances and by visiting a range of interesting locations linked to local history. They are introduced to the Welsh language and culture from the early years and progressively gain in their understanding through the integration of the Welsh culture across the curriculum, as well as through their Welsh language lessons.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good and sometimes very good.

- The parents and pupils understand the school policies on a range of subjects related to the school's ethos, positive behaviour, personal and social education (PSE).
- The school achieves its aim of helping pupils to become caring and considerate of others.
- The positive aspects of pupils' behaviour and their achievements are celebrated through rewards and certificates presented in weekly assemblies by the headteacher or during the day by the staff.
- Pupils respond positively to the standards of leadership set by the school and are respectful of each other, teachers, and non-teaching adults on the premises and of school property. As a result, there is a purposeful learning environment and a productive partnership with the teaching staff.
- Pupils are attentive in class and apply themselves well to their work and they socialise well in the playground, classroom and dining-hall.
- Pupils are lively, happy and confident and the school is an orderly and civilised community where routines and good standards are firmly established.

4.3 Attendance

The overall rate of attendance is good.

- Registers are maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and teachers are very conscientious in recording data and monitoring pupils' attendance.
- A fully computerised register system has been introduced during the course of this year. This system is implemented efficiently and effectively by teachers and the school administrative officer who also plays a key role in the monitoring of attendance matters in support of the headteacher. There is very good improvement since the last inspection.
- In addition, a first day call system is firmly established and the school's strategies in relation to overall social inclusion are a particular strength of the school and work

well in supporting the school's efforts to raise standards of attendance. The school has responded positively and effectively to requirements as outlined in Estyn Memo 3/99.

- There is very good communication at all levels with additional valuable support from the Education Welfare Officer, school nurse and school psychologist.
- Expectations of good attendance by pupils are a feature of the school's ethos and it is noticeable that good patterns of attendance are firmly instilled from the time that pupils first enter the school in nursery through to Y2. Parents and pupils respond well.
- There were no exclusions or unauthorised absences during the previous year. The school strongly discourages parents from arranging holidays during term time although registers for the previous year revealed a pattern of such practice and of pupils who take occasional day holidays.
- At the commencement of the school day, many parents accompany their children to their classrooms and view their work and reading books. This practice is greatly appreciated by parents and pupils settle down quickly to their work. The pupils are punctual and the school day operates promptly, efficiently and without any fuss.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall. In 19 per cent it is very good, in 60 per cent it is good and in the remaining 21 per cent it is satisfactory. Most of the best teaching was observed in the nursery and some Y2 classes, where it was very good.

This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection when 60 per cent of teaching was good, 40 per cent was satisfactory of which 25 per cent had unsatisfactory features.

In the nursery and reception classes:

- The teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. They are perceptive and responsive to the needs of all the children and adapt their teaching strategies accordingly.
- There is very good provision for children to practise their listening, speaking and social skills and develop their creativity as they act out roles in the imaginative play areas.
- The staff are very good role-models for the children as they model speaking and listening skills and a range of positive behaviours.
- The staff promote children's learning well through a wide range of challenging but achievable activities. Teachers build on children's previous learning by pitching the activities at a demanding level and motivating the children to achieve them through carefully framed questions and conversation. As a result the children achieve well, and feel secure and happy, taking part in activities that are relevant and interesting.
- The staff begin the very good partnership with parents as soon as their children enter the nursery or reception classes. The importance of the parents' role in helping their children to learn is recognised. Staff encourage parents to take part in activities in school or in key skills courses that enhance their skills and those of their children. Children are encouraged to take home books and read with their parents. The staff

appreciate special things children bring from home to talk about which is relevant to their topics.

- There are significant numbers of children who enter the nursery or reception classes with language difficulties. There is a strong emphasis on teaching communication skills. Pupils are assessed very well and support staff target individual pupils and groups of pupils that need the most help.

In KS1:

- The quality of teachers' day-to-day planning is generally good. The plans detail what pupils are expected to learn and identify opportunities for the development of key skills and assessment. Teachers introduce new vocabulary and knowledge in a clear and logical way. The evaluations of pupils' progress are used very well to inform future planning.
- The teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They regularly update their knowledge and skills by attending in-service training courses (INSET) which are used effectively in their teaching. Good use is made of specialist teaching in music.
- Effective use is made of the learning support and teaching assistants to help the pupils learn. There are also many voluntary helpers, parents and members of the community who willingly give their time to assist the staff and help to supervise small groups of pupils. All of these groups make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- In the majority of lesson observations, the teachers introduce their lessons well. They effectively recap on pupils' previous learning and set clear objectives for the lessons. Pupils then know what is expected of them. The well-directed questioning and monitoring of pupils' work, keep pupils motivated and involved in their work, extending their thinking and learning. Structured class discussions at the end of the lesson, consolidate what pupils have learned and help teachers to assess the effectiveness of their work.
- In the best teaching, activities are very well thought out and planning is integrated to develop pupils' learning in a variety of areas. Pupils make rapid progress because maximum use is made of time and resources to help pupils learn.
- The teachers hold high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. There are very good relationships between the pupils and the staff. The staff constantly seek to reward and praise pupils for their efforts which builds their self-esteem and confidence.
- When the teaching is satisfactory, the teacher-led introductions are sometimes too long, which does not allow sufficient time for pupils to complete their work.
- The work is not always matched well enough to the needs and abilities of the pupils.
- There are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to write at length. This is limited by the use of worksheets and workbooks which often prevent pupils from writing more than a few words or sentences.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to speak at length. Teachers often ask questions which do demand one or two words as an answer. This prevents pupils speaking at length about their work.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting on pupils' progress and achievement is very good, and is used effectively by the school in order to raise the standards achieved by the pupils. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

- Assessment, recording and reporting procedures for the whole school are clearly set out and are understood and carried out by all teachers and support staff at the school. There is regular teacher assessment at the end of each topic as well as specific assessments in language and mathematics.
- The parents and carers receive a written report twice in each school year, in January and in July. The reports are informative and set out the way ahead for each pupil. They tell parents the standards their children achieve, the progress they have made and what they need to learn next. There are three opportunities for discussing their child's progress with the teachers, and parents are aware that they are welcome to seek further opportunities if they so wish.
- The children are assessed in the early years in order to establish a baseline for each individual child's development. Use is made of county assessment booklets and the results are very carefully analysed in order to prepare an appropriate programme of learning experiences for each child, as well as meeting the class needs in order to achieve the Desirable Outcomes by the beginning of KS1.
- The results of all assessments are carefully analysed and teachers moderate standards as a team. Specific targets are set for each pupil and these are shared with the pupil and his/her parent or carer. The management team at the school provide extra adult support to meet these particular needs, in addition to the provision made for pupils who are identified with SEN.
- The school assessment procedures are effective in identifying pupils with SEN in order that their needs can be met appropriately.
- A marking policy using symbols that are understood by the pupils is effective in supporting the pupils in achieving their individual short-term targets.
- Each pupil has a Record of Achievement file and the samples of work are annotated to indicate the level achieved, or to note its significance in the development of particular skills. The teachers' planning and recording books contain information on each pupil's progress as well as comments on group and whole class development.
- Pupils are involved in assessing their own development and in setting targets for improvement and there is opportunity for parents to comment on the written reports and on the progress of set targets.

5.3 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is very good with some outstanding features. The curriculum has outstanding features in its inclusive nature and in the provision for pupils' personal and social development.

- There is a very good range of planned activities for the children under five that promote rapid progress. The staff challenge the children very well to learn. Each activity is planned very well to the Desirable Learning Outcomes to develop children's knowledge and understanding in a variety of different aspects. Good

progress is continued in the reception classes. The curriculum leads effectively into the NC.

- The curriculum in KS1, is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. The timetable is balanced appropriately to teach all NC subjects and religious education. Personal, social, health education, including sex education are integrated well into the curriculum. The discretionary time is used well to teach pupils basic skills, swimming, library skills and life skills.
- There is good provision for the development of key skills and the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*. In 1999, the provision was rewarded with the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark for good teaching of basic skills and raising standards.
- There are good quality policies and schemes of work for all subjects of good quality which have been reviewed in the light of the new requirements for 2000. The quality of planning is good. The staff work together well to ensure consistency in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding between year groups and classes. Effective use is made of time and cross-curricular links planned through topics.
- The curriculum strategies and initiatives are kept under constant review to ensure they meet the needs of all pupils. A watching brief is kept for all pupils to ensure that those who may be at risk do not fail to achieve academically or socially. This is evidenced by the vast majority of pupils attaining the expected level in the NC tests. The Code of Practice is adhered to for pupils with SEN. These pupils are fully integrated into all aspects of the curriculum and achieve well.
- There is great emphasis placed on pupils' personal development. The school policy and guidance to support pupils' PSE is well thought out to enhance the positive ethos of the school which is evident in the very good relationships between adults and pupils. The successful strategies of the friendship club, Circle Times (class discussions on moral and social topics of concern), assemblies and the care taken by the staff to motivate and encourage pupils, boosts pupils' self confidence and self-esteem. This results in happy and lively pupils who are keen to learn and contributes significantly to pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The pupils' experience is effectively extended by the visits made in the local area and the visitors who come into school to talk to the children about their work, such as, the local services, or for example, the experiences they have of the last war, contributing to the Y2 pupils' work in history. Visiting theatre groups, a local artist and a potter, the school eisteddfod and book readings from the local librarian and well known authors make a good contribution to pupils' cultural skills and broadens their experience of the arts. There is very good improvement in the provision for pupils' creativity since the last inspection.
- Homework is used well by the staff to enhance pupils' learning of skills and knowledge acquired in their daily lessons. The provision of a homework club two days a week after school usefully extends pupils' learning in key skills within a purposeful working environment.
- There are very good extra curricular activities. Sporting activities include football and short tennis. Other activities include clubs for music, Welsh, friendship, homework and there is a breakfast and after school fun club.

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- There is an imbalance in the amount of time that pupils spend learning the skills of writing such as spelling and punctuation and the time they spend developing a broader understanding of the forms, purposes and process of writing.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The quality of the support, guidance and concern for pupils' welfare provided by the school is very good with many outstanding features.

- The school provides a most welcoming, warm and caring environment where all pupils, including the under-fives and those with special needs, feel safe, happy and secure.
- All pupils are highly valued as individuals and their academic progress, attendance and personal development are monitored very effectively.
- Child protection measures are very good. All staff, including support staff, have been trained in identifying signs of abuse and know and follow agreed procedures.
- Health and safety is the responsibility of all staff and the school has very well documented health and safety procedures, including procedures in the event of an emergency. The governing body is actively involved in completing regular checks for safety. Supervision in the playground is vigilant and supportive. The recent installation of CCTV cameras has increased school security.
- The social inclusion policy is highly successful. Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural problems, some of whom have been excluded from other schools, are welcomed, supported and nurtured by members of staff. Very good strategies are followed to modify unacceptable behaviour.
- Issues such as bullying, anger management and personal loss are planned for and formally covered in assemblies, 'Circle Time' and through the 'Paths Project'. In these sessions, pupils discuss and resolve social and moral issues or other matters that concern them.
- Spontaneous, unplanned opportunities are also taken by teachers to support and guide pupils. For example, a teacher immediately investigated why a pupil was upset following playtime and gave those involved time to express their point of view. She stressed the need for them to sort out the rules of the game they were playing and then stick to them.
- A 'friendship club' operates weekly to help pupils showing signs of aggression. A "friendship bench" has been created in the playground as a place where pupils can go if they are feeling lonely, unhappy or worried about something. School counsellors, who are Y2 pupils, befriend them and talk to them. A 'worry box' is also provided as another way for pupils to express any concerns they may have.
- Liaison with external support agencies such as the school nurse, educational social worker and educational psychologist is very good. There is regular contact with parents and external agencies and the 'surgery' they provide helps parents to seek their help and advice informally.
- Despite the best efforts of the school to remedy the problem, puddles in the playground and at the bottom of the steps to one of the mobile classrooms constitute a risk to the health and safety of pupils and staff.

5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is very good and is effective in raising standards of achievement of the pupils involved.

- The school's policy and guidelines for SEN conform to the requirements of the Code of Practice and includes identification of the more able pupils at the school. There are 29 per cent of pupils identified by the school in need of SEN support, two of whom have a statement of SEN. Pupils are identified for support mainly for language development, but the school also identifies and supports SEN in mathematics.
- The pupils are fully integrated into mainstream classes and have adult support within the classroom in addition to the particular provision by the class teacher. Pupils on stages 2 upwards are supported by an Individual Educational Plan which is decided upon by the class teacher and the part time support teacher. This teacher is also responsible for the organisation of SEN within the school in partnership with the headteacher who is the special educational needs coordinator.
- The pupils with SEN are making very good progress in response to the detailed and well-monitored programs of study, coupled with the attention to their needs within each class activity. Pupils with behavioural problems are well supported during the school day through the provision of extra adult help in order that they achieve the individual targets of behaviour set for each one. Care is taken to fully involve parents in reviews of progress and targets set.
- The SEN pupils' progress is very closely monitored and when their targets are achieved through timely support, they are taken off the SEN register.
- The school provides adequate resources for learning for pupils with SEN including a special reading scheme and computer hardware and software.
- The school management team regards the provision of extra adult support for pupils with SEN, as and when specifically needed, as a priority when setting and developing their School Development Plans (SDPs) and Business Plans.
- The classroom used for withdrawal sessions with groups or individual pupils is a shared facility, and is used for eating sandwiches, and by the playgroup. This restricts the storing and easy access of special resources for learning and the availability of the computer during parts of the day.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

The school's partnerships with parents and community, schools and other institutions are very good.

- Policies in relation to parental and community involvement are implemented most effectively to the benefit of the school and its range of activities.
- The prospectus is available to all parents and distributed to parents of all new pupils. In addition, other useful booklets about starting school are also available. All documents are user-friendly and the prospectus, together with the governing body annual report to parents, fully complies with Estyn Memoranda 14/01 and 15/01 respectively.

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- Parents receive a constant flow of correspondence and information about school events and activities and the school operates an ‘open-door’ policy whereby parents are welcome to visit the school at any time or make an appointment to discuss problems at a mutually convenient time. In addition, parents often have contact at the beginning of the school day with their children’s teachers when they accompany pupils to their classrooms. Parents appreciate this arrangement in particular and also the school’s approachability and response in following-up parental concerns.
 - Three open evenings are held annually; each with a specific purpose, providing parents with opportunities to meet teachers and discuss their children’s work. There is an expectation for all parents to attend or be represented at these meetings and the support for these meetings is very good.
 - Parents and friends of the school are invited and encouraged to become volunteers in support of activities. As a result, valuable practical assistance is given by a large number of adults in the classroom, activities and a whole range of tasks. Parents feel that this is a listening and caring school, sympathetic to the needs of both children and parents.
 - A range of educational courses is organised for the benefit of parents and adults in the neighbourhood, making use of external agencies in their delivery. The agencies willingly offer help and advice to parents.
 - The ‘Friends of Bodnant School’ are most active in raising funds for special projects and activities and a joint PTA, with Bodnant Junior School is also highly supportive.
 - Annual arrangements for receiving pupils into the school are thorough and sensitive. A ‘Home-School Agreement’ has been established and is introduced when pupils first enter school.
 - The annual transfer arrangements of Y2 pupils to the Junior School are similarly extensive and thoughtful and links are well established.
 - There are very good links with the playschool. The staff work well with the nursery and reception staff in curriculum coordination.
 - There are also valuable links with the High School which assist with aspects of curriculum development.
 - There is a beneficial range of practical links with the community which are woven into the school’s annual programme of activities. There is an established community ethos in this school.
 - The school is used as a resource annually for students on initial teacher training courses and a large number of placements are provided for young people on NNEB, General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) and work experience courses.
 - Conscious of a responsibility to the wider world, pupils’ awareness of the needs of others is raised annually by supporting national charities and emergency appeals.
 - The large number, range and quality of partnerships secured by the school make a valuable contribution to the life of the school, the quality of education provided, pupils’ general development and standards of achievement.

5.7 Partnership with industry

The school's links with business, commerce and industry are very good and they have a positive effect on the quality of educational provision, resources and pupils' achievement.

- There is an annual strategy and programme of links and project work which enable pupils to gain insights into the world of work in general and the importance of industry to the community.
- The school is outward looking and makes good use of the community as an educational workshop; purposeful visits are made locally in connection with project work which are pertinent to pupils' level of understanding and which enhance their experiences.
- The local business and industrial community provides valuable support in many ways including fund raising, donations and benefits-in-kind and these links are woven into the school's programme of activities and effectively support pupils' learning.
- Service industries are supportive of the curriculum; staff development and the curriculum are enhanced by links with ELWA, 'Investors in People Award' and industry and business in general.
- The school succeeds in attracting funding and support from different organisations and agencies and uses them well in delivering a broad and interesting curriculum.
- Partnership with industry has been strengthened considerably since the last inspection.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is a very good feature of the school. This is a forward-looking school which has a continuous cycle for self-improvement.

- The school has developed very good strategies for analysing the pupils' assessment and test results. The staff regularly monitor and assess pupils' work. General assessments of pupils' development and skills are made from entry to the nursery and include the statutory baseline assessment on entry to the reception classes and continue to the NC tests in Y2.
- Teaching and learning are monitored carefully by the headteacher, and curriculum coordinators regularly monitor the delivery and standards achieved across the school in their subjects. Appraisal opportunities for the staff are linked to the school's needs and combine to identify ways of raising standards and encourage the setting of professional development targets.
- The members of the governing body keep themselves fully informed on the whole school targets for improvement and together with the management team they put together a School Business Plan in order to resource the priorities of the school as stated in the SDP. All targets are closely monitored in line with clearly identified criteria and the results form the basis of further action.
- The staff are all fully involved in assessment, moderating and analysing the pupils' progress and in the setting of targets. The targets are comprehensive and include personal as well as academic considerations.

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- The ethos of the school and the steps taken to achieve and maintain the very good quality of relationships across the school community are well thought out and systematically monitored.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

There is outstanding leadership by the headteacher. She leads the school with commitment, diligence and clear vision. There are clear expectations for success shared by the staff, governors, parents and pupils which is key to the success of the school. All the school community know what the school stands for. For example, there is an agreed code of conduct that is consistently reinforced by parents and governors as well as the staff.

- The governing body is a knowledgeable, positive force for improvement. The governors are very experienced in their understanding of the traditions and the population surrounding the school. This gives them valuable insight into the aspirations and concerns of all the people they represent.
- Central to the ethos of this school is that pupils always come first; this is reflected in the good quality teaching and the very positive relationships within school. The ethos is one where issues are discussed openly by the whole school community including pupils and parents. There is a shared commitment to high achievement of all pupils.
- The headteacher knows the pupils and the parents very well. The regular and frequent communication with parents helps to identify problems and take action to help pupils to make progress.
- The links with the parents are seen as necessary to improving the quality of provision and raising standards. The school also seeks to help the community by providing day care for pupils from the age of two and a half and courses for parents to develop their skills such as information technology. The school is a meeting place where the local services meet to discuss relevant issues with parents concerning their children.
- The senior management make a successful leadership team. There is a positive climate for improvement. The coordination roles for the subjects and aspects of the curriculum are shared between the staff. The staff work together very well as a team, committed to implementing the aims and values of the school. These are regularly and systematically monitored. The underperformance of any individual pupil or group is not acceptable.
- All coordinators know and carry out their responsibilities very well and are successful in improving their subject provision as they manage resources, monitor the implementation of their curriculum policies and schemes of work and give advice to colleagues. They all have annual targets for improvement agreed and reviewed by the headteacher. However, although the development of the targets are known informally and reported to the governors, there is no formal recording of detail each term with built in success criteria and evaluations. This limits the governors and headteacher in formerly assessing and monitoring the effectiveness of the targets.
- The headteacher and staff are very responsive to change. For example, they take advantage of projects with additional funding and have recently been successful in gaining grants to support the out of school clubs, and curriculum enrichment and visits. When there are new ideas to improve the curriculum or benefit the pupils' learning, they are put into practice.

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- At present, the budget and School Business Plan are set in detail for one year with a five year projected plan. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school. This is based on the review of pupils' achievements and from a detailed consultation process which involves consulting the pupils, staff, parents and governors before decisions are taken. The plan is firmly rooted in raising pupils' academic and personal achievement.
 - The headteacher and the governors, with the help of a local authority finance officer, effectively oversee the budget. Financial decisions are carefully considered before committing to expenditure. The expenditure is linked to the priorities of the School Business Plan. The current surplus is being used to improve staffing, resources and accommodation.
 - The school secretary and office support staff are very efficient in carrying out daily administrative tasks and ensuring the smooth running of the school. The caretaker, cleaners and mid-day staff make a positive contribution to the running of the school and the welfare of the pupils.
 - The day-to-day management of the budget is very efficiently managed by the headteacher. The governing body are kept very well up to date with detailed financial information. The recommendations of the last financial audit have been resolved. Statutory requirements are met. The school provides very good value for money.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The school's staffing and resources are very good. Aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory.

- The school has received the Investors in People award for the second time.
- There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified teaching and other staff to meet the needs of the school. There is a good mix of very experienced and more recently qualified staff.
- Pupils benefit from the contribution of the large number of additional paid and voluntary support workers, including parents and grandparents.
- The staff development policy is effective and teachers have attended a wide range of INSET courses. Some courses attended by staff, for example on developing a policy and scheme of work, are very helpful in general terms. However, curriculum leaders of some subjects would benefit from more opportunities to develop their expertise through subject-specific courses.
- Specialist staff and curriculum leaders support each other very effectively by sharing their knowledge and expertise.
- The governing body and staff have done all in their power, within the available resources, to improve the standard of the accommodation. Internal areas of the school are attractive and welcoming. Murals, planters and hanging baskets enhance the attractiveness of the playground. Staff are extremely well organised and resourceful and make huge efforts to overcome the shortcomings of the accommodation.
- The school's resources policy prioritises spending in line with goals for curriculum development. The community raises large sums of money to enrich the school's resources. The quality of learning resources is very good.

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- Good use is made of the available resources to enhance pupils' achievements.

All shortcomings in this section relate to the standard of the accommodation, aspects of which, despite the best efforts of the school, have not improved since the last inspection in 1997.

- The uneven playground surface means that many puddles accumulate in wet weather. Pupils cannot avoid stepping into these puddles to enter classes. This is a health and safety hazard to the pupils.
- The number of pupils in the school exceeds the official accommodation figure.
- The 'canteen' used for assemblies, physical education, lunch, and for before and after school clubs is old, dreary, in a poor state of repair and some distance from other school buildings. In poor weather, pupils have to sit in wet shoes and next to wet outdoor clothes during assembly.
- Pupils who are taught in the four mobile classrooms are accompanied by a classroom assistant if they visit the toilet during lessons because there are no toilet facilities or water in the mobile classrooms. This restricts valuable adult support time and pupils' learning time.
- The lack of space and storage in the mobile classes does not allow pupils to work on a large scale in art and design and technology.
- Although there are collections of fiction and non-fiction books in every classroom, the location and size of the central library in the main building restricts opportunities for older pupils, in particular, who are taught in the mobile classrooms, to use their library skills during lessons.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

There is very good provision for children aged 3–5 years. The curriculum promotes the expected Desirable Learning Outcomes very well. The children in the nursery achieve very good standards in all areas of learning. In the reception classes, children achieve good standards in all areas of learning, except in their personal and social development where they achieve very good standards.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Good features

- The 3-4 year-old children make very good progress in acquiring early language skills. Most are keen to talk about their experiences and their work. They recite well-known rhymes enthusiastically. The majority enjoy looking at books and listening to stories.
- The 4-5 year-old children make good progress in their learning. They listen very well, often for long periods of time and join in well with discussions. Most are able to retell a story and talk about their favourite characters. Many have good pencil control as they learn to copy words and begin to write independently. Children in both the

nursery and the reception classes learn Welsh. The children respond well to the teachers' use of Welsh as they learn Welsh words, songs and phrases.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Personal and social development

Good features

- The 3-4 year-old children make very good progress in their personal and social skills. They quickly settle into the well-established routines of the session and move confidently from one activity to another. They listen and respond well to the directions from the staff. Most behave very well and are learning to share and take turns with favourite resources. Most are independent in personal hygiene and the majority are able to dress themselves for outside activities with some help.
- The 4-5 year-olds continue to make very good progress. The majority sensibly share resources. The children take turns in helping to give out snacks and help the staff to tidy up at the end of each session. They listen to what others have to say and respect their views in discussion. The majority understand the difference between right and wrong and follow the teachers' directions when working with others in a small group or independently choosing their own activities. They persevere with their tasks and concentrate well.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Good features

- Most 3-4 year-old children make good progress and most are learning well to count to five. They are developing mathematical vocabulary well through their sand and water play, learning the meaning of, for example, 'full' and 'empty' or 'more' and 'less'. They enjoy number rhymes and songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'. Most sort and match familiar objects and are beginning to recognise patterns of two colours.
- The 4-5 year-olds follow and complete more complex number patterns. They count to twenty and beyond and count back from ten to zero. Most understand mathematical concepts such as more than or less than and recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. Children enjoy working with their toy farm animals. They make repeating patterns, count them and sort them into sets.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Good features

- Most of the children talk about themselves and their families and pets. They show interest in the world around them as they observe and explore the work that people do on their walk in the immediate area surrounding the school. The children visited the army station, crossed the road and went to the filling station and past the post office. They follow up and consolidate what they learn as they role-play the work of the lollipop man. They observe the sequence of the traffic lights and learn about road

safety as they cross the road and take their cars to the petrol station and through the car wash. Children use the computer independently, learning to manipulate the mouse, to drag and drop clothes to 'dress teddy'.

- The older 4-5 year olds continue to make good progress. They are beginning to grasp mapping skills as they work with farm animals to scale, placing them in appropriate places on a model farm mat. They know the names of animals and their young and talk about their characteristics. Their knowledge and understanding is developed further in their role-play activities as they act out the roles of the farmer, for instance by milking cows and herding sheep. The children independently use the computer and operate simple language and number programs and use programmable toys, controlling them accurately to move in different directions.

Shortcomings

- Some children use limited vocabulary to express their ideas.

Physical development

Good features

- There is cramped and barely appropriate provision of play space for the 3-4 year-olds in the nursery. The staff make the best use of all resources and the children respond very well to all indoor and outdoor planned activities. The children in the nursery are developing skills well as they use tools for cutting, sticking and drawing. They use increasing control to build models and complete small games and puzzles.
- The children aged 4-5 take part in physical activities in the school hall, which is also used as a canteen. Most move around sensibly and independently without bumping into others. The children listen very well to the teachers' instructions and travel in different directions, walking, hopping or skipping on command. Most are developing their skills in balancing well.

Shortcomings

- Physical activities in inclement weather are limited in the nursery by cramped accommodation. Valuable learning time is lost in getting ready for lessons as the children in the reception classes have to walk across the playground to reach the hall, which is some distance from the classrooms.

Creative development

Good features

- The children aged 3-4 years in the nursery respond very well to a very good range of creative activities. They explore textures and colour through discovering the properties of materials and mixing paints. Most use their imaginations in well-structured role-play. The children have very good opportunities to express their thought and ideas by participating in activities such as painting, drawing and responding to music.
- The children continue to make good progress in the reception classes. The 4-5 year-olds, communicate their ideas and feelings by using a widening range of materials and tools to design and make their own models. They play a range of instruments to accompany the songs they have learned which they sing with gusto. Imaginative play is well directed to support childrens' ideas and develop their vocabulary. In the farm,

the children choose their props and costumes, working well with one another to create their play.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

English

Standards of achievement in English are satisfactory with some good features. The standards are good in listening and reading and satisfactory in speaking and writing.

Good features

- By the end of the key stage, and when given the opportunity, children can speak at length on topics about which they are knowledgeable. They organise what they have to say and make themselves clear when explaining, for example, the reasons for being sent off in football or the process of using the contents and index pages in an information book.
- Pupils make good progress in their listening skills. They generally listen attentively to their teachers, responding appropriately, if briefly, to questions. They listen with concentration and pleasure to story tapes.
- Pupils make good progress in their reading. They talk about the characters and identify significant events in familiar stories such as Cinderella. By the end of the key stage they understand features of fiction texts such as the range of possible openings to a story. They also understand features of non-fiction texts, such as, contents and index pages, and are beginning to use them in order to locate information. They have a positive attitude to reading.
- When reading aloud, most pupils employ a range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and understand the text. Less confident readers choose their favourite part of a story and give reasons for their choice. However, they tend to over-rely on phonic knowledge when encountering a difficult word instead of using the full range of strategies, including re-reading the passage and/or reading ahead.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing and by the end of the key stage, when writing from personal experience, the most able writers write independently and have found a personal 'voice'. When the writing process is modelled for them, pupils begin to show greater individuality in their writing, although their choices of vocabulary are limited.
- Pupils understand the purpose of punctuation marks such as full stops and capital letters and use them in their writing. Their spelling is of a good standard. Handwriting is usually correctly formed and legible but left-handed pupils sometimes encounter difficulties. Pupils' presentation of work is satisfactory.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils collaborate effectively in pairs to compose their writing using the computer. They read their work aloud with confidence and begin to discuss the quality of their writing.

Shortcomings

- Mainly because of lack of opportunities, pupils do not often offer more than one word answers to questions, use talk to explore and develop their ideas, or give extended explanations or reasons for their opinions.

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- Pupils do not consistently organise and present their writing in different ways, appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Mathematics

There is good provision for mathematics. Pupils achieve good standards throughout the school.

Good features

- Pupils progressively build their knowledge, skills and understanding in all aspects of mathematics.
- In Y1, most pupils know the properties of commonly used shapes and apply their knowledge to the general properties of position and movement. They are beginning to grasp a range of number facts and understand for example, how multiplication tables are a measure of counting in intervals of twos and tens.
- In Y2, pupils make good progress in understanding number patterns and relationships to one hundred. They accurately count and order numbers and understand place value.
- Pupils' skills in mental mathematics are developing well. Pupils apply their knowledge to solving problems using a range of strategies. Pupils in Y2 for instance make increasingly accurate estimates as they judge the intervals between groups of numbers along a measuring stick.
- Pupils know the learning objectives and at the end of each lesson, teachers help the pupils to recap on what they have learned. This helps the pupils to consolidate their learning.
- The basic skills and associated mathematical vocabulary are learned well in other subjects. For example, pupils in Y2 draw graphs of their favourite foods in science using information and communication technology. Pupils represent data well in graphs and tables and maps using information technology.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' abilities to offer their own ideas or to explain how they solve problems are limited.

Science

There are good standards of achievement in science.

Good features

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The youngest pupils in Y1 begin to recognise the characteristics of fair testing. They are able to classify a range of objects and materials into those that are living such as plants and those that are non-living such as stones.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy investigation. The Y2 pupils offer convincing explanations using correct vocabulary of the properties of materials such as paper, coal and wood.

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- Pupils are developing good skills in predicting what they think may happen in their investigations. This helps them to understand, through testing and an analysis of evidence, whether their claims are supported.
 - All pupils undertake the same experiments. The lower attaining pupils work alongside the higher attaining pupils. This promotes discussion from which all pupils benefit.
 - Pupils use numeracy skills effectively to record the findings of their experiments in tables and graphs. For example, the Y2 pupils use a table to classify the properties of materials.
 - Pupils are confident and enthusiastic in their work. Teachers praise the pupils for their efforts. Pupils are well motivated by this encouragement.

Shortcomings

- Some of the lower attaining pupils have difficulty in reading and writing their answers.
- Pupils do not often practise their writing skills to write up experiments in their own way.
- Pupils' ability to construct large scale experiments is severely limited by the cramped accommodation.

Welsh second language

Standards in Welsh as a second language are good.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 make very good progress in listening and responding to a range of oral stimuli. The standards achieved reflect an early introduction to spoken Welsh through the good use of incidental Welsh in the early years from the nursery onwards.
- Pupils respond confidently to the use of Welsh in daily routines and they display good pronunciation and intonation. They know and sing a wide range of songs and hymns in Welsh and enjoy performing suitable actions to match the words.
- The pupils progressively build up a wide vocabulary on a range of topics such as colours or the weather as well as learning, remembering and using a good range of phrases and sentences. They ask and answer questions in pairs using positive and negative mode as required. They carry out simple dialogue to set patterns.
- The pupils locate and read words and phrases displayed in the classroom and are able to follow simple early reading books centred on a particular character, such as the tales of Magi Ann.
- Pupils label a range of pictures with single words or a short phrase and their written work includes the recording of a simple questionnaire on likes and dislikes amongst the class members.
- The pupils' confidence and pronunciation and understanding of Welsh are greatly enhanced by their participation in an extra curricular Welsh club. Here new books and games are introduced and as the pupils become confidently familiar with them, they are later used successfully within the classroom.

Shortcomings

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- There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

The standards are good in design and technology.

Good features

- Pupils use resources effectively. They are stored so they are easily accessible.
- Pupils make good progress in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the scheme of work.
- Pupils make well-informed judgements about the materials they use to make models and artefacts, the techniques they use to join materials and evaluate their products well which helps them to improve the quality of their work.
- Pupils develop their skills in information technology and apply their knowledge to enhance the construction of artefacts and models through well-planned opportunities. For example, the Y2 pupils have taken pictures of themselves using the digital camera with expertise as the starting point for the construction of photograph frames.
- There is very good improvement in pupils' standards of achievement since the last inspection.

Shortcomings

- The accommodation in the mobile classes does not allow the pupils to work on a large scale and restricts the pupils' achievements in three-dimensional work.

Information technology

Standards in information technology are good.

Good features

- In all the classes the pupils use information technology with increasing understanding, confidence and independence to achieve a variety of outcomes to support their learning across the curriculum.
- As they progress through the school they consolidate and build up their control skills which enable them to use a variety of software to support their learning. New software is introduced carefully to the whole class and the pupils follow instructions to carry out the necessary steps to use the new program.
- They select and move objects and shapes, select colour and line to create a picture, and make up simple compositions.
- They use a prepared database of information to record the result of a class survey as a graph and create simple reflective symmetry pictures.
- Pupils' learning in areas across the curriculum is enhanced through their use of imaginary situations where they control the mouse to carry out selection processes, or to take part in number and word games.
- Their word processing skills are progressing well and pupils select pictures to illustrate their written work.

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- Older pupils have experience in using a digital camera to support aspects of their learning and can describe how an image is produced and printed. They are progressing well in their understanding of the use of e-mail and send messages from class to class. Pupils use their numeracy skills well to give instructions to activate and control a programmable floor robot and are then able to transfer these skills to directing objects on the screen.
 - The pupils make purposeful use of listening stations and of video recordings in their learning activities.

Shortcomings

- The pupils do not sufficiently use word processing to compose directly onto the computer screen and to edit and correct the content and the presentation of their creative writing.

History

Standards are good in history.

Good features

- Pupils learn well. They enjoy their work and make good progress in history.
- Pupils effectively acquire the subject vocabulary, skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils use information technology well. Pupils have a clear understanding of the contributions made by famous people such as Louis Braille and Florence Nightingale.
- Pupils have good chronological awareness through the good use made of timelines and a range of historical artefacts such as household objects of today and from the past.
- Pupils are able to begin to accurately sequence events and objects by making comparisons of similarities and differences.
- Pupils learn effectively about how their local area fits into the wider history of Wales from their study of myths, legends and famous people.
- The contributions made by pupils' visits to places of interest and visitors to the school stimulate the children's interest by bringing the subject to life. The pupils gain a good understanding, for example, from the retelling of what life was like during World War Two.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' writing and story-telling skills are underdeveloped.

Geography

Standards in geography are good.

Good features

- Pupils make good progress in their geographical enquiry skills and in their knowledge and understanding of places.

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- Pupils in Y1 observe and collect information about the local area and can identify features such as the park, station and old people's home on the plan of a route they have walked from the station and back to school. They interpret the plan in order to answer geographical questions such as 'Where is the post office?' Pupils know where the post office is in relation to the school.
 - In Y2, pupils effectively use secondary sources of information such as enlarged photos of a village in Mexico to extend their awareness of places beyond Prestatyn and to compare geographical features such as the weather, roads and buildings.
 - They demonstrate the beginnings of independent research skills when using maps, globes and atlases to locate the position of Mexico in the world. They know that it is near the equator and that it must therefore be, in one child's words, 'very, very, very hot!'
 - Pupils in Y2 are developing a good understanding of the differences between human and physical geography. Most pupils know, for example, that houses, churches and roads are human features and that mountains, fields and the beach are physical features. They write short statements expressing their views about the locality. They have learned to distinguish between the attractive features such as the beach and unattractive features such as litter.
 - Pupils are beginning to have a good understanding of the relationship between people and the environment and this is enriched by visits to places such as the power station and Llysfaen quarry.
 - Pupils understand there are differences around the world between cultures that affect how they live.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Art

Standards in art are good.

Good features

- Pupils make good progress in developing their skills and understanding in art and use a good range of materials, tools and techniques throughout the key stage. They make good use of resources, which include a kiln.
- Pupils in Y1 show great interest when investigating natural objects such as coral, corn and shells and use the visual language of art appropriately when discussing aspects such as colour, texture, shape and pattern.
- Pupils' close observational drawings of natural objects demonstrate an increasing ability to represent differences in tone, pattern and texture using a variety of lead pencils and a range of techniques.
- Year 2 pupils look at and talk about illustrations in books such as 'The Rainbow Fish'. Using the illustration as a stimulus, they draw their own fish with wax crayons in preparation for making batik pictures. Their pictures show individuality and attention to the detail of colour, pattern and shape. They understand that wax resists water and they handle sponges carefully in order to complete a colour wash of poster paint over their pictures.

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- The pupils' creativity has improved significantly since the last inspection. Visiting artists and craftspeople make a very good contribution to the standard of pupils' work. A local potter helped individual pupils design and make detailed clay tiles for clay planters depicting different areas of the curriculum so that, for example, the 'religious education planter' included tiles of a Celtic cross, a bishop and an angel.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not engage in large-scale work such as collage and model making. This limits the standards achieved by the pupils.
- The standard of pupils' close observational drawings would benefit from greater focus on one or two objects rather than several at a time.

Music

Standards in music are good.

Good features

- Pupils respond positively to the music in the foyer which provides a calm and soothing background for pupils throughout the school day. They listen attentively to music at the start of assemblies and respond thoughtfully to pieces that they hear.
- Pupils make good progress in the musical skills of performing, composing and appraising.
- Throughout the school pupils enjoy singing. They sing enthusiastically, confidently, in tune and in unison. They sing a variety of songs in both English and Welsh with good posture and breath control.
- They listen carefully, memorise and repeat accurately simple musical phrases played and sung by the teacher. They can distinguish between musical elements such as loud and quiet in familiar songs.
- The very good range of percussion instruments available has a positive impact on standards of achievement. All pupils enjoy composing using a variety of tuned and untuned percussion and their compositions reach a good standard.
- Older pupils can copy a rhythm on instruments such as wooden blocks and compose simple tunes on a glockenspiel. Most can keep time to a steady beat when providing a percussion accompaniment to singing in assemblies.
- They understand the purpose of simple musical notation, suggesting symbols to represent vocal sounds they compose and arrange for a short vocal piece.
- Part-time specialist staff make a positive contribution to standards in music and the extra-curricular provision offered in an optional music club further enhance and extend pupils' musical experience.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Physical education

Standards in physical education are good in the lessons observed. During the course of a school year the pupils follow a full NC programme of studies. There are several extra

curricular physical education and sport events and clubs which support the good standards achieved by the pupils. Pupils in Y2 attend swimming lessons. Planning for all aspects of NC physical education is thorough and clearly set out.

Good features

- Pupils dress appropriately for physical education lessons and understand the effect of physical exertion on their temperature and heart beat. They realise the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise.
- In all the classes, the pupils show good standards of suppleness and use of imagination in their gymnastic performance. In two classes, the standards are very good.
- The pupils concentrate well on their own performance and observe and evaluate their own and others' performance. The aims of the lesson are clearly understood and reinforced during the lesson and this is reflected in the pupils' suggestions for ways of improving their performance.
- Pupils plan thoughtfully how to create a series of balances with different ways of changing from one to another smoothly and practise diligently. They attain good standards in their final performance and are able to appreciate particular aspects of others' performance and creativity.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

Standards in religious education are good.

Good features

- The pupils understand that Christianity is the main religious belief in this country and are familiar with the local church buildings and their purpose. The school Christmas and Harvest festivals are celebrated in the churches within the community. Through preparing a series of questions which they then put to two of the local clergy, the pupils become familiar with the work and lifestyle of religious leaders within society.
- Within the daily life of the school the pupils learn the meaning and practice of praying through learning and reciting prayers in assembly and at the end of the day. They know that singing is an important aspect of worship.
- The pupils learn of other faiths which are followed by people within their community and they understand the significance of particular celebrations and festivals to these other faiths, particularly the Jewish faith. The use of appropriate artefacts such as those used for a special Jewish meal enhances their understanding of symbols and acts within this faith.
- Pupils reflect on the stories told them from the Bible and in discussion they note the significance of these Bible stories to their own life today. They link the story of Noah to environmental issues of today and the need to take care of the world they live in.
- In religious education lessons the pupils discuss right and wrong and apply this understanding to everyday living. They know that their words and actions can affect others and know that they can and should show care towards others.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**8.1 Progress since the last inspection**

The last inspection in April 1997 identified the following key issues for the school to address:

- raise pupils' standards of achievement in aspects of English, mathematics and science;
- provide increased opportunities for pupils to use their creativity and initiative to develop independent learning skills;
- build upon existing programmes for professional development of staff and monitoring of educational provision, aiming to achieve consistently high quality teaching throughout the school;
- maintain its efforts to extend and improve the school accommodation in order to provide the appropriate environment for teaching and learning;
- work towards an improved system of marking and assessment of pupils' work that identifies both achievements and shortcomings more clearly and sets realistic targets for improvement;
- ensure that all registers are completed at the start of the morning session.

The school has made very good progress in resolving these issues and has improved almost every other aspect of the work of the school. The cramped accommodation remains an outstanding issue for improvement despite the best efforts of the governing body.

8.2 Key issues for action

The school needs to:

1. Raise pupils' standards in speaking and writing by:
 - continuing to provide further opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to write at length for a range of audiences and purposes and extend pupils' use of more adventurous vocabulary;
 - planning opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to speak at length about their work.
2. Improve the quality of provision by:
 - resolving the health and safety issues that the uneven surface of the playground presents;
 - continuing to find strategies to improve the cramped accommodation.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Bodnant Infant School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 - 7
Address of school	Marine Road Prestatyn
Post-Code	LL19 7HA
Telephone Number	01745 852783

Headteacher	Mrs J Hannam MBE
Date of appointment	September 1994
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mrs Yvonne Lawrence Denbighshire
Registered Inspector	Mrs Anna Dawson
Dates of inspection	14-17 January 2002

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>					
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Total
Number of pupils	60	76	71	78	285

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	3	1.2

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	15:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.25:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	N	R	KS1	Whole school
Spring 2001	92	91.5	93	92.25
Summer 2001	90	93	93	93
Autumn 2001	91	95	93.8	94

<i>Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.</i>	0
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2001

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2001		Number of pupils in Y2: 64						
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	6	72	22	0
		National	0	4	13	62	21	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	8	66	27	0
		National	0	4	13	54	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	9	80	11	0
		National	1	3	13	53	30	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	8	86	6	0
		National	0	5	13	70	12	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	6	55	6	0
		National	0	5	10	75	9	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	61	36	0
		National	0	3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	77	23	0
		National	0	2	9	60	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	6	73	20	0
		National	0	2	10	67	21	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	70	16	0
		National	0	2	10	67	21	0

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

D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996 or, in the case of the Task/Test were absent.

W Pupils who are "working towards" level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

Observations were made of 48 teaching sessions or activities. Discussions took place with governors, parents, teachers, support and ancillary staff, volunteer helpers and pupils. Samples of work from each class, covering the whole curriculum were looked at and noted.

In addition, the inspection team examined policies, curriculum plans, and minutes of meetings, financial reports and SDP's. Evidence from a pre-inspection meeting with the governing body was taken into account. Similarly, there was a separate meeting attended by 16 parents and views were also expressed in the 69 questionnaires returned by parents.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Anna Dawson	RgI	Context Main findings Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum Teaching Curriculum Leadership and efficiency Progress since the last inspection Key issues for action	early years mathematics science design and technology history
John James	Lay	Behaviour and attitudes Attendance Partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry	
Eirian Hughes	Team	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment, recording and reporting Provision for pupils with SEN Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement	Welsh information technology physical education religious education
Stephanie James	Team	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	English geography music art

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