

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

**Ysgol Gynradd Brynchrug
Brynchrug
Tywyn
Gwynedd
LL36 9PR**

School Number : 661/ 2184

Date of Inspection : 18 – 19 March, 2002

**BY
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CURRICULUM AND KEY STAGES NOMENCLATURE

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through the school was introduced in 1989. It is intended that this system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory education until the age of 18 should facilitate communication amongst schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of progression.

The term "Reception" (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) whose fifth birthday will occur during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is used for the year group of pupils whose sixth birthday will occur during the academic year and so on until Y13 - the year group whose 18th birthday will occur during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Age	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 includes Y1 and Y2; KS2 includes Y3 to Y6; KS3 includes Y7 to Y9 and KS4 includes Y10 and Y11 (the last year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The following five point scale is used to represent the main opinions in the report as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some particularly good.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features that outweigh some shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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1. CONTEXT

The School and its Priorities

This community primary school is located in the middle of the village of Brynecrug, in Gwynedd.

During the inspection, 37 pupils were receiving full-time education at the school. They are taught by two full-time and one part-time teacher. The school does not admit nursery aged pupils but a class for children aged three to four years, under the auspices of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, is held in the community hall that is part of the school building.

The head was appointed to her post in September 2001.

The area is described as one that is, in general, neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. The percentage of children [11%] eligible to receive free school meals is lower than the county and national average.

Although only 25% of the pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language, approximately 70% of them are fluent in the language.

The school admits pupils from the full range of ability. Nine pupils [24%] have been placed on the Special Educational Needs [SEN] register but no pupils have a statement of SEN.

The School Development Plan [SDP] identifies the following priorities for the year 2001-2002:

- raising oracy standards throughout the school;
- increasing the percentage of pupils who achieve level 4 in Welsh, English and mathematics;
- raising standards in information and communication technology [ICT] throughout the school;
- developing Personal and Social Education [PSE];
- carrying out an audit following the updating of schemes of work.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

- The new head is enthusiastic and industrious and provides clear leadership for the remainder of the staff. She is accessible to staff and parents and has high expectations in terms of standards of achievement and values.
- The good relationships that exist between the governing body, the head, the assistant teachers and other staff members have led to a homely and positive atmosphere and caring ethos being created in the school.
- Pupils' standards of achievement, across the school, are satisfactory or better in every lesson. They are good in 42% of lessons.

- The educational provision for the under fives is appropriate and the desirable outcomes in the six areas of learning are fostered. Standards are as follows:

AREAS OF LEARNING	RECEPTION
Language, literacy and communication skills	Satisfactory
Personal and social development	Satisfactory
Mathematical development	Satisfactory
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Satisfactory
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

- In KS1 and KS2, standards achieved by pupils in the various subjects are as indicated below:

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

- In KS1, the school's results in National Curriculum [NC] tests for 2001 are higher than county and national averages in every subject. In KS2, the school's results in science are slightly higher than county and national averages but slightly lower in Welsh, English and mathematics. Only two pupils were involved in the KS2 tests.
- Pupils achieve good standards across the curriculum in speaking and listening, in writing and reading in English; in Welsh they achieve satisfactory standards. They make effective use of relevant technical terms in both languages when discussing various aspects of the curriculum.
- The ability of pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum is good in both key stages and they make satisfactory use of ICT to collate, record and summarise information in the various subjects.
- The quality of teaching is good in four lessons out of every ten and satisfactory in the vast majority of the remainder. Lessons in which the teaching is unsatisfactory are very rare.
- In general, the work is planned carefully and prepared thoroughly, ensuring that the tasks set match the needs of individual pupils. Purposeful and effective use is made of various teaching methods with a balance being achieved between direct teaching, co-operative work

in groups or pairs and individual teaching. Pupils are given adequate opportunities to solve problems in meaningful contexts and to engage in discussions when making decisions.

- In some instances, the pace of the teaching is too leisurely and the teachers' introductions too long; on occasion they do not manage to control overenthusiastic pupils effectively enough. This limits the amount of work that is completed during lessons.
- In the early years, the quality of the teaching is generally satisfactory. Although the work has been planned carefully, the play activities are not sufficiently structured to foster the children's development in the basic skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their attitudes to learning are good. Levels of attendance are very good. Pupils are very keen to attend school and enjoy the experience. Parents are aware of the school's expectations and are very supportive of them.
- The quality of the support and personal and educational guidance provided for pupils is good.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions, is good. The parents are very supportive of the school's aims and of the education and values that are encouraged; they are given a sufficient number of opportunities to visit the school to discuss their children's work. The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.
- The quality of the curriculum provided for the pupils and the quality of the arrangements made for the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress, is good. The provision made for pupils with SEN is also good.
- Meetings of the governing body are held regularly and the members carry out their statutory responsibilities conscientiously. Members demonstrate an interest in curricular issues and monitor the school's finances in order to achieve value for money. Although there is a substantial surplus in the budget [about 12%], plans have been made to spend this money to maintain staffing levels.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory. Appropriate strategies have been adopted for evaluating provision in the various subjects of the curriculum but up to now there are no formal arrangements in place for evaluating the teaching and learning by observing lessons.
- The SDP is a useful document that identifies curricular and managerial priorities but it does not indicate how the financial resources available to the school are to be used to implement them. The quantitative targets quoted are not sufficiently specific to lead to improvement and the links between the outcomes of the self-evaluation process and the priorities of the SDP are not close enough.
- The school has responded effectively to all the key issues identified in the previous report and the progress made is generally good.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Standards of achievement across the school are satisfactory or better in every lesson. They are good in 42% of lessons.

- The provision for children under five is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. The standards achieved by children in the reception class age group are generally satisfactory.
- In KS1 and KS2, standards of achievement are good in Welsh reading, science, design and technology, history, geography and religious education. Standards of achievement in music and in speaking and listening and writing in Welsh are satisfactory in both key stages.
- In KS2, standards are good in speaking and listening, reading and writing in English, mathematics, ITC, art and physical education.
- In KS1, standards are satisfactory in mathematics, ITC, art and physical education.
- Pupils on the SEN register are making good progress both educationally and socially.
- In KS1, the school's results in NC tests for 2001 are higher than county and national averages in all subjects. In KS2, the school's results are higher than county and national averages in science, but slightly lower in Welsh, English and mathematics. Only two pupils took the tests in KS2.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

- The children under five achieve good standards as they apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in the six areas of learning that are listed in the 'Desirable Outcomes' document. They speak confidently in their mother tongue and the learners' ability to use Welsh is developing satisfactorily. Children use appropriate computer programmes which further their mathematical and linguistic development. The play activities provided for them are not sufficiently structured to enable them to develop their communication, linguistic and numeracy skills to their full potential.
- Standards across the curriculum are good in speaking and listening, reading and writing in English and satisfactory in Welsh. Although pupils make consistent and effective use of both languages, they are in general more fluent and confident when dealing with aspects of the curriculum through the medium of English. They make effective use of relevant technical terms in both languages when discussing the various subjects.
- Pupils' ability to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum is good in both key stages. Good standards are achieved when pupils are undertaking measuring activities in design and technology and when they are collating and handling data in different contexts. They make wide-ranging and effective use of their number skills when carrying out investigations.

- The use made of ICT to collate, record and summarise information across the curriculum is satisfactory. Although pupils' standards of achievement are good in ICT in KS2, they do not take full advantage of the technology to develop their skills in the various subjects of the curriculum.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

- Whole school acts of collective worship and the opportunities they provide for pupils to take part and to engage in quiet reflection, contribute effectively to their spiritual development.
- In their dealings with each other, the pupils demonstrate a good awareness of moral values and when given the opportunity they contribute generously to support those who are less fortunate than themselves.
- They take full advantage of the regular opportunities they are given to develop their ability to co-operate and to take responsibility for aspects of their work in the school.
- The school succeeds well in its efforts to encourage pupils to appreciate their own cultural tradition and to respect the variety and wealth of other cultures.
- A number of aspects of Personal and Social Education [PSE] are fostered effectively.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The general quality of pupils' behaviour and their attitude to learning is good.

- Pupils are courteous and respectful of each other, their teachers, other members of staff and visitors to the school.
- The pupils played a part in the process of formulating the school's arrangements for controlling and maintaining behaviour and as a result they understand the rules and appreciate that they have a purpose. They respond positively to the school's rewards scheme.
- The school's strategies offer encouragement to pupils who have behaviour problems and they are helped to accept the school's values and practices.
- The pupils are interested in their work. They pay attention to the teachers' instructions and are ready to co-operate. Despite this, the excessive enthusiasm of some pupils impairs the progress of some lessons.
- Parents are supportive of the school's procedures and have responded positively to the home-school contract.

- No instances of bullying, sexism, racism or other kinds of discrimination were observed during the inspection period. Clear strategies have been adopted to respond to any such cases, should they arise.

4.3 Attendance

Pupils' levels of attendance are very good.

- Over the three terms preceding the inspection the average attendance percentage was 97.6%.
- Pupils are very keen to attend school and enjoy the experience.
- The parents are familiar with the school's expectations and submit prompt explanations for absences.
- The statutory requirements for recording and presenting reports on attendance are met in full.
- Instances of unauthorised absence are very rare.
- Pupils arrive at school promptly. Appropriate attention is given to punctuality in the daily running of the school.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of the teaching is good in four lessons out of every ten and satisfactory in the vast majority of the remainder. There are only a few lessons where the teaching is unsatisfactory.

- The quality of the teaching in the early years is generally satisfactory. The work is planned carefully with appropriate attention being given to the six areas of learning. However, play activities are not sufficiently structured to foster the children's development in the key skills.
- In KS1 and KS2, in lessons where the quality of the teaching is good, the work is planned carefully and prepared thoroughly, ensuring that the tasks set match the needs of individual pupils.
- Lessons are well structured and presented in a lively and stimulating manner. Work previously undertaken is revised appropriately through purposeful questioning. The questions are varied and pupils are encouraged to speculate, to reason and to identify patterns. Interesting and challenging tasks are set and opportunities provided for pupils to reflect on their work and to offer feedback as lessons are brought to an end.
- The teachers successfully and effectively introduce and revise subject terminology in appropriate contexts.

- Purposive and effective use is made of various teaching techniques in order to ensure that there is a balance between direct teaching, co-operative work in groups or pairs and individual work.
- Pupils are given ample opportunities to solve problems in relevant and stimulating contexts and to discuss with each other when making decisions.
- Effective use is made of a good range of equipment, resources and artefacts to enrich and reinforce the work that is introduced.
- In lessons where the teaching is satisfactory, and in the rare instances where teaching is unsatisfactory, although some of the above-mentioned attributes are present, there are also some shortcomings.
- A lack of sufficiently detailed guidance as pupils engage in activities means that not all pupils achieve their full potential. In some large-group oral sessions, not all the groups engaging in discussions are given an equal amount of the teacher's attention.
- At times, most specifically in KS1, the pace of lessons is too leisurely, teachers' introductions too long and the over-enthusiasm of some pupils is not controlled effectively enough. This has an adverse effect on the amount of work covered during the lesson.
- Full advantage is not taken of the opportunities provided in some lessons to further develop pupils' understanding of some important concepts.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The quality of the arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress is good.

- The arrangements are based on an effective policy.
- Pupils' progress is assessed regularly through the use made of standardised tests and tests produced by the school.
- The findings are recorded and targets set for further progress; effective use is made of booklets prepared by the LEA to record assessments in the core and foundation subjects. Targets for improvement are set for individual pupils on the basis of these findings.
- Baseline assessment arrangements and 'This is me' booklets are used to assess the achievement of the children under five.
- Detailed records are kept of the learning difficulties encountered by pupils with SEN as well as records of their progress.
- Three Open Evenings are held for parents during the school year; parents appreciate the opportunities they are given to be aware of the progress targets set for their children. The quality of the reports they receive at the end of the school year is good.
- The teachers provide encouraging comments about pupils' work, but there is no consistency in the guidance pupils are given to improve their own work, especially in KS2.

5.3 Curriculum

The curriculum provided for pupils is of good quality.

- The curriculum is based on a two-year cycle of themes.
- Relevant curriculum plans have been prepared and the long-term subject plans are detailed and of good quality. The plans are implemented in a well-organised manner in the classes, ensuring that appropriate attention is given to a good range of subject matter.
- Planning for the children under five is detailed and meets the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- The school has a clear homework policy. A variety of tasks are set that require pupils to record the results of their investigations and to practise their language skills.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding are reinforced by the occasional contributions of adults who have specific specialisms and by the educational visits that are arranged to relevant locations.
- The regular contribution of volunteers who listen to pupils read and who provide tuition in musical instruments is effective, as are the comments offered about pupils' progress.
- KS2 pupils benefit from the opportunities they are given to take part in extra-curricular activities when they occasionally stay overnight at Plas Tan-y-Bwlch. Urdd Gobaith Cymru meetings are held regularly after school hours. Peripatetic music tutors contribute effectively to the extra-curricular provision available in the school.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The quality of the support and educational and personal guidance provided for pupils is good.

- The staff exercise care in relation to the safety and welfare of pupils, ensuring that the school is a happy community.
- Equal opportunities are provided. Nevertheless, there are rare occasions where insufficient attention is given to pupils who are not confident in Welsh.
- The school has adopted policies on sex education and on personal and social education; these areas are dealt with effectively within the curriculum.
- Teachers are aware of the appropriate steps to be taken in order to protect children from abuse.
- One of the teachers possesses a current qualification in first-aid. The fire extinguishers and portable electrical appliances are inspected annually. Fire practices are held regularly.
- Appropriate steps have been taken to restrict access to the school building.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

The quality of the provision for pupils with SEN is good.

- The SEN provision is based on a policy that outlines the statutory requirements relating to SEN. However, it does not contain details about the SEN stages, nor does it contain details of the exact nature of the provision provided by the school.
- Pupils with SEN are identified at an early stage and are placed on the appropriate stage of the Code of Practice. There are currently nine pupils on the register, but no pupil has a statement of SEN.
- The records that are maintained and the individual learning plans that are produced for pupils on Stages 2 and 3 of the Code of Practice are of good quality; records are kept of all discussions with parents and other agencies.
- Good support is provided for pupils, occasionally in the mainstream classes and at other times in group sessions taught by the assistant who is employed on a part-time basis. The co-operation between her and the class teacher, in terms of the planning and implementation of activities, fosters the pupils' progress.
- The member of the governing body who has specific responsibility for SEN is well aware of the circumstances and situation in the school.

5.6 Partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions

Partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions, are good.

- The parents are very supportive of the work of the school and of the education and values it promotes. The Friends of the School Association occasionally organises educational meetings and organises fund-raising activities. They make a valuable contribution to the school, totalling £2500 or more each year.
- The arrangements made to provide parents with information about aspects relevant to the life and work of the school are good. The handbook and the governing body's annual report to parents, are current and meet the majority of the statutory requirements. The handbook does not include enough detail about the school's SEN policy, it does not include the school's objectives in relation to sports nor details about the home/school contract.
- The school appreciates the support it willingly receives from the community. Relevant visits are arranged to locations and institutions in the area and beyond. A small number of parents and other volunteers have agreed to participate in reading sessions with the pupils. The school is used as a community centre for the village during the evenings.
- Effective links have been established with the pre-school unit that meets in the community hall. Pastoral and curricular links with the local secondary school are good.
- On occasion, students from the local secondary school or from the local training institutions visit the school for work experience purposes.
- Effective links have been established with the various services of the local Unitary Authority.

5.7 Partnership with Industry.

The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

- The school does not have a policy to provide direction to the work of developing the contribution of industry to the curriculum. Nevertheless, some strategies are implemented to provide valuable experiences for pupils.
- Following a visit to the school by an officer from the local council, the pupils have carried out a study of rubbish in order to determine which materials it is practical to recycle.
- Education and Learning Wales [ELWa] have sponsored a Science Show for all the school's pupils. Sponsorship has also been received from the Arts Council and from the National Lottery to finance art work produced to celebrate the millennium.
- Visits are arranged to local businesses that are relevant to the topics being studied in the school. Pupils' understanding of processes relating to the world of work is developing satisfactorily.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory.

- When she took up her post in the school, the head sent a questionnaire to all parents in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school from their perspective. The vast majority of the responses were positive and the school has taken action in response to the small number of recommendations for improvement which resulted from the consultation process. This has proved to be effective in that it has strengthened the links with parents and increased their role in the development of the school.
- Appropriate arrangements have been made, over a period of several years, to set quantitative targets for each pupil in the school on the basis of national and internal test results. These arrangements have been adopted by the new head and the targets set are both ambitious and accessible.
- The scripts and results of NC tests are analysed carefully, any shortcomings identified and future work modified accordingly.
- Work has commenced on establishing a monitoring procedure. Some specific areas of the curriculum and aspects relating to the management or ethos of the school have been discussed. In addition, the provision in both classes has been scrutinised in detail in respect of these aspects. The outcomes have been recorded in detail, areas requiring further attention have been identified and the likely outcomes listed. A summary of these records has been presented to the governing body.
- Although the head regularly visits the KS2 class, and although the teachers work closely together, no formal arrangements have been made to evaluate the teaching and learning by observing lessons.

- The SDP is a useful document which includes a detailed evaluation of the previous SDP as well as a detailed action plan for the current year. It identifies curricular and managerial priorities, but does not describe how the financial resources available to the school are to be used in order to meet these priorities. It does not contain quantitative targets that are specific enough to lead to improvement and the links between the outcomes of the self-evaluation procedures and the priorities in the SDP are not close enough.
- The arrangements made for the professional development of staff, including in-service training courses, are well matched to the priorities listed in the SDP. The job descriptions prepared for each staff member identify general and statutory responsibilities, but do not refer to specific curriculum responsibilities.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

- The relationships established between the governing body, the head, the assistant teachers and the remainder of the staff have established a homely and positive atmosphere and caring ethos.
- The new head is enthusiastic and industrious and offers firm leadership. She is accessible to staff and parents and has high expectations in terms of standards of achievement and values.
- The governing body meets regularly and the members carry out their statutory responsibilities conscientiously. Members demonstrate an interest in curricular issues and monitor spending in order to secure value for money. Although there is a substantial surplus in the school budget [12%] plans have been made to use these funds to protect staffing levels by continuing to employ a classroom assistant for a specific period.
- Action has been taken with regard to all the recommendations contained in the most recent auditors' report.
- The general organisation and administration of the school are good.
- The school conforms with the statutory requirements and gives value for money.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

- Staffing levels are good and the teachers' experience and qualifications are appropriate for the age range they teach. The ancillary staff and assistants carry out their duties well when providing support for the pupils and teachers. The teachers have attended a good range of training courses. The vast majority of these courses have had a positive effect on many aspects of the work and have led to an improvement in teaching methods and to a raising of standards.
- The classroom housing KS1 pupils and the under fives is small and at times this has an adverse effect on the implementation of the curriculum. The other classrooms are of a good size and are suited to the teaching of NC subjects. The tasteful and varied displays in the school contribute to pupils' learning.

- The school is located on an open and pleasant site and with the exception of a gutter that has fallen out of its brackets and a window that is rotting, the condition of the building is good.
- The hard-surfaced play area and school field are of adequate size. A wire from a nearby electrical pole is difficult to see and could pose a danger. No separate playing area has been designated for the under fives.
- Standards of cleanliness, inside and outside the school, are very good.
- The resource provision is good across all areas of the curriculum and, with the exception of outdated books, the resources are of good quality and are used effectively.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

7.1 Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

Four children of reception class age [4-5 years] are taught in the KS1 class. The educational provision for them is appropriate and the desirable outcomes are successfully promoted. General standards are satisfactory.

Good features

- The children's personal and social development is satisfactory. In general they co-operate and play happily with Y1 and Y2 pupils, sharing resources and apparatus. A small number persevere with their tasks and demonstrate a good level of independence when engaging with their activities.
- Their language development is satisfactory. They can talk confidently in their mother tongue and follow instructions accurately. The oral skills of the Welsh learners are developing satisfactorily. They enjoy listening to a story, demonstrate an interest in books and are beginning to read simple, familiar texts. They can write their names and copy out words and sentences.
- The children's mathematical development is satisfactory. They identify numbers up to at least 10 and can order them correctly on a blank number line. They understand the concepts 'more than' and 'fewer than' and can apply this knowledge when handling numbers. They can identify and name simple two-dimensional [2D] shapes.
- The children's creative development is good. They sing a good range of different songs and rhymes and can maintain the beat fairly accurately when using untuned instruments. Their creative skills are further developed when they join with KS1 pupils to undertake painting and craft work activities.
- The children's physical development is good. They handle small tools skilfully and demonstrate a good degree of control over their movements when involved in physical education lessons with KS1 pupils. The regular opportunities they are given to play with large toys promote their development.

- The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. They know about the work of the postman and understand the function of the post office. They can name the parts of the body and identify the basic colours.
- The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively.

Shortcomings

- A significant minority of the children find it difficult to listen for extended periods and are not always willing to conform to the teacher's expectations.
- The play activities are not sufficiently structured. Consequently, some important skills are not fully developed across the six areas of learning.

Welsh

Reading standards are good and standards in oracy and writing are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- A good number of KS1 pupils listen satisfactorily to presentations and instructions and produce enthusiastic oral responses. They demonstrate a good understanding of the issues introduced in whole-class sessions.
- A large majority of the pupils read meaningfully; they enjoy books and can discuss the events and characters intelligently.
- A small number can produce pieces of writing of good quality to express their experiences and to record information. They pose a variety of questions and can arrange a list of instructions when outlining a process.
- In KS2, a significant number of pupils are confident and quite fluent when talking to each other and when communicating with adults.
- The reading of the majority of the pupils is fluent and effortless. They know how to use information books, can discuss the kinds of texts they are reading, and express opinions about the content and the authors.
- A small number can record their ideas in writing to a satisfactory standard. They produce extended pieces of writing in paragraphs and use a variety of forms and idioms to reinforce their writing. In general, their spelling and punctuation skills are developing satisfactorily.

Shortcomings

- A small number of KS1 pupils are over-enthusiastic during oral sessions and tend to disrupt each other's contributions.
- KS1 pupils do not produce pieces of coherent, free writing regularly enough.
- In KS2, there are a number of pupils who not contribute with any degree of confidence during lessons; they do not possess the vocabulary or syntactic accuracy to write well or to an acceptable level of correctness.

English

In accordance with the policy of the Unitary Authority, the teaching is mainly through the medium of Welsh in KS1. However, the pupils do benefit from regular contact with English and are developing well in their ability to talk, read and write.

In KS2, standards in oracy, reading and writing are good.

Good features

- Pupils derive consistent benefit from the use made of role-play across the curriculum to develop their oral skills; they express themselves and convey their ideas well. They co-operate effectively to create situations and to report back on their experiences.
- A good number of the pupils read fluently and meaningfully, understand what they are reading and can discuss their favourite authors. They can gather information effectively from books and other sources.
- Throughout the KS2 years, the pupils record their experiences, produce pieces of writing in different forms, mainly in response to literary stimuli and are learning effectively about the attributes of the written language.
- By Y5 and Y6, the more able pupils are producing extended pieces of writing of good quality. They vary the register according to the purpose of the pieces in question and demonstrate an awareness of the audience they are writing for. They make meaningful use of paragraphs and have a satisfactory mastery of spelling and punctuation skills.

Shortcomings

- Throughout the key stage, a number of pupils are quiet and reticent; they do not contribute sufficiently to class discussions.

Mathematics

Standards are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils count on and count back accurately in a variety of steps and can identify some patterns and sequences such as odd and even numbers. They have a good understanding of place value, can correctly order numbers containing one and two digits from the largest to the smallest and know what each digit represents.
- By Y2, they can identify every coin up to £1 in value and the more able pupils use coins in appropriate contexts when counting out simple totals of money when giving change. They add and subtract numbers with increasing accuracy and have a good level of understanding of the multiplication process as repeated addition.
- They can identify 2D shapes by their names and describe their attributes correctly. They can identify symmetry in a shape and produce symmetrical patterns.

- They use a ruler correctly when drawing and measuring lines to the nearest centimetre and have a good understanding of the quantity of water in a litre.
- In KS2, pupils' understanding of place value with numbers containing up to four digits and their knowledge about the addition, subtraction, multiplication and division processes, is secure. Their understanding of the multiplication tables and their ability to apply this knowledge when solving problems is progressing in accordance with their age.
- In Y3 and Y4, the pupils use mathematical terms accurately when naming and describing the attributes of 2D and 3D shapes. They use standard measures successfully when measuring length, mass and time. They solve problems methodically and effectively by collating, analysing and comparing data.
- By Y5 and Y6, the vast majority of pupils deal speedily with mental work. They can double and halve simple fractions and numbers up to at least 1000 with speed and accuracy. They use a number of different strategies when involved in oral work and can provide effective explanations of the methods they used. They co-operate effectively in groups when solving challenging problems.
- Pupils have a good understanding of angles, perimeters and area and use and apply this knowledge skilfully in different contexts. They use standard measures confidently.
- They collate, compare and analyse various data intelligently and record the results effectively and very accurately in the form of tables and block and line graphs. They have a good understanding of when to use different kinds of graphs and how to interpret them.

Shortcomings

- A significant number of KS1 pupils are uncertain when carrying out mental calculations and their ability to use suitable strategies have not been developed sufficiently.

Science

Standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils know and can describe the differences between living and non-living things. They can name the main external organs of the human body and identify similar and different features in individual children. They know the importance of diet to physical well-being. They know that human beings grow and can describe the different stages in people's lives.
- By Y2, the pupils' knowledge of the physical processes associated with electricity is good. They construct electrical circuits with ease and understand that electrical devices will not work if there is a break in the circuit. They use a switch to control a device and can explain the effects of using more than one battery to make a light bulb work.

- Pupils' investigative skills are good. They use their own ideas and make sensible predictions. They make detailed observations and use appropriate non-standard measures before coming to a conclusion. They use tables and simple block graphs to record their results and offer clear explanations for their discoveries.
- When carrying out investigations to discover which material would be best for the purpose of building a dark cave in their classroom, they describe their work clearly, both orally and in writing, and use the appropriate scientific vocabulary.
- In KS2, pupils engage in a good variety of scientific investigations and they have a firm knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of the work.
- In Y3 and Y4, the pupils can identify and name different kinds of forces. When investigating magnets, they describe the forces they create effectively and the effects of these forces on different materials. They use the appropriate scientific terms correctly in both languages.
- They can name and locate the main organs in the human body, explain their functions and name the main external parts of a flowering plant. They know that a plant requires water and light to make it grow.
- Throughout KS2, pupils undertake a good range of scientific investigations. They make sensible predictions, based on intelligent reasoning. When carrying out an investigation to determine the best kind of material to use in curtains for the Camera Club, they demonstrate a good understanding of the need for fair testing.
- They co-operate effectively in groups when investigating the effects of different forces on people's everyday lives. They participate in detailed discussions to ensure that a test is fair and offer intelligent explanations of which factors need to be changed and which should remain constant as they carry out their investigation. They make sensible suggestions as to how their work could be improved.
- Pupils make effective use of different kinds of apparatus when carrying out detailed measurements and understand the need to make a series of observations and measurements in some cases. They record their conclusions in an organised manner using block and line graphs. They analyse their results carefully and explain their conclusions intelligently, using scientific vocabulary accurately and appropriately.

Shortcomings

- A significant minority of Y5 and Y6 pupils are uncertain as to the reasons why measurements need to be repeated in investigations.
- Pupils do not make sufficient use of ITC when carrying out scientific investigations or when recording their work.

Design and technology

Standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils handle a wide range of different materials and components when designing and making various objects.
- When designing and making puppets, they produce simple sketches that have been labelled appropriately to illustrate the details of their initial ideas. They can handle simple tools safely and use appropriate methods of measuring, marking cutting and shaping a range of materials.
- When designing and making a moving vehicle, they come to understand how simple mechanisms, such as joints, axles and wheels, work. They talk confidently about their work expressing preferences or suggesting improvements.
- In Y4, pupils successfully design and make a greetings card that incorporates a mobile component. They plan their work carefully and evaluate their design ideas sensibly. The final products are of good quality and demonstrate considerable creativity and imagination.
- Pupils make progress as they proceed from year to year in KS2 They have developed a range of useful skills which enables them to deal with a number of design and making tasks. They know how to measure accurately, how to strengthen a frame and how to use simple mechanisms to produce different kinds of movement.
- When designing and making a tipper lorry, KS2 pupils make drawings and designs of good quality which contain detailed measurements. They make effective use of pneumatics to produce movement in the vehicle. They can discuss their ideas and decisions confidently and offer intelligent explanations of how they made the product. The vast majority of pupils produce objects of good quality which meet identified needs. They evaluate their products effectively, giving appropriate consideration to their suitability and suggesting ways of improving them.
- All the pupils demonstrate a good awareness of health and safety rules when using a range of tools.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not use control technology to input and store instructions that regulate movement in their products.

Information Technology

Standards are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- The older pupils in KS1 work independently on the computer selecting and opening programmes, saving their work on a personal file, recovering work and printing it.
- They make appropriate use of word-processing skills and effective use of a drawing package.

- They make some use of a programme that allows them to compose music and of a database for producing simple graphs. They work with a good range of programmes to reinforce and enrich their experiences in language and mathematics. They are very aware of the use made of ICT in the world around them.
- The pupils have worked effectively in groups to produce an imaginary map by inputting and following direction on screen.
- In KS2, pupils use ICT to produce and present information in a variety of forms for different purposes and for a variety of audiences. They make confident use of e-mail to send and receive messages.
- KS2 pupils make confident use of a data-handling programme to collate, modify, interrogate and organise information based on a questionnaire about the re-cycling of materials. Data are recorded effectively in the form of block and line graphs.
- They use a desktop publishing programme effectively to produce a newspaper report. They understand how to create borders, how to change the size, shape and colour of print and can use pictures downloaded from the Web when presenting their work in a finished form.
- When using LOGO software, they successfully write out a set of instructions to form a shape on screen.
- They make effective use of sensors to carry out detailed measurements when investigating the effect of light on various materials.
- They make appropriate use of a scanner and digital camera when combining text and pictures.

Shortcomings

- KS1 pupils do not make consistent use of technology to reinforce their class work.

History

Standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils have a good understanding of the passage of time and of the way in which change occurs over a period; they know about the characteristics of children's lives in different periods. They can use historical terms accurately to convey aspects of the past and present.
- They understand the difference between real and imaginary characters and know that both kinds represent aspects of the past. They can empathise with living conditions in an earlier period by identifying with a character from the past.
- They can compare and contrast objects such as the household implements of the past and present successfully, recording their knowledge in the form of pictures.

- KS2 pupils can discuss the historical periods they have studied well and can locate them in chronological order. They understand the main characteristics of these periods.
- They can identify with characters who represent the different groupings within primitive societies and can reason about their comparative importance in such societies.
- Pupils use evidence, such as artefacts or pictures from the Second World War period, to reinforce their understanding of a specific period.
- They benefit from visiting a centre that has a historical ambience to extend their understanding and to record their impressions in a variety of forms; they pose relevant questions in writing.

Shortcomings

- KS2 pupils are not sufficiently experienced in carrying out their own investigations.

Geography

Standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- KS1 pupils are well informed about their own area; they know about its main features and about specific locations which offer services to the residents of the village.
- When tracing a journey on a map, they can locate specific places by using simple co-ordinates.
- Following an interesting investigation of the letters that arrive at the school, they acquire a good knowledge of the location of towns and cities in the British Isles and comparative distances from their own village.
- When studying the climate of contrasting areas, in Wales and beyond, KS2 pupils record their findings effectively in the form of graphs.
- Pupils have a good awareness of the influence of climate and weather on the living conditions of the inhabitants of some countries and on some specific products destined for the breakfast table.
- They have a good understanding of environmental issues and can express opinions about the effectiveness of different locations and methods for dealing with waste.
- They make effective use of mapping symbols as they plan journeys around places in the locality.

Shortcomings

- KS2 pupils' knowledge and understanding of contrasting communities has not been developed sufficiently.

Art

Standards are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- KS1 pupils know about individual paintings by famous artists. They can use a combination of media to produce paintings and demonstrate an awareness of texture when emulating style.
- They produce paintings of a satisfactory standard in response to music.
- Pupils make effective use of computer technology to produce pictures.
- Their ability to observe objects, such as artefacts used in the past, is good and the sketches they produce contain some detail.
- By observing the work of famous artists and emulating aspects of their styles, KS2 pupils produce paintings of good quality, including portraits, still life and landscape paintings.
- They produce collage work using basic materials but in a manner that produces a striking visual impression.
- By observing carefully, they produce effective sketches of the school building; they respond to work undertaken on the history of primitive societies by creating clay pots which reflect the period in question.

Shortcomings

- KS1 pupils do not make sufficient use of their art skills to create three-dimensional objects.
- Pupils do not practise their artistic and imaginative powers sufficiently in either key stage.

Music

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils are familiar with a variety of appropriate songs. They sing energetically and with enjoyment; the vast majority sing in tune and can differentiate between different sounds.
- They listen intently to music by well-known composers and respond appropriately by using different parts of their bodies to emulate rhythmic patterns.
- They can identify and name a good number of musical instruments and can explain the differences between them. They use percussion instruments effectively to compose their own simple rhythmic patterns and record their work appropriately on a graphic score.

- In KS2, pupils sing a satisfactory range of songs for various occasions. They can modify the dynamics when required to do so and demonstrate some control over breathing, diction and phrasing.
- They listen intently to their own recorded musical creations and their ability to evaluate their work and to suggest improvements is developing well.
- Pupils listen to a range of well-known music and respond intelligently to it. KS2 pupils can identify and name a good range of instruments by listening to the sound they make.
- They can identify and name different notes and the vast majority can read a simple musical score.

Shortcomings

- Although the pupils deal appropriately with all aspects of the subject, their dealings with them are superficial and the musical skills of a significant number are elementary.

Physical Education

(The school benefits from catchments area arrangements to teach gymnastics to Y5 and Y6 pupils in the local secondary school.)

One ball-skills lesson was observed in KS1 and a gymnastics lesson for Y3 and Y4 pupils. On the basis of the evidence observed, standards are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- As they take part in warming-up exercises, KS1 pupils move gracefully and make effective use of space. They respond well to instructions when changing pace and direction. They understand why warming-up is necessary before engaging in energetic activity.
- Their ball-handling skills develop satisfactorily when they work in pairs.
- In KS2, pupils work effectively to create movements and demonstrate posture and the ability to create a sequence of floor movements. They respond to instructions to improve their performance and offer useful comments when observing each other's performances.
- Their ability to handle large apparatus safely is developing and they respond in a disciplined manner when working on various apparatus.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, the progress made by pupils when practising their ball-handling skills in pair and group work is insufficient. They do not realise that adhering to rules is a fundamental aspect of competitive activity.
- In KS2, the quality of some pupils' technique, in activities such as jumping and rolling, is not of the required standard when they work on the apparatus.

Religious Education

Standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, the pupils are familiar with a number of Bible stories and can re-tell them correctly. They understand that the Bible is a Holy Book and that it is a source of stories about Jesus.
- Their knowledge and understanding of places of worship is appropriate and their awareness of the importance of Christian rituals, such as baptism and the communion, is good. They can describe Christian festivals confidently.
- They know about important figures in the Welsh Christian tradition and of the significance of their contribution.

- Pupils throughout the school understand the purpose of prayer and compose their own simple prayers. The periods of collective worship contribute well to pupils' knowledge and understanding of different aspects of the Christian faith and of moral and spiritual issues.
- By KS2, pupils' knowledge about the Bible and its stories has increased. They can re-tell them confidently in interesting ways through role-play and by using a variety of different forms of writing.
- Their knowledge and understanding of the various rituals of Christianity is good. They can identify the main characteristics of places of worship and the use that is made of the artefacts within them.
- They have a good awareness of the characteristics of religions other than Christianity and are developing in their respect and tolerance for those religions. They can describe the main characteristics of Judaism and Islam and use a wide range of interesting artefacts to reinforce their understanding.
- All the pupils have a good understanding of principles such as friendship, caring for others and respect for fellow human beings and for the environment.

Shortcomings

- Pupils are not ready enough to ask questions and to discuss religious or spiritual matters.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The report issued following the inspection in the Spring Term, 1997, identified the following key issues as requiring action by the school.

The school needs to:

- 1. reconsider its financial plans in order to make use of the surplus that is available to it;*
- 2. arrange additional support for Y4 pupils whose progress is slow;*
- 3. improve standards in some subjects from satisfactory to good and in other from good to very good;*
- 4. review the manner in which teaching space is utilised in order to provide a more appropriate learning environment for the children under five.*

1. Although there is a substantial surplus in the budget, the school plans to use it to maintain staffing levels by continuing to employ a classroom assistant for a specific period. This is effective use of funds and it is likely to lead to an improvement in standards.
2. According to the post-inspection action plan, a part-time teacher was employed to provide 20 days of additional support over a two-year period for the Y4 pupils whose progress was slow. Some indication of the effect of this additional support is evident in the percentage of these pupils who gained level 4 or higher in the statutory tests at the end of KS2: Welsh – 12.5%; English – 62.5%; Mathematics – 75%; Science – 75%.

3. Since the previous inspection, standards of achievement in English, mathematics in KS2, science in both key stages, physical education in KS2, art in KS2 and religious education in both key stages, have improved from satisfactory to good.

Standards of achievement in the other subjects have remained unchanged.

- Space in the classroom where KS1 pupils and the children under five are taught continues to be limited, but by now the school has taken steps to provide a more conducive environment for the under fives by making additional use of the hall and of the open air during the summer. The children are given opportunities to play with large toys or with the sand or water tray, under the supervision of the classroom assistant, on a weekly basis. Enquiries have been made with officers from the authority about the possibility of modifying the teaching spaces in order to provide additional space for the KS1 and under-fives' class. To date, no decisions have been made.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The school needs to:

- maintain standards in the subjects and aspects where standards are good;
- improve standards in the subjects and aspects that are satisfactory by paying attention to the shortcomings noted;
- further develop its self-evaluation arrangements by:
 - visiting classrooms to evaluate the teaching and learning;
 - ensuring that there are close links between the outcomes of the self-evaluation arrangements and the priorities in the SDP;
- modify and refine the SDP so that it contains quantitative targets for improvement and producing more detailed expenditure plans for the priorities identified.

APPENDIX

School Data

A. Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Brynchrug
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Address of school	Brynchrug Tywyn Gwynedd
Post code	LL36 9PR
Phone number	01654 710931

Headteacher	Mrs Iona Wyn Jones
Date of appointment	September 2001
Chair of governors	Mrs Bethan Lawton
Registered Inspector	Mrs Jean Marshall
Date of inspection	18,19 March 2002

B. School data and indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>								
Year Group	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	4	4	6	8	4	5	6	37

<i>Number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full time equivalent
Number of teachers	2	1	2.1

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil: teacher ratio, excluding nursery and special classes	17.6:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special places	18.5
Teacher: class ratio	1.05

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	Reception	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Spring Term	99.18	98.29	97.04	98.17
Summer Term	98.66	98.54	96.97	98.06
Autumn Term	96	96.45	96.97	96.47

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and the public examinations

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 results : 2001	Number of pupils in Y2: 6
As the number of pupils eligible to be assessed at the end of KS1 was more than 5 but lower than 10, only performance indicators are included.	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and Welsh			
By teacher assessment		By test	
In the school:	83.3%	In the school:	83.3%
In Wales:	80%	In Wales:	80%

National Curriculum Assessments KS2 Results: 2001	Number of pupils in Y6: 2
Because the number of pupils eligible to be assessed at the end of KS2 was lower than 5, there is no need to include this information	

D The evidence base of the inspection

The school was inspected over a period of 2 days by a team of two professional inspectors and one lay inspector. During the inspection:

- 27 sessions were observed, with the time being shared fairly equally between the classes;

- discussions were held with pupils, the head and all the staff;
- pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work they had completed were examined;
- all the pupils were listened to reading in both languages;
- samples of pupils work were examined;
- an analysis was made of the school's policies and plans, the teachers' long-term and short-term plans and the schemes of work;
- the attendance registers, pupils' records and teachers' assessment notes were examined;
- detailed attention was given to the school budget documentation;
- a formal meeting was held with the school governors;
- a parents meeting was held, which was attended by 10 parents and 14 parents' questionnaires were received and analysed.

E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Name	Role	Sections of the report	Subjects (section 7)
Jean Marshall	Registered Inspector	1.0 2.0 3.1 3.2 5.1 6.1 6.2 6.3 8.1 8.2 Appendix	Children under five, Mathematics, Science, Design and technology, Information technology, Music, Religious education
Len Jones	Professional Inspector	4.1 5.2 5.3 5.5	Welsh, English, History, Geography, Art, Physical Education
Griff Ch. Morris	Lay Inspector	4.1 4.2 4.3 5.4 5.6 5.7 6.3	

The inspectors wish to express their thanks to the school's governors, head, staff, pupils and parents for their willing co-operation during the inspection.