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BRYNGWYN INFANT'S AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13, the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage (KS) 1 of the national curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

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

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Bryngwyn Infant's and Junior School was created in 1972 from the original Victorian secondary school. It contains a modern Early Years Unit as well as a unit for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The school serves the community of Six Bells and a significant proportion of pupils come from backgrounds that are economically disadvantaged.

At the time of the inspection there were 242 pupils attending the school and the school's roll has risen considerably since its last inspection in 1997. Thirty-one children attend the school's nursery. Approximately 23 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Although this figure is above the national average, it is currently falling and is less than at the time of the school's last inspection. Fifty-five pupils get some additional support for their special educational needs (SEN). The needs of 24 pupils are mainly catered for in the Special Needs Unit (SNU). Pupils attending the school have a full range of abilities and all pupils speak English as their first language.

The school has a clear set of aims, which support the development of pupils' academic, social and personal education. The school specifically states that its aim is to 'enlarge upon a child's knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding, and thus his/her awareness of moral values and capacity for enjoyment'.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

- This is an effective school with a number of very good facets. It has generally made good progress in addressing the issues raised by the last inspection. The leadership of the school by the head teacher, deputy head teacher and senior staff is good. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in Early Years and Key Stage 1.
- The quality of education provided for children under five is appropriate. The curriculum provided is very good and children achieve high standards in the five areas of learning.
- Pupils' overall standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) and religious education are as follows:

English	Very Good
Welsh as a Second Language	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Design and Technology (DT)	Good
Information Technology (IT)	Satisfactory
History	Good
Geography	Good
Art	Good
Music	Good
Physical Education (PE)	Good
Religious Education (RE)	Good

- The standards achieved by pupils in the key skills of speaking, listening and reading are very good. Standards in writing are good. Overall standards in literacy are very good and pupils make effective use of their skills in all subjects of the curriculum. Standards of numeracy are good and pupils use their skills well in all subjects, especially science, history and geography. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory. However, insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in some subjects across the curriculum and practice varies between classes. Good practice is seen in mathematics, where pupils have good opportunities to construct graphs from data they have gathered, but opportunities are missed in history, music and RE.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall. Collective worship makes a satisfactory contribution to these aspects of their education. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided and as a consequence are making good progress in their personal development.
- The quality of pupils' behaviour is very good. They have very positive attitudes to school and their work. As a result, they generally make good progress in their learning in all classes. Pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities overall. The school has good systems for ensuring good behaviour and for eliminating all forms of discrimination. Although there are satisfactory systems for inclusion, pupils from the SNU are currently not sufficiently integrated into the mainstream classes.
- Attendance is satisfactory overall, although there are a small number of pupils who are persistent non-attenders. Lessons generally start on time and most pupils are punctual.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. In lessons seen, teaching was very good in 29 per cent, good in 58 per cent and satisfactory in 13 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching is particularly good in Early Years, where all lessons seen were very good. Teaching was also very good overall at Key Stage 1, where 43 per cent of lessons seen were judged to be very good. Good teaching is characterised by effective planning for lessons and high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Where lessons were less successful, introductions were over long and lesson planning was too brief.
- The school procedures for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' progress are very good. Assessments are accurate and consistent. Information is used very well to promote higher standards and has been successful in raising standards in nearly all subjects. Reports to parents are good and provide them with useful information about their children's progress. Assessment information is analysed thoroughly and used effectively to ensure that all pupils have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The curriculum provided by the school is broad, balanced and of a good quality. It is particularly good at Key Stage 2. All subjects of the NC are covered well and good planning ensures that all pupils have access to the full range of activities offered. There is good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, music and chess. These make a significant contribution to the standards achieved by pupils, especially in PE. The arrangements for pupils' personal and social development are good and contribute significantly to the standards achieved.
- Provision for pupils' support and guidance is good overall, with some very good features evident in the care, kindness and respect that adults show for all pupils. There are satisfactory procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare overall, but some accommodation

concerns were raised with the school management. Arrangements for pupils' personal and educational guidance and for child protection are good.

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good overall and it has very effective policies. Pupils are supported well in classes and the Special Needs Unit (SNU), and all have access to the full curriculum. As a consequence of the good provision, pupils with SEN are making good progress in relation to their abilities.
- The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents and the wider community. Parents are provided with appropriate information on a regular basis. They make a satisfactory contribution to school life. There are good links with the local community, including local churches. Clergy come into school on a regular basis to take assemblies. The school has satisfactory relationships with other schools and good links with initial teacher training institutions.
- The school has satisfactory links with industry overall, but there are weaknesses in the extent to which the school has used these links to enhance staff development.
- The school has satisfactory procedures for evaluating educational standards and the quality of its provision. However, the school development plan is unsatisfactory in that it does not adequately inform future planning and is not linked to the school's budget. Targets are not adequately prioritised and decisions have not been systematically recorded, so that progress towards targets can be objectively measured. Systems for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development plans are currently informal and therefore unsatisfactory.
- The head teacher provides good leadership for the school and has ensured a clear educational direction for its work. This has resulted in improvements in standards over the past few years. The school has clear aims and objectives, which are worked out well in practice. The deputy head teacher and staff support the head teacher well. They work together as a team and this results in consistency of practice throughout the school. All subject co-ordinators work hard and to good effect, which has had a positive impact on standards. However, the governing body does not take a sufficiently active role in the management of the school, and this is a weakness. In addition, current administrative systems are unsatisfactory. There is no clear link between the school's budget and its development plan. As a result, budget setting does not adequately relate to the school's educational objectives. In turn, there is no mechanism for evaluating the effect of major spending decisions to ensure best value for money. Routine administration is severely hampered by the fact that administrative support is only available for three days a week and a significant proportion of this time is taken up with counting and recording dinner money.
- The school is well staffed by suitably qualified teachers, who are deployed effectively. They are supported well by classroom and learning assistants. There are satisfactory systems for staff appraisal and professional development. The school's accommodation is adequate, but there are some shortcomings. The hall is too small for Key Stage 2 PE lessons and there are some safety issues associated with the cramped conditions. Toilet facilities for pupils and staff are inadequate and the staffroom is too small for the number of staff who use it. The school is well resourced and this has a good impact on the standards achieved by pupils.
- The school has made good progress overall in addressing the key issues raised by its last inspection. The role of co-ordinators has been developed well and they now make a positive contribution to the management of the curriculum. Standards in spelling have been improved and are now good overall. There have been significant improvements to the accommodation for the Early Years and Key Stage 1. However, insufficient progress has been made in improving the school development plan and this remains and a key area for further development.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Standards of achievement were good in 69 per cent of lessons seen. They were very good in 18 per cent of lessons. This represents an improvement since the school's last inspection.

- The standards achieved by children in the Early Years Unit are very good. They make very good progress and achieve standards that are well above those expected at age five in all areas, except in their physical development, where their level of achievement is above the expected level.
- At Key Stage 1, standards of achievement are very good in English. They are good in Welsh as a second language, mathematics, science, art, design and technology (DT), geography, history, music, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE). Standards are satisfactory in information technology (IT).
- In teachers' assessments in 2001 at Key Stage 1, 86 per cent of pupils reached Level 2 or above in English. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 or better was above the national average. In mathematics, 84 per cent of pupils reached the expected Level 2 or above, which was below the national average. In science, 83 per cent of pupils reached Level 2, which is again below average.
- At Key Stage 2, standards of achievement are very good in English. They are good in Welsh as a second language, mathematics, science, art, DT, geography, history, music, PE and RE. Standards of achievement are satisfactory in IT.
- In the National Curriculum (NC) tests in 2001, 88 per cent of pupils reached Level 4 or above. The proportion of pupils achieving at least Level 4 was above the national average. In comparison to schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school was well above average. In mathematics, 92 per cent of pupils reached Level 4 and above, which was well above average. The results were also well above the average of similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in science was 100 per cent, which was well above the national average and that for similar schools. Overall, in all three core subjects, the school was well above the national average at 84 per cent reaching Level 4 or above. It was also above the upper quartile in comparison to similar schools. Early indications are that in the 2002 tests, pupils have continued to perform above the national average, although not at such a high level. This is largely due to the number of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. They generally enter the Nursery with levels of achievement that are broadly average. Progress is very good in Early Years and good in Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4, and very good progress in Year 5. Progress in Year 6 is good overall, although progress in a few foundation subjects has been adversely affected by the need to concentrate on core subjects at the end of the key stage. Pupils' progress in English is very good throughout the school. It is good in mathematics and science. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys and girls.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Literacy (speaking, listening, reading and writing)

Standards in key literacy skills are very good overall and all pupils make at least good progress. Many pupils, including those with SEN, are making very good progress in their development of their speaking, listening and reading skills.

- Pupils throughout the school make very good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. They are able to speak confidently and clearly and take the opportunities provided in various subject areas to discuss and debate their point of view.
- Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and each other and they speak confidently in class asking and answering questions. They communicate ideas and information in a variety of forms, taking into account the needs of their audience.
- Reading is very good throughout the school and pupils handle books confidently and enjoy reading, as well as using their skills to research information in other subjects. Pupils enjoy books and can give several good reasons why they have selected a particular book. Older pupils develop preferences for the work of certain authors and have an appropriate knowledge of genre.
- Standards of writing are good throughout the school and pupils write regularly for a range of purposes and to suit different contexts and audiences. Written work is generally well organised and presented. Pupils use their writing skills well in most subjects of the curriculum.

Numeracy

Standards of numeracy are good throughout the school and all pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress.

- Pupils use their well-developed arithmetical skills effectively in science, design technology and art.
- Pupils are able to gather data and understand its application in design and technology by the end of Key Stage 2.

Information and Communication Technology

Standards in ICT are satisfactory at both key stages and progress is likewise satisfactory.

- Pupils use their word processing skills across the curriculum and this is evident in how they present their work in their books and in wall displays.
- In DT, pupils are able to control their electric circuits, using control technology. A satisfactory level of programming is evident in their work.
- Pupils are confident in the use of the computer and use graphic programmes to produce computer-generated images, the digital camera is also effectively utilised in their work.
- Some teachers' planning does not identify regular opportunities to use technology. Insufficient use is made of audio-visual equipment which would support learning in Welsh.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of pupils is good. The school has been successful in maintaining a very good ethos, where respect for others and care in the community is developed effectively. Pupils recognise the difference between right and wrong and this is integral to their moral development.

- Pupils display good attitudes towards their peers. They respect the property of others and have a positive attitude to work. Pupils have a constructive attitude to the environment and are caring in their relationships with others.
- Relationships within the school are very good and pupils respond positively to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision.
- Acts of worship are part of the daily routine where experiences are shared. The RE lessons encourage pupils to think and respond to issues and this is making a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
- Pupils' social development is evident in the collaborative way the 'Book Buddies' initiative is fostering links between older and younger pupils and when assistance is given with reading, older pupils are ready to prompt and give praise.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided by the school for collaborative art projects. The school is actively involved in promoting the pupils' awareness of the culture of Wales and beyond.
- Links with the community and concern for others is evident in the pupils' effort in organising events to raise money for worthwhile causes and charities.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The school has successfully maintained the very good standards of behaviour identified in the previous inspection report. Behaviour continues to be strength of the school.

- The school has created a caring, orderly community where pupils feel secure and valued, and in this environment their individual talents and self-esteem are successfully nurtured.
- In lessons pupils display very good attention to, and interest in their studies. The very good quality of relationships between class teachers and their pupils, and the range of teaching strategies employed make a positive contribution to pupils' behaviour and to standards of achievement.
- There is a good behaviour policy. Behaviour management is unobtrusive and derives its effectiveness from the leadership of the school, the family ethos and a common sense of purpose amongst all members of the school community.
- Pupils clearly know what is right and wrong; the head teacher and his staff are very good role models and their clear and simple expectations of behaviour are constantly achieved.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to one another, they are happy together, and they demonstrate increasing confidence and maturity with adults as they progress through the school.

- All members of staff are alert in monitoring and minimising oppressive behaviour, including incidents of bullying, in line with the family ethos that permeates the school.

4.3 Attendance

The school achieves satisfactory levels of attendance, generally in excess of 93 per cent. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection.

- The large majority of pupils have good attendance records. There are, however, a small minority of pupils, some 13 per cent, whose attendance in school is below 90 per cent. This impedes their learning and adversely affects the school's average. Unauthorised absence is non-existent. Pupils' punctuality is generally satisfactory, there are however a small number of pupils who are regularly late.
- Attendance is calculated manually. This is time consuming, particularly so in view of the limited amount of administrative time available to the school. Figures, when they are produced, are analysed efficiently by the head teacher, with good support from the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Class teachers take registration efficiently and procedures comply with National Assembly requirements. Whilst the school does not set overall attendance targets, good emphasis is placed in targeting those pupils whose attendance records give rise for concern. The completion of registers has improved since the last inspection but punctuality concerns still exist.

5 QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching was very good in 29 per cent of lessons seen. It was good in 58 per cent and satisfactory in 13 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. These figures represent a significant improvement since the last inspection.

- Teaching is very good for children under five. Teachers have a very good grasp of the needs of young children and planning is very effective. Lessons are varied and stimulating, and as a result, children learn rapidly. Assessment information is used very effectively to ensure children are given work that is well matched to their needs.
- At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good overall and pupils are making rapid gains in their learning as a result. Planning is effective and has clear learning objectives. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to ask probing questions. As a result, pupils are making good progress in acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the key stage. Teachers make effective use of assessment information and tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities and prior attainment.
- The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall, and high quality teaching was seen in Year 5, as well as in several lessons in other year groups. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the key stage.
- Lessons are generally planned well at Key Stage 2, with clear learning objectives. Longer-term planning is also good, ensuring there is continuity and progression as pupils move from class to class. Teachers use a wide range of teaching techniques and classroom management is very effective.

- The good teaching throughout the school is characterised by high expectations of both behaviour and achievement. This has a positive effect on the progress made by pupils in their learning. All teachers have very good behaviour management skills and this ensures that there is a very good environment for learning and pupils feel secure. This has a particularly positive impact on standards of speaking and listening, as pupils are confident when they speak, knowing they will be listened to and that their contributions will be accepted.
- The quality of teaching in English is very good throughout the school. Teachers have succeeded in raising standards effectively and lessons are imaginative and inspiring. Teaching is effective in mathematics, with a good emphasis on mental arithmetic and problem solving. In science, too, teaching is good and pupils are given many opportunities to conduct practical investigations.
- Occasionally, where teaching is satisfactory, introductions are over long and pupils lose interest. Some planning for lessons was also very brief and did not clearly identify what different groups of pupils were expected to learn in the lesson.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The overall procedures for assessment, recording and reporting are very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

- The school complies with the statutory requirements for NC assessment and recording the progress of all pupils including those with SEN. The NC standard assessment test results are analysed in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in performance. Assessment information is used effectively to promote high standards.
- The school policy for marking pupils' work is good and it contains sufficient detail and guidance. Pupils' work is marked regularly at both key stages. Supportive and informative comments are made on the work.
- There is a very good system in place for recording pupils' achievements and progress. A blend of commercially produced and school based tests is used each year in mathematics. Assessment information is used effectively to inform future planning and to set targets for improvement.
- Teachers maintain good weekly planners which relate to NC standards.
- There is continuous assessment of pupils' progress in the core subjects and subject portfolios are kept showing a full range of annotated work in the core subject areas. Assessment and recording in the foundation subjects is satisfactory.
- The assessment of pupils with SEN is good and assessment is integral to the teaching process. Most of the assessment is based on pupils' progress in National Curriculum or sequence of skills, information is used to set targets in the individual education plans (IEPs).
- Written reports comply with statutory requirements and provide parents with useful information and clear statements of achievement. Parents are encouraged to comment on the reports and record their views. However, there is no room for pupils to make comments.
- Appropriate arrangements are in place for teachers to report on pupils' achievements. Parents are requested to attend the school in the autumn term when a review of progress is undertaken and during the summer term written when reports are presented.

5.3 Curriculum

The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that is accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs. The school has been successful in maintaining a wide and varied curriculum since the last inspection.

- The provision for children in the Early Years Unit is appropriate. The quality of the curriculum provided is very good and successfully provides for all the desirable outcomes for their learning.
- All curriculum policies are clearly written, appropriate and up to date. They are well supported by a range of other policies such as the equal opportunities policy, which ensure that all pupils enjoy full access to all areas of the curriculum.
- Schemes of work are of good quality and have been appropriately revised in line with Curriculum 2000. They contain the necessary detail to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning over time.
- Teachers' planning for the long and medium-term is detailed and relevant. However, individual lesson plans are often very brief. They state the learning objectives and activities to be provided but lack important information on how work is to be planned for pupils at different levels of attainment. Key skills are not included.
- Curricular planning to ensure access to the breadth of the NC for all pupils with SEN is good. IEPs contain clear and measurable targets that inform teachers' planning. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils in the SNU unit to learn alongside their peers and to share the richness of many mainstream learning experiences.
- There has been no formal audit of arrangements for the development of pupils' personal and social education but opportunities within the formal curriculum are effective overall.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their Welsh heritage and culture and that of the local area. The use of incidental Welsh is a positive feature that enriches the delivery of the curriculum.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced by an extensive range of worthwhile extra-curricular activities including team games, music and dance that are all well attended.
- Provision for homework is good and encourages pupils to work enthusiastically at home as well as at school.
- Opportunities to enrich the curriculum and pupils' understanding of the world of work by links with industry are beginning to have an impact on standards. At present, they are satisfactory.
- The school meets the recommendations of the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) Circular 3/99 regarding the amount of teaching time planned for each week.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

Provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is good overall. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection.

- The school has effective procedures for pupils' personal and educational guidance. There is a suitable policy for personal and social education, which is worked out well in practice. Teachers

know their pupils well and give good quality support in lessons. Assessment is used effectively to set clear educational targets and to support pupils' progress.

- Child protection procedures are well documented and all members of the school community are aware of their responsibilities and alert to this aspect of their roles. The school has a good working relationship with the relevant agencies.
- There is a comprehensive policy on health and safety, and the head teacher efficiently manages issues. Health and safety audits and equipment inspections are regularly undertaken. During the inspection it was noticed that the steps leading down to the Early Years area do not have handrail supports for use by the youngest pupils in the school.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

Provision for meeting the special educational needs of pupils is good overall with examples of very good practice. There have been some significant improvements since the last inspection.

- There are 55 pupils on the special educational needs register of whom 24 receive the vast majority of their education in the three separate special classes which make up the SNU. Sixteen of these pupils carry statements of special educational need, one is awaiting a statement and seven pupils in the SNU are at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice (School Action Plus). Of the 31 pupils in mainstream classes who have been identified as having special needs, 13 are at Stages 1 & 2 (School Action) and 18 are at Stage 3 (School Action Plus). A further seven pupils in the nursery and reception classes are being identified as experiencing greater difficulties in learning than their peers and are being closely monitored.
- Attitudes towards the pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties are positive throughout the school.
- Pupils in mainstream classes make sure, steady progress so that by the end of Key Stage 2 many achieve standards that are in line or close to national expectations.
- Pupils in the special classes make good progress over time. By the time they leave the school, they have achieved improvements of two and sometimes three levels in the core curriculum subjects.
- The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has long experience which enables her to oversee the SNU and mainstream school provision with good knowledge and expertise. She provides sound advice and support for both Unit and mainstream class teachers but has insufficient non-contact time to develop an in-class role that would enable her to monitor teaching and learning.
- The current policy for meeting special educational needs meets the 1993 Code of Practice and the school is aware of the changes in procedures that will take place under the new Code to be introduced in September.
- Assessment, record keeping and reporting are thorough, well organised and up to date. Parents are enabled to make appropriate contributions to the annual reviews of statements which statutory requirements.
- Whole school assessment procedures for identifying pupils with reading and writing difficulties are good. Appropriate levels of valuable support are provided both in class and in withdrawal

groups by learning support assistants who know the pupils well and are sensitive to their difficulties.

- IEPs are effective. Targets are clear and measurable with specific criteria for success. However, outcomes are not always recorded so that it is sometimes difficult to track progress between IEPs. Class teachers are aware of the targets and provide work for individual pupils at a suitable level of difficulty in the core curriculum but this is not always the case in the foundation subjects.
- The school receives very good support from the school psychological service and specialist teaching for pupils with specific learning difficulties is clearly focused and effective.
- Two of the three SNU classes are located within the main school buildings and social integration is good but there are limited planned opportunities for pupils to learn alongside their peers and so gradually increase their time in mainstream.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The school's partnerships with parents, schools and other institutions are satisfactory. The partnership with the community is good. This is similar to the situation found by the last inspection.

- There is an effective, warm, working relationship with parents. Parents, in the pre-inspection processes, expressed their appreciation of the approachability of all school staff, and the support and education provided by the school.
- A home/school agreement is in operation, and this is successful in attendance management. It is noted that parents do not participate in classroom activities and the PTA is no longer in operation. Good, regular, information is provided for parents that is complemented by parents' meetings and, on occasions, special meetings to deal with curriculum and school issues. The prospectus, and Governors' Annual Report to Parents, though informative, does not fully comply with Circulars 14/01 and 15/01 respectively.
- The school is significantly involved in the local community where they have a good reputation in sporting, musical and charitable activities. Both the immediate locality, and wider community of South Wales are effectively used as an additional educational resource, through visits undertaken and in visitors to the school. This programme is impressive and richly enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding across the subject areas.
- Transition into the school is managed in a sympathetic and caring manner to ensure an easy entry into the nursery unit. Onward progression into secondary education, though well established, lacks formal procedures and curriculum links are under-developed.
- The school enjoys good, effective, working agreements with initial teacher training colleges for trainee teachers, and local colleges for nursery training and other placements. The school gives students from the local comprehensive school good work experience placements.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Partnership with industry is satisfactory, which is much the same as at the time of the last inspection.

- The school is in the process of developing a policy on partnership with industry to provide both a focus, and impetus, to the growth of industrial links as a means of exposing pupils to the world of work.
- Contact with ‘those who help us’ has resulted in a good understanding of road safety, safety in the home and drug awareness issues, as well as demonstrating role models from the emergency services.
- Older pupils have been involved with a major supermarket group giving them firsthand experience of the manufacture and marketing of food products including an elementary understanding of supply and demand.
- Similarly pupils in Year 6 have visited the local filtration plant, and river cleansing scheme, which has enabled them to both understand, and care for, their local environment.
- The Education Business Partnership has not been involved with the school, and currently not all pupils in the school have opportunities to explore and understand the working world.
- Work placements for staff do not form part of the staff development programme.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement within the school are both unsatisfactory.

- The school has satisfactory procedures for evaluating educational standards and the quality of its provision. Teachers at both key stages, and co-ordinators, have an effective informal practice for evaluating standards and they have been able to set targets as a response to this initiative.
- The school development plan is unsatisfactory in that it does not adequately inform future planning and is not linked to the school’s budget. Targets are not adequately prioritised and decisions have not been systematically recorded, so that progress towards targets can be objectively measured.
- Systems for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development plans are currently informal and therefore unsatisfactory.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The head teacher, deputy head teacher and senior staff provide good leadership for the school. There is a very positive ethos and high expectations of behaviour and achievement. However, there are some weaknesses in the administration of the school. Some aspects of the management of the school are not as good as at the time of the last inspection.

- The head teacher provides good leadership for the school and has ensured a clear educational direction for its work. This has resulted in improvements in standards over the past few years.
- The school has clear aims and objectives, which are worked out well in practice. The school provides a genuine caring environment, where all pupils are valued equally. The head teacher is very supportive of pupils, staff and all adults working in the school, especially those who face challenges and difficulties. This high level of commitment is shared by the school staff.
- The deputy head teacher and staff support the head teacher well. They work together as a team and this results in consistency of practice throughout the school. All subject co-ordinators work hard and to good effect, which has had a positive impact on standards. The monitoring of standards is good overall, but teachers do not currently have opportunities to monitor what is happening in their subjects by observing lessons.
- The governing body is very supportive of the head teacher and the school. However, it does not take a sufficiently active role in the management of the school, and this is a weakness.
- Administrative systems are unsatisfactory. There is no clear link between the school's budget and its development plan. As a result, budget setting does not adequately relate to the school's educational objectives. In turn, there is no mechanism for evaluating the effect of major spending decisions to ensure best value for money.
- Routine administration is severely hampered by the fact that administrative support is only available for three days a week and a significant proportion of this time is taken up with counting and recording dinner money. As a result of the lack of adequate administrative support, the telephone remains unanswered on occasions, which means that vital messages are sometimes not received. There are omissions in the school's essential paperwork, which is currently poorly organised. The school prospectus and annual report to parents do not meet statutory requirements. All other statutory requirements are met.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory overall. Although there have been improvements in some areas since the last inspection, there has been a deterioration in others.

- The school is staffed with well-qualified teachers and they are deployed well. All staff have the necessary knowledge and expertise to teach the full requirements of the NC and RE.
- Procedures for induction, appraisal and professional development are satisfactory overall. Subject co-ordinators have ensured that teachers have had regular training in their subjects and good use has been made of consultants to provide 'in-house' training sessions. However, the current training programme is not effectively linked to the school's development plan and the school has no mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of the training teachers receive. Teachers have not received sufficient training to use new IT equipment effectively, for example. Systems for the induction of newly qualified teachers are satisfactory.
- The accommodation is well cared for and kept clean by the cleaners and care-taking staff. Classrooms are well arranged with colourful displays, which provide a stimulating environment for pupils. The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils and the curriculum provided. However, the hall is too small for the number of pupils in PE lessons, especially in upper Key Stage 2. There is some concern that stacked furniture and equipment presents a

safety hazard when pupils are moving rapidly about the space. The accommodation for staff is too small for the number of people using it and there are insufficient adult toilets. Toilet facilities for older pupils in Key Stage 2 are inadequate, as they were originally designed for infants. The Early Years Unit is too small for the number of children currently on roll and the toilets open directly onto the teaching space, which is unhygienic.

- The outside accommodation is adequate, although the playing field is off site, down a steep hill. There are some concerns about the steep and uneven steps down to the Key Stage 1 area, as they could cause a child to trip and fall. There are also a number of sharp metal projections on the walls around the playground at the rear of the school. These could also cause injury to rapidly moving pupils.
- The school has a wide range of good quality resources, including a new computer suite and multi-media projector. The resources are used well to support all subjects of the NC and this has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Provision for Children Under-Five

Educational provision for pupils under five is appropriate. The curriculum provided is very good and successfully promotes all the desirable outcomes for children's learning. There have been a number of significant improvements since the last inspection.

- The school has a purpose-built Early Years Unit which accommodates a full-time nursery class of 31 children, aged three to four years old and a reception class of 25 children aged four to five years old. The majority of children enter the nursery with average levels of basic skills development. They all make very good progress during their time in the Unit so that by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1, they are very well prepared to move on to the NC. Standards in the nursery and reception classes are very good in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development and creative development. In physical development, standards are good.

Language, literacy and communication

Standards of achievement are very good.

- Children in the Nursery gradually gain confidence in expressing themselves in small groups and in front of an audience. They listen with interest to stories and respond to the teacher's questions enthusiastically. They are learning to wait their turn to speak and most manage this well. By the end of their first year in school, the majority communicate clearly with adults and with other children. They take part in acting out a story with confidence and pride. More able pupils speak very clearly in full sentences and less confident pupils are enabled to participate at a level with which they are comfortable, for example making animal noises or playing a musical instrument.
- Children associate the spoken word and written word from an early stage. They enjoy looking at big books with the teacher and they handle their own books appropriately when 'reading' independently in the book corner. They can predict the next word in a familiar story or rhyme and use pictures and phonic clues to make sense of a word. They are developing the basic skills of reading successfully.

- Children learn how to make a mark to represent words and over their first year many progress to 'pretend' writing that is beginning to include recognisable letter shapes. They make good attempts at tracing over words and then at underwriting. This sound beginning develops well in the reception class where all pupils learn to write independently before the end of the year. More able pupils compose and record their own sentences. Pupils have good pencil control and handwriting and spelling are developing well.
- In Reception, children listen carefully to the teacher and to the contributions of their friends. They take turns to speak and express their ideas clearly. Many speak in extended sentences with a good range of vocabulary. Children take part in discussions in an informed manner, for example when explaining the life cycle of a butterfly, they used the correct terms and sequence of development. Children can match the letters and sounds of the alphabet and are beginning to blend the sounds that make up simple words. They can follow the text in a book and recognise familiar words.
- There is effective use of incidental Welsh throughout the day and children are increasing their understanding of basic phrases.

Personal and social development

Standards of achievement are very good.

- In the Nursery, children play well together and enjoy role-play activities. They develop friendly and effective relationships with other children and adults. They show an eagerness to explore new learning and are beginning to initiate ideas and solve problems when engaged in purposeful play sessions and adult-led activities. Shy and less confident children are helped by sensitive teaching and skilful organisation to gradually feel part of the group and to enjoy coming to school.
- Children in Reception work well independently and as part of a group. They know the importance of being kind and helpful to others and they demonstrate this in their relationships. They settle quickly to tasks and organise themselves well. All children help to tidy away at the end of sessions and they are learning to take responsibility. They concentrate well for extended periods of time and persevere in their learning.

Mathematical Development

Standards of achievement are very good.

- Children in the Nursery can sort objects accurately according to size, colour and shape. They count to five and ten confidently and can explain how many objects they can see. Children sing number songs and rhymes with confidence and enjoy working on simple number games. They can name shapes correctly and are developing a good vocabulary for comparing objects and describing their features and position in relation to other objects, for example under, next to and behind.
- In reception, children can count confidently to ten and by the end of the year, most are confident to twenty and beyond. They recognise the numbers to 20 and can place them in sequence. Number skills are well supported by a wide range of good practical skills in the class shop, café and picnic area. Their mathematical vocabulary is good. By the end of the year, the majority are confident with the concepts such as more/less, bigger/smaller, lighter/heavier and add/subtract. Children use money in the class 'shop' and recognise coins up to £1.

- All children gain good understanding of volume, weight and measuring through different play and practical activities inside and outside the classroom.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Standards of achievement are very good.

- The children's natural interest in the world about them is effectively fostered by the many well-planned learning experiences which they take part in. They are enthusiastic learners who are keen to find out more.
- Children in Nursery learn to distinguish between what is safe and what is dangerous when sorting objects for their class puppet and they can explain why. In reception this develops into an understanding of which foods and implements are safe for children and which not. They have a developing sense of themselves in relation to other family members and how they grow and change over time. They are able to think about when they are grown up and say what they would like to be, demonstrating good awareness of a wide range of jobs. Children know that coal was an important feature in the life of their village and they have explored where it came from and how it looks and feels.
- In the Nursery, children are provided with good opportunities to explore their own locality and they are beginning to develop a sense of place and distance. They know that some places in the world are hot and others cold and they can identify different features. Children recognise how everyday objects have developed over time.
- In the Reception class, children can distinguish between objects that are live or not alive and they are aware of what humans need to live and the importance of protecting the environment. They have very good knowledge of the life cycle of a butterfly and demonstrated awe and wonder when their butterflies were released into the wild.
- All children have direct experience of working with simple forces, learning to push, pull and change the direction in which toys/vehicles move. Children in Reception understand that there are many different sources of information and they use books, pictures, television and information technology to effectively develop their learning.
- Children know some stories from the Bible and take part in a range of festivals celebrated by different religions.

Creative development

Standards of achievement are very good.

- Children in Nursery sing tunefully with good diction and awareness of dynamics. They know the names of some musical instruments and can produce sounds to represent animal sounds and movements. They perform confidently in front of an audience. Children enjoy using paint to create their own pictures. These gradually become more representational over time. Self-portraits show a developing sense of self.
- In Reception, children sing confidently and know the words of many songs and nursery rhymes. They make good progress in creating music with voice, instruments and body parts. Children make confident decisions about the use of colour and create vivid and exciting pictures, for example the abstract paintings that were folded and cut into butterfly shapes.

- Children in both classes work with a suitable range of 2D and 3D media and implements so that they develop confidence in their own abilities to make and create form. In role-play activities, children use their imaginations well to act out situations and events.

Physical Development

Standards are good.

- Children in Nursery make good progress in handling and manipulating small objects. They are developing an effective pencil grip that enables them to draw and to begin to write clearly. They can use plastic scissors and hold a knife for spreading although this remains a challenge for most. Children respond well to instructions and quickly become aware of the need to move sensibly around the limited space of the nursery. They show good body control both inside the classroom and outside in the play area.
- In Reception, children have good pencil control that is reflected in the good standard of handwriting. They use a range of implements confidently and carefully. They are able to thread and weave and to cut and stick with minimal support.
- All children develop confidence in running, jumping and climbing and they use the full range of large and small equipment such as bikes, prams, barrels and climbing frames with evident enjoyment. In gymnastics and athletics, children stretch and move all parts of their bodies and develop good eye/hand co-ordination.

Shortcomings

- Despite the best efforts of the staff to organise the classrooms, there is very limited space. This has a negative impact on provision.
- The wet play and painting equipment is situated in close proximity to the children's toilets. This is a health and safety issue and unpleasant for both children and adults.
- There is no dedicated cookery area in either class and no quiet area within the Unit for small group teaching or to withdraw pupils if they are upset or have problems.
- Physical development is impeded by the lack of space on wet days when the pupils cannot go outside. This is already a problem in the nursery class that will worsen as the children grow in size and stature during their reception year.

English

Standards of achievement are very good in both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Good Features

- The vast majority of pupils attain standards in line with national expectations and, by the time they reach Year 6, a significant proportion exceeds these targets.
- Listening skills are very well developed throughout the school. Pupils of all ages listen carefully to the teacher and maintain good concentration. They also listen well to the contributions of other pupils. Responses to questions reflect a high level of interest and understanding that promotes and extends learning. Pupils with special educational needs who are easily distracted or who have hearing difficulties are sensitively and patiently enabled to develop their concentration and extend their learning.

- Speaking skills are skilfully developed so that standards are very good in both key stages. At Key Stage 1, all pupils answer questions enthusiastically. They speak confidently and clearly, both in small groups, and in front of larger audiences such as in assemblies. Less confident pupils are encouraged to express their ideas by the politeness of their classmates who patiently wait their turn to speak.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils participate very well in lessons. They ask relevant questions and incorporate new words into their vocabularies with confidence so that their speech is varied and interesting. Younger pupils participate well in role-play and drama. Older pupils understand the difference between formal and informal modes of speech. They are able to present a formal argument and take part in debates in a sophisticated and mature manner, varying their speech to suit the occasion and the audience. Pupils in the special educational needs classes make very good progress over time in developing their speech into full and clear sentences.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils read common words with ease and are developing a suitable range of strategies to help them tackle new words and make sense of them. By the age of 7, the majority of pupils read confidently and accurately. They understand the use of punctuation and most read with emerging or good expression. They are very well placed to move on to the next stage of learning.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils' reading skills develop very well. The majority use punctuation correctly to provide good expression and they use contextual clues to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. Pupils have a sound understanding of different styles, purposes and genres of writing and they talk about books and authors in an informed manner. They use dictionaries and thesauruses appropriately and are able to locate information in a range of reference books and on the Internet with confidence. All pupils use the school library and many visit the public library with family members, which reinforces their positive attitudes and good progress. They enjoy reading for pleasure and for information.
- Pupils who experience difficulties with reading receive sensitive support in class and well-focussed additional teaching in withdrawal groups. Most make good progress so that they catch up over time. Younger pupils in the special educational needs unit find learning to read an enormous challenge. However, with good teaching, they steadily improve so that by Year 6, the majority are able to read satisfactorily for their age. This represents very good progress over time.
- Standards of writing are at least good and are often very good in both key stages. Pupils write well for their age and stage of development.
- At Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils make good progress so that by the end of Year 1, they are writing independently with good letter formation and spacing. By the end of the key stage, most pupils write in sentences with capital letters. Their use of full stops is less consistent. Spelling of common words is sound.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils write confidently for a wide range of purposes and audiences. They plan, draft and edit their own work improving both style and content. The pupils' writing reflects lively imaginations and very good use of descriptive language that brings the work to life. Examples of vividly expressed stories and poetry were seen in all years. More able pupils use complex sentence structures with a wide vocabulary to produce writing of a high standard. Standards of spelling have improved since the previous inspection. Handwriting, spelling and presentation are now, at least, satisfactory.

- In the special educational needs unit, pupils start from a very low level of writing development. By the time they leave the school, they attain standards that are approaching national expectations. This represents very good progress over time.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Mathematics

Standards in Mathematics are good at both Key Stages. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection. All pupils, including those with SEN, make at least good progress overall.

Good features

- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve good standards for their age and ability. They work with improper fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and pupils are developing their own strategies for solving problems.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of fractions and can calculate these in a variety of ways. By the end of the key stage they are able to see the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages.
- Pupils are able to respond quickly and with accuracy to mathematical problems. They respond well to challenging questions and are able to hypothesise and examine different strategies by which they can arrive at a reasonable solution.
- Pupils identify a variety of two and three-dimensional shapes and understand the properties of these shapes. They are able to find the area and perimeter of shapes.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils work with accuracy and are making good progress, they are fluent in the use of number in both mental and written calculations, and they have good knowledge of the properties of shape.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good use of mathematical vocabulary in explaining their number work and they talk about their work with confidence.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to collect data and use ICT to graph their results; they interpret data and are able to formulate questions as based on their interpretations.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

Standards of achievement are good at both key stages. Provisional results from the 2002 National Tests at Key Stage 2 show that standards are above the national average. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection. All pupils, including those with SEN in the SNU and mainstream classes, are making good progress in their learning.

Good Features

- Pupils at both key stages achieve well in activities that involve the process of predicting, testing, recording and evaluating. Good progress is made in the development of investigative skills and pupils record their findings in a systematic manner.

- At Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a good understanding of the need for a ‘fair test’ and how to conduct one. With teacher support, they are beginning to plan and carry out investigations, make predictions, record their findings and draw conclusions from their work. All due attention is given to matters of safety.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils understand well the need for accurate recording of observations. They use tables and graphs effectively to chart their results. Older pupils make accurate predictions and test these using well-constructed experiments. Pupils in Year 5 test the effects of friction on a moving toy car by constructing different experiments. They then draw correct conclusions from the tests they have made. Their recording of their investigations is of a high order.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils have a good grasp of life and living processes. They are able to describe accurately the basic requirements for life and know well that living things grow and reproduce. Older pupils in the key stage recognise many of the parts of living plants and produce carefully drawn and accurately labelled diagrams illustrating this knowledge.
- Pupils at Key Stage 2 also have a good knowledge and understanding of living processes. They describe many of the organs of the human body and know their function. Older pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of plants and how seeds disperse. They explain accurately how the functions of various parts of a plant are essential to the organism.
- Pupils have a good grasp of materials and their properties at both key stages. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 correctly sort materials into sets, using more than one criterion. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 can explain accurately how materials can be separated using both mechanical and chemical methods. They know well the difference between reversible and non-reversible changes in materials.
- Pupils’ understanding of physical processes is less well developed, but nonetheless is at least satisfactory at both key stages. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 can name a number of sources of light and understand that the moon reflects the light of the sun. At Key Stage 2, older pupils are able to correctly identify different ways in which an electrical circuit can be changed to give different results. They construct both parallel and series circuits accurately. More able pupils can recall that forces acting on a body cause it to move and that equilibrium occurs when all the forces in an object are balanced.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Language Welsh second

Standards in Welsh have improved since the last inspection and are good in both Key Stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were found to be satisfactory.

Good features

- At Key Stage 1, pupils of all levels of ability show good understanding of phrases and respond to questioning with a degree of fluency. They talk confidently with one another and freely offer opinions. The quality of their spoken Welsh is good.
- Pupils read simple sentences and communicate ideas with annotated drawing. Most pupils are acquiring a range of vocabulary relating to the topic being dealt with. Oral work is reinforced by appropriate attention to reading and writing. They use appropriate computer software to write simple sentences and to present their work.

- At Key Stage 2, pupils are developing an appropriate vocabulary and the focus is on developing language patterns. They successfully take part in mini dialogues and role-play, they speak confidently and the context in which they practice their Welsh is varied from term to term. All pupils develop their sentence structures confidently. They combine their reading, speaking and listening with their written work. They enhance their vocabulary by writing their own poetry based on the class theme, and they enjoy reciting the poem out loud.
- There is good progression and continuity in the work and good teaching at both key stages, ensures that incidental Welsh is used regularly within the pupils' daily routine. Labelled wall displays and thematic collections of artefacts play an important role in developing and extending vocabulary.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

Standards in design and technology are good at both key stages and have been maintained well since the last inspection.

Good features

- At Key Stage 1, pupils learn how to investigate in order to inform their design and make activities. Pupils have created cards with moving parts enhancing their knowledge of mechanisms. They have combined ingredients to create their own fruit salads. They convey and refine their ideas through discussions and annotated drawings and they are able to evaluate and improve the quality of their work as it develops.
- Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are able to use simple equipment with improved accuracy and deal with a range of materials. Pupils work independently and collaboratively in groups.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils use a range of materials and components in their work. Various context setting situations are used and pupils have achieved a good knowledge of a broad range of materials and associated generic skills.
- When designing and making, older pupils are able to research and investigate the topic and gather information that they use in their work. Good understanding of structures and mechanisms was evident towards the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils in Year 6 are able to control their electric circuits using control technology. A good level of programming is evident in their work.
- Pupils evaluate their products well, giving detailed information as to how the outcome could be improved. Pupils are able to match the working characteristics of materials to their selection of equipment and tools. They also consider appearance, function and reliability. The finish of products was generally good.

Shortcomings

- At Key Stage 2, pupils need to develop their initial ideas and design work in order to make valued judgements before proceeding to the making stage.

Information technology

Standards are satisfactory at both key stages. There has been consolidation in its use to support other curricular areas such as mathematics, language and art. However, standards are not as good as at the time of the last inspection.

Good features

- At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to store and retrieve work. They are confident in the use of computer software and this aids in their understanding of language and reinforces number work.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use computers to develop ideas and communicate in a variety of ways in many subject areas. With assistance and supervision, pupils are able to send and receive electronic mail.
- Pupils investigate certain topics associated with the class theme using the Internet and CD ROMs. Word processing is undertaken throughout the school and pupils produce satisfactory outcomes.
- Progress at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and all pupils make use of a range of software programmes to improve the quality of their work. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and pupils in Year 6 use computer control and an interface to control external devices.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' IT skills are not as high as they should be as they do not receive sufficient regular lessons that focus on skills development.

History

Standards of achievement are good at both key stages. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection.

Good features

- Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 have a good sense of chronology. They can accurately place historical objects, such as clothes pegs, in a sequence, from oldest to newest. Pupils use a good range of words to indicate the passing of time.
- Older pupils at Key Stage 1 are aware of similarities and differences between the past and the present. They have a good idea of chronology and can give several suggestions about how schools have changed over the past hundred years. Pupils understand well how the locality has changed and can name major events in the past, such as the closure of the Six Bells Pit.
- Standards are good at Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good factual recall of the main events of the Roman occupation of Britain. They understand that history is divided into different periods. Their writing shows great empathy with people in the past and is generally of a high quality.
- Older pupils in the key stage have a good understanding of World War II. They can recall significant events and the main causes of the war. In their writing about rationing, they identify correctly why rationing was necessary and linked this well to the Battle of the Atlantic. Pupils understand well the different ways in which the past can be represented and use first and secondary sources well. They understand the function of propaganda and how this differs from a factual account.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

Standards are good in both key stages and have been maintained successfully since the last inspection.

Good features

- At Key Stage 1, pupils have a clearly developed sense of place and an emerging understanding of distance and travel. Younger pupils have a sound knowledge of some of the geographic features of the place where they live and are they developing good observational and recording skills. They can identify differences between hot and cold places and understand that climate effects the environment.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils can successfully compare differences between their own village and a contrasting seaside town. They use appropriate geographical vocabulary such as coast, mountains and valleys with confidence. Mapping skills are good. Pupils draw plans and pictorial maps of the school and its location and Year 2 pupils can identify the four countries that make up the United Kingdom. They are familiar with the points of the compass and can locate South Wales on a map.
- In the lower part of Key Stage 2, pupils know that changes in Cardiff Bay are associated with changes in industry and jobs in South Wales. The good cross-curricular links with the history of Six Bells and the closure of the colliery, together with the field trip to the Bay, enable pupils to integrate their learning well.
- Pupils make relevant observations when comparing their own locality with a place in Kenya in their study of an economically developing country. They are aware of the impact of climate on the environment, housing and the way people live and can contrast this with their own lives.
- In Year 5, standards are very good. Here pupils have a detailed knowledge of the effect of climate and human activity on the environment and can discuss this impact with insightful understanding. They use a wide range of geographic terminology correctly when discussing rain forests.
- Awareness of world geography and mapping skills are good at the top end of the school. Pupils in Year 5 know where and why rain forests are located between certain latitudes around the globe and pupils in Year 6 know where the countries in the news are located. They make good use of atlases and the internet to independently research geographic information.

Shortcomings

- Standards in written work are not always as high as they are in oral work.

Art

Standards are good and this has been maintained at both key stages. This is a similar good picture to that found by the last inspection.

Good features

- Pupils at both key stages are given the opportunity to use a broad range of media in order to develop their two and three-dimensional work.

- Pupils at Key Stage 1 are able to mix and match colours and explain the process well. They then apply this knowledge effectively in other areas of their work. Pupils are competent in their evaluations of the work of other artists and are able to make good use of the computer to create work in the style of Paul Klee.
- Aspects of the local community and environment are used to set the art work in context and the ‘Six Bells’ area has been portrayed in different media by pupils in both key stages. Working with local artists and artists in residence has enabled the pupils to develop skills in making marks, still life and observational drawing. Pupils are encouraged to examine the work of other artists in Wales and of those from other countries.
- Pupils at Key Stage 2 have gained a greater insight of art-craft and design in a historical context through the work of the arts and crafts movement and by studying the work of William Morris.
- At the upper end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce work that is varied, interesting and of good standard. The practical elements of their work is supported by well-reasoned comment and evaluation, they use a broad range of materials and tools and techniques in their work. Pupils are confident in the use of the computer and use graphic programmes to produce computer-generated images, the digital camera is also utilised in their work.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

Standards are good at both key stages and the school has successfully maintained its standards since the last inspection.

Good Features

- At Key Stage 1, pupils sing confidently, maintaining the rhythm and varying pace and dynamics appropriately. They can identify the mood of the music and respond appropriately in their movements. Pupils know the names of many instruments and are familiar with the sounds they make.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils co-operate well to compose and perform a musical pattern to portray a character or event in a nursery rhyme. They can explain why they have selected certain instruments and evaluate their own performances.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils sing well with good control of breathing, diction, dynamics and timing. They sing with good interpretation and evident enjoyment. Pupils can read simple standard and non-standard notation when following a rhythm.
- Pupils listen carefully and interpret imaginatively what they hear. They compose musical pictures with a range of sounds using tuned and untuned instruments and discuss the effectiveness of the musical elements they have achieved. They evaluate their own compositions and performances and collaborate well to improve their own work.
- The well-established school choir and orchestra enrich the musical life of the school and make a very valuable contribution to assemblies. Annual school concerts enable pupils to select and perform music of their choice. They rehearse in after school clubs with enthusiasm and achieve good, confident standards of performance.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical Education

Standards of achievement are good throughout the school and very good at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Good features

- Pupils achieve well in a wide range of physical activities. Standards in dance, games, swimming and athletics are all at least good.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils have a good range of physical skills. They can run, jump and throw with increasing agility and accuracy. Pupils engage in vigorous activities and are aware of the need for regular exercise. In their athletics activities, they show great skill in their movements, including jumping over hurdles.
- Pupils at Key Stage 2 move well. They are mobile and athletic. Pupils show increasing control, fluency and accuracy. They can carefully and thoughtfully link movements in dance, showing high-quality body control. In athletics, pupils show increasing skill in linking actions across a range of activities. Standards are well above the expected level.
- Pupils do well in competitive sports, including swimming, soccer and netball. This shows that they have a good grasp of tactics and the strength and stamina to sustain a consistently good performance. Pupils spoken to during the inspection had a good grasp of the need of exercise for a healthy life-style.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious Education

Standards of achievement are good at both key stages. The school meets all the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection.

Good features

- Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a good understanding of 'special places', such as churches and gurdwaras. They can name the main parts of a Christian church accurately. Pupils also can name a good range of 'special days', including Harvest Festival and Christmas. Pupils also have good factual recall of the events of Noah's Flood, the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Christmas Story.
- Older pupils at Key Stage 1 have a good understanding of the need to care for the environment. They can give good personal reasons for their views. Pupils write at length and express their views clearly. Most pupils have a good recall of major Christian festivals and have some idea of aspects of Buddhism. They know that Easter is important for Christians and that Jesus died on the cross. They know that the Buddha meditated to find enlightenment. Pupils have a good understanding of Sikhism and can accurately recount the main events of a Sikh wedding.
- At Key Stage 2, younger pupils have studied the Roman Catholic Church and followed the life of the parish priest. They have a good recall of the main artefacts to be found in a Catholic Church building. Pupils have a good understanding of laws and rules and know the Ten

Commandments. They link these to the need to have rules in school and in society. Pupils have a good understanding of Islam and know that the Qu'ran is the holy book of Muslims. They can recall accurately some of the ceremonies surrounding the handling of the Qu'ran.

- Older pupils in the key stage have a very good understanding of Christianity and can name many of the main tenets of the faith. They understand well that baptism is a rite of initiation and can link it well to the Jewish Bar Mitzvah ceremony. Pupils have also studied aspects of Celtic Christianity and can recite some prayers in Welsh.
- Pupils are developing their own views and beliefs well. In the main, they also respect the beliefs of others. They debate well the 'pros' and 'cons' of vegetarianism and can appreciate why some Hindu sects, such as the Jains, avoid killing any form of life. During the debate, pupils were able to discuss differing views amicably, showing good levels of maturity. RE makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and pupils respond well to the opportunities provided. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The school has made good progress in addressing three of the four key issues raised by the last report. It has also been successful in raising standards in English, mathematics and science, and PE. However, standards in IT are not as good as at the time of the last inspection.

- In the last report, the school was required to extend the role of curriculum co-ordinators to support the head teacher in the monitoring of standards achieved in class activities and written work. This has been achieved and standards have risen as a consequence. There is good monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' planning. However, co-ordinators still do not have sufficient opportunities to observe lessons.
- The second key issue was to ensure that there was a concerted approach to spelling throughout the school. This issue has been addressed well and standards are now good at both key stages.
- The school was also required to develop the outdoor school environment. This has been accomplished and there are new blocks for the Early Years and Key Stage 1. However, some further work is needed to make the steps down to this area safe.
- Finally, the school was required to extend the school development plan to identify action needed to secure the implementation of priorities and the means whereby their success can be evaluated. Progress in this area is unsatisfactory, as the school still does not have a suitable written development plan, with clear links between its priorities, the actions that need to be taken to secure these priorities, what they will cost to achieve, or how to measure the success of actions taken.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order to further improve the quality of education provided by the school and raise standards, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

1. Further raise the already satisfactory standards in information technology by:
 - a. Ensuring that pupils have good access to computers and other technology to further support their work in subjects across the curriculum;
 - b. Ensuring that staff training is securely linked to the information technology action plan so that teachers have sufficient subject knowledge and expertise to use new equipment;
 - c. Ensuring that all pupils and staff use the IT suite effectively.
2. Improve formal systems for self-evaluation and developmental planning by:
 - a. Ensuring there is a coherent written school development plan, which is linked closely to the school's budget and staff development plans;
 - b. Developing effective systems for monitoring the school development plan to ensure that targets are met;
 - c. Developing effective systems for measuring the effectiveness of spending decisions and for ensuring best value for money;
 - d. Increasing the involvement of the governing body in decision-making and evaluation processes.
3. Improve the quality of day-to-day planning and administration by:
 - a. Putting in place coherent systems for managing paperwork, finances and office administration;
 - b. Ensuring that administrative staff have sufficient time to complete their duties effectively;
 - c. Improving systems for gathering, analysing and using financial information on a regular basis.
4. Improving the accommodation by:
 - a. Ensuring there is sufficient space in the hall for pupils to undertake a full range of physical education activities;
 - b. Making the steps down to the Key Stage 1 area safe for all users;
 - c. Providing an adequate sized staffroom and toilet facilities for staff;
 - d. Ensuring that the toilet facilities for all pupils are suitable for their needs;
 - e. Ensuring there is sufficient space in the Early Years Unit for the number of children on roll.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information about the School

Name of School	Bryngwyn Infants' and Junior School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Bryngwyn Road Six Bells Abertillery Gwent
Post Code	NP13 2PD
Telephone Number	01495 212678

Head Teacher	Mr Gwyn Price
Date of appointment	01/05/84
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mr Garth Collier
Registered Inspector	Mr Stephen Dennett
Dates of inspection	08/07/02 to 11/07/02

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	31 (15.5)	25	32	26	36	27	35	34	246

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	12	0	12

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23.7:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10.3:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	4.2:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27:1
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Term 1	89.82	92.98	92.25	92.08
Term 2	91.44	93.92	93.46	93.43
Term 3	92.62	95.06	95.64	95.07

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

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2001

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2001							Number of pupils in Y6: 35					
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School							40	48	12	
		National				1	1	6	19	48	25	
	Test/Task	School							12	76	12	
		National						5	14	47	30	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School										
		National										
	Test/Task	School										
		National										
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School							20	52	28	
		National					1	4	20	47	28	
	Test/Task	School							8	60	32	
		National						4	18	42	32	
Science	Teacher assessment	School							20	48	32	
		National						3	15	52	29	
	Test/Task	School								72	28	
		National						2	13	51	31	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	84	In the school:	84
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

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

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who, over a period of 3½ days completed a total of 10 inspection days in school.

For the majority of time in school, the inspectors visited classes, talked to individual groups of pupils, and evaluated their work. A total of 45 lesson observations were made for a total of 30 hours. A range of work from a representative sample of pupils from each year group was examined, together with their records and reports. A representative sample from each year group was heard to read and interviewed. Approximately 30 hours were spent on these activities.

In addition:

- interviews were held with the head teacher, deputy head teacher, subject co-ordinators and representative parents;
- informal discussions took place with members of the non-teaching staff;
- informal discussions took place with many pupils as part of lesson observations;
- the documentation provided by the school, including teachers' planning, was carefully analysed;
- the school's attendance registers were examined;
- playground and dining arrangements, registration periods and collective worship were observed;
- budget figures were reviewed.

Six adults attended a parents' meeting and completed questionnaires were received from 111 parents. In addition 7 parents submitted written comments. The issues raised helped inform the inspection process.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr Stephen Dennett	Registered Inspector	Context Main Findings Standards of achievement Teaching Support, guidance and pupils' welfare (effectiveness of personal and social education) Leadership and efficiency Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Progress Key Issues	Science History Physical Education Religious Education
Mr Roger Pexton	Lay Inspector	Pupils' behaviour and attitudes Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare (child protection and health and safety) Partnership with parents and the community Partnership with industry	
Dr Arlene Thomas-Ramasut	Team Inspector	Curriculum Special educational needs Early Years	English Geography Music
Mr Gerwyn Thomas	Team Inspector	Key Skills Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment, recording and reporting Self-evaluation	Welsh as a second language Mathematics Art Design and Technology Information Technology

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