

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

BRYNMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Trafalgar Place
Brynmill
Swansea, SA2 0BU

School Number: 670/2006

Date of Inspection: 27th – 30th September, 2004

MRS. EIRWEN GRIFFITHS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR: WO50/17562

28th October, 2004

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/37/04P

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Brynmill Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their children's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Brynmill Primary School took place between 27th and 30th September, 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths, M.Phil., M.Ed., undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

Year-Groups and Key Stages

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

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year-group of pupils in a primary school who attain the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year-group of pupils who attain the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year-group of students who attain the age of eighteen during the academic year.

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Brynmill Primary School is situated close to the A4067 Oystermouth Road from Swansea to Mumbles and lies a short distance from Swansea University, two large colleges of further education, a large hospital and the city centre. The beach and one of Swansea's largest parks are nearby. The school primarily serves the long-established residential area of Brynmill, with a minority of pupils, whose parents have expressed a preference for the school, coming from other areas. Housing ranges from large private dwellings, many of which have been converted into flats, to small terraced houses.

2. The school currently has a roll of 339 pupils aged four to eleven years, together with fifty-two nursery children who attend on a part-time basis. Numbers have declined over the past three years in line with the falling birth rate in the city. Pupils reflect the diverse racial and social character of the area, with approximately 32% coming from ethnic minority groups. Many pupils enter the school with very good early skills in speech, and good manipulative skills in areas such as pencil and computer-mouse control, although the school reports that, over the last five years, increasing numbers of pupils show a lack of personal and social skills and basic listening and speaking skills.

3. Approximately 17% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure slightly below the average of 19% for Wales as a whole. Around 14% are considered to have some form of special educational need, including three who are the subjects of formal statements. This percentage is also significantly below the national average for Wales. About 21% of pupils speak a home language other than English. No pupil comes from a Welsh-speaking home.

4. The school was last inspected in March, 1999. No significant changes have been made to the age-range or character of the school since that time. A new headteacher was appointed in September, 2000.

5. At the time of the inspection, four of the seventeen permanent members of the teaching staff were either on short or long-term absence from the school, with four supply teachers teaching their classes.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school currently has a one-year development plan for the period 2004-2005, the primary aims of which are the following:

- to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- to create the conditions under which change can be introduced;
- to prioritise planning for development in a rational way;
- to strengthen the partnership between staff, governors, parents and the community,

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7. Priority has been given to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and to information and communications technology. The school recognises that the plan will need to build on the school's identified strengths and begin to address its perceived weaknesses.

Summary

8. Brynmill Primary School is a school with a capable and conscientious staff which is making steady progress in most areas.

9. The inspection team agreed with the majority of judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report submitted just prior to the inspection.

Table of grades awarded

10. The team judged the school's work as follows:

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

Standards

11. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs, and pupils make good progress towards the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning*.

12. In the main, children enter the school with good speaking and listening skills and show strengths in mathematical awareness. Sound routines ensure that social skills are properly developed. Work undertaken at this level adds good value to children's prior attainments, with the result that baseline assessments are above average for the local education authority by the beginning of the reception year.

13. At Key Stages 1 and 2, standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number are good. Without exception, pupils listen carefully, respond well to questioning, and articulate their thoughts clearly and confidently. Wide use of reading skills, on both a group and individual basis, results in the accurate understanding and reading of text and the ability to gather information from books and other material. Writing skills are purposefully applied across the curriculum. Good use is made of number skills, with pupils successfully applying their knowledge in everyday situations such as measuring household items and working out money problems. Considerable progress has been made in improving pupils' mental agility over the past twelve months.

14. In general, pupils make adequate use of information technology to support their learning, although skills are not consistently applied across the curriculum. Opportunities are

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not always taken for ensuring that more-able pupils, in particular, are provided with appropriate challenge in this area.

15. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall and generally achieve the targets they are given.

16. National Curriculum assessment conducted by teachers last summer indicated that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments were similar to the national average for Wales in science and significantly above the national average in English and mathematics. Results, on the whole, were above average when compared with other schools in Swansea and with similar schools in Wales. No significant differences occurred between the performance of boys and girls. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, results in English and mathematics were in the upper quartile.

17. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results indicated that attainments were generally well above local and national averages in all three core subjects and above the average for similar schools throughout Wales. Again, there were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, test results in mathematics were in the upper quartile.

18. Pupils throughout the school display very positive attitudes to learning, which makes a significant contribution to their progress and standards of achievement. The majority show enthusiasm for lessons, concentrate well on their tasks and collaborate effectively with each other in pursuing learning goals.

19. Behaviour is good overall, although there are occasions when restlessness mars concentration as, for example, during assemblies and in sessions when classes double up in cramped areas. For the most part, good behaviour and courteous, responsible attitudes enable pupils to gain maximum benefit from the experiences provided by the school.

20. Understanding of equal opportunities is developing well. Pupils are fortunate in being able to gain a close insight into a variety of beliefs and cultural traditions from within the school community, and share thoughts and ideas from other parts of the world.

21. Average attendance for the three terms immediately preceding the inspection was approximately 94%, compared with an average of 92.6% for Swansea as a whole. Evidence, however, indicates that some families withdraw their children for longer holiday periods than permitted, resulting in a significant loss of working time in the school. A number of pupils also miss introductions to lessons by arriving late at the start of the day.

The quality of education and training

22. The quality of teaching was judged to be the following:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
23%	39%	32%	6%	-

23. The percentage of satisfactory or better lessons (94%) is just below the Welsh Assembly Government's target of 95%, whilst the percentage of good or very good lessons (62%) is well above the target of 50%.

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24. Teaching is generally brisk and work proceeds at an appropriate pace. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach and, in most cases, maintain an appropriate balance between explanation, practical activities and plenary sessions. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are characterised by the effective management of time and appropriate techniques to engage and retain pupils' interest. In instances where teaching is less effective, lessons introductions are often too long, with pupils losing enthusiasm and interest. Restlessness occurs on such occasions.

25. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and are regularly reviewed by team leaders. Medium and short-term planning is generally good and displays clear learning objectives. Aims, however, are not always shared with pupils or used as a focus during lessons. Planning recognises the need to develop key skills but does not always identify appropriate opportunities and relate them to specific tasks and assessment. Work is conscientiously marked, with teachers making good use of praise and encouragement. Too little guidance, however, is given on ways of raising standards and making further improvements.

26. A clear, concise policy has been drawn up for assessing pupils' achievements and progress, but elements are not yet firmly embedded into everyday practice. A useful tracking system has recently been introduced but is still at an early stage of development. Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and provide appropriate information on pupils' progress and standards of achievement.

27. Learning experiences generally ensure that pupils acquire a suitable range of skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate help in withdrawal sessions, whilst those learning English as an additional language benefit from an effective enhancement programme provided by the local education authority.

28. Pupils show a good understanding of right and wrong, and sensibly discuss moral issues during circle times, assemblies and school-council sessions. Collective worship successfully promotes moral development but fails to provide sufficient time for thoughtful reflection. Too little emphasis is placed on spiritual development.

29. Good provision is made for personal and social education. Outcomes are well reflected in pupils' behaviour, attitudes and willingness to work and play harmoniously with each other. Due attention is paid to the importance of protecting the environment and to issues such as global citizenship.

30. Visits to places such as Swansea Museum and the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans provide pupils with appropriate first-hand experiences and help them to appreciate the heritage and culture of Wales. The Welsh language is well promoted at Key Stage 1, but less so at Key Stage 2, with the result that pupils at this level lack appropriate confidence in using and speaking the language. The temporary subject co-ordinator recognises the area as one requiring further development, but this has not yet been identified as a priority in the school development plan.

31. Good understanding is being acquired of other customs and cultures through visits to places of worship, the sharing of experiences and studies in areas such as geography and religious education. Too little prominence, however, is given to other cultures in the display work of the school and in subjects such as music and art.

32. Partnerships with local industry and the community have helped to enrich pupils' experiences and improve the learning environment.

33. Although teachers have not undertaken industrial placements, a number of local companies work with the school to help enhance the curriculum, particularly in art, geography, and design and technology. Pupils play an active part in a number of local events. Good use is made of the local environment to broaden knowledge in history and geography.

34. Communication with parents is not always fully effective. Delays in distributing both the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents mean that the school is failing to fulfil statutory requirements in these areas.

35. In the pre-inspection meeting and responses to the questionnaire, most parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children and the values promoted by the school. Some, however, felt that they received insufficient information about the curriculum and the progress made by their children.

36. The school has an appropriate policy on promoting racial equality, which is well understood and implemented by pupils and staff alike.

37. In general, learners are well cared for, supported and guided. All pupils are equally valued by staff, who cater effectively for their different needs and ensure equality of opportunity. Samples of work are kept in individual portfolios and reflect what pupils have achieved. A major strength of the school is the way in which pupils from different cultures and backgrounds work and play happily together.

38. Due attention is given, in the main, to pupils' safety and welfare. Staff show appropriate awareness of health and safety requirements and are informed of the specific physical and medical needs of their pupils. The lack of adult supervision on cramped stairwells, however, constitutes a potential safety hazard.

Leadership and management

39. The school has a suitable set of aims that are well focused on the needs of its pupils. A particular strength of the headteacher's leadership is the promotion of equality for all and the harmonious integration of pupils sharing different languages and cultures. Evidence, however, suggests that there is scope for clearer direction in strategic planning, closer communication between senior managers and the creation of a joint vision incorporating all members of staff.

40. In its current form, the school development plan is narrow in focus and is insufficiently detailed to provide a sound basis for further improvement. Whilst regular attention has been given to English, mathematics and science, too little emphasis has been placed on rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation to identify targets for improvement in other subjects and areas. Not all co-ordinators are sufficiently involved in development planning.

41. Members of the governing body, especially the chairman, are very supportive and take a keen interest in the school. Some have only recently been appointed, although most have now undertaken training provided by the local education authority and are beginning to inform themselves about the quality of provision, particularly through the new "Governors-in-Partnership" scheme. Good work is being undertaken in a number of policy areas such as

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racial equality, health and safety, and the drafting of aims. Most committees are led by the chairman, who takes on a heavy personal load and produces a number of reports. Work and responsibilities are not yet distributed equitably.

42. The headteacher provides regular oral reports to the governing body but presents only one written report a year. This is insufficient to ensure that members are kept properly informed and are able to discharge their duties in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

43. Although gradually acquiring greater expertise and experience, governors are not yet working effectively as a body to provide sufficient strategic direction for the school.

44. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers with a good mix of expertise and experience. High-quality, effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as an additional language.

45. Sufficient accommodation is available for the present number of pupils on roll, with the school benefiting from two halls which are used for physical education, computer studies and other activities. Some classrooms, however, particularly those for older pupils, allow little space for movement, and parts of the building – for example, the stairways – are in a very poor state of decoration. The surface of the stairs themselves is slippery and presents a hazard in wet conditions.

46. Recent alterations have improved some areas, with a spacious new library providing ample opportunity for younger pupils to enjoy books in an attractive environment.

47. Under present break and lunchtime arrangements, the school playground comfortably caters for pupils' needs but the area for nursery children, whilst secure, is narrow and restrictive.

48. An ample supply of suitable resources has been provided to promote the development of children under five in each of the six areas of learning. Resources at Key Stages 1 and 2 are adequate to support the delivery of the National Curriculum, with staff making good use overall of what is available during lessons.

49. The lack of an appropriate school development plan means that spending decisions cannot be precisely matched to needs. Emphasis has been placed on English, mathematics, science, and information and communications technology, with insufficient attention to other subjects.

50. Progress since the last inspection has been steady overall. The school now provides ample opportunities for children under five to develop good co-ordination skills and has improved or maintained standards at Key Stages 1 and 2, although there is still scope for further improvement in several of the foundation subjects, particularly information and communications technology, and design and technology. Improvements have been made in procedures for assessing pupils' attainments and progress, but the pace has not been as rapid as might have reasonably been expected over the past five years. Extended absences of staff have affected progress in some areas of the curriculum, particularly in relation to the development role of subject co-ordinators. The school now complies with guidance relating to the time it allocates for teaching.

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51. Overall, the school is currently providing satisfactory value for money.

Recommendations

In order to raise standards of achievement and to improve the quality of provision for pupils, the school needs to ensure:

- R1. that future school development plans are comprehensive, detailed documents which serve as a firm basis for identifying priorities and achieving specific targets;
- R2. that senior management adopts a more structured and strategic approach to leadership and the monitoring of classroom practice;
- R3. that maximum challenge is provided for all pupils in each area of the curriculum, particularly those pupils capable of high standards of achievement;
- R4. that the good and, in some instances, the very good practice which exists in the school is disseminated more effectively so that standards are brought up to the best in all cases;
- R5. that early action is taken to comply with statutory requirements regarding the publication of information and the recording of unauthorised absence by pupils;
- R6. that the safety issue relating to the stairways is addressed as soon as possible.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

52. Overall the findings of the inspection team match the school's judgment in its self-evaluation report.

53. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs, and pupils make good progress towards the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning*.

54. In the main, children enter the school with good speaking and listening skills and show strengths in mathematical awareness. Sound routines ensure that social skills are properly developed. Work undertaken at this level adds good value to children's prior attainments, with the result that baseline assessments are above average for the local education authority by the beginning of the reception year. There has been a slight downward trend, however, over the last three years as a result of changes in the annual intake.

55. At Key Stages 1 and 2, standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number are good. Without exception, pupils listen carefully, respond well to questioning, and articulate their thoughts clearly and confidently. Wide use of reading skills, on both a group and individual basis, results in the accurate understanding and reading of text and the ability to gather information from books and other material. Writing skills are purposefully applied across the curriculum. Good use is made of number skills, with pupils successfully applying their knowledge in everyday situations such as measuring household items and working out money problems. Considerable progress has been made in improving pupils' mental agility over the past twelve months.

56. In general, pupils make adequate use of information technology to support their learning, although skills are not consistently applied across the curriculum. Opportunities are not always taken for ensuring that more-able pupils, in particular, are provided with appropriate challenge in this area.

57. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall and generally achieve the targets they are given.

58. National Curriculum assessment conducted by teachers last summer indicated that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments were similar to the national average for Wales in science and significantly above the national average in English and mathematics. Results, on the whole, were above average when compared with other schools in Swansea and with similar schools in Wales. No significant differences occurred between the performance of boys and girls. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, results in English and mathematics were in the upper quartile.

59. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results indicated that attainments were generally well above local and national averages in all three core subjects and above the average for similar schools throughout Wales. Again, there were no significant differences between the

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performance of boys and girls. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, test results in mathematics were in the upper quartile.

60. Pupils throughout the school display very positive attitudes to learning, which makes a significant contribution to their progress and standards of achievement. The majority show enthusiasm for lessons, concentrate well on their tasks and collaborate effectively with each other in pursuing learning goals.

61. Behaviour is good overall, although there are occasions when restlessness mars concentration as, for example, during assemblies and in sessions when classes double up in cramped areas. For the most part, good behaviour and courteous, responsible attitudes enable pupils to gain maximum benefit from the experiences provided by the school.

62. Understanding of equal opportunities is developing well. Pupils are fortunate in being able to gain a close insight into a variety of beliefs and cultural traditions from within the school community, and share thoughts and ideas from other parts of the world. Visits to centres of worship and places of interest in the locality help to foster understanding of different faiths and practices and enhance knowledge of the life, culture and work of the local community.

63. Pupils at both key stages are able to discuss their preferences for different areas of the curriculum and, to some extent, their strengths in particular subjects. However, the school has not yet established a culture whereby pupils regularly evaluate their own work against set targets and monitor their own achievements and progress.

64. Average attendance for the three terms immediately preceding the inspection was approximately 94%, compared with an average of 92.6% for Swansea as a whole. Evidence, however, indicates that some families withdraw their children for longer holiday periods than permitted, resulting in a significant loss of working time in the school. A number of pupils also miss introductions to lessons by arriving late at the start of the day.

The Quality of Education and Training

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

65. Overall the findings of the inspection team match the judgment in the school's self-evaluation report.

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
23%	39%	32%	6%	-

67. Relationships with pupils are good throughout the school. Pupils work in an atmosphere conducive to learning and concentrate well on their tasks. Teaching is generally brisk and work proceeds at an appropriate pace.

68. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach and, in most cases, maintain an appropriate balance between explanation, practical activities and plenary sessions. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are characterised by the effective management of time and appropriate techniques to engage and retain pupils' interest. In instances where teaching is less effective, lessons introductions are often too long, with pupils losing enthusiasm and interest. Restlessness occurs on such occasions.

69. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and are regularly reviewed by team leaders. Medium and short-term planning is generally good and displays clear learning objectives. Aims, however, are not always shared with pupils or used as a focus during lessons. Planning recognises the need to develop key skills but does not always identify appropriate opportunities and relate them to specific tasks and assessment.

70. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to cater for the needs of pupils and to deal with the subject matter of lessons. A particularly good feature is the extent to which pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively with each other and to share ideas and information. Resources, in the main, are well used and are generally appropriate to needs and abilities. Too little use, however, is made of information and communications technology to develop skills in research and to enhance learning across the curriculum. Sufficient challenge is not always provided for higher-achieving pupils.

71. Good questioning techniques promote full responses and, in the best lessons, enable pupils to explore issues in increasing detail and depth. Strong emphasis is placed on developing speaking skills to encourage pupils to become articulate and confident. Work in this area constitutes one of the strengths of the school.

72. Very good liaison takes place between teachers and support staff, particularly in areas such as special educational needs, cultural diversity and equality, and the learning of English as an additional language. Staff have a good insight into the needs of their pupils resulting from the joint planning of work.

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73. A clear, concise policy has been drawn up for assessing pupils' achievements and progress, but elements are not yet firmly embedded into everyday practice. A useful tracking system has recently been introduced but is still at an early stage of development. Good use is made of National Curriculum assessment results each year to guide the future planning of work and to identify areas for further improvement.

74. Work is conscientiously marked, with teachers making good use of praise and encouragement. Too little guidance, however, is given on ways of raising standards and making further improvements. Teachers do not always make full use of assessment to provide appropriate feedback for pupils and to agree new targets for attainment, particularly in the foundation subjects. Pupils are aware of their strengths but are less conscious of their weaknesses.

75. Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and provide appropriate information on pupils' progress and standards of achievement. Useful guidance is also put forward on ways in which parents can help their children to make further progress. Parents are encouraged to respond to the report and given an opportunity to do so.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

76. The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgment in its self-evaluation report.

77. Overall, the school provides a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum which is suited to pupils' needs. All pupils have equal opportunities and full access to each area of the curriculum.

78. Learning experiences generally ensure that pupils acquire a suitable range of skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate help in withdrawal sessions, whilst those learning English as an additional language benefit from an effective enhancement programme provided by the local education authority. Pupils, in the main, make sound progress, with thirteen of the eighteen pupils learning English as an additional language last summer attaining at least Level 4 in English, mathematics and science in National Curriculum standard assessment tests. Gifted and talented pupils, however, are not always sufficiently challenged, particularly in areas such as information and communications technology.

79. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to enhance and extend their skills in areas such as music and sport through activities outside school hours.

80. Pupils show a good understanding of right and wrong, and sensibly discuss moral issues during circle times, assemblies and school-council sessions. Collective worship successfully promotes moral development but fails to provide sufficient time for thoughtful reflection. Too little emphasis is placed on spiritual development.

81. Good provision is made for personal and social education. Outcomes are well reflected in pupils' behaviour, attitudes and willingness to work and play harmoniously with each other. Due attention is paid to the importance of protecting the environment and to issues such as global citizenship.

82. Visits to places such as Swansea Museum and the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans provide pupils with appropriate first-hand experiences and help them to appreciate the heritage and culture of Wales. The Welsh language is well promoted at Key Stage 1, but less so at Key Stage 2, with the result that pupils at this level lack appropriate confidence in using and speaking the language. The temporary co-ordinator recognises the area as one requiring further development, but this has not yet been identified as a priority in the school development plan.

83. Good understanding is being acquired of other customs and cultures through visits to places of worship, the sharing of experiences and studies in areas such as geography and religious education. Too little prominence, however, is given to other cultures in the display work of the school and in subjects such as music and art.

84. Partnerships with local industry and the community have helped to enrich pupils' experiences and improve the learning environment. The junior play area, for example, has been refurbished with help from a young offenders' team, whilst the local residents'

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association has provided funding to develop a “walking bus” scheme, used both by pupils and parents.

85. Although teachers have not undertaken industrial placements, a number of local companies work with the school to help enhance the curriculum, particularly in art, geography, and design and technology. Pupils play an active part in a number of local events. Good use is made of the local environment to broaden knowledge in history and geography.

86. Links with parents are generally good. The majority of parents are supportive and have good relationships with the school, with a number providing valuable support both within and outside the classroom. An active parent-teacher association organises social functions and raises funds to supplement resources. In the pre-inspection meeting and responses to the questionnaire, most parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children and the values promoted by the school. Some, however, felt that they received insufficient information about the curriculum and the progress made by their children.

87. Communication with parents is not always fully effective. Delays in distributing both the school prospectus and the governors’ annual report to parents mean that the school is failing to fulfil statutory requirements in these areas.

88. The school has an appropriate policy on promoting racial equality which is well understood and implemented by pupils and staff alike.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

89. The findings of the inspection team match the judgment in the school's self-evaluation report.

90. In general, learners are well cared for, supported and guided. All pupils are equally valued by staff, who cater effectively for their different needs and ensure equality of opportunity. Samples of work are kept in individual portfolios and reflect what pupils have achieved. A major strength of the school is the way in which pupils from different cultures and backgrounds work and play happily together.

91. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised, planned and supervised by a conscientious and capable co-ordinator. Sound diagnostic procedures, well-prepared programmes of work, extra support during withdrawal sessions and a careful tracking system ensure that pupils make suitable progress in the development of basic skills. Effective liaison takes place with the support services provided by the local education authority and other outside agencies. Good measures are in place to ensure that parents are kept fully informed and involved. At the other end of the ability scale, the school recognises the need to increase opportunities for talented and gifted pupils whose skills could be yet further enhanced.

92. Induction programmes for nursery and reception children are very good, with procedures which enable children to settle well into the school and to develop their skills from the outset. Parents recognise and very much appreciate the work of the early-years co-ordinator in providing strong support for children at this stage.

93. The school works closely with most parents and carers, some of whom provide valuable support in the classroom or participate in family learning programmes.

94. No policy or clear procedures are currently in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality. Over 20% of pupils attend school for less than 90% of the available time, and a significant number arrive after the start of the school day. There is inconsistency between the recording of absences, all of which are classified as "authorised", and the issuing of warning letters to a number of parents about the non-attendance of their children.

95. Detailed policies have been drawn up on behaviour, racial harassment and bullying, together with effective procedures such as the "Chums" scheme, which helps to teach pupils the skills they need to tackle bullies and to offer support to victims. All pupils demonstrate by their behaviour that policies are properly implemented throughout the school. Strong emphasis is placed on the social inclusion of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

96. Due attention is given, in the main, to pupils' safety and welfare. Staff show appropriate awareness of health and safety requirements and are informed of the specific physical and medical needs of their pupils. The lack of adult supervision on cramped stairwells, however, constitutes a potential safety hazard.

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97. The school follows the local education authority's guidelines on child protection, with the headteacher acting as the responsible member of staff. Not all members of staff, however, are fully aware of procedures.

98. No up-to-date school prospectus was available at the time of the inspection owing to printing delays.

99. All pupils have opportunities to participate in a range of extracurricular activities. Before and after-school clubs are well supported both by pupils and parents.

100. Most entrances to the building incorporate a number of steps, some of which – particularly at the front of the school – are difficult to negotiate. No definite plans have yet been drawn up to provide access for physically-disabled pupils.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 4: some good features but shortcomings in important areas

101. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgment of Grade 3 in the school's self-evaluation report.

102. The school has a suitable set of aims that are well focused on the needs of its pupils. A particular strength of the headteacher's leadership is the promotion of equality for all and the harmonious integration of pupils sharing different languages and cultures. Evidence, however, suggests that there is scope for clearer direction in strategic planning, closer communication between senior managers and the creation of a joint vision incorporating all members of staff.

103. Self-evaluation is a developing feature of the school, although currently it is in its early stages. A new senior-management structure has recently been adopted to establish more effective communication and procedures and to enable all members of staff to participate in school planning and self-evaluation. The headteacher recognises that this initiative requires further development in order to strengthen dialogue and to formulate agreed objectives between senior managers and subject leaders.

104. Staff are working conscientiously within teams to monitor and evaluate progress, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Where practice is good, team leaders produce valuable reports outlining targets for further development.

105. In its current form, the school development plan is narrow in focus and is insufficiently detailed to provide a sound basis for further improvement. Whilst regular attention has been given to English, mathematics and science, too little emphasis has been placed on rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation to identify targets for improvement in other subjects and areas. Not all co-ordinators are sufficiently involved in development planning.

106. The headteacher has established appropriate procedures for introducing performance management, which is beginning to have a positive effect upon the school. In-service training has been undertaken by the staff as a body in order to make efficient use of resources, with beneficial effects in areas such as information and communications technology. No robust system, however, is currently in place for evaluating teaching and learning through regular, structured classroom observation, with the result that good practice, of which there is much in the school, is not effectively disseminated.

107. Appropriate account is taken of national priorities and local school-cluster and partnership arrangements. Recent initiatives such as the Swansea Writing Continuum are helping staff to evaluate pupils' work more effectively and to set targets for improvement. The establishment of a school council is also encouraging pupils to contribute to and influence decisions which affect them.

108. There has been a considerable amount of staff absence over the last twelve months, which has resulted in delays to planned developments. During the inspection, supply teachers

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covered the duties of four permanent members of staff, although the school continued to function smoothly, largely as a result of good mentoring by team leaders.

109. Members of the governing body, especially the chairman, are very supportive and take a keen interest in the school. Some have only recently been appointed, although most have now undertaken training provided by the local education authority and are beginning to inform themselves about the quality of provision, particularly through the new “Governors-in-Partnership” scheme. Good work is being undertaken in a number of policy areas such as racial equality, health and safety, and the drafting of aims. Most committees are led by the chairman, who takes on a heavy personal load and produces a number of reports. Work and responsibilities are not yet distributed equitably.

110. The headteacher provides regular oral reports to the governing body but presents only one written report a year. This is insufficient to ensure that members are kept properly informed and are able to discharge their duties in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

111. Statutory requirements relating to the publication of information are not currently being met in full.

112. Although gradually acquiring greater expertise and experience, governors are not yet working effectively as a body to provide sufficient strategic direction for the school.

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

Grade 4: some good features but shortcomings in important areas

113. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgment of Grade 3 given in school's self-evaluation report.

114. The headteacher, staff and governing body are committed to raising standards. Work in gathering data over the last two years has provided the school with valuable information and indicated areas for development. New initiatives are helping to support self-evaluation but, overall, the establishment of a self-critical culture is still at an early stage and does not yet fully embrace all concerned.

115. A detailed analysis is made of a range of assessment results, including baseline tests. The local education authority also provides a valuable service in collating and producing statistics to inform and assist the school.

116. Good use has been made of data to effect improvements in the core subjects and to target early learning skills. Structures have recently been put into place to enable staff to monitor and evaluate the improvement process, with support and guidance from team leaders. These measures are proving effective as far as the discussion and planning of work are concerned. No opportunities, however, are provided for senior management to observe lessons on a regular, structured basis and to monitor a broad range of practices across the curriculum. Mechanisms are not yet firmly established for sharing and disseminating good practice throughout the school and effecting improvements where necessary.

117. Performance management is beginning to have a positive effect on the development of a self-critical culture, with the headteacher involving all senior managers in the process. In-service training is based on professional needs and contributes to classroom improvements. Useful work has been undertaken by the deputy headteacher, for example, in facilitating training in information and communications technology and science across both key stages.

118. The school recognises the need to listen to learners and has taken action to involve them in decision-making by establishing a school council and conducting a Year-6 survey. The process, however, has not yet been extended to parents and the wider community to gain relative insight into their perception of the school's performance in different areas.

119. The school development plan is not sufficiently comprehensive and lacks appropriate detail as a planning document. Prominence has been given to English, mathematics and science but other areas receive relatively scant attention, with little information about strategies, costs, resources, timescales and criteria for evaluation. Evidence indicates that not all concerned in its production are fully aware of the importance of the document as a means of determining targets for further improvement and priorities for future expenditure based on the outcomes of the school's own evaluations.

120. Progress since the last inspection has been steady overall. The school now provides ample opportunities for children under five to develop good co-ordination skills and has improved or maintained standards at Key Stages 1 and 2, although there is still scope for further improvement in several of the foundation subjects, particularly information and

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communications technology, and design and technology. Improvements have been made in procedures for assessing pupils' attainments and progress, but the pace has not been as rapid as might have reasonably been expected over the past five years. Extended absences of staff have affected progress in some areas of the curriculum, particularly in relation to the development role of subject co-ordinators. The school now complies with guidance relating to time allocated for teaching.

121. The school adopted Estyn's format for self-evaluation and completed the document together as a staff. Whilst setting out strengths and recognising the need for improvements, the report does not clearly set out the action to be taken in all areas. Overall, the inspection team agreed with the judgments made by the school in four of the seven key questions.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

122. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgment of Grade 2 given in school's self-evaluation report.

123. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers with a good mix of expertise and experience. High-quality, effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as an additional language.

124. Support staff are effectively deployed and work closely with class teachers.

125. Subjects such as music and Welsh benefit from the advice and expertise of visiting teachers. The support has been particularly valuable in Welsh given the long-term absence of the subject co-ordinator.

126. Sufficient accommodation is available for the present number of pupils on roll, with the school benefiting from two halls which are used for physical education, computer studies and other activities. Some classrooms, however, particularly those of older pupils, allow little space for movement, and parts of the building – for example, the stairways – are in a very poor state of decoration. The surface of the stairs themselves is slippery and presents a hazard in wet conditions.

127. Recent alterations have improved some areas, with a spacious new library providing ample opportunity for younger pupils to enjoy books in an attractive environment.

128. Under present break and lunchtime arrangements, the school playground comfortably caters for pupils' needs but the area for nursery children, whilst secure, is narrow and restrictive.

129. An ample supply of suitable resources has been provided to promote the development of children under five in each of the six areas of learning. Resources at Key Stages 1 and 2 are adequate to support the delivery of the National Curriculum, with staff making good use overall of what is available during lessons.

130. In information and communication technology, too little use is made of computers to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum. The provision of just one whiteboard, situated in the junior part of the school, is inadequate for the total number of classes, with infant pupils receiving no benefit from the facility.

131. The lack of an appropriate school development plan means that spending decisions cannot be precisely matched to needs in every area. Emphasis has been placed on the core subjects and information and communications technology, with insufficient attention to other subjects.

132. At the current time, there is no clear plan for the coming year when funding is expected to be more limited.

School's response to the inspection

The school is delighted that the inspection findings recognise the progress that the school has made since its last inspection and that, at the end of Key Stage 2, our results are well above the national average and the average for similar schools in Wales. We are pleased too that inspectors noted that our pupils had positive attitudes to learning, showed enthusiasm for lessons, concentrated and worked together effectively. These positive qualities are formed in the Early Years where inspectors saw good value added to our pupils' attainments.

We have worked very hard in developing our pupils' key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number and were pleased that inspectors noted those skills and saw that our pupils were able to apply them.

In a multi-cultural school, such as ours, containing children of a wide ability range, the promotion of equal opportunities is vital to us and inspectors acknowledged that all pupils were equally valued by staff and were well cared for, supported and guided. In addition pupils with special educational needs made good progress and the learning of pupils with English as an additional language was effectively enhanced.

An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report. The current development plan will be discussed by staff and governors, expanded to include all issues identified in our School Self Evaluation Report and priorities agreed. The monitoring of teaching, begun formally earlier this year, will be developed so that the good practice, witnessed by inspectors, can be disseminated more effectively. The school appointed, in July 2004, a teacher responsible for helping staff meet the needs of able and talented pupils and also a new I.T. co-ordinator so that I.T. skills can be more consistently applied across the curriculum. In order to comply with statutory requirements our prospectus will be printed, next year, by a firm that can guarantee to produce it on time, and recording and tracking of absent pupils will be discussed with our new Education Welfare Officer and our existing practice amended as appropriate. Finally, we will alter routines to provide adult supervision on the stairways and consult our L.E.A's Health and Safety Officer about improvements to the fabric of the stairs.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report, as usual, on the progress we are making including the progress made on the inspection findings.

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Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Brynmill Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Trafalgar Place Brynmill Swansea
Post code	SA2 0BU
Telephone Number	01792 459110

Headteacher	Mr. Phillip Andrew
Date of appointment	1st September, 2000
Chairman of Governors	Mrs. Juliette James
Registered Inspector	Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths, M. Phil., M.Ed.
Dates of inspection	27th – 30th September, 2004

Brynmill Primary School
Report by Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths and Team

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	26	48	39	54	44	53	50	51	365

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	17	0	17

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	21.2 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24.2
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.1 : 1

Term	N	R	Rest of School
Summer, 2004	86%	93%	93%
Spring, 2004	85%	94%	95%
Autumn 2003	90%	91%	93%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	2

Appendix C

**National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 1:**

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2004			Number of Pupils in Y2:					50
Percentage of Pupils at Each Level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
English	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	6	70	20	0
		National	0	4	14	63	20	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	2	62	36	0
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	12	58	30	0
		National	0	2	10	66	22	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	86	In Wales	79

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

National results relate to 2003, as figures for 2004 have not yet been published.

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**National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 2:**

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y6									50	
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	2	0	0	6	14	58	18	0	
		National	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31	0	
	Test/Task	School	0	0	8	0	0	0	10	44	38	0	
		National	0	2	1	0	0	5	12	38	40	0	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	2	0	0	2	8	62	26	0	
		National	0	0	0	0	0	4	19	46	30	0	
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0	0	2	8	44	44	0	
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	18	42	33	0	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	2	0	0	0	8	50	40	0	
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35	0	
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0	0	2	6	56	38	0	
		National	0	2	0	0	0	1	9	48	39	0	

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	76	In the school	80
In Wales	70	In Wales	71

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

National results relate to 2003, as figures for 2004 have not yet been published.

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of 3½ days.

- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.
- Twenty-five parents attended a pre-inspection meeting with two members of the inspection team.
- Fifty-nine questionnaires were returned, analysed and summarised.
- All documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the school development plan, policy and curriculum documents and teachers' planning files.
- Pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school and during the midday and other breaks.
- At various times during the day, inspectors took the opportunity to talk to pupils and to discuss their work.
- Thirty-one lessons or parts of lessons were observed.
- Pupils were heard reading and were examined in their knowledge and understanding of English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- A wide range of pupils' written and other work was examined in each class.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with class teachers and examined assessment records.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators and other staff.
- The work of pupils with special educational needs was examined.
- Minutes of meetings and documents relating to the financial management of the school were discussed.
- Budget figures were examined and discussed with the headteacher.
- Attendance and pupil records were inspected.
- Inspectors attended acts of collective worship.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key Questions 1, 3, 4 and 7
Mrs. Anne Robertson Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 4 and 7
Mr. J. Beecher Team Inspector	Key Questions 2, 5 and 6

Name and address of contractor

E.G.I.S.,
Brynheulog,
Brockweir,
Chepstow,
Gwent, NP16 7NQ.

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the staff, parents and pupils of the school for their courtesy and co-operation throughout the inspection.

BRYNMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
SWANSEA

INSPECTION

27th – 30th September, 2004

SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR:
MRS. EIRWEN GRIFFITHS
(WO50/17562)

Inspection under Section 10 of
School Inspections Act, 1996

28th October, 2004

Brynmill Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their children's schools. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. **The full report can be obtained from the school.**

The inspection of Brynmill Primary School took place between 27th and 30th September, 2004. An independent team of three inspectors, led by Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths, M.Phil., M.Ed., undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

Summary

1. Brynmill Primary School is a school with a capable and conscientious staff which is making steady progress in most areas.
2. The inspection team agreed with the majority of judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report submitted just prior to the inspection.

Table of grades awarded

3. The team judged the school's work as follows:

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

Standards

4. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs, and pupils make good progress towards the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning*.
5. In the main, children enter the school with good speaking and listening skills and show strengths in mathematical awareness. Sound routines ensure that social skills are properly developed. Work undertaken at this level adds good value to children's prior attainments, with the result that baseline assessments are above average for the local education authority by the beginning of the reception year.
6. At Key Stages 1 and 2, standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number are good. Without exception, pupils listen carefully, respond well to questioning, and articulate their thoughts clearly and confidently. Wide use of reading skills, on both a group and individual basis, results in the accurate understanding and reading of text and the ability to gather information from books and other material. Writing skills are purposefully applied across the curriculum. Good use is made of number skills, with pupils successfully applying their knowledge in everyday situations such as measuring household items and working out money problems. Considerable progress has been made in improving pupils' mental agility over the past twelve months.

7. In general, pupils make adequate use of information technology to support their learning, although skills are not consistently applied across the curriculum. Opportunities are not always taken for ensuring that more-able pupils, in particular, are provided with appropriate challenge in this area.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall and generally achieve the targets they are given.
9. National Curriculum assessment conducted by teachers last summer indicated that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments were similar to the national average for Wales in science and significantly above the national average in English and mathematics. Results, on the whole, were above average when compared with other schools in Swansea and with similar schools in Wales. No significant differences occurred between the performance of boys and girls. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, results in English and mathematics were in the upper quartile.
10. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results indicated that attainments were generally well above local and national averages in all three core subjects and above the average for similar schools throughout Wales. Again, there were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of free school meals, test results in mathematics were in the upper quartile.
11. Pupils throughout the school display very positive attitudes to learning, which makes a significant contribution to their progress and standards of achievement. The majority show enthusiasm for lessons, concentrate well on their tasks and collaborate effectively with each other in pursuing learning goals.
12. Behaviour is good overall, although there are occasions when restlessness mars concentration as, for example, during assemblies and in sessions when classes double up in cramped areas. For the most part, good behaviour and courteous, responsible attitudes enable pupils to gain maximum benefit from the experiences provided by the school.
13. Understanding of equal opportunities is developing well. Pupils are fortunate in being able to gain a close insight into a variety of beliefs and cultural traditions from within the school community, and share thoughts and ideas from other parts of the world.
14. Average attendance for the three terms immediately preceding the inspection was approximately 94%, compared with an average of 92.6% for Swansea as a whole. Evidence, however, indicates that some families withdraw their children for longer holiday periods than permitted, resulting in a significant loss of working time in the school. A number of pupils also miss introductions to lessons by arriving late at the start of the day.

The quality of education and training

15. The quality of teaching was judged to be the following:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
23%	39%	32%	6%	-

16. The percentage of satisfactory or better lessons (94%) is just below the Welsh Assembly Government's target of 95%, whilst the percentage of good or very good lessons (62%) is well above the target of 50%.

17. Teaching is generally brisk and work proceeds at an appropriate pace. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach and, in most cases, maintain an appropriate balance between explanation, practical activities and plenary sessions. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are characterised by the effective management of time and appropriate techniques to engage and retain pupils' interest. In instances where teaching is less effective, lessons introductions are often too long, with pupils losing enthusiasm and interest. Restlessness occurs on such occasions.

18. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and are regularly reviewed by team leaders. Medium and short-term planning is generally good and displays clear learning objectives. Aims, however, are not always shared with pupils or used as a focus during lessons. Planning recognises the need to develop key skills but does not always identify appropriate opportunities and relate them to specific tasks and assessment. Work is conscientiously marked, with teachers making good use of praise and encouragement. Too little guidance, however, is given on ways of raising standards and making further improvements.

19. A clear, concise policy has been drawn up for assessing pupils' achievements and progress, but elements are not yet firmly embedded into everyday practice. A useful tracking system has recently been introduced but is still at an early stage of development. Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and provide appropriate information on pupils' progress and standards of achievement.

20. Learning experiences generally ensure that pupils acquire a suitable range of skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate help in withdrawal sessions, whilst those learning English as an additional language benefit from an effective enhancement programme provided by the local education authority.

21. Pupils show a good understanding of right and wrong, and sensibly discuss moral issues during circle times, assemblies and school-council sessions. Collective worship successfully promotes moral development but fails to provide sufficient time for thoughtful reflection. Too little emphasis is placed on spiritual development.

22. Good provision is made for personal and social education. Outcomes are well reflected in pupils' behaviour, attitudes and willingness to work and play harmoniously with each other. Due attention is paid to the importance of protecting the environment and to issues such as global citizenship.

23. Visits to places such as Swansea Museum and the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagans provide pupils with appropriate first-hand experiences and help them to

appreciate the heritage and culture of Wales. The Welsh language is well promoted at Key Stage 1, but less so at Key Stage 2, with the result that pupils at this level lack appropriate confidence in using and speaking the language. The temporary subject co-ordinator recognises the area as one requiring further development, but this has not yet been identified as a priority in the school development plan.

24. Good understanding is being acquired of other customs and cultures through visits to places of worship, the sharing of experiences and studies in areas such as geography and religious education. Too little prominence, however, is given to other cultures in the display work of the school and in subjects such as music and art.

25. Partnerships with local industry and the community have helped to enrich pupils' experiences and improve the learning environment.

26. Although teachers have not undertaken industrial placements, a number of local companies work with the school to help enhance the curriculum, particularly in art, geography, and design and technology. Pupils play an active part in a number of local events. Good use is made of the local environment to broaden knowledge in history and geography.

27. Communication with parents is not always fully effective. Delays in distributing both the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents mean that the school is failing to fulfil statutory requirements in these areas.

28. In the pre-inspection meeting and responses to the questionnaire, most parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children and the values promoted by the school. Some, however, felt that they received insufficient information about the curriculum and the progress made by their children.

29. The school has an appropriate policy on promoting racial equality, which is well understood and implemented by pupils and staff alike.

30. In general, learners are well cared for, supported and guided. All pupils are equally valued by staff, who cater effectively for their different needs and ensure equality of opportunity. Samples of work are kept in individual portfolios and reflect what pupils have achieved. A major strength of the school is the way in which pupils from different cultures and backgrounds work and play happily together.

31. Due attention is given, in the main, to pupils' safety and welfare. Staff show appropriate awareness of health and safety requirements and are informed of the specific physical and medical needs of their pupils. The lack of adult supervision on cramped stairwells, however, constitutes a potential safety hazard.

Leadership and management

32. The school has a suitable set of aims that are well focused on the needs of its pupils. A particular strength of the headteacher's leadership is the promotion of equality for all and the harmonious integration of pupils sharing different languages and cultures. Evidence, however, suggests that there is scope for clearer direction in strategic planning, closer communication between senior managers and the creation of a joint vision incorporating all members of staff.

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34. Members of the governing body, especially the chairman, are very supportive and take a keen interest in the school. Some have only recently been appointed, although most have now undertaken training provided by the local education authority and are beginning to inform themselves about the quality of provision, particularly through the new "Governors-in-Partnership" scheme. Good work is being undertaken in a number of policy areas such as racial equality, health and safety, and the drafting of aims. Most committees are led by the chairman, who takes on a heavy personal load and produces a number of reports. Work and responsibilities are not yet distributed equitably.

35. The headteacher provides regular oral reports to the governing body but presents only one written report a year. This is insufficient to ensure that members are kept properly informed and are able to discharge their duties in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

36. Although gradually acquiring greater expertise and experience, governors are not yet working effectively as a body to provide sufficient strategic direction for the school.

37. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers with a good mix of expertise and experience. High-quality, effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as an additional language.

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39. Recent alterations have improved some areas, with a spacious new library providing ample opportunity for younger pupils to enjoy books in an attractive environment.

40. Under present break and lunchtime arrangements, the school playground comfortably caters for pupils' needs but the area for nursery children, whilst secure, is narrow and restrictive.

41. An ample supply of suitable resources has been provided to promote the development of children under five in each of the six areas of learning. Resources at Key Stages 1 and 2 are adequate to support the delivery of the National Curriculum, with staff making good use overall of what is available during lessons.

42. The lack of an appropriate school development plan means that spending decisions cannot be precisely matched to needs. Emphasis has been placed on English, mathematics, science, and information and communications technology, with insufficient attention to other subjects.

43. Progress since the last inspection has been steady overall. The school now provides ample opportunities for children under five to develop good co-ordination skills and has improved or maintained standards at Key Stages 1 and 2, although there is still scope for further improvement in several of the foundation subjects, particularly information and communications technology, and design and technology. Improvements have been made in procedures for assessing pupils' attainments and progress, but the pace has not been as rapid as might have reasonably been expected over the past five years. Extended absences of staff have affected progress in some areas of the curriculum, particularly in relation to the development role of subject co-ordinators. The school now complies with guidance relating to the time it allocates for teaching.

44. Overall, the school is currently providing satisfactory value for money.

Recommendations

In order to raise standards of achievement and to improve the quality of provision for pupils, the school needs to ensure:

- that future school development plans are comprehensive, detailed documents which serve as a firm basis for identifying priorities and achieving specific targets;
- that senior management adopts a more structured and strategic approach to leadership and the monitoring of classroom practice;
- that maximum challenge is provided for all pupils in each area of the curriculum, particularly those pupils capable of high standards of achievement;
- that the good and, in some instances, the very good practice which exists in the school is disseminated more effectively so that standards are brought up to the best in all cases;
- that early action is taken to comply with statutory requirements regarding the publication of information and the recording of unauthorised absence by pupils;
- that the safety issue relating to the stairways is addressed as soon as possible.

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

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the staff, parents and pupils of the school for their courtesy and co-operation throughout the inspection.