

**Inspection under Section 10 of the
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**Caldicot Sandy Lane Infants School
Sandy Lane, NP6 4NQ**

School Number: 6792229

Date of Inspection: 16/01/06

by

**Mr Meurig Thomas
17639**

Date of Publication: 20th March 2006

Under Estyn contract number: 1116705

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- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
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Caldicot Sandy Lane Infants School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection 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 information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Caldicot Sandy Lane Infants School took place between 16/01/06 and 18/01/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dafydd Meurig Thomas 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.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements 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

“There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **standard** inspection.”

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
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. Sandy Lane Infants is a community school, situated in Caldicot, in between the two major bridges which cross the Severn River in Monmouthshire.
2. The school serves a mixed catchment area, with pupils coming from both private and public housing; parts of the town are known to be subject to economic disadvantage, and 12% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is significantly less than the national average of 18.8%. All pupils come from homes where English is the main language, and no pupil speaks Welsh as a first language; English is the medium of education. There are currently 99 pupils on roll together with 48 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis, making a total of 123 full-time equivalent (FTE). 4 pupils are subject to a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and a further 23 pupils appear on the school SEN register, representing approximately 25% of the total roll.
3. During the inspection, one class was taught by a supply teacher.

The school's priorities and targets

4. The school was last inspected during the Spring term, 2000 and describes its main priorities as follows:
5. To create individuals who are:
 - perceptive, imaginative and creative;
 - adaptable and independent;
 - responsible and mature;
 - honest, tolerant and respectful;
 - conscientious and industrious;
 - capable of forming good relationships with peers and others; and
 - physically and spiritually healthy
6. The current targets of the school include a commitment to:
 - further improve the way in which reading is taught;
 - develop an increasing use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) throughout the school and in all curricular areas;
 - work towards the statutory implementation of the Foundation Phase;
 - ensure consistency in behaviour management throughout the school;
 - raise the level of governor involvement;
 - introduce the concept of Building Learning Power into all classrooms; and
 - ensure workforce remodelling is introduced in line with statutory requirements.

Summary

7. Sandy Lane Infants School is a happy and thriving community, in which pupils feel valued, trusted and appreciated. There are many good features to standards of both attainment and achievement, and the school displays outstanding characteristics in a significant proportion of teaching, the work with pupils who have SEN and the support and guidance of pupils. There remain shortcomings however, in some aspects of standards and provision, management issues, and the overall extent of progress since the last inspection.

Table of grades awarded

8. The inspection team judged the work of the school as follows:

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

Standards

9. The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses but there is evidence that these weaknesses may soon be put right. Baseline assessments suggest that levels of achievement as children start school are considerably lower than the county average for the majority of children.

10. In KS1 in the subjects inspected, standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	KS1
English	2
Information Technology	3
Design and Technology	3
Geography	2
Music	2
Physical Education	2

11. In the lessons inspected standards were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
12%	81%	7%	0%	0%

12. Pupils' achievement in lessons is substantially higher than the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target for the whole of Wales in 2007, namely 98% of lessons to be at least Grade 3 and 65% good or better (Grade 2).
13. Children in the early years make good progress across the range of key skills in language, literacy and communication, numeracy and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and show positive attitudes towards learning. However in the main reception class, problem-solving and creative skills are hindered by a lack of independent experiences and activities using a range of resources of the children's own choice; as such independent learning and personal and social skills also do not develop to their full potential in this class.
14. In the key skills in KS1, pupils display good standards in listening, speaking, reading writing and numeracy. In ICT, good features outweigh shortcomings; pupils work enthusiastically within a range of appropriate activities, but pace is often somewhat slow, and reading from screen not always sufficient to the demands of the task.
15. Pupils in KS1 display good development in their personal and social skills, co-operating happily within a range of learning strategies and producing lively discussions within class. They make good progress in their ability to solve problems, with a few individuals at the upper end of the school applying previous knowledge very well in this respect. In creative skills standards are consistently good in a range of activities that were observed during the inspection. However in bilingual competences, good features outweigh shortcomings; pupils' spoken Welsh is developing well, but these standards are frequently not matched in reading and writing skills.
16. Pupils with SEN make outstanding progress and achieve the challenging targets set for them.
17. In KS1 teacher assessments for 2005 show that the great majority of pupils achieve national expectations (level two) in English (92%), mathematics (91%) and science (86%); approximately 22% of pupils achieve level 3 in all three subjects. 83% of pupils achieve the core subject indicator (at least level two in all three subjects). Results for both English and mathematics are above national norms, and science only slightly below. English is above the county average, mathematics and science slightly below. When results are benchmarked against comparable schools based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, results for English and mathematics placed the school above the median (middle) score but not in the top 25% of performers; results for science were below the median but not in the lowest 25% of performers. The high percentage of SEN pupils within the year group (25%) is the principal reason which explains the somewhat lower profile which benchmarking describes. Slightly fewer girls than boys achieved the core subject indicator.
18. Pupils' attitudes towards their learning, the interest which they show in their work and their ability to concentrate are generally good. The vast majority work

diligently in lessons, are keen to join in the activities prepared for them and are enthusiastic in their work.

19. Many pupils behave very well whilst some of the older pupils in Y2 show mature citizenship within the school community. A significant number of pupils display challenging behaviour but respond positively to the calm yet authoritative efforts of staff to raise their self image through positive praise. Such responsible attitudes have a beneficial effect on progress in standards of achievement. Pupils are polite and respond well to the high expectations of teachers. They show respect to their peers and adults, and the quality of relationships within the school is good.
20. Throughout the school pupils' understanding of issues of equal opportunities are good. Diversity within faiths and cultural traditions within society are respected, whilst older pupils respond in a mature fashion to concepts such as tolerance, compassion and fairness.
21. Pupils have a developing appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of their own work. However, the process of setting personal short-term targets has not been securely embedded; only the most able recall and discuss their targets with appropriate understanding.
22. Attendance for the last three terms before the inspection averaged 91.65%. The school was particularly hard hit by chicken pox in one term which lowered the statistics significantly. Pupils who are taken on holiday during term time also remain a significant cause for the shortcomings in overall statistics.

Quality of education and training

23. In the lessons inspected, teaching was graded as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
34%	52%	14%	0%	0%

24. The percentage of lessons which are judged to be grade 2 or higher is higher than the WAG target for 2007 of 75% of lessons to be good or better.
25. Where teaching is good, the following characteristics are consistently present:
 - clear exposition of aims and objectives at the beginning of the lesson and effective appraisal at the end;
 - a purposeful range of teaching and learning strategies, including lively introductions;
 - high expectations;
 - challenging pace; and
 - consistent use of positive praise.
26. Where teaching is outstanding, it is additionally characterised by:

- highly detailed and pertinent differentiation of a broad spectrum of educational needs, which effectively matches activities to a significant number of individual pupils;
 - a wide range of outstanding behavioural management strategies, tailored to individual needs, which enables all pupils to register progress and achievement within lessons; and
 - excellent deployment of support staff in both planning and delivery of activities.
27. In some lessons, shortcomings in teaching were noted as follows:
- a lack of sufficient organisational management in resourcing lessons appropriately; and
 - lengthy introductions which have an adverse effect on the pace of learning and time management.
28. Teachers use a variety of appropriate means to strengthen and consolidate pupils' bilingual competences in lessons with consistently good use of a range of simple commands.
29. The quality of assessment is good, showing rigour, accuracy and consistency in meeting statutory requirements. Teachers know their pupils well. Arrangements for assessing the progress of pupils with SEN, reviewing their Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and matching learning experiences to their needs is an outstanding feature.
30. Annual reports to parents provide clear information about achievement across the curriculum, and the next steps required for progress. Statutory requirements are well met, and there is ample opportunity for parents to both view and discuss their children's work throughout the year.
31. The school responds well to the needs of pupils and provides equality of opportunity to a broad and balanced curriculum with outstanding emphasis on social inclusion. Curricular breadth includes due attention to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and Personal and Social Education (PSE), whilst provision for education in sustainable development and global citizenship is also good. Staff have recently been trained in a WAG initiative to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills and are now well placed to deliver programmes in this respect.
32. Learning experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well in general, though there remains scope to both promote and maintain a more worshipful atmosphere during periods of collective worship. The quality of partnerships with parents and the community are good.
33. The quality of support and guidance offered to pupils is an outstanding feature. Pupils are clearly happy in the school and have very good relationships with their peers and teachers within the very caring, inclusive community. There is a strong feeling amongst pupils that they are trusted, appreciated and supported. Parents who expressed an opinion also voiced strong confidence in the care and guidance offered by the school.

34. Provision for SEN is outstanding and meets in full the requirements of the Code of Practice (CoP).
35. There are several good features in the leadership of the head teacher, particularly in terms of overseeing behavioural management, ensuring that the school achieves the challenging targets which are set and competent financial management within tight constraints. The manner in which she manages provision for a broad range of SEN and the smooth day-to-day operation of the school is also effective. In all of these areas, she is ably assisted by the deputy and both have a strong sense of vision for further development. There are however some shortcomings which need addressing, particularly in effective management of delegation, and ensuring that new initiatives are pursued to a conclusion that allows their full impact to be realised.
36. Target setting are well developed within management strategies. Each year, realistic targets are initially set, with further challenge added thereafter in order to help ensure that all pupils achieves to maximum potential. This is particularly true in terms of pupils who are judged to be borderline in terms of attainment level, and the head teacher provides additional language support in order to raise these pupils' achievement. Subject co-ordinators play an increasingly active role in monitoring standards within their areas of responsibility, but the best practice in this respect has not been disseminated amongst all staff.
37. The work of the Governing Body (GB) shows good features which outweigh shortcomings. It is very supportive of the school, and has intervened effectively to help manage pupil support and guidance, behaviour, SEN, finances and health and safety. Its work is less focussed in terms of curricular development and monitoring standards however, and not all members have a sufficient understanding of the processes and outcomes of self evaluation across the full spectrum of responsibilities and activities.
38. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a useful planning document. A sound audit of the previous plan is outlined and current priorities match the needs of the school well. They also relate clearly to issues raised in the self-evaluation document which indicates a holistic approach to development planning. Priorities are appropriately timescaled and costed. Success indicators are often too vaguely expressed however, and read more as desirable activities than measurable outcomes; this is a further aspect of monitoring that remains in need of development.
39. Useful analysis is made of a range of data, including baseline assessments in the reception class and statutory end of key stage assessments in Y2. The school has a clear picture of the added value within these statistics and makes good use of such analysis to improve standards, to plan purposefully, and to target pupils who require additional support.
40. Much of the self-evaluation report produced before the inspection is of good quality, particularly in terms of identifying good and outstanding features. Whilst some shortcomings are also appropriately highlighted, the inspection team

awarded a lower overall grade in one of the key questions (KQ1), but a higher grade in one further question (KQ2). Overall however, the self evaluation report displays a sound knowledge of the current strengths and shortcomings, and presents both in a suitably honest and direct fashion.

41. Progress since the last inspection is characterised by good features which outweigh shortcomings. Standards in Information Technology (IT) have improved but some shortcomings remain. Outstanding progress has been made in terms of behavioural management, but progress in relation to monitoring has been insufficient, especially with regard to quality of teaching.
42. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers to teach every area of the curriculum. Deployment of staff has a number of good features, especially in relation to additional support for SEN pupils, and also the manner in which Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time has been addressed in such a way as to allow specialist teaching in physical education; this is influencing standards positively.
43. The smooth running of the school is supported efficiently by administrative staff and its cleanliness is maintained admirably by the caretaker.
44. The school has an appropriate collection of resources to meet needs in all curriculum areas. Much of the provision is well used, but not all is stored to best advantage or in appropriately labelled locations. Use of space is generally good, apart from the play area adjoining the reception class where accessibility is a problem particularly to the larger resources for learning through play. Access to the computer room is planned purposefully to support teaching of information technology and development of skills across the curriculum; this valuable resource is used well.
45. Financial management is rigorous, within very tight constraints and the school remains on course to deliver a small surplus this financial year. Staffing and SEN are prioritised within expenditure, whilst sound financial structures and protocols have enabled the head to manage the financial implications of the falling roll competently.
46. The school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1 take the appropriate steps to address the shortcomings in the provision for the under-fives;
- R2 improve standards further in IT and Design and Technology (DT) as subjects, and in the key skills of ICT and bilingual competences;
- R3 fully embed the system of setting personal individual targets for all pupils;
- R4* establish a comprehensive system of monitoring all aspects of standards, and especially the quality of teaching;

- R5 address the shortcomings in the leadership of both senior staff and the GB;
and
R6 Ensure that success outcomes as expressed in the SIP are both specific and measurable.

*(R4 is already noted in the SIP).

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

47. The judgement of the team does not match the Grade 2 awarded by the school in the self evaluation report; standards in some subjects and key skills, as well as the quality of provision for the early years had been overestimated.
48. The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses but there is evidence that these weaknesses may soon be put right. Baseline assessments suggest that levels of achievement as children start school are considerably lower than the county average for the majority of children.
49. In KS1 in the subjects inspected, standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	KS1
English	2
Information Technology	3
Design and Technology	3
Geography	2
Music	2
Physical Education	2

50. In the lessons inspected standards were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
12%	81%	7%	0%	0%

51. Pupils' achievement in lessons is substantially higher than the WAG target for the whole of Wales in 2007, namely 98% of lessons to be at least Grade 3 and 65% good or better (Grade 2).

52. Children in the early years make good progress across the range of key skills in language, literacy and communication, numeracy and ICT and show positive attitudes towards learning. However in the main reception class, problem-solving and creative skills are hindered by a lack of independent experiences and activities using a range of resources of the children's own choice; as such independent learning and personal and social skills also do not develop to their full potential in this class.
53. In the key skills in KS1, pupils display good standards in listening, speaking, reading writing and numeracy. In ICT, good features outweigh shortcomings; pupils work enthusiastically within a range of appropriate activities, but pace is often somewhat slow, and reading from screen not always sufficient to the demands of the task.
54. Pupils in KS1 display good development in their personal and social skills, co-operating happily within a range of learning strategies and producing lively discussions within class. They make good progress in their ability to solve problems, with a few individuals at the upper end of the school applying previous knowledge very well in this respect. In creative skills standards are consistently good in a range of activities that were observed during the inspection. However in bilingual competences, good features outweigh shortcomings; pupils' spoken Welsh is developing well, but these standards are frequently not matched in reading and writing skills.
55. Pupils with SEN make outstanding progress and achieve the challenging targets set for them.
56. In KS1 teacher assessments for 2005 show that the great majority of pupils achieve national expectations (level two) in English (92%), mathematics (91%) and science (86%); approximately 22% of pupils achieve level 3 in all three subjects. 83% of pupils achieve the core subject indicator (at least level two in all three subjects). Results for both English and mathematics are above national norms, and science only slightly below. English is above the county average, mathematics and science slightly below. When results are benchmarked against comparable schools based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, results for English and mathematics placed the school above the median (middle) score but not in the top 25% of performers; results for science were below the median but not in the lowest 25% of performers. The high percentage of SEN pupils within the year group (25%) is the principal reason which explains the somewhat lower profile which benchmarking describes. Slightly fewer girls than boys achieved the core subject indicator.
57. Pupils' attitudes towards their learning, the interest which they show in their work and their ability to concentrate are generally good. The vast majority work diligently in lessons, are keen to join in the activities prepared for them and are enthusiastic in their work.
58. Many pupils behave very well whilst some of the older pupils in Y2 show mature citizenship within the school community. A significant number of pupils display challenging behaviour but respond positively to the calm yet authoritative efforts

of staff to raise their self image through positive praise; these responsible attitudes have a beneficial effect on progress in standards of achievement. Pupils are polite and respond well to the high expectations of teachers. They show respect to their peers and adults, and the quality of relationships within the school is good.

59. Throughout the school pupils' understanding of issues of equal opportunities are good. Diversity within faiths and cultural traditions within society are respected, whilst older pupils respond in a mature fashion to concepts such as tolerance, compassion and fairness. Visits to the local community and places of interest help to expand pupils' understanding of their community, and arrangements and training are now in place for developing appropriate business enterprise skills for older pupils in Y2.
60. Pupils have a developing appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of their own work but the process of setting personal short-term targets has not been securely embedded; only the most able recall and discuss their targets with appropriate understanding.
61. Attendance for the last three terms before the inspection averaged 91.65%. The school was particularly hard hit by chicken pox in one term which lowered the statistics significantly. Pupils who are taken on holiday during term time also remain a significant cause for the shortcomings in overall statistics.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good and Outstanding Features

62. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 which was awarded by the school in the self-evaluation report, which underestimated the proportion of outstanding teaching in KS1.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
34%	52%	14%	0%	0%

63. The percentage of lessons which are judged to be grade 2 or higher is higher than the WAG target for 2007 of 75% of lessons to be good or better.
64. Where teaching is good, the following characteristics are consistently present:
- clear exposition of aims and objectives at the beginning of the lesson and effective appraisal at the end;
 - a purposeful range of teaching and learning strategies, including lively introductions;
 - high expectations;
 - challenging pace; and
 - consistent use of positive praise;

65. Where teaching is outstanding, it is additionally characterised by:

- highly detailed and pertinent differentiation of a broad spectrum of educational needs, which effectively matches activities to a significant number of individual pupils;
- a wide range of outstanding behavioural management strategies, tailored to individual needs, which enables all pupils to register progress and achievement within lessons; and
- excellent deployment of support staff in both planning and delivery of activities.

66. In some lessons, shortcomings in teaching were noted as follows:

- lack of sufficient organisational management in resourcing lessons appropriately; and
- lengthy introductions which have an adverse effect on the pace of learning and time management.

67. Teachers use a variety of appropriate means to strengthen and consolidate pupils' bilingual competences in lessons with consistently good use of a range of simple commands.

68. The quality of assessment is good, showing rigour, accuracy and consistency in meeting statutory requirements. Teachers know their pupils well. Arrangements for assessing the progress of pupils with SEN, reviewing their IEPs and matching learning experiences to their needs is an outstanding feature.

69. Pupils' progress and achievement in the core subjects are tracked through ongoing marking and assessment of daily work and recorded through an effective system of Baseline, Literacy and Numeracy profiles, standardised maths test and statutory teacher assessments at the end of the key stage.

70. Addressing shortcomings in recording progress in the foundation curriculum has been a recent priority for the school. Good practice is now in place but not yet fully disseminated throughout all the staff; however the school is well placed to consolidate these recent developments.

71. Annual reports to parents provide clear information about achievement across the curriculum, and the next steps required for progress. Statutory requirements are well met, and there is ample opportunity for parents to both view and discuss their children's work throughout the year.

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.

72. The findings of the inspection team match those of the school in the self-evaluation report.
73. The school responds well to pupils' learning needs. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements in full. Provision reflects the emphasis which the school places upon social inclusion in all aspects of access and equal opportunities, and is well structured according to the main aims of the school.
74. The school deploys programmes of study which are well planned in detail and which are accessible to all pupils irrespective of ability, gender, or cultural background. Provision for pupils with SEN is outstanding within individual classes, whilst all teachers prepare differentiated tasks in every lesson to meet what is a broad range of pupil needs; this is especially the case in the mixed-aged class of Reception, Y1 and Y2 pupils.
75. A series of policies for every subject of the NC and religious education have been adopted. These are concise documents which afford careful consideration to the individual nature and demands of each subject. Appropriate attention is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and, as a set, they form a good collection of documentation as a basis for curriculum management.
76. Schemes of work are categorised into long, medium and short term documents. Long term planning often serves as an extension to policy documents and is of a general nature. However medium term planning is rigorous and detailed, paying close attention to provision in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, and showing progression and continuity in a clear fashion. These documents are utilised well by staff to inform short term plans which are undertaken on either a weekly or fortnightly basis.
77. Planning for creative skills is undertaken on a subject specific basis within the individual creative areas. Planning for pupils' bilingual competences is based largely around the use of incidental Welsh, and specific Welsh lessons, with provision showing consistent application amongst all staff, this being one of the main aims of the school. The school is taking specific steps to develop pupils' independence increasingly within learning, according to their age and levels of confidence in their work. Current initiatives in this respect include the Building Learning Power programme, with teachers concentrating particularly on the nature of their questioning skills.
78. The quality of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good; pupils show increasing pride in their Welshness and by the end of Y2, discuss well a number of elements and characters which reflect both contemporary and historical Wales, without recourse to stereotyping.

79. Pupils' interests are well catered for in opportunities provided by means of lunchtime clubs; equal opportunities are prioritised in these extra-curricular activities and pupils gain valuable skills as a result. Frequent visits to local places of interest make a valuable contribution to enhancing the quality of the curriculum as does the work of visitors who come to the school to share experiences and expertise, for instance in history, music and art.
80. Learning experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural progress well in general. Collective worship sessions provide well expressed moral messages to which pupils can relate well, but more may sometimes be done to establish and maintain a worshipful atmosphere. Activities in creative subjects deepen pupils' appreciation of awe and beauty well.
81. The school makes good provision for the personal and social education of pupils, mainly by integrating requirements within curriculum subjects. There are a number of special enterprises such as purposeful circle-time discussion groups. Opportunities for older pupils in Y2 to take responsibility for others and themselves are frequently provided whilst members of the school council (also a Y2 initiative) take an increasing part in several aspects of the life and work of the school; older pupils especially appreciate such opportunities to show initiative and to influence matters which affect their daily lives. Opportunities for pupils to explore their emotions appropriately are another notable aspect of provision. These opportunities, as well as a broad range of humanitarian and conservation activities enable pupils to make good progress in their appreciation of local and global citizenship.
82. There are effective links with parents. As part of the inspection process 13 questionnaires completed by parents were received which proved largely positive in their support of the school and the efforts of staff. 11 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector. The vast majority of their comments were also very supportive, though concerns were voiced about the frequency of supply cover the school has recently utilised. The evidence clearly shows however that this need has been in response to circumstances outside the immediate control of the school. Parental sessions in literacy, run by the deputy have been well attended and made a significant contribution to home-school links. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is actively flourishing and raises substantial sums of money for the purchase of further resources.
83. The school promotes pupils' appreciation of other cultures well, especially through the medium of comparative studies and humanitarian activities; as a result pupils' appreciation and respect for diversity and tolerance develops well.
84. The partnership with the community enriches the quality of the curriculum in several respects and provides valuable opportunities for all pupils, especially in terms of links with religious institutions and local amenities; standards in this respect are good. The school web-site is of an outstanding quality, and a valuable resource to inform the community and beyond of activities, successes and celebrations.

85. Pupils develop well in their appreciation of the importance and viability of sustainable development and simple recycling projects within the school are actively pursued. Pupils are also engaged well in conservation of energy, whilst older pupils in Y2 voice sound awareness of local projects and initiatives which cover a much broader range of recyclable materials.
86. The partnership with industry is gradually developing. Across the school pupils have an emerging knowledge the world of work and opportunities to visit local industries. The head has developed her management skills by means of an education-business partnership, and the school is now enrolled and trained on a WAG initiative for pupil enterprise.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

87. The findings of the inspection team match the Grade 1 presented by the school in the self-evaluation report.
88. The quality of support, care, and guidance provided for learners is outstanding. Pupils are happy in the school and form very good relationships with peers and teachers within the caring, supporting, inclusive community. Pupils feel strongly that they are appreciated, valued and trusted. Parents who expressed an opinion also voiced confidence in the care and guidance which the school provides.
89. Efforts to raise pupils' self-respect, and self-image are an evident strength; all successes are regularly celebrated in a variety of ways, and strategies for praise feature prominently in the work of all teachers.
90. The quality of provision for SEN is outstanding. The system of early identification, assessment and monitoring is highly effective in meeting individual needs. The input of staff working on a one-to-one basis in the class makes a significant impact on pupils' achievement. Expertise of support staff is very well matched to individual needs. IEPs are carefully prepared and reviewed on a regular basis with contributions from all staff concerned. Pupils with SEN are always invited to review their own progress, and parents are fully involved in all aspects of consultation.
91. Staff display excellent knowledge of the detailed guidelines that are in place in the area of child protection, an area for which the headteacher is responsible for. Protocols for implementation are soundly established and regularly practised in an outstanding fashion.
92. The partnership with external agencies is outstanding. Visits by the fire brigade, police and the school nurse promote pupils' health and safety in a positive fashion. Monthly meetings between the head teacher and welfare officer provide an excellent means of early intervention regarding a variety of challenging educational and social problems.

93. Close partnerships have been established between local nursery groups and other nursery units within schools to help ensure that younger pupils settle quickly. Efficient transfer arrangements with the two junior feeder schools ensure that pupils are confident as they move from Y2 to Y3. Members of staff visit other schools on a regular basis both to update and disseminate good practice.
94. There was no incidence of bullying during the inspection but the school has clear guidelines for staff should the need arise. Parents and pupils report that staff, implement both policy and guidelines effectively.
95. The school's policy for promoting racial equality is in place and implemented equitably by all teachers. In a number of subjects, work reflects the importance attached to respect and tolerance and the school succeeds well in developing pupils' understanding of other cultures.
96. The school monitors attendance and punctuality in a firm fashion.
97. The school is enthusiastic in the manner in which it develops principles of healthy living, and has played an active role in the Healthy Schools Initiative. Pupils are encouraged to drink water throughout the school day, in order to improve concentration, and the school fruit shop is well patronised and another means of helping the school to achieve its aims.
98. The structures for caring for pupils who have an accident or do not feel well are effective and almost all members of staff have appropriate qualifications in emergency aid at work. A policy outlines arrangements for dispensing medicines, including drawing up appropriate risk assessments.
99. The sex education policy has been well established and is implemented with considerable praise from parents. Provision for alcohol and drugs-related education is also effective and has an evident influence upon pupils' attitudes.
100. Appropriately practical steps are taken to ensure the safety of pupils whilst they are in school. Fire drills are held regularly and all extinguishers are in place. All school entrance doors are kept locked during the day.
101. Provision for promoting equal opportunities is very good for all pupils including those with physical disabilities. The school has worked hard to implement improved access, with appropriate ramps in place, and suitable toilet facilities.
102. The quality of academic support and guidance is good. Pupils' work is marked regularly using specific criteria; the comments appended are constructive and give clear guidance as to how to improve the work further.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings.

103. The findings of the inspection team match the grade 3 awarded by the school in the self-evaluation report.
104. A number of purposeful aims and objectives have been adopted; these are included in an introduction to the SIP and are reflected well in the work of the school. There is a clear atmosphere of trust and understanding amongst all staff.
105. There are several good features to the leadership of the headteacher, particularly in terms of overseeing behavioural management, ensuring that the school achieves the challenging targets which are set and competent financial management within tight constraints. The manner in which she manages provision for a broad range of SEN and the smooth day-to-day operation of the school is also effective. In all of these areas, she is ably assisted by the deputy and both have a strong sense of vision for further development. There are however some shortcomings which need addressing, particularly in effective management of delegation, and ensuring that new initiatives are pursued to a conclusion that allows their full impact to be felt.
106. Good consideration is given to national priorities. The emphasis on social inclusion and equal opportunities is one of the main aims of the school and is consistently well reflected within all activities. Recent developments such as the Healthy Schools Initiative have also had a positive effect on pupils' daily lives. The school has been awarded the Quality Mark of the Basic Skills Agency.
107. Target setting is well developed within management strategies. Each year, realistic targets are initially set, with further challenge added thereafter in order to help ensure that all pupils achieves to a maximum potential. This is particularly true in terms of pupils who are judged to be borderline in terms of attainment level, and the headteacher provides additional language support in order to raise these pupils' achievement. Subject co-ordinators play an increasingly active role in monitoring standards within their areas of responsibility, but the best practice in this respect has not been disseminated amongst all staff.
108. The work of the GB shows good features which outweigh shortcomings. It is very supportive of the school, and has intervened effectively to help manage pupil support and guidance, behaviour, SEN, finances and health and safety. Its work is less focussed in terms of curricular development and monitoring standards however, and not all members have a sufficient understanding of the processes and outcomes of self-evaluation across the full spectrum of

responsibilities and activities. Despite its best efforts, the school has not been able to secure a full complement of governors for the current year.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings.

109. The findings of the inspection team agree with those made by the school in the self-evaluation document.
110. The headteacher, governors, and staff show good commitment to improving standards. Staff, in particular, has played a proactive role in contributing to the self-evaluation process in general, and the self-evaluation report specifically.
111. There are good features in the roles of curriculum leaders, with monitoring of standards increasingly influencing achievement and progress, although the best practice in this respect has not been disseminated amongst all the staff. There are shortcomings in the monitoring of teaching however, and this aspect is insufficiently developed within self-evaluation structures and processes.
112. The SIP is a useful planning document. A sound audit of the previous plan is outlined and current priorities match the needs of the school well. They also relate clearly to issues raised in the self-evaluation document which indicates a holistic approach to development planning. Priorities are appropriately timescaled and costed. Success indicators are often too vaguely expressed however, and read more as desirable activities than measurable outcomes; this is a further aspect of monitoring that remains in need of development.
113. Useful analysis is made of a range of data, including baseline assessments in the reception class and statutory end of key stage assessments in Y2. The school has a clear picture of the added value within these statistics and makes good use of such analysis to improve standards, to plan purposefully, and to target pupils who require additional support.
114. Performance Management has already had a good effect on the school The headteacher is gradually implementing a culture of self-evaluation that contributes specifically towards noting and fulfilling the professional needs of all the staff.
115. Much of the self-evaluation report produced before the inspection is of good quality, particularly in terms of identifying good and outstanding features. Whilst some shortcomings are also appropriately highlighted, the inspection team awarded a lower overall grade in one of the key questions (KQ1), but a higher grade in one further question (KQ2). Overall however, the self evaluation report displays a sound knowledge of the current strengths and shortcomings, and presents both in a suitably honest and direct fashion.
116. Progress since the last inspection is characterised by good features which outweigh shortcomings. Standards in IT have improved but some shortcomings

prevail. Outstanding progress has been made in terms of behavioural management, but progress in relation to monitoring has been insufficient, especially with regard to quality of teaching.

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

Grade 2 : good features and no important shortcomings

117. The findings of the inspection team agree with the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation document.
118. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers to teach every area of the curriculum. Deployment of staff has a number of outstanding features, especially in relation to additional support for SEN pupils, and also the manner in which PPA time has been addressed in such a way as to allow specialist teaching in physical education; this is influencing standards positively.
119. All staff benefit from appropriate In Service Education and Training (INSET) that improves their expertise in curriculum areas which they lead; where this is then well disseminated, there is a definite impact on standards. In addition whole school training addresses priorities in the SIP as a result of which standards have risen dramatically in behaviour and key skills across the school. Induction for new staff is effectively provided by an experienced teacher.
120. A committed team of support staff plays a full and effective part in planning, teaching, progress review and classroom management. Lunchtime supervisors are well trained to reinforce management strategies introduced in the classroom to ensure a consistent and holistic approach throughout the day.
121. The smooth running of the school is supported efficiently by administrative staff and its cleanliness is maintained admirably by the caretaker.
122. The school has an appropriate collection of resources to meet needs in all curriculum areas. Much of the provision is well used, but not all is stored to best advantage or in appropriately labelled locations. Use of space is generally good, apart from the play area adjoining the reception class where accessibility is a problem particularly to the larger resources for learning through play.
123. Access to the computer room is planned purposefully to support teaching of information technology and development of skills across the curriculum, this valuable resource is used well.
124. The school and its grounds are spacious, providing good opportunities for outdoor learning; recent improvements in boundaries have had a dramatic impact in overall health and safety of pupils.
125. Financial management is rigorous, within very tight constraints and the school remains on course to deliver a small surplus this financial year. Staffing and SEN are prioritised within expenditure, whilst sound financial structures and

protocols have enabled the head to manage the financial implications of the falling roll competently.

126. The school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

127. Pupils listen attentively and speak enthusiastically about their work. They express themselves clearly and with ease, offering sensible comments. They follow instructions well, respond promptly to commands, recite rhymes with enthusiasm and role play in a lively fashion. By Y2, pupils speak with accuracy, clarity and purpose. They develop well in their ability to express opinions and ask sensible questions relating to their work.

128. Pupils enjoy reading a wide variety of texts and make good progress according to their age and ability. Most have developed a sound grasp of phonics and use this knowledge well to deconstruct unfamiliar words, alongside use of contextual clues and pictures. They predict outcomes sensibly and discuss plot and characters in increasing detail throughout the key stage. In each year, there are a number of pupils who read fluently, using punctuation well to vary enunciation, and bringing the characters of their stories to life.

129. Pupils write effectively in a variety of forms, developing their ideas in a methodical, systematic and interesting manner as they write for a variety of purposes and audiences. In Y1 most pupils write independently, with correct sentence structure, accurate spelling of simple words and a good awareness of punctuation. By Y2, many show vivid imagination in producing original ideas, and here pupils write in a more extended fashion. Their work shows a clear sense of structure and scans well within a more complex framework of punctuation. Handwriting and presentation of work is good throughout KS1.

Shortcomings

130. There are no important shortcomings

Information technology

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

131. Pupils work independently with the equipment, naming and labelling the different parts correctly. They click the mouse successfully and correctly, moving objects across the screen confidently and accurately; the most able pupils recognise some situations where a single and double click result in different outcomes.

132. Y2 pupils begin to develop word processing skills, showing some knowledge of keyboard geography, and ability to include appropriate punctuation. The more able pupils vary font and size of print well in this respect.
133. Pupils use a roamer successfully and confidently, modelling different programs, inputting them and operating them correctly. They make use of a variety of directions, demonstrating sound prediction skills in the process.
134. Pupils' investigative and research skills are developed well to support scientific knowledge, and they question simple data bases to extract this information.
135. Computer-based art work is at least good, with some very good examples from individual pupils who use the program in an investigative fashion to experiment with concepts such as line, tone and colour.
136. Pupils produce a range of simple graphs to record the results of their surveys and are adept at inputting information to create simple data bases.

Shortcomings

137. Particularly in word processing, many pupils work at a laboured pace.
138. Pupils' reading skills from screen are not as well developed as reading from print. This at times has a detrimental effect on the pace of work, and the extent of challenge achieved, for instance when accessing adventure games.
139. A significant proportion of pupils in Y2 make too many errors when interpreting the data which they produce in the form of computerised graphs.

Design and technology

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

140. Pupils display a range of well developed making skills, and work accurately and neatly at tasks such as cutting and folding. They use a variety of means to join materials successfully, including the use of a range of simple adhesives.
141. Pupils in Y1 and Y2 have developed detailed drawings as designs for homes, having studied various buildings in the locality in depth. More able pupils compare their finished model sensibly with the initial design, noting clearly what they have done differently.
142. Pupils have engaged well with an outside agency in problem solving activities during which they designed and built artefacts using commercial construction kits. Photographic evidence of this work reveals suitable attention to the use of moving parts, with the most ambitious designs utilising these by means of motors and simple electrical circuits.

Shortcomings

143. Pupils' making skills are limited to too narrow a range of materials; at times, this limits their ability to make informed choices at both the design and making stage of their work.
144. Only the more able pupils appraise and evaluate their finished artefacts in sufficient detail; overall, insufficient progression is seen in these skills across the key stage.

Geography

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

145. Pupils in KS1 have a secure knowledge of the area surrounding the school gained through organised walks. During such activities they develop good understanding of directions and use suitable vocabulary to discuss these. More able pupils demonstrate good recall of the routes they have walked.
146. Pupils know their addresses and locate them accurately on a local map; they use their knowledge of directions well to draw individual route maps of their journey from home to school.
147. Older pupils extend their mapping skills well by drawing more complex routes to a variety of destinations in the locality. They develop good knowledge of a variety of map symbols and interpret these accurately. They identify buildings in the local area from photographic evidence and represent these in models, drawings and writing linked to their mapping work.
148. Older pupils who participated in the school's balloon race accurately name several European countries where their balloons were found. They use the four points of the compass correctly to describe these countries in relation to Wales and the United Kingdom.
149. Pupils recall their weather studies confidently. They know how temperatures are measured and record daily temperatures systematically in a suitable chart using pictorial symbols and numerical degrees. They develop graphic representation of this numerical data, and apply interpretative skills well to compare and contrast the weather for two different months.
150. Throughout the school pupils know the importance of keeping the environment clean and attractive, and are actively involved in applying such notions to the school grounds. They have a sound appreciation of the importance of recycling and show good knowledge of the range of materials that can be kept for such purposes.

Shortcomings

151. There are no important shortcomings

Music

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

152. The quality of singing is good. Pupils achieve clear diction and clarity of interpretation in their singing within a confident level of volume. They manage call and response techniques rhythmically and tunefully, whilst action songs are energetically delivered. They maintain pitch successfully and breathe correctly to make added sense of the lyrics.
153. Pupils in Y1 internalise and repeat melodic patterns quickly and with confidence. They keep a steady beat well, and progress their skills to recalling short rhythmic patterns accurately. In composition work, they develop simple but effective textures with competent and consistent use of simple ostinati. They show a good awareness of the difference between rhythm and beat in their work.
154. Pupils in Y2 internalise, repeat and discriminate within more complex rhythmic and pitch patterns, indicating pitch with accurate and consistent hand signs. In both performance and composition work, they control a range of percussion instruments appropriately, and maintain simple independent lines as a means of accompaniment. They correspond sound to symbol well and use these skills to develop increasing knowledge of further musical elements such as structure and dynamic.
155. Pupils in both years develop good appraisal skills, well related to the musical elements and within a suitably broad range of musical styles and idioms.

Shortcomings

156. There are no important shortcomings

Physical education

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

157. Pupils develop a range of movement skills in floor work during gymnastics and practice these with considerable energy. When such skills are transferred to apparatus work, they show good ability to balance the body appropriately. They co-operate well in pairs and small groups to create sequences of movements which they perform confidently and evaluate effectively.
158. Older pupils show good progression in gymnastic skills by combining balance and movement, using a good variety of body parts, levels and pathways. A few more able pupils already take their weight on their hands confidently. Instructions are followed accurately showing good understanding of vocabulary related to movement.

159. In dance pupils apply their knowledge and skills imaginatively to depict the movements of various animals. Through gestures and movements they respond increasingly rhythmically to music and show good understanding of a range of moods and feelings. Good spatial awareness is consistently evident when working individually and with others.

Shortcomings

160. There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

161. We welcome the finding of the inspection team that Sandy lane is “A happy and thriving community in which pupils feel valued, trusted and appreciated”
162. We are pleased that the inspection team confirmed that pupils achievements in lessons is substantially higher than the WAG target for the whole of Wales and that our pupils with SEN make outstanding progress and achieve the challenging targets set for them. We are also delighted that the inspection team identified the high proportion of outstanding teaching which takes place at Sandy Lane and again the school achieves considerably higher than the WAG target for the quality of teaching.
163. The report recognises the school website as one of outstanding quality and that it is a valuable resource, providing information to the wider community. The opportunity for children to explore their emotions and become responsible citizens was also recognised by the team.
164. As a school that believes strongly in inclusion, we were again delighted to hear that the inspectors found that the quality of support, care and guidance provided for all learners is outstanding. We were also pleased that our efforts to raise pupils' self-respect and self-image through praise and celebration was recognised as a particular strength.
165. The school has worked hard since the last inspection addressing the needs of pupils with behavioural problems and is pleased that the inspectors recognised the calm and consistent approach, coupled with outstanding behavioural management strategies, used by all staff when dealing with the challenging behaviour displayed by some pupils.
166. Our self evaluation document was completed as honestly as possible and it is pleasing to note that the inspection team agreed that this document was of good quality and presented in an honest and direct way.
167. The staff and governors will now work closely together to produce an action plan to address the recommendations of the report and any shortcomings identified in individual subjects. This action plan will feed into the School Improvement Plans for 2006-2012 and will be monitored by senior staff, governors and the LEA. A copy of this action plan will be sent to the Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning and Leisure and will be sent to all parents. The annual report to parents will report each year on the progress the school is making following the inspection.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Caldicot Sandy Lane Infants School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3-7 yrs
Address of school	Sandy Lane, Caldicot
Postcode	NP6 4NQ
Telephone number	01291 420677

Headteacher	Mrs Susan Richards
Date of appointment	01:02:1991
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr W Edwards
Registered inspector	Mr Meurig Thomas
Dates of inspection	17 th -19 th January 2006

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	24	31	36	32					

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	1	6.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	18:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.3:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Spring 2005	87.9	90.8	89.7
Summer 2005	87	92.8	90.8
Autumn 2005	93.5	92	93.8

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

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y2:		36		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	2	6	69	23
		National	0	4	13	63	20
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	12	51	34
		National	0	3	11	63	23
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	8	69	20
		National	0	5	15	69	11
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	8	66	23
		National	0	3	14	55	26
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	6	71	20
		National	0	2	11	63	24
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	11	63	23
		National	0	2	10	65	23

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	83	In Wales	80

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

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

168. Four Inspectors spent a total of 11 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection. In addition, the Headteacher attended all inspection meetings in the role of nominee.

169. These inspectors visited:

- 28 lessons or part lessons;
- All classes;
- Acts of collective worship (as observers only); and
- A range of extra curricular activities.

170. Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- Staff, governors and parents before the inspection began; and
- Senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils during the inspection;

171. The team also considered:

- The school's self evaluation report;
- 13 responses to a parent's questionnaire;
- Comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- A wide range of pupils' past and current work.

172. The inspection team held post inspection meetings with the staff and governors.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Meurig Thomas Rgl	KQs 1,3 5 and 6 English, Information Technology and Music
Mrs Margaret Hanney Team Inspector	KQs 2, 4 and 7 Design and technology, geography and physical education
Mrs Sarah Waters Peer Assessor	Contributions to all aspects of the inspection
Mr Gwilym Morris Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1 3 4 and 7

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