

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

***YSGOL CEFN MEIRIADOG  
GROESFFORDD MARLI  
CEFN MEIRIADOG***

***School Number: 663-2124***

***Date of Inspection: 10-12 December 2001***

***by***

***MRS S M BARNES***

***Registered Inspector***

***Date: 14 February 2002***

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

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

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

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

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

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

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

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

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## 1. CONTEXT

### The school and its priorities

The school is situated in the small village of Cefn Meiriadog, near the town of Abergele. It is a small school, attended by 51 boys and girls, the youngest of whom attend part time in the afternoons. (The total number of pupils is 47 full-time equivalent). This is a higher number than at the time of the previous inspection, when there were 27 pupils on roll. These pupils are currently taught by two full-time, and one part-time, teachers. During the greater part of the week, the children are taught in two classes and the average class size is 23.5. At other times, the school is divided into three classes for English and mathematics. When last inspected in 1997 it was judged to have a caring, family atmosphere within which pupils were treated as individuals and encouraged to achieve their potential. The school has successfully built upon the standards noted at that time, and in many areas it has improved still further. Pupils come from homes in the surrounding villages, although a few come from further afield. Approximately 12 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, slightly above the national average. Approximately 30 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs (SEN), which is higher than average. Two pupils have a statement of their need. All pupils speak English as a first language. There have been no recent exclusions. The children start in the nursery in the September following their third birthday. Nursery pupils attend for half-day sessions. The school has a clear set of aims, to give the children a stimulating and encouraging environment, whereby all pupils can make progress to the best of their ability. Due to the small size of each cohort, appropriate targets are set based on individual pupils' ability and prior attainment.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### The main findings of the report

- The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that the shortcomings can be put right. Overall standards are satisfactory and the children are making steady progress towards the desirable outcomes for children's learning in most areas, though there are unsatisfactory aspects in children's physical development and in their creative and imaginative learning. However, provision for developing language, literacy and communication skills are good and nursery and reception children make good progress in this area of learning as a consequence. Children of three and four are taught in one nursery and reception class, together with Year (Y)1 and Y2 pupils. They enter with overall standards of achievement that are average. At the age of five, standards are broadly average, except in physical development, which are below, and early literacy skills, which are above average.

Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Personal and social development	Satisfactory
Mathematical development	Satisfactory
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Satisfactory
Physical development	Unsatisfactory
Creative development	Satisfactory

- In Key Stage 1 (KS1), and Key Stage 2 (KS2), standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) and religious education are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>
English	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Welsh second language	Good	Very good
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Very good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Good
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	N/A	Good
Religious education	Good	Good

- Standards achieved are at least satisfactory in all lessons observed and in more than half they are at least good. They were very good in nearly a quarter of lessons observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory to good and a small number of unsatisfactory lessons were observed. All of the teaching of children under five and pupils in KS1 was at least satisfactory and a significant proportion was good. At KS2, all of the teaching was at least satisfactory, virtually all of it was at least good and much of it was very good.
- Despite the small school size and small cohorts making fluctuations year by year more likely, the results of the NC assessments over recent years have indicated that pupils are making at least the expected progress during their time in school. (Actual results cannot be published, to protect pupil confidentiality, as the size of each cohort is so small).
- Standards pupils attain in applying their skills across the curriculum are good overall. They are good in speaking and listening, reading and numeracy and very good in information technology. In writing they are satisfactory.
- Sufficient opportunities are provided for children under five in the nursery and reception class to develop and apply the skills of literacy, numeracy and use of information technology across the six areas of learning of the foundation stage.
- At KS1 and KS2, skills continue to be developed effectively across the curriculum.
- The ethos of the school is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is very well established in the school; pupils study the work of Welsh artists and musicians and the Welsh dimension figures highly throughout the curriculum.
- Standards of behaviour, both in the classroom and at playtimes or when moving around the school, are good. There has been a significant improvement in the school's formal procedures and arrangements for promoting good behaviour since the previous inspection.

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- Attendance levels in the school are good. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. However, due to the small size of the school, those few who take holidays in term time do lower overall percentage figures.
  - The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. In all of the lessons observed, the teaching was at least satisfactory and in most cases it was good. Good teaching was observed in both classes. The high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection have been effectively maintained.
  - Teaching in the nursery, reception and KS1 class is always at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons are effectively planned with both the foundation curriculum for children under five and the NC for older pupils in mind.
  - Teaching at KS2 is nearly always at least good and often very good. Lessons are well planned to take good consideration of what pupils have already been taught. There are good levels of continuity and good opportunities given in introductions to lessons to revise work already covered and remind pupils what they know.
  - Teachers have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Lessons are orderly and relationships are good. Lessons have a good pace and are interesting as a result. There is suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils as well as support for those with SEN.
  - Homework is used appropriately with tasks, such as reading, being set and this enables parents to be suitably involved in their children's learning.
  - Procedures for assessment, recording and reporting are good overall. Arrangements for assessment are systematic, accurate and followed consistently and conscientiously by all staff. Marking is accurate, prompt and positive and helps pupils improve their work.
  - Good practice in pupils' assessment of their own work is being developed throughout the school.
  - The school makes good use of a variety of tests, including an 'on entry' assessment in nursery and a baseline test in reception. Target setting based on evidence from these and other assessments is very good.
  - The quality, breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory in the early years and at KS1 and good at KS2. There have been significant improvements to the organisation of the curriculum since the previous inspection, which judged that there were some shortcomings in the provision. However opportunities for physical development of children under five and for their creative and imaginative play are constrained by staffing levels and by constraints of the overall accommodation.
  - Curriculum documents are detailed and consistent in presentation and format. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. All subjects have been effectively reviewed to provide coverage of NC and progression through all areas and aspects of the curriculum. There is now appropriate time allocation at both key stages.
  - Overall, the support and guidance provided for pupils is good. The headteacher and staff know their pupils well and provide a calm, happy and caring environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-esteem. Day-by-day educational guidance is effective and academic monitoring is thorough.

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- Provision for pupils with SEN is good and they are effectively supported. The Code of Practice is followed appropriately. As a result these pupils make good progress towards their learning targets.
  - The school has established good partnerships with parents, the community, schools and other institutions. Parents expressed highly complimentary views in the pre-inspection meeting, and through the parental questionnaire, about all facets of the school. The information the school provides for parents is very good.
  - Good use is made of the local community, as an additional educational resource and children also visit various places of interest and environmental benefit to their school-work. The many visitors who come to the school and talk to the pupils on a range of subjects also have a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in their learning.
  - The school has good relationships with other schools and institutions. The effectiveness of the school's links with industry is very good.
  - The quality of self-evaluation within the school is good. The school has set priorities and appropriately challenging targets for improvement. There is a good School Development Plan (SDP), where monitoring responsibilities are identified along with cost and dates for completion. This document highlights the appropriate areas for whole-school development that are challenging but achievable.
  - The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good. It ensures clear direction and the promotion of high standards. The school has a clear and explicit set of aims, which are well reflected in its work. There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion of all. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
  - The leadership provided by governors and co-ordinators is good. Governors know the school well and are suitably involved in all aspects of management. The governors, headteacher, and staff all work together effectively for the benefit of the school.
  - Routine administration and organisation is very good. Statutory requirements are complied with and the school takes good note of National Assembly guidelines.
  - Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. Teachers are appropriately qualified for the subjects they teach and there is a generally satisfactory balance of experience and expertise, due to the good quality of professional development.
  - The staffing of 2.3 full-time equivalent teachers is not always adequate to provide for the under-fives in the KS1 class in the mornings. The nursery nurse attends in the afternoons and so nursery children only have the opportunity of an afternoon placement.
  - The accommodation for Y3-Y6 in the mobile classroom is very cramped and limits movement in, for example, drama and dance. There are very limited facilities for physical education at the school (indoor and out) and the school has use of a hall at a local primary school for one session each week. It is only due the very hard work and commitment of staff, regularly moving furniture to make space during break times, that standards in subjects such as design and technology and investigative science remain as high as they do.

- Outdoor facilities for the children under five require development. There is a small play area which has a shredded bark surface, on which is sited some recreational equipment of a simple nature. The surface of the playground is uneven which limits its effective use for very young children.
- There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection and the school is in a good position to continue to improve still further. All staff have worked hard and the key issues of the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. The school provides good value for money.

### **3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

Standards achieved are at least satisfactory in all lessons observed and in the great majority they are at least good. They were good in approximately 60 per cent of lessons observed. They were very good in nearly a quarter of lessons observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory to good.

- Despite the small school size and small cohorts making fluctuations year by year more likely, the results of the NC assessments over recent years have indicated that pupils are making at least the expected progress during their time in school. (Actual results cannot be published, to protect pupil confidentiality, as the size of each cohort is so small).
- Children in the nursery and reception class achieve good standards in language, literacy and communication skills and satisfactory standards in mathematical skills, creative development, personal, social and moral development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the area of physical development and creative and imaginative play their development is restricted due to constraints of accommodation and staffing ratios and progress and standards are unsatisfactory overall.
- Standards are good at KS1 in mathematics, Welsh second language, science, design and technology, information technology, art, music, history, geography and religious education.
- Standards are satisfactory at KS1 in English. It was not possible to come to an overall judgement on standards in physical education as no lessons were observed at KS1.
- At KS2 standards are very good in Welsh second language and information technology. In all other subjects standards are good.
- Pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils and those with SEN achieve appropriately and attain suitable standards in relation to their prior attainment.

#### **3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum**

Standards pupils attain in applying their skills across the curriculum are good overall.

- Children under five in the nursery and reception class appropriately develop and apply the skills of literacy, numeracy and use of information technology across the six areas of learning of the foundation stage.
- At KS1 and KS2, skills continue to be developed effectively across the curriculum.
- Skills in speaking are good. Pupils speak confidently and fluently in a range of situations and learn effectively through drama.

- They listen attentively and concentrate for appropriate periods of time, following instructions well.
- Writing skills are developed satisfactorily, although skills of drafting writing using computers are not practised sufficiently often.
- Pupils use books effectively to research information in other subjects. This is particularly well developed at KS2.
- Numeracy skills are developed well across the whole curriculum. These skills are successfully applied to other subjects, particularly science. Skills in number are also developed very effectively in Welsh second language.
- Pupils ask relevant questions demonstrating the ability to look thoughtfully at artefacts and interpret text. They develop problem-solving skills effectively through questioning, in a way that enables them to come to informed decisions. This is particularly the case in geography and history at KS2.
- Information technology skills are very well developed and effectively used to research for other subjects, communicate ideas and handle data.
- Standards in the key skills achieved by pupils with SEN are good overall.

#### **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

##### **4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and standards are high as a result.

- The school is a warm, friendly and caring community, which provides security and support to all its pupils.
- In the whole-school assemblies, held three days a week, pupils respect the religious ethos and sense of 'a different place.' On the other two days each key stage has its own collective worship. The school worships at the local church once a week. The Harvest Festival is conducted in the Welsh Chapel. Pupils are given ample opportunities to reflect upon their own ideas and values in relation to others', especially during circle time in KS1, English, religious education and history. They say prayers daily. Pupils show respect for property and school discipline. They know right from wrong and respond positively to the reward system for effort and good behaviour.
- Pupils learn to support others less fortunate than themselves through, for example, donations to various national and international charities such as 'Jeans for Genes', 'Red Nose Day', the 'Marie Curie Foundation', 'Save the Children', 'Whizz Kids' and 'Operation Christmas Child' in Rumania.
- They are also effectively encouraged to be conscious of the importance of their environment and work towards Eco School awards.
- Pupils make good progress in social and interpersonal skills. Relationships between pupils and adults in the school are friendly and mutually respectful. Relationships between the pupils themselves are positive. Pupils work well in pairs and small groups. Older pupils work very well individually. Those pupils who are given opportunities to use their initiative, such as organising stalls for the Summer Fair, do so maturely and conscientiously.

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- Pupils benefit from the enhancement of their social skills by questioning and conversing with the many adults who visit the school to talk to them about a range of subjects to extend their learning, and by the many activities they share with other schools.
  - Pupils' social and cultural development is further enhanced by extra-curricular activities such as Yr Urdd, the Eisteddfod, Music Club, instrumental tuition and sports.
  - The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is very well established in the school; pupils study the work of Welsh artists and musicians and the Welsh dimension figures highly throughout the curriculum. Activities such as carding, spinning and weaving enhance pupils' understanding of cultural changes. The use of incidental Welsh is constant and enriches the pupils' awareness of their Welsh heritage.
  - Pupils' awareness of life in other cultures is raised through stories in English, study of Nepal in geography, history and English. In religious education, aspects of Judaism and Islam are studied. The pupils are effectively enabled and encouraged to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures.
  - Pupils maintained excellent communication with the RAF Mountain Rescue Team's Everest expedition and are developing interesting links with a rural school in Nepal.

#### **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

The behaviour of the pupils, both in the classroom and at playtimes or when moving around the school, is good. There has been a significant improvement in the school's formal procedures and arrangements for promoting good behaviour since the previous inspection.

- The school has very effective procedures for promoting good behaviour. There is a clear policy on behaviour and discipline with good guidance for staff to ensure good behaviour is achieved in the classroom and around the school. The school places a suitably strong emphasis on pupils' personal and social development and self-discipline and tolerance is encouraged. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond well and their behaviour is good.
- The school's main thrust is to emphasise the positive aspects of pupils' behaviour and celebrate achievement. Praise and encouragement are central to the rewards system in the school. Achievement is rewarded in the weekly assembly. Pupils are tolerant of each other and work hard to gain their teachers' commendation.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and are based on mutual respect and the thorough knowledge of individual pupils. This has positive impact on the quality of life in the school, the work of the pupils and the progress they make in their learning. Pupils are interested in their work and concentrate well in lessons.
- Routines are quickly established in the first class and even very young children make good progress in learning the behavioural expectations at school. They know what is expected and how to behave in lessons. As a result, pupils are generally confident and responsive in class.
- Pupils are well motivated and their attitude towards work and school life is good. This has a positive effect on the standards and progress achieved. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

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- The school has a very effective anti-bullying policy, which is well implemented and ensures that any reported instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Racial equality is effectively promoted. The school has little intolerance and pupils are not discriminated against in work or play.

### **4.3 Attendance**

Attendance is good. The overall attendance figure for 2000/2001 was above 95 per cent, and this was maintained through the first part of the autumn term 2001.

- A significant number of parents taking children on holiday in term time did reduce the attendance figures in this small school.
- The school has reminded parents that holidays should not be taken in term time, but this has not led to an improvement during the autumn term 2001.
- Pupils are punctual on arriving at the start of the school day and all observed lessons started on time.
- The school fully complies with the requirements of National Assembly circulars 45/91 and 53/94.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. In all of the lessons observed the teaching was at least satisfactory and in most cases it was good. Good teaching was observed in both classes. The high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection have been effectively maintained.

- Teaching was at least good in 63 per cent of lessons. Good teaching occurred in both key stages and for children under five.
- Teaching of nursery and reception age children was always at least satisfactory and was good in a third of lessons observed; at KS1 teaching was always at least satisfactory and was good in more than a third of lessons observed; at KS2 teaching was nearly always at least good and was very good in a third of the lessons observed.
- Lessons are well planned to take good consideration of what pupils have already been taught. There are good levels of continuity and good opportunities given in introductions to lessons to revise work already covered and remind pupils what they know. Teachers know the pupils well and make good use of assessment to ensure that all are suitably challenged. Lessons have a good pace, there is suitable continuity and progression and they are interesting as a result.
- Teachers make good use of an appropriate range of teaching techniques and teaching arrangements to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve as well as they can. Good use is made of giving pupils opportunity to work with other age groups when this is appropriate.
- Teachers make good use of information technology to support pupils' learning. This is particularly the case at KS2, where many opportunities are taken to integrate information technology into other subjects.
- Teachers have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They all have appropriately high expectations of pupils' behaviour and potential

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achievement. Lessons are orderly and relationships are good. Lessons have good pace and are interesting as a result.

- Teachers all know the pupils very well and match work effectively to pupils needs to make sure lessons are suitably challenging for higher attaining pupils and suitably supportive of those with SEN.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good and teachers manage pupils well. They have appropriately high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment. As a result pupils are confident and enjoy their lessons.
- Support staff are effectively deployed to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Appropriate use is made of homework such as reading and this enables parents to be suitably involved in their children's learning.

## **5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting**

Procedures for assessment, recording and reporting are good overall.

- The school has a clear and useful policy on all aspects of assessment, recording and reporting.
- Arrangements for assessment are systematic, accurate and followed consistently and conscientiously by all staff.
- Baseline assessment of reception children is made in October and updated the following July. Reading and spelling tests for both key stages take place regularly. All NC subjects, except personal, social and health education, are assessed and recorded accurately and constructively. Design and technology will be assessed this academic year. Teachers have a good understanding of NC marking criteria in KS2.
- Marking is accurate, prompt and positive and helps pupils improve their work.
- The school meets the statutory requirements of the NC assessment and recording and those of the SEN Code of Practice.
- Good practice in pupils' assessment of their own work is being developed throughout the school.
- Assessment of pupils is very well used to inform staff on pupils' learning needs. The use of this information in relation to matching tasks to pupils' abilities is thorough. All pupils are given a form of individual education plan (IEP) based on assessment findings. The use of these procedures to offer challenge to the more able is being well developed. It is good for pupils with SEN.
- Detailed records of pupils' progress are kept. These include pupils' books, folders of work, photographs and artefacts based on pupils' achievements in specific assessment assignments.
- The quality of transferring records to KS3 is good.
- Pupil-centred reports to parents are clear, informative, well presented and conform to statutory requirements. Parents are encouraged to visit school to discuss their children's education.
- Although the school has identified clear targets for pupils to use to improve their work, these are not incorporated into the reports.

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### 5.3 Curriculum

The quality, breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory in the early years and at KS1 and good at KS2. There have been significant improvements to the organisation of the curriculum since the previous inspection, which judged that there were some shortcomings in the provision.

- Whole-school planning for all subjects is good and is much more detailed than at the time of the previous inspection, when this was a key issue. The thorough planning is manageable, linked to assessment procedures and ensures progression in pupils' learning. There are policies and appropriate schemes of work for all subjects.
- Planning for children under five in the nursery and the reception years is appropriate and covers the six areas of learning for children of that age. However due to restrictions of staffing and accommodation planned opportunities for structured use of large and outdoor equipment is limited to one session per week and there are too few opportunities for creative and imaginative play.
- Teaching time at KS2 has been extended and teaching at both key stages now meets the amount recommended by the Welsh Office. The balance of time allocated to the various subjects is appropriate.
- There is a suitable structure to the curriculum and liaison to ensure progression between KS1 and KS2. Organisation of the curriculum and flexibility within teaching groups ensures suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils and appropriate support for lower attaining pupils and those with SEN.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and is taken up enthusiastically by a high percentage of pupils. This has a direct impact on their personal and social development and self-esteem. It makes a very positive contribution especially in the area of physical education skills.
- The curriculum is very well organised to ensure equality of access and opportunity to all pupils.
- The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is promoted well throughout and particularly well in history, Welsh, geography and during assemblies.
- Curricular provision, including homework, has a positive impact on standards of achievement.
- There is appropriate planning and arrangements for personal, social and health education, including drug and sex education.
- Planning for key skills is good overall. It is implicit in teachers' general planning, and the quality is enhanced by the detailed whole-school schemes of work.

### 5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

Overall, the support and guidance provided for pupils is good, as was found in previous inspection.

- The staff all know the pupils well and provide a happy and caring environment in which pupils of all levels of prior attainment develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Day-to-day educational and personal guidance is effective and supports pupils well. Parents say that pupils enjoy their time in school and have a real sense of belonging.

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- There are effective induction arrangements for young children entering the first class, as members of nursery or reception year and for the transfer of pupils to the local secondary schools at 11.
  - Child protection systems are good. Relevant child protection features are followed and statutory requirements fully met.
  - Arrangements for the supervision of pupils before and after lessons, during breaks and at lunchtime is good.
  - There is an appropriate health and safety policy in place and risk assessments and general maintenance checks are conscientiously carried out.
  - Staff are aware of the medical needs of the pupils. First Aid and administration of medication procedures are appropriately reviewed, and a full-time member of staff is trained to administer first aid.
  - Pupils' achievement and progress is enhanced by the quality of support and guidance within the school.

## **5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN**

Provision for pupils with SEN is good overall.

- The SEN policy is clear and relevant to the pupils and staff available.
- The SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) is part-time and works in consultation with the headteacher. There are two pupils with statements of SEN. The 13 pupils who are on the SEN register make steady progress.
- Parents are appropriately involved in reviews of their children's progress.
- The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice offering all pupils equal access to the NC and religious education. Pupils are assessed regularly and consistently. In many cases the pupils are involved in setting their own targets.
- Individual education plans have a clear, helpful format and identify relevant and constructive individual targets for improvement. Teachers' planning incorporates the needs of the pupils well. 'Early Bird' and 'Catch Up' schemes to support pupils according to their needs work well and discernible progress is made.
- Specialised resources for teaching pupils with special needs are limited in scope and number, in particular computer software and developmental schemes.
- The work of support staff with pupils with SEN is always at least satisfactory and often good.

## **5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions**

Links with parents, the community and other schools are good. Overall they make a positive contribution to pupils' standards of achievement and personal development. The parents' questionnaire indicated positive support for the school.

- Most parents support the events held at the school and take an active part in productions and events. Pupils' work is displayed throughout the school for parents to see.

- Some parents, governors and members of the local community assist the teaching staff when required, while others offer special assistance, for instance a local historian, and a parent who helps introduce pupils to safe working practices with hand tools.
- There is a home school agreement, which is widely supported by the parents and has a positive impact on relationships.
- Information provided for the parents is good. Information in the form of newsletters or leaflets is sent home on a regular basis. Particular attention is paid to the period before a pupil moves on to the secondary school and there is information available to help parents choose the most suitable placing for their child. There is a good liaison with all the main secondary schools, to which pupils from this school will progress. Pupils spend some time at their chosen school prior to transfer.
- The school is active within the local group of primary schools, which share ideas and resources among themselves. Physical education in KS2 is taught weekly at a nearby junior school, which has appropriate facilities.
- The pupils have given concerts for the local community, singing for instance at the local hospital. There is a strong link with the local churches and the community council use the school as a base for their meetings.
- In conjunction with the local county council, children have recently become involved in a road safety initiative.
- The pupils also have a continuing involvement with the Urdd Eisteddfod and here have gained some notable success in craft and music competitions.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

The school has many very good links with industry. The school's policy for work related education and its effect on the quality of provision is very good. Recently many strong links have been developed with local industry that benefit the school as a whole.

- Children have been encouraged to enter many events and competitions sponsored by local industry and have achieved many successes that have been of benefit to both the individual pupils and the school as a whole. A notable success was in developing an energy efficient system for the school.
- The quality of relationships with Training and Enterprise Councils, Education Business Partnership, career companies and other education business contacts are good. The good links that the school has developed help to effectively enhance provision for pupils' learning.
- There has been some match funding from the industrial sector in developing the school.
- Staff have been unable to benefit from placements in the industrial sector due to uncertainties in funding the cover required in the classroom during such placements.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement**

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

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- All members of staff are appropriately involved in the self-evaluation process.
  - There are good procedures in place for the assessment of pupils' achievement and the headteacher is making increasing use of these, to track pupils' progress and so monitor the school's achievements and set targets.
  - The SDP is a useful management tool. It has identified suitable areas for development, outlining priorities, personnel involved, cost and time scales allocated. The governing body is fully involved in the formulation of the development plan, scrutinising and discussing the document carefully.
  - Following self-evaluation, the SDP identifies strengths and appropriate areas for development on a rolling programme for all subjects and particular aspects of the school.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

The leadership of the school is good overall and has resulted in a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher has a very good level of awareness of what the school needs to do to continue to improve. There is a very positive ethos and sense of purpose, which pervades all aspects of school life. Relationships are good and financial expenditure is carefully monitored.

- The quality of leadership by the headteacher is very good. The headteacher, and governors ensure very clear educational direction for the work of the school. There is a good ethos and a sense of purpose throughout the school.
- The good quality of leadership has led to a significant improvement in standards in subjects since the previous inspection.
- The aims of the school are appropriate and are known to parents, all staff and governors. The school has a commitment to equality of opportunity for all. The SDP and budget setting are suitably linked to these overall aims of the school. School finances are managed carefully and the recommendations of the most recent auditor's report have been fully implemented.
- Available resources are managed well overall. However the current arrangements for sessions for children under five do not allow sufficient opportunities for physical, imaginative and out-door learning.
- Routine administration and organisation are good. Office management is efficient and has a positive impact on school life generally.
- The development of subject management is developing well. Schemes of work have been developed to ensure continuity and progression. There is a need to develop this further to include formal monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Statutory requirements are fully met and National Assembly guidelines appropriately noted.

## **6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

The staffing of the school, the accommodation and the provision of learning resources are satisfactory.

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- Teachers are appropriately qualified for the subjects they teach and there is a generally satisfactory balance of experience and expertise, due to the good quality of professional development.
  - The staffing of 2.3 full-time equivalent teachers is not always adequate to provide for the under-fives in the KS1 class in the mornings. The nursery nurse attends in the afternoons and so nursery children only have the opportunity of an afternoon placement.
  - There is a learning support assistant who works with pupils on a statement for SEN for 28.75 hours per week. A member of the learning development team visits for one afternoon per week.
  - Teaching in the school is effectively supplemented by visiting speakers, such as an artist in residence and visiting coaches for rugby and football.
  - In-service training is driven by school, curricular and individual teachers' professional needs. Appropriate induction and mentoring procedures are in place, however formal appraisal systems and monitoring of teaching are not yet in place.
  - Job descriptions are clear and appropriate.
  - The accommodation for Y3-Y6 in the mobile classroom is very cramped and limits movement in, for example, drama and dance. There are very limited facilities for physical education at the school (indoor and out) and the school has use of a hall at a local primary school for one session each week. It is only due the very hard work and commitment of staff, regularly moving furniture to make space during break times, that standards in subjects such as design and technology and investigative science remain as high as they do.
  - The school presents a safe and secure environment for the pupils. The main accommodation is clean and internally well decorated. Toilets and other facilities are clean and in good working order.
  - Lighting and heating are efficient in both the main building and the portable classroom. Ventilation in the main building however is apparently a problem in the summer months as many of the window frames are in very poor condition and opening lights do not function.
  - Despite the space limitation displays are relevant and contribute to the good learning of the pupils.
  - The playground on the south side of the school is on a steep slope and has a poor surface, which is broken and loose in several places. The playing field on the north side of the school is rented from a local farmer and is in reasonable condition, though easily becomes waterlogged and muddy in wet weather.
  - Outdoor facilities for the children under five require development. There is a small play area which has a shredded bark surface, on which is sited some recreational equipment of a simple nature.
  - Learning resources are satisfactory in all subjects. They are satisfactory in quantity and quality and are sufficient to meet the needs of the NC in every subject. There is a problem with storage space.
  - There is insufficient software and use of published schemes to support the learning of pupils with SEN.

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## 7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

### Standards achieved by pupils

#### Provision for the under-fives

The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that the shortcomings can be put right. Overall standards are satisfactory and the children are making steady progress towards the desirable outcomes for children's learning in most areas, though there are unsatisfactory aspects in children's physical development and in their creative and imaginative learning. Provision for developing language, literacy and communication skills is good and they make good progress as a consequence. Children of three and four are taught in one nursery and reception class together with Y1 and Y2 pupils. The class is taught by a teacher in the mornings and by a teacher and a nursery nurse in the afternoons.

#### Good features

- Children make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriate standards in their personal and social development. They move around the early years classroom with developing confidence and learn to make positive relationships with adults and other children. They treat one another and their environment with respect. They co-operate well with each other and with staff. Activities are undertaken alongside each other, with nursery children learning to take turns and to share. Older children in the reception year share equipment and work together purposefully. The children are generally well behaved and sit quietly to listen to the teacher at registration, lesson and story times. They follow instructions sensibly when working and moving about in the wet play area, and in the reception year they concentrate on their work for increasing lengths of time. Older children start to develop independence in their learning.
- Children make good progress in the development of their language, literacy and communication skills, and standards are above those expected by the age of five. The children all pay great attention to books, which they enjoy. Reception children make predictions based on the illustrations and join in with well-known words with enthusiasm. They remember the main story line and can sequence events correctly. They enjoy sharing books and listening to stories. They learn that pictures and words carry meaning and many in the reception year demonstrate effective learning of early phonics. Some have started to recognise familiar words and to read starter books. The teacher makes good use of opportunities to promote the skills of speaking and listening and children make good progress in their acquisition of vocabulary as a result. The use of incidental Welsh, as they work, is enjoyed by the whole class. Children enjoy a variety of basic writing experiences and use opportunities in their play to make marks and to learn to write for a purpose.
- Children make satisfactory progress in their mathematical development and achieve standards in line with those expected by the time they are five. Children in the nursery learn to recognise and name simple shapes. Reception children talk about the similarities and differences and can sort coins into one and two pence pieces. They are starting to recognise written symbols for numbers to ten and learning to count out different combinations to add up to five pence. Older children match and sort familiar objects into sets by different criteria, and learn the meaning of mathematical language

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connected with position and size. They join in with counting to ten. Most can mentally add one to a given number and say the resulting figure.

- In their knowledge and understanding of the world, children under five experience a suitably wide range of activities, make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriate standards. Reception children ask relevant questions and make observations about the days of the week and the changing weather. They are developing understanding of shops and how goods are exchanged for money. They develop a good understanding of technology through the use of the computer and computer programs are used very effectively to support their work in other subjects.
- Development of fine control is satisfactory. Children use a wide range of small and large equipment with increasing confidence and co-ordination within the class. Nursery and reception children develop their fine physical skills appropriately through using a range of construction sets and manipulating play-dough. They use a variety of small tools construction toys with developing skill. They use pencils and paintbrushes with suitable accuracy.
- Satisfactory progress and generally appropriate standards are achieved in creative development. Nursery children experiment with paints and crayons. They practise drawing and some draw figures with facial features. Reception children paint and draw pictures of themselves and of their families and houses. They apply paint confidently, talking about the effects they hope to achieve. Reception children demonstrate imagination and creativity when they play together happily in the shop. They join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes.

### **Shortcomings**

- Progress and standards in physical development are unsatisfactory overall. Due to constraints of staffing and accommodation, nursery and reception children have limited opportunities to run, climb and jump and develop their co-ordination effectively. There is a weekly planned opportunity to work outside and to propel tricycles by using the pedals, but the surface of the playground is uneven and so not all of it can be used for these activities. Opportunities for children to move freely and use physical activity to develop creative and imaginative games to explore and learn about their world are too limited.

### **English**

Standards of achievement in English are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2. Standard assessment test (SAT) results at the end of KS2 are slightly above the national average. This is an improvement at KS2 since the previous inspection, which judged standards to be satisfactory at both key stages.

### **Good features**

- Whatever their ability pupils in both key stages speak confidently and articulately to each other, the teacher and to visiting adults. Most speak audibly and many KS2 pupils can develop ideas well during discussion.
- In KS1, pupils recite verse correctly and appropriate expression.
- Pupils in KS1 listen attentively and carefully to a broad repertoire of stories and have good recall of the sequence of events. In KS2, pupils focus well and learn quickly and in detail from what they have heard. They follow instructions accurately and promptly.

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- Pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading for their ability and age. KS1 pupils are making satisfactory progress with their phonic work and are developing a suitable range of reading strategies. They follow the narrative and plots of stories well.
  - Pupils in KS2 read with satisfactory expression and fluency and are improving as a result of shared reading practice. They experience a wide range of reading materials.
  - Most have good understanding of what they read. The more able pupils can discuss in some depth favourite characters and events in their books and make intelligent predictions of the story endings. Many KS2 pupils have good reference and library skills.
  - Scrutiny of written work indicates that pupils have responded well to the focus of literacy introduced into the school two years ago.
  - Key Stage 1 pupils write legibly with fairly consistent letter formation. Generally, their spelling indicates a developing knowledge of whole word structure, letter strings and visual patterns. Some more able pupils write imaginatively and naturally.
  - In KS2, pupils respond positively to shared writing experiences. They demonstrate imagination, well considered ideas and a breadth of expression and vocabulary. They understand and use similes and metaphors appropriately in their work.
  - Pupils write in a variety of different styles: poetry, dialogue, scripts, autobiography, narrative, reports and creative descriptions. This mirrors the breadth of writing they encounter from early KS2 as a consequence of being taught with Y6 pupils. Less able pupils, despite weaknesses in punctuation, often write at length.

### **Shortcomings**

- Although younger pupils can describe what is required to demarcate a sentence they do not always do so correctly in their written work.

### **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement are good by the end of KS1 and in KS2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, which judged standards to be satisfactory throughout the school. Results of SATs in KS2 are above the national average.

### **Good features**

- In both key stages, pupils of all levels of ability have a good understanding of number work.
- In KS1, pupils are able to sort, match and sequence objects and numbers correctly. They recognise numbers up to 20 at least. They can differentiate between odd and even.
- Many have a good understanding of place value in hundreds, tens and units. They have satisfactory understanding of number bonds and the more able can add two numbers up to 20.
- Pupils can recognise equivalence in money sums and can solve simple money problems quickly.
- They can count in 2's, 3's, 4's and 5's. Pupils identify and name a range of 2-D shapes and can discuss the difference between four shapes with good understanding.

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- They recognise simple standards of measure and are beginning to tell the time. Pupils use computers competently to practise their newly acquired concepts.
  - In KS2, pupils make good progress in their understanding of number and knowledge and use of their tables. They show a secure grasp of problem solving strategies in their investigational work.
  - Pupils use the four operations quickly and accurately in mental maths. They know the effect of multiplying and dividing. Their work in fractions, decimals and percentages is advancing well.
  - Pupils show competence, in relation to their abilities, in all areas of maths and respond intelligently to the initiatives taken by their teacher in exploring new methods.
  - Very effective use is made by all pupils of computer software to reinforce their mathematics.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Science**

Standards in science are good at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when they were satisfactory at both key stages.

### **Good features**

- Pupils of all levels of ability at both key stages experience a suitable balance of science activities and appropriately develop skills of observation, measurement and experimentation.
- At KS1, pupils learn about the parts of the human body and the different senses. They are starting to use some appropriate scientific vocabulary in their oral and written work. Pupils' skills of enquiry are developing effectively. They make observations and describe and record these in a variety of ways, such as pictures, tables and simple sentences. In this context they use information and communication technology well.
- Younger pupils perform scientific investigations to increase their understanding of physical processes. For example, when learning to make a simple circuit they try to solve the problem of why some circuits work and others do not. They have suitable knowledge of how batteries store energy and can discuss their work with confidence.
- They learn about light sources, linked to work on lighting homes in history.
- At KS2 this work is continued. Pupils learn about healthy bodies and tooth care as a continuation of earlier work. They experiment to discover how far different sounds travel clearly. When looking at light they discover what materials will allow light through and which will not. As part of this activity they make "monster shadows" in the playground.
- Pupils learn about parts of plants, their life cycles and how seeds germinate. They use information technology skills effectively to investigate how plants germinate and use freeze frame photography and a digital microscope to investigate further.
- In work on forces, pupils learn about gravity, Newton's Law, friction and air resistance. They develop good knowledge of how to set up a fair test and how to measure and record their findings.

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- When studying materials they learn to filter and decant liquids and investigate to find ways to separate solids from solutions.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Welsh second language**

Standards of achievement in Welsh as a second language are good in KS1 and very good in KS2. Pupils benefit from the good quality Welsh spoken and used consistently by their class teachers. The level of incidental Welsh in the school is high. The '*helpwr heddiw*' system is used well. This indicates a good level of improvement at KS1 and a very good level of improvement at KS2 since the previous inspection.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils have a wide vocabulary: they know colours, articles of clothing, aspects of weather, numbers and items of food.
- Pupils of all levels of ability speak with confidence and enjoyment, using correct greetings and appropriate responses to a variety of question posed by their teachers.
- They understand and use a wide range of sentence patterns including "Ga i . . .?", "Dyma . . .", "Oes gen ti . . .?", "Wyt ti'n hoffi . . . ? All pupils answer these questions with the correct response pattern both to the teacher and when playing relevant board games in small groups.
- Pupils listen carefully and emulate the correct pronunciation and intonation of their teachers. They listen attentively to stories and glean a great deal of detailed information.
- In KS2, pupils of all abilities develop their language skills very well. They follow a series of complex instructions accurately and immediately and can speak at some length on their appreciation of a story or an account of their experiences. Many understand and use some sophisticated language structures.
- Pupils relish opportunities for role-play and carry out them out fluently with little self-consciousness. The more able speakers can tell the time in Welsh.
- Pupils begin to read Welsh in KS1 and this, again, is a skill that is well developed in KS2. Pupils in KS1 copy Welsh sentences accurately. Older pupils write their own letters, many of which are fluent, all of which are well structured.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Design and technology**

Standards in design and technology are good at both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory overall.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 learn to follow patterns to make models. They design and make sunglasses and pop-up cards with good finish. They measure and cut out card and paper with suitable accuracy.

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- They learn about food technology appropriately, including health and safety issues and healthy eating in work when making “healthy sandwiches” and when cooking flapjacks in work linked to science.
  - Younger pupils make good use of construction kits to make models such as imaginary boats, buildings and railway systems.
  - Throughout the school pupils make good progress in learning how to measure, mark out, cut and join a suitable range of materials, following their designs carefully. For example, pupils in KS2 cut and stick rigid plastic effectively to make jewellery or wood to make frames for pictures.
  - Pupils make suitable use of design opportunities with malleable materials, as when KS1 pupils made model heads and pupils in KS2 made papier mâché masks and Celtic jewellery.
  - Older pupils develop suitable skills in planning their work well. They plan how they will make model Celtic villages in work linked to history. They record their ideas as sketches, which they then annotate to list what equipment they will use for each part.
  - They develop skills of evaluation well and suggest sensible ways in which their designs could be improved, which they present in a clear format.
  - Pupils make good use of information technology when learning about design and technology, such as when older pupils use design programs to plan decorations for a Christmas box.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Information technology**

Standards are good at KS1 and very good at KS2. The high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection have been effectively maintained and built upon still further. There has been consolidation in the use of the subject to support other curricular areas such as mathematics, science, history, geography and music.

### **Good features**

- At the end of KS1, with support pupils are able to open a range of different programs. They are confident in the use of computer software, and this aids in their understanding of language and reinforces number work effectively.
- Pupils show good control of the mouse, can enter, drag and drop, use the delete key, find new games and restart.
- Pupils overall show a confidence in using a range of computer programs and also in using other equipment such as headphones.
- At the end of KS2, pupils use computers to develop ideas and communicate in a variety of ways in many subject areas. They use programs to practice and learn mathematical processes, research subjects such as looking at Celtic history and record and interpret information, such as their friends’ progress in swimming, or favourite authors.
- Pupils in KS2 effectively followed the progress of an expedition to Everest, linked to their work in geography, using the Inter-net to read and send messages to the team.

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- They confidently investigate topics associated with the class themes using CD-ROMs. They use control programs to set up traffic lights when working in design and technology lessons and set up time lapse photography to study germination in seeds.
  - Word processing is undertaken throughout the school and pupils produce good quality work, which they illustrate and present to a high standard.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **History**

Standards in history are good at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 learn about chronology from stories, discussion and role-play. They gain a good knowledge of the passage of time and talk about what they have done in the past.
- Pupils in KS1 can place events in a given story in order. They learn about growing up, looking at development from babyhood to adult, in work linked to science, and they organise and communicate their ideas and findings in writing and in pictures.
- They talk about homes in the past and now, and different forms of lighting that have been used down the ages.
- Pupils at KS2 study different peoples who have lived in the past. They compare life styles in early Wales and look at what it must have been like to be a Celt. They extend their knowledge of chronology placing the different peoples they study on a time line.
- Skills of historical enquiry and research are effectively developed as pupils handle first hand evidence sources such as flints and other ancient tools, and talk about them, making simple deductions and learning to conduct an investigation effectively.
- Pupils make effective use of information technology to research the different periods they study and to communicate findings and to create and analyse data.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Geography**

Standards in geography are good throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory.

#### **Good features**

- At KS1, pupils learn about the local environment and compare the different styles of building in the local area. Pupils in Y2 start to learn to use plans and maps effectively when orienteering in a local parkland.
- In work on homes, they think about different types of home and look at the style of designs through the ages and the materials used. They develop early map making and reading skills through learning to draw plans of the school.
- At KS2, pupils develop their knowledge of different countries and environments through work linked to tracking the progress of an expedition to Everest.

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- They make good use of a wide range of resources and maps, including information technology to effectively compare life in their village with life in other places, such as Nepal.
  - Pupils at KS2 learn about how man uses his environment, and develop their knowledge effectively when visiting local copper mines and talking to geologists about their work.
  - They learn about co-ordinates and develop this further during field trips and compass trails. They talk with confidence about different aspects of map-work and interpret information about the physical features from details such as the distance between contour lines. Information technology skills are used effectively to develop geographical knowledge and understanding.
  - Pupils learn about the effect of pollution and how man can improve or damage his environment. They talk about the effect of using fossil fuels and have a good developing understanding of the possible alternatives and their advantages and disadvantages. Discussions appropriately enhance pupils' understanding of social issues and citizenship.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Art**

Standards of achievement in art are good in both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory throughout the school.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils demonstrate interest and competence in a number of activities, which develop their skills in art.
- They enjoy exploring the mixing of colours and developing their painting from their own drawings or rubbings. Many pupils observe pattern keenly.
- They use a variety of materials and can explain why they chose them, including pastels, pencil, charcoal, paint, finger-painting and felt tip pens.
- The Welsh dimension figures highly in pupils' art activities, for example they paint faces to represent various Welsh captions.
- In both key stages, pupils look closely at the work of famous artists, including Welsh artists, and make good attempts at emulating their techniques or subject matter.
- Younger pupils based some of their work on that of Van Gogh, Monet and Goldsworthy for which they selected and collected their own natural materials.
- From their visit to Bodelwyddan Castle where KS2 pupils studied the works of Kyffin Williams and Chris Hall they intelligently compare the two artists and relate how they use sketch-books and developed these basic drawings into their own paintings. They appraise sensitively and have pride in refining their work.
- They also produce good computer-art work and research a wide range of artists and art-related topics.
- There is discernible progression in pupils' 3-D work.

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- Pupils in KS2 develop the skills they have learned in KS1 and are able to discuss their work in some detail in relation to their choices of colour, tone, line and the effect of different materials.
  - In their work on Celtic jewellery pupils demonstrate a good understanding of texture and pattern. They focus well on their tasks and make thoughtful decisions.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Music**

Standards of achievement in music are good in both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, which judged that they were at least satisfactory and often good.

### **Good features**

- Key Stage 1 pupils sing, for the most part, in tune. They maintain a steady beat with others in the group.
- Most pupils play un-tuned percussion instruments with appropriate rhythm. More able pupils are beginning to play tuned percussion sensibly to create their own musical responses to stimuli or to illustrate mood and narrative.
- They listen carefully to music which is generally associated with the topic they are studying and to music as an aid to reflection. Many are beginning to discriminate between dynamics, pace, duration and timbre and can describe their effects.
- They are developing their appraisal skills by evaluating their own and others' work on tape.
- In KS2, pupils build on the solid start they have made at KS1 in all aspects of NC music.
- They sing with relish (when they sing from memory) as a large group and perform well in three part rounds and are focusing on making improvement to their breathing and diction.
- They develop what they can do musically by listening carefully to directions and published music and following them accurately and immediately.
- Pupils also enjoy exploring their creativity by composing rhythms on tuned and un-tuned percussion, for example on "Growth". Attempts to improvise on an African song in pentatonic scale and ternary form during the inspection indicated a good musical understanding.
- The majority of pupils identify and use musical terminology confidently.
- Pupils make good use of information and communications technology by recording their improvisations on computer.
- They have a satisfactory knowledge of a variety of instruments and can identify pertinent musical elements in music such as Saint Saens "Carnival of the Animals".
- In their evaluation exercise pupils contributed some perceptive comments on how to improve.
- Despite being in such a small school a large percentage of pupils participate in many musical activities both in their own and with other schools.

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### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Physical education**

Only one gymnastics lesson was observed during the inspection. As this was at KS2 it is not possible to make an overall judgment on the quality of the pupils' achievement at KS1. Standards in the lesson seen were good and this is supported by records of pupils' attainment in swimming and games. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Good features**

- Pupils at KS2 are developing their movement in a variety of ways and their awareness of space and movement is good.
- Pupils apply their knowledge of shape and space effectively when developing awareness of body shape within movement.
- All pupils make at least satisfactory progress in learning to swim and for most pupils progress is good. Pupils attain at least the 25 metres expected and most develop skill and stamina to swim much further.
- Pupils develop skills in outdoor pursuits such as canoeing and rock climbing during residential visits.
- They develop effective skills of working as a team when taking part in local sporting competitions and when orienteering in the local castle grounds.

### **Shortcomings**

- No significant shortcomings were found in the lesson observed.

### **Religious education**

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, which judged standards to be satisfactory. The school follows the Local Education Authority's (LEA) Agreed Syllabus.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 are acquiring a good knowledge of Christianity and Judaism through learning about Old and New Testament stories, and various festivals.
- Year 2 pupils demonstrate understanding of the sequence of events in the Nativity and write appropriate captions for pictures.
- They discuss how various people help them beginning with the role of their own family, caring for a baby and relationships. The stories of Moses, Ruth and Jesus' parables are used to reinforce the need to care and to trust.
- Key Stage 2 pupils develop their study of Christianity and Judaism in more detail. They also study some basic tenets of Islam.
- Pupils explore certain aspects of other religions as well as Christianity, through artefacts, including many photographs and printed resources and through comparison of celebrations and rites of passage.
- They write thoughtful thank you prayers and conduct interesting investigations into different types of crosses.

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- Pupils learn how famous Christians conduct their lives for the good of others, for example Gladys Aylward.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress since the last inspection**

There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection and the school is in a good position to continue to improve still further.

The key issues for improvement highlighted by the previous report were:-

- raising standards in geography, physical education and design and technology at both key stages and Welsh second language at KS2;
- improve resources for science, history, art and design and technology and facilities for physical education;
- improve planning, policies and establishing schemes of work;
- extend teaching hours at KS2;
- develop whole-school marking, assessment and recording procedures;
- develop strategies to meet the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils more effectively;
- put job descriptions and appraisal systems in place;
- improve links with pre-school, primary schools, high schools and local industry and business.

Since the appointment of the current headteacher, much hard work has been done and standards have been raised in all of the subjects highlighted for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. In addition, standards in some other subjects have also been improved. Resources have been improved in science, history, art, design and technology and physical education.

Much work has been done in developing planning in all subjects, and schemes of work have been written to ensure progression and continuity. Marking and assessment procedures have been developed for each subject at the same time. Teaching hours at KS2 have been extended and management of subjects and teaching ensures that the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils are effectively met. Teachers have clear job descriptions and there are plans to develop appraisal in line with county guidelines. Good links have been developed with local schools and with industry.

### **8.2 Key issues for action**

In order to raise standards further the school needs to:

1. ensure that nursery and reception children have daily regular opportunities to take part in energetic physical activities and to take part in imaginative and creative play;

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2. in conjunction with the LEA and governors, should seek for ways to allow pupils suitable, regular opportunities to develop skills of physical education, drama, and dance, which are currently constrained.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog
School type	LEA maintained
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Groesffordd Marli Cefn Meiriadog Abergele Denbighshire
Post-code	LL22 9DS
Telephone number	01745582224

Headteacher	Mrs K Royles
Date of appointment	January 1999
Chair of governors	Cllr Meirick Lloyd Davies
Registered inspector	Mrs S M Barnes
Dates of inspection	10-12 December 2001

### B. School data and indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	4	7	6	4	8	4	5	9	47

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	1	2.3

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	18.7
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	18
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
Tymor	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Autumn Term 2000	91.4	95	97	95.6
Spring Term 2001	91.6	92.1	93.3	92.7
Summer Term 2001	93.3	95.9	95.2	95.1

<i>Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.</i>	0
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### C. Results of national curriculum assessments and public examinations

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2001</b>	Number of pupils in Y2: 7
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of KS1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included.	

<b>Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment</b>			
In the school:	71%	In Wales:	81%

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2001</b>	Number of pupils in Y6: 3
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of KS2 was fewer than five, summary information is not included.	

### D. The evidence base of the inspection

- The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of two days.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.
- Ten parents attended a meeting to give their views of the school.
- Fourteen questionnaire responses were analysed and summarised.
- All documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the SDP, 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.
- Eighteen lessons or part-lessons were observed.
- Pupils were heard reading and were examined in their knowledge and understanding of English, Welsh, science and other subjects.
- A wide range of pupils' written and other work was examined in both classes.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with class teachers and examined assessment records.
- Discussions were held with the staff.
- The work of pupils with SEN was examined.
- Documents relating to the financial management of the school were discussed.
- Budget figures were examined.
- Attendance and pupil records were inspected.
- Inspectors attended acts of collective worship.

## E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Aspect Responsibilities</b>	<b>Subject Responsibilities</b>
Mrs S M Barnes	RgI	Context of the school Main findings Standards of attainment Key skills Behaviour Quality of teaching Curriculum Support and guidance Leadership and efficiency Progress	early years science design and technology information and communication technology history geography physical education
Mrs M Meredith-Jones	Team	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment recording and reporting Special educational needs Resources	Welsh second language English mathematics music art religious education
Mr B Haynes	Lay	Attendance Links with parents Links with industry	

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