

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

**Coelbren Primary School
Heol Eglwys
Coelbren
Neath
West Glamorgan
SA10 9PF**

School Number: 6662108

Date of Inspection :- 17-19 October 2005

by

**Mrs S. M. Barnes
W182/78732**

Date: 24 November 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/027/05P

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

The inspection of Coelbren Primary School took place between the 17th and 18th of October 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs S. M. Barnes 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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 sections.

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 past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection 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 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 attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Coelbren Primary is a smaller than average community school in the village of Coelbren, near Neath. The 37 boys and girls who attend are between the ages of four and 11 and are organised in two classes. There were no nursery children in school at the time of inspection. None of the children speak Welsh as a first language and virtually all speak English at home. The intake covers the full range of ability, but attainment on entry fluctuates year on year, due to the extremely small size of some year groups. The attainment of the current reception group is broadly average. Due to the very small size of some year groups, the results of assessments at the end of year 2 and year 6 are not published to protect pupil confidentiality. The boys and girls come from a range of homes around the school. The area is currently one of high unemployment. About 11 per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the all-Wales average of 19 per cent. About 16 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs (SEN). The school adheres to the county policy for admission.

The school's priorities and targets

2. The school has a set of aims:-

At Coelbren we aim to foster the following elements:-

- Provide pupils with a good command of literacy and numeracy skills, which they will need for their future development.
- Develop in each pupil a belief in themselves and an awareness of others.
- To be aware of the value of individuals as a vital part of the thriving community.
- Develop their aesthetic awareness through the teaching of Art, Music, Drama and Movement.
- Provide opportunities to develop and enrich their lives through sporting and intellectual pursuits.
- Provide standards and values both social and moral to help children make important decisions for themselves, throughout their lives.
- To make school an interesting, happy and active place to be and one where an enquiring mind can thrive.
- A place where "I want to be!"
- Expand and develop the role of the governing body to confidently undertake their roles and responsibilities.
- Develop a strategy to promote bilingualism throughout the school.
- Provide staff training in teaching Welsh as a second language in order to give this area greater priority.

Summary

3. This is a school that enables pupils from all groups to achieve well. Relationships are exceptionally good, as is the behaviour of the pupils. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, due to the good leadership of the head teacher. There was a close match between the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation report and those made by the inspection team.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

Subjects and Areas of Learning Early Years

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	2
Physical development	2

4. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning. Children in the early years make good progress overall and very good progress in their personal and social development.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Subject 1: Under Fives	N/A	N/A
Subject 2: English	2	2
Subject 3: Information technology	2	3
Subject 4: History	2	3
Subject 5: Geography	2	2
Subject 6: Religious education	2	2

5. Pupils' standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	86%	7%	0	0

6. Pupils' achievements are good and they make good progress towards their potential in virtually all subjects. The extremely small size of some year groups, (less than 5) prevents the school from publishing the results of national end of key stage assessments in English, mathematics and science to protect pupil confidentiality. For some year groups, (where there are between 5 and 10 pupils), only the core indicators (amalgamated averages) are published. The core indicator of the proportions of pupils in year 2, who took the test in 2005 and attained at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science was 100%.
7. The tracking by the school and the local education authority demonstrates the good progress and achievement of pupils, which is higher than local and national results. The trend of performance of the school is of steady improvement in most areas and maintenance of high standards in others, such as religious education, which was also identified as being good by the previous inspection. Lessons are planned well and incrementally pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding steadily develop.
8. Boys and girls from all groups and levels of prior attainment including those with special needs make good progress and achieve well overall. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The school sets challenging, but appropriate targets that are met. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are good throughout the school. Their skills in information technology are good at key stage 1, but with some shortcomings at key stage 2. Pupils demonstrate good problem solving skills throughout the school. The absence of a structured programme which ensures progression in the speaking, reading and writing of Welsh, results in pupils having inadequate bilingual skills.
9. The overall average level of attendance for 2004/5 is good. Punctuality is very good at the start of the day allowing sessions to start promptly without interruption. Pupils understand that they are expected to attend regularly and punctually. Monitoring of attendance, punctuality and behaviour of pupils is efficient. The school takes account of the requirements of National Assembly of Wales (NAW) Circular 3/99.

The quality of education and training

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
14%	72%	14%	0	0

10. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and support staff are extremely dedicated and hard working. All adults in the school have consistently high expectations of the behaviour and concentration of all boys and girls, including

pupils with SEN, who are all expected to do their best. As a result, pupils know very well what is expected of them and relationships are excellent.

11. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is maximised effectively by their careful deployment. As a result, lessons are often exciting and innovative. Teachers' planning is good and teachers make good use of links with other subjects and ways to develop key skills, although not all these links are explicit in written planning. Pupils' individual needs including the needs of SEN pupils are met effectively.
12. The school meets all statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting. Teachers use schemes of work to support planning and teaching. Planning identifies assessment opportunities in both the long and short term. Baseline assessment for under-fives is analysed and the information gained is well used to target children's strengths and areas for development. Information gained from testing at year 4 is used to set targets for pupils in the core subjects.
13. The assessment in core subjects at the end of the key stages provides information that is used effectively to chart individual pupils' progress. It is also used effectively to set individual targets for pupils that are shared with parents and reviewed termly. Pupils are aware of their targets that are written in their books. The assessment of foundation subjects is not sufficiently rigorous. Although teachers gather a considerable amount of information from their assessments, the system needs to be more coherent and manageable in order to make optimum use of the information gathered. Teachers' marking identifies what pupils know and can do and supports pupils' learning by indicating what they need to do next in order to improve their work. Pupils are not, however, involved in planning their own progress and improvement and the school has identified this as an area for development.
14. Parents have termly opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers and review targets. The school provides very informative annual written reports for parents together with targets for improvement and comparative data at the end of year 6.
15. The school is successful, overall, in meeting pupils' needs and provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils which meets legal and course requirements. Pupils enjoy a broad and stimulating curriculum that ensures continuity and progression throughout the school. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided including residential courses, a French club and a recorder club which enhance the knowledge, interests and skills of pupils.
16. The school provides many opportunities for the development of the common requirements of the National Curriculum. Although there is no specific planning document for key skills, they are evident in practice and are generally well developed across the curriculum. The school provides good

opportunities for pupils to use incidental Welsh, however the teaching of bi-lingual skills lacks the required structure in order to be fully effective.

17. The school addresses social disadvantage in a very positive manner. Adults encourage all pupils, regardless of personal circumstances, gender, ethnic background or ability to participate in all the school's activities. As a result, pupils demonstrate respect for one another, towards visitors and for all adults who contribute to the life of the school.
18. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and very good in terms of their social development. The school encourages pupils to be self-disciplined and to exhibit good social skills that enhance the quality of school life. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude to learning and to acquire skills, which they will need when they enter the world of work. Collective worship meets statutory requirements. Acts of worship are broadly Christian in nature, but pupils learn to respect the other main religious traditions.
19. The school promotes *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* effectively through Saint David's Day celebrations, Welsh folk dancing and Welsh hymns and songs and stories from Welsh literature. However, pupils' awareness of Welsh culture, heritage and history and of their local area is less well developed. The school has identified the need to visit more places of historical and cultural interest both locally and further afield.
20. The school is developing its provision for sustainable development. Pupils have an adequate awareness of the effects of pollution on the environment and of the importance of recycling and need to minimise waste. Pupils' views, opinions and suggestions are provided through the elected School Council.
21. The partnership with parents is good. The school keeps parents well informed about its life and work. Some parents help on a regular basis in the life of the school. In some cases this has provided effective opportunities for recognised vocational training. The school is an integral part of the community, which is very supportive of the school and has replaced the resources that were destroyed as a result of dry rot. There are good links with other schools resulting in collective training opportunities in a cost-effective manner.
22. The current provision of effective work related education is minimal. Partly due to the remoteness of the community, the absence of local industry and the cost of transport there are no partnerships or formal links with industry.
23. The school provides a secure, welcoming, happy, safe and caring environment for pupils to learn. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. The school building provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn and play. The school regularly undertakes effective risk assessments.
24. A clear Child Protection Policy is in place and all members of the teaching staff have very recently received appropriate training. The school's race

equality policy fully meets statutory requirements. Arrangements for pupils joining the school and transferring from year 6 to the High School are well established and effective.

25. Policies covering behaviour and anti-bullying are firmly established. Bullying or inappropriate behaviour is considered a serious matter and is not tolerated. Incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour are rare and any that are reported are dealt with promptly and effectively.

Leadership and management

26. The head teacher leads the school effectively. He ensures that the overall aims and specific targets take due account of national and local priorities and are understood by all the staff. The aims and values are understood by all parties and are reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The self-evaluation review produced by the school for inspection demonstrated a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
27. Targets set for school improvement are realistic but also suitably challenging. The views of pupils are sought and taken into due consideration through the school council. Parents feel confident to approach the school and feel that their views are also considered.
28. Performance management is underway and is suitably linked to whole school development. Training is linked effectively to whole school as well as individuals' priorities. Co-ordinators' roles are being developed, focusing initially on the core subjects. School takes due account of the heavy responsibilities of staff, some of whom are part time, in planning to ensure a sensible balance in workload.
29. The governing body is supportive of the school and meets its statutory duties effectively. Currently nearly all of the positions on the governing body are filled, but half of the governors are new. As a result, they have swiftly identified the need for training to ensure they are going to be able to fully fulfil their roles. In recent times, many of the responsibilities, which are rightly those of the Governing Body, have fallen to the head teacher in addition to his own. The Governing Body is aware that it will need to develop skills and confidence to challenge the school and act more as a critical friend to reduce much of this extra workload.
30. The open and friendly nature of the school ensures that all parties are fully aware of self-evaluation procedures and lines of communication are good. Self-evaluation is honest and focused effectively on raising standards. Clear whole school priorities are set for improvement, which are understood by all. These are fully supported through careful allocation of the school's resources.
31. The school has sufficient qualified and experienced teachers for the numbers on roll. A good feature of the school is the way in which the head teacher

deploys staff economically and efficiently in order to make the best use of staff expertise.

32. Learning resources are easily accessible to all pupils and match the demands of their learning experiences. The good range of resources is appropriate overall to pupils' age and needs. The accommodation, overall, is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. Storage facilities are limited but adequate. There are attractive displays around the inside of the school, which enhance and stimulate learning.
33. Despite some improvements over recent years, the aged school buildings require further maintenance attention. The requirements of the Disability Act are yet to be assessed.
34. The school manages its limited budget well in order to obtain optimum value for money and it provides good value for money overall.

Recommendations

35. In order to improve standards further, it is recommended that the school should:
- R1 Raise standards in bilingualism.
 - R2 Raise standards in information technology and history at key stage 2.
 - R3 Improve the use of assessment for foundation subjects and involve pupils more in setting their own targets.
 - R4 Improve governors' confidence so that they can better undertake their role as a critical friend.

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 2: Good features with no important shortcomings.

36. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

Subjects and Areas of Learning for Early Years

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	2
Physical development	2

37. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning. Children's achievement in the personal and social area of learning is very good.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Subject 1: Under Fives	N/A	N/A
Subject 2: English	2	2
Subject 3: Information technology	2	3
Subject 4: History	2	3
Subject 5: Geography	2	2
Subject 6: Religious education	2	2

38. Pupils' standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	86%	7%	0	0

39. Pupils' achievements are good and they make good progress towards their potential in virtually all subjects. The extremely small size of some year groups, (less than 5) prevents the school from publishing the results of national end of key stage assessments in English, mathematics and science to protect pupil confidentiality. For some year groups, (where there are between 5 and 10 pupils), the core indicators only (amalgamated averages) are published. The core indicator of the proportions of pupils in year 2 in 2005 who took the test and attained at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science was 100%.

40. The tracking by the school and the local education authority demonstrates the good progress and achievement of pupils, which is higher than local and national results. The trend of performance of the school is of steady improvement in most areas and maintenance of high standards in others, such as religious education, which was also identified as being good by the previous inspection. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built upon steadily.
41. Boys and girls from all groups and levels of prior attainment including those with special needs make good progress and achieve well overall. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The school sets challenging, but appropriate targets which are met. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are good throughout the school. Their skills in information technology are good at key stage 1, but have some shortcomings at key stage 2. The absence of a structured programme that ensures progression in the speaking, reading and writing of Welsh results in pupils having inadequate bilingual skills.
42. Pupils demonstrate good problem solving skills throughout the school from the under-fives upwards. They know how to improve their own learning and collaborate well both within and between classes in order to achieve shared goals. They demonstrate increasing autonomy as they progress through the school and all, from the youngest children, contribute positively to its life and work. They respond well to opportunities to take responsibility and make confident decisions about their work. Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral and cultural development and very good progress in their personal and social skills. They learn to respect the views of others and accept that people from all groups have equal rights. Their preparation for the life of work is good.
43. Pupils have generally good levels of awareness of how well they are progressing and are told of their next targets for development in English and mathematics for example. They are not included in negotiating their own targets, however, and the criteria for attaining different levels in their work, is not made explicit to them.
44. The overall average level of attendance for 2004/5 (three terms) is good. The attendance level for each of the three terms (94.2%, 94.27% and 93.62%) is slightly below the County (94.5%) average but better than the national average (93.2%) for primary schools. Unauthorised absences for the corresponding three terms are virtually zero.
45. The main causes of pupil absence are sickness and parents taking their children on holiday during term time, causing them to miss valuable learning time. The school strongly and actively discourages this practice.
46. There are no significant variations in attendance levels across the school. Punctuality is very good at the start of the day allowing sessions to start promptly without interruption. The school takes account of the requirements of National Assembly of Wales (NAW) Circular 3/99.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings.

47. The findings of the inspection team are slightly higher than the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
14%	72%	14%	0	0

48. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and support staff are extremely dedicated and hard working. All adults in the school have consistently high expectations of the behaviour and concentration of all boys and girls, including pupils with SEN, who are all expected to do their best. As a result, pupils know very well what is expected of them and relationships are excellent.
49. Teachers have good subject knowledge which is maximised effectively by their careful deployment to teach those areas which they specialise in particularly. In this way lessons are often taken by teachers with high levels of personal interest and expertise. As a result, lessons are often exciting and innovative. They grab the attention of pupils who are then keen to do their best.
50. Teachers' planning is good and teachers make good use of links with other subjects and ways to develop key skills. However, not all these links are explicit in the written plans.
51. Pupils' individual needs including the needs of SEN pupils, are met effectively and teachers know their pupils well and know how well they are doing.
52. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to research information on their own and in groups. Homework is often used as an effective method of ensuring that things taught are remembered. Teachers also make good use of technology, such as interactive white boards, to make their teaching memorable.
53. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to use incidental Welsh, however the teaching of bilingual skills lacks the required structure in order to be fully effective in the development of pupils' bilingual skills.
54. The school meets all statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting. Teachers use schemes of work to support planning and teaching. Planning identifies assessment opportunities in both the long and short term. When completed, however, these assessments are not sufficiently precise in identifying issues to be addressed, neither are they used to inform subsequent planning and teaching.

55. Baseline assessment is analysed and the information gained is well used to target children's strengths and areas for development. Material from the Qualifications, curriculum and assessment authority for Wales is used to assess pupils at the end of key stage 1 and, at the end of year 4, standardised tests which are analysed by the Local Education Authority (LEA) are administered. Information gained from both is used to set targets for pupils in the core subjects.
56. The assessment in core subjects at the end of the key stages provides information that is used effectively to chart individual pupils' progress in the core subjects. The information gained is also used to set individual targets for pupils which are shared with parents and reviewed termly. Pupils are aware of their targets that are written in their books. Teachers' marking identifies what pupils know and can do and supports pupils' learning by indicating what they need to do in order to improve their work. Pupils are not, however, involved in planning their own progress and improvement and the school has identified this as an area for development.
57. The assessment of foundation subjects is not sufficiently rigorous. The system lacks precision and a focus on formative assessment. Although teachers gather a considerable amount of information from their assessments, the system needs to be more coherent and manageable in order to make optimum use of the information gathered.
58. The school has begun to assemble samples of pupils' work that are matched to National Curriculum levels in a portfolio of assessed work for English. This provides support for teachers when making judgements about standards. It requires, however, further development to include examples of work at level 5 and specific criteria for each sub-level in order to be fully effective. No such portfolios are in place for other areas of the curriculum. This contributes to a lack of clarity and consistency when teachers assess pupils' work.
59. Parents have termly opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers and review targets. The school provides very informative annual written reports for parents together with targets for improvement and comparative data at the end of year 6.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

60. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
61. The school is successful, overall, in meeting pupils' needs and provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils which meets legal and course requirements. As a result of the creative teaching and imaginative learning experiences provided, pupils enjoy a broad and stimulating curriculum that

ensures continuity and progression throughout the school. Pupils' needs are well catered for and specialist support is provided for pupils with SEN.

62. The school has recently been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. A good range of extra-curricular activities are provided including residential courses, a French club and a recorder club which enhance the knowledge, interests and skills of pupils. Some opportunities are missed however, to use the school environment in order to further enrich pupils' learning.
63. The school provides many opportunities for the development of the common requirements of the National Curriculum. Although there is no specific planning document for key skills, they are evident in practice and are generally well developed across the curriculum.
64. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.
65. The school addresses social disadvantage in a very positive manner. Adults encourage all pupils, regardless of personal circumstances, gender, ethnic background or ability to participate in all the school's activities. As a result, pupils demonstrate respect for one another, towards visitors and for all adults who contribute to the life of the school.
66. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and very good in terms of their social development. The school encourages pupils to be self-disciplined and to exhibit good social skills that enhance the quality of school life. Adults consistently promote basic human values that they consider essential to the development of character. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude to learning and to acquire skills, which they will need when they enter the world of work. They provide, for example, learning experiences that promote co-operation, concentration and perseverance.
67. Spiritual development is promoted effectively during morning worship, however no opportunities for quiet reflection are provided. Pupils thoughtfully discuss such issues as taking care of their environment and apply reasoning effectively when discussing moral issues. Collective worship meets statutory requirements. Acts of worship are broadly Christian in nature, but pupils learn to respect the other main religious traditions. Pupils have a good awareness of other cultures and this is developing well in Reception and key stage 1 through the creative use of a Chinese doll in order to enable pupils to understand and empathise with her customs and way of life.
68. Personal development was well addressed during lessons seen. The use of a doll and sensitive discussion of other issues affecting pupils such as death and divorce, were handled in a skilful manner that had a positive effect on the self-esteem of particular pupils.

69. The school promotes *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* effectively through Saint David's Day celebrations, Welsh folk dancing and Welsh hymns and songs and stories from Welsh literature. However pupils' awareness of Welsh culture, heritage and history and of their local area is less well developed. The school has identified the need to visit places of historical and cultural interest both locally and further afield. Teachers develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the richness and variety of other cultures through such activities as the French club, world book day and in geography. Teachers are developing the promotion of bilingual skills and pupils answer the register in Welsh. It is used incidentally in both key stages though progression is not adequately addressed.
70. The school is developing its provision for sustainable development. Pupils have an adequate awareness of the effects of pollution on the environment and of the importance of recycling and need to minimise waste. The school is developing this area in order to gain Eco-school status.
71. The partnership with parents is good and during the pre-inspection consultation, most parents expressed satisfaction with the quality of communication and the general standards at the school. The school keeps parents well informed about its life and work. Parents receive termly information about their children's progress. Some parents help on a daily basis in the life of the school that in some cases has provided effective opportunities for recognised vocational training.
72. Individuals from the local community visit from time to time to speak to pupils about their experiences; this enhances pupils' learning, for example in history. Regular visits by the local vicar also contribute to the pupils' learning experiences. The community is very supportive of the school and replaced resources that were destroyed as a result of dry rot. There are good links with other schools resulting in collective training opportunities in a cost effective manner. Pastoral arrangements to ease the transfer of year 6 pupils to the secondary school are comprehensive and effective. Staff also co-operate on joint projects and curricular activities. There are formal partnerships with colleges and teachers and pupils benefit from the additional adult support.
73. Work experience placements are provided for high school pupils and Further Education college students. The previous links with a Teacher Training College (Trinity College) are no longer in place.
74. Vocational topics contained in the schools' personal and social education (PSE) sessions help provide pupils with some work-related education. The current provision of effective work related education is minimal. Partly due to the remoteness of the community, the absence of any local industry and the cost of transport there are no partnerships or formal links with local industry.
75. Teachers have yet to undertake industrial/commercial placements, and use the experiences to enrich the curriculum. The school is yet to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills. The head teacher has received appropriate training

and plans to introduce the development of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum as soon as he receives the full set of information (DYNAMO) packs.

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings.

76. The findings of the inspection team are slightly higher than the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
77. The school provides a secure, welcoming, happy, safe and caring environment for pupils to learn. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. Teachers identify and react constructively to individual pupils' needs and requirements. External support services are used appropriately, regularly and effectively. The family atmosphere in school helps pupils settle into the school quickly and happily.
78. The school has good procedures in place in order to identify and meet pupils' needs. Effective support from such specialist services as the psychological service and the health service ensure that pupils receive guidance of a high quality in support of their personal and social education.
79. Parents are positive and complimentary towards the school. Parents consider pupils are very well cared for and supported and they are satisfied with the help and guidance provided for their children. The deployment of available support staff is organised to meet pupils' needs. Good relationships exist between pupils, staff, parents and the local community. There is an active 'Friends of Coelbren' organisation that raises valuable funds for the school. However, the relationships between the school and parents is, at times, one sided, with very few parents participating in some parents evenings and only a small number willing to help out in the school.
80. The school operates an 'open door' approach and parents are invited to attend parents' evenings to discuss their child's targets, progress and/or any other matter related to their education. Two parents' evenings per year are held one at the start of the year to discuss targets and one at the end of the year to discuss the progress reports.
81. The school receives poor response to its questionnaires and now only informally seeks parents' views and opinions on a range of relevant matters, for example, at parents' meetings and at the school gate. Pupils' views, opinions and suggestions are provided through the elected School Council.
82. There are no signed home-school agreements for some pupils. Despite the head teacher's efforts a significant number of parents have not signed and returned the appropriate recently revised agreement paperwork.

83. Although there are no documented procedures detailing the schools' induction or transition programmes, the informal arrangements for pupils joining the school and transferring from year 6 to the high school are well established and effective.
84. The school demonstrates recognition of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds in its life and work. Pupils understand that they are expected to attend regularly and punctually. The manual register system for recording attendance is accurate and robust. The school expects high standards of behaviour and does not tolerate bullying or inappropriate behaviour. Pupils understand the clear systems for rewarding good attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Registers are completed correctly, twice each day. Procedures for following up lateness or absence are very effective. The head teacher personally monitors attendance, punctuality and behaviour of pupils.
85. The education welfare officer (EWO) visits the school, as necessary, to deal with the very few cases involving pupils who are persistently late or absent. Registers are completed quickly and accurately at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. There are very few cases of unexplained absence. Parents are aware of the procedures to follow to notify the school of their child's' absence.
86. The school gives a high priority to pupils' health, welfare, safety and security. The school building provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn and play. The school regularly undertakes risk assessments. Three school staff are First Aid trained. Good procedures are in place to adequately meet the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have suffered an injury whilst in school.
87. The schools PSE programme contains 'Health and Safety' related topics. The policy has been formally adopted and staff and pupils have an appropriate awareness of its contents.
88. The head teacher is the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator. A Child Protection Policy is in place and all members of the teaching staff have very recently received appropriate training. School staff are aware of the signs of possible child abuse and the specific procedures they must follow. A register of current Child Protection cases is maintained (no entries at present).
89. The school's race equality policy fully meets statutory requirements. The school has high expectations in all pupil relationships. Racial equality is included in the PSE programme.
90. All pupils are treated as individuals and are strongly encouraged to consider every other person as an individual regardless of colour, religion or nationality.
91. Policies covering behaviour and anti-bullying are firmly established. Bullying or inappropriate behaviour is considered a serious matter and is not tolerated. Incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour are rare and any that are reported are dealt with promptly and effectively. Teachers encourage pupils

to report any incident of bullying or inappropriate behaviour straight away. No records of bullying are available since the head teacher considers that none of the reported incidents have been serious enough. There are no recorded pupil exclusions for the last nine years. The school's involvement with local employers is extremely limited.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

92. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
93. The head teacher leads the school effectively. He ensures that the overall aims and specific targets take due account of national and local priorities and are understood by all the staff. As a result, the school works in a cohesive way. The aims and values are understood by all parties, including volunteer parents and visitors and are reflected in all aspects of the school's work. For example, the lunchtime supervision of pupils maintains the principles and expectations set in assemblies, lessons and other activities.
94. Targets set for school improvement are realistic, but also suitably challenging. The views of pupils are sought and taken into due consideration through the school council. Parents feel confident to approach the school and feel that their views are also considered when changes are made. However, there are limited opportunities for parents or pupils to make written comments on reports.
95. Performance management is underway and is suitably linked to whole school development. Training is linked effectively to whole school as well as individual priorities. Co-ordinators' roles are being developed, focusing initially on the core subjects. The responsibilities of some teachers are high due to the small size of the school and the part-time teaching commitment of some staff. The school takes due account of this in planning to ensure a sensible balance in workload.
96. The governing body is supportive of the school and meets its statutory duties effectively. Currently nearly all of the positions on the governing body are filled, but half of the governors are new. As a result, they have swiftly identified the need for training to ensure they are going to be able to fully fulfil their roles. In recent times, many of the responsibilities, which are rightly those of the Governing Body, have fallen to the head teacher in addition to his own. The Governing Body is aware that it will need to develop skills and confidence to challenge the school and act more as a critical friend to reduce much of this extra workload.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

97. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

98. The open and friendly nature of the school ensures that all parties are fully aware of self-evaluation procedures and lines of communication are good. The self-evaluation process is rigorous and provides the school with an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's evaluations closely match those of the inspection team. As a result of this clear view, combined with a determination to continue to raise standards, there has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
99. The head teacher and core subject co-ordinators have a clear overview of standards in English and mathematics across the school, as a result of systematic monitoring and evaluation through testing and lesson observation. In other subjects co-ordinators monitor coverage and have started to monitor teaching and planning. They do not all, however, rigorously monitor standards pupils attain through looking at books, teachers' evaluations or by conducting pupil interviews. This is largely as a result of the very small size of the school and the consequent heavy workload on all members of staff, including those who are part time. The school is aware of this and is making every effort to move forward in developing co-ordinators' roles at a sensible speed.
100. Clear whole school priorities are set for improvement, which are understood by all. These are fully supported through careful allocation of the school's resources. These resources are supplemented effectively by the generosity of the local community through gifts, fund-raising, good will and the hard work of the head teacher. The school self-evaluation is honest and focused effectively on raising standards. The head teacher ensures that this evaluation feeds into school development. However, the process is still being refined to include the active involvement of co-ordinators. While the leadership of the school is rightly focused on improving aspects where there are shortcomings, it does not always have a national perspective of some of the things the school does outstandingly well.

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings.

101. The findings of the inspection team are slightly higher than the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
102. The school has sufficient qualified and experienced teachers for the numbers on roll. A good feature of the school is the way in which the head teacher deploys staff economically and efficiently in order to make the best use of time, expertise and experience together with teachers' interests.
103. Students training for vocational courses and parents who help on a voluntary basis work effectively with teachers in the classroom and support pupils' learning well.

104. The school has effective procedures for promoting staff development. It identifies individual needs through performance management together with priorities in the School Development Plan (SDP). It also takes into account the interests of teachers.
105. Learning resources are easily accessible to all pupils and match the demands of their learning experiences. The good range of resources is appropriate to pupils' age and needs. Books, materials and equipment, some of which are held centrally, enhance the quality of work in many subjects. The range of hardware and software to promote and support the development of information communications technology (ICT) skills is of good quality. However insufficient resources for the under-fives, an inadequate range of good quality picture books in key stage 1 and lack of support staff render difficult the delivery of a full curriculum. This is a matter that the school has identified as one to be addressed.
106. Externally there are suitable grassed and hard surface playing areas. Security of the school site is reduced since parts of the perimeter fence are missing and parts of the boundary wall very low. With the exception of the rather small and congested early years classroom, the accommodation, overall, is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. Storage facilities are limited but adequate. There are attractive displays around the inside of the school, which enhance and stimulate learning.
107. The utilised areas of the school are not fully accessible for all pupils including those with disabilities. The requirements of the Disability Act are yet to be assessed.
108. Despite some improvements over recent years the aged school buildings require further maintenance attention. Several parts of the school are decaying as a result of the ingress of moisture (damp), for example the boys' toilet. The result of adverse weather and vandal damage to the outside of the buildings is clearly visible.
109. The play area outside the nursery is small and is currently void of any stimulating activities or colour. During discussion, pupils indicate that play equipment placed outside previously had been stolen or vandalised.
110. The school manages its limited budget well in order to obtain optimum value for money. The SEN budget is well used to support targeted pupils. The Better Schools Fund (GEST) is monitored carefully and spending reflects the priorities in the SDP and those noted through performance management. The head teacher monitors budget spending regularly.
111. The school manages its resources efficiently and provides good value for money overall.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Subject 1: Early Years

112. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

113. Standards are good with no significant shortcomings.

Good features

114. The children speak clearly and confidently for a range of purposes and in a variety of contexts. Creative and stimulating teaching and learning experiences such as acting out stories with puppets and good use of the outdoors as a learning environment ensure that they acquire rich language. They use this to express themselves using appropriate syntax when they ask and answer questions, respond to stories and rhymes and when they speak about their experiences and feelings. They demonstrate good understanding when they follow instructions. The wide range of teaching strategies used, such as fairies changing the order of things and writing to Siu Liu, the Chinese doll, ensures that the children have a good understanding of the purposes of writing. They express opinions confidently and actively seek opportunities to browse through books. The children listen well to stories in which they become absorbed and to which they respond enthusiastically. The children know several Welsh rhymes and songs which they enjoy singing.

Shortcomings

115. Children's basic mark-making is underdeveloped before they engage in formal writing activities.
116. Children make insufficient use of role play in order to further develop their language.

Personal and Social Development

117. Standards are good with outstanding features.

Good features

118. The children's confidence and self-esteem is very good. For instance, they sit at mixed aged tables of pupils in the dining hall, asking for and offering help when necessary and displaying good table manners. They undress themselves competently for physical education lessons, for example and

make every attempt to put on their socks and shoes with minimal assistance. Children fetch resources and return them to their rightful place. They welcome new experiences and participate in them with great enthusiasm. They play happily together and behave towards adults and other children with courtesy and respect. The children maintain their concentration well in class and whole school situations and contribute enthusiastically to discussions. They demonstrate a good awareness of how children of other cultures may be different in appearance but have similar fears and problems. For instance, they demonstrate empathy for the doll Siu Liu and understand the things that make her unhappy. They make very sensitive suggestions for making Siu Liu feel better and write her notes and make her cards without prompting. They also speak unselfconsciously about their own feelings and show concern for others.

Mathematical Development

119. Standards are good with no significant shortcomings.

Good features

120. The children are beginning to develop fundamental mathematical concepts about shape, number and measurement. They demonstrate their understanding through their accurate use of appropriate mathematical language when comparing objects and when given appropriately contextualised tasks. These include rearranging coins whose order has been changed, giving instructions and engaging actively in number rhymes, songs and stories that contain mathematical concepts. They understand the purpose of money and count to 10 confidently. They name two-dimensional shapes correctly and their knowledge of these is developing into a growing recognition of three-dimensional shapes. They enjoy forming their numbers using different media such as paint and felt pens. They understand well the concepts of 'big' and 'small', 'tall' and 'short'. Children know their numbers in Welsh up to five and enjoy singing Welsh number rhymes.

Shortcomings

121. Children have insufficient experience of mark-making as the basis of the symbol system of numeracy before they engage in the formal recording of number.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

122. Standards are good with no significant shortcomings.

Good features

123. The children understand how society functions in terms of the world of work, how different people spend their day and the variety of places in which people

live, both rural and urban. They know the days of the week and the cycle of the seasons. The children have a good understanding of the seasons and their characteristics and know about hibernating creatures, some of which they can name. Their concept of time is good and is reinforced by the interest they display when they identify historical artefacts such as toys and discuss and compare them with those of the present day. They understand well the differences between clothes, toys, homes, transport and food long ago and now. They demonstrate good problem solving skills in response to their teacher's request for ideas to make Siu Liu happy and when working out where Teddy may be hidden.

Shortcomings

124. Children's experience of selecting from a range of materials is underdeveloped.
125. Their use of a variety of information sources is restricted.

Physical Development

126. Standards are good with no significant shortcomings.

Good features

127. Children move their bodies confidently and demonstrate good control and co-ordination when responding to the teacher's instructions and chosen stimuli. They enjoy using their bodies to create different movements which they do unselfconsciously, making good use of space. Their fine and gross manipulative skills are developing well as a result of the range of opportunities in this and other areas of learning that they enjoy such as drawing, cutting, gluing and dance. Their ability to co-ordinate movements is enhanced by their understanding of positional language and they derive pleasure from experimenting with a variety of ways of controlling their bodies. They are able to give and follow positional directions in order to both hide and find Teddy.

Shortcomings

128. Children's development of physical skills is restricted because dance is underdeveloped.

Creative Development

129. Standards are good with no significant shortcomings.

Good features

130. The children's progress in the musical aspect of this area of learning is good. They sing enthusiastically and perform appropriate actions to accompany their

singing when asked. They enjoy playing percussion instruments and keep a beat. Children perform confidently demonstrating evident enjoyment and they listen appreciatively to the performances of others. They enjoy drawing, painting and modelling and have produced some observational representations of a good standard using oil pastels and charcoal, admiring and commenting on one another's work with sensitivity and appreciation.

Shortcomings

131. Children's opportunities to experiment with a wide range of media and make choices about which to select are limited.
132. Children's role play and the opportunities for creative development which it presents, is under-developed.

Subject 2: English

Key Stage 1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

133. Standards in listening are good with no significant shortcomings throughout both key stages. In key stage 1, pupils take turns and listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and attentively to the ideas of others. In key stage 2, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and respectfully to the contributions of their peers.
134. Standards in speaking are good in both key stages. Pupils in key stage 1 have a developing understanding of the importance of expressing their ideas fully by using a growing vocabulary and by beginning to apply aspects of standard spoken English correctly. They are eager to express themselves and do so enthusiastically, demonstrating an understanding of compound words that they use correctly.
135. In key stage 2, pupils discuss their activities in groups and work well collaboratively. Some pupils demonstrate that they are able to articulate their ideas with confidence and clarity. On occasion they use extended descriptive sentences and subject specific vocabulary correctly to talk about the characteristics of different snakes, for example.
136. Standards in reading are generally good with no significant shortcomings. Most pupils in both key stages make good progress with reading in relation to their abilities. Key stage 1 pupils use phonic cues to support their reading development. They correctly distinguish fact from fiction and show they recognise humour in texts. Even the youngest pupils demonstrate good reading behaviour and enjoy handling books and telling stories from the illustrations when using good quality picture books.

137. Pupils in key stage 2 read books from the school library that are colour coded according to difficulty. They understand the system and read from a broad range of texts with increasing fluency and accuracy. They read for pleasure and information, re-reading favourite texts and using dictionaries and reference books accurately. Pupils name their favourite books, authors and characters, often giving interesting reasons for their choices.
138. Standards in writing are generally good. Pupils in both key stages write with increasing accuracy according to their abilities. In key stage 1, pupils develop a sound understanding of grammar. They have a good knowledge of simple sentence construction and use basic punctuation accurately. Older pupils in key stage 1 write for a broad range of audiences in different forms including letters, poems, instructions and reports. Attractive books have been made of their writing such as their own versions of 'Peepo' which they enjoy browsing through and of which they are very proud. Their stories are interesting, and they carefully select descriptive words in order to create vivid images. Some begin to produce extended pieces of writing at the end of the key stage.
139. There is clear evidence of good progress between the key stages and across key stage 2. Pupils in key stage 2 write extensively for different purposes using various forms that are suitable for the task. They punctuate accurately using inverted commas correctly. Pupils cover a wide range of grammar exercises and a good feature of their writing is their use of these grammatical conventions in their work. They produce stories that are often exciting, making effective use of imagery and selecting their words carefully. Pupils learn to re-draft their writing and produce a good range of poetry including cinquains and acrostic poems (poems that read both vertically and horizontally). They write well for a range of purposes across the curriculum, which is a good feature of their work.
140. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils demonstrate an awareness of paragraphs and use them effectively. The writing of a significant number of older pupils is accurate and their stories and reports are well structured. They demonstrate a good understanding of the genre of persuasive and discursive writing and produce interesting examples. Pupils write sensitively about the experiences of children in the Second World War in response to the stimulus of 'Goodnight Mr. Tom'. All pupils take pride in their work and the best write neatly. The presentation of pupils' work is of a good standard.

Shortcomings

141. Throughout the school, some pupils read mechanically and with little expression. This deficiency restricts their understanding and enjoyment of the literature they read.
142. Pupils do not know the full range of reading strategies. This contributes to the lack of expression and fluency in reading.

Subject 3: Information Technology

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

143. In key stage 1, pupils learn to use a range of computer programs effectively to draw pictures and make patterns. They use a geography program well to complete work on homes.
144. Pupils in year 1 and year 2 know how to use word processing facilities well to write simple labels and phrases. They know how to use pictograms effectively to record work in mathematics.
145. In key stage 2, pupils use computer programs well to write up accounts and stories in English and Welsh. They effectively develop their skills in using drawing programs to support work in mathematics and in art, for example learning about symmetry and about four axis.
146. They make good progress in developing research skills, using the Internet and CD ROM's to research many things to help them in their work in other subjects. For example they find out about events such as the holocaust or the requirements and natural habitat of giant land snails to include in work in history and science. They also find out more about Hajj and the Japanese kite festival in work in religious education.
147. They use digital photography to record work in geography on rock formation and development of the landscape.
148. Their word processing skills develop effectively and they write reports with confidence, making careful choice of fonts and layout to present their work attractively. They learn to cut and paste to combine pictures and text to produce newsletters and reviews of high quality.

Shortcomings

149. Pupils' skills, in year 3 to 6, in using the computer to control or to create programs are under-developed. They cannot produce slide shows to present their work for example.
150. Pupils have poorly developed typing skills.

Subject 4: History

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

151. Pupils in key stage 1 demonstrate a genuine interest in history. They use a variety of ways to describe differences between past and present based on topics that are meaningful to them such as toys and food.
152. Pupils are learning how to sequence events and understand well how change happens in a historical context, for example, they know the main differences between kitchens in the iron age, middle ages and in the Victorian era.
153. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the meaning of old and new in relation to their own lives through activities such as handling artefacts and by enjoying stories about the past.
154. They are developing a knowledge and enjoyment of Welsh history by studying the lives of famous people and significant events such as Daniel Evans and his journey to Patagonia on the Mimosa.
155. Pupils are developing a good sense of chronology through the study of the Celts and Stuarts. They know that the Celts were farmers who lived in small communities such as Coelbren. They have enjoyed learning about and discussing the life of Jane Pritchard and understand well the main differences between her way of life and theirs.
156. In key stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the past is developing through examining Victorian artefacts and topics such as the Romans, the Tudor period and exploring how archaeologists gain information from artefacts obtained from a dig.
157. Pupils have learned about the dissolution of the monasteries and have a good knowledge of what life was like for the monks. Pupils know that many monasteries contained valuable artefacts and that there were many monks who did not live appropriate lives. They understand why Henry the Eighth wanted to destroy the monasteries.
158. Pupils' knowledge of Welsh history is developing well through their study of the effects of the depression on Wales at the beginning of the twentieth century. They learn how it affected people's lives by abstracting information from primary sources such as photographs and secondary sources in the form of articles. They have used secondary sources effectively to gain information about the effects of the depression on both Coelbren and Ystradgynlais, and the Rhondda, Aberdare and Jarrow hunger marches.
159. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing skills of enquiry, analysis and interpretation and problem solving in history. They are beginning to

investigate past events, for example, examining tithe maps and parish registers effectively in order to obtain data about Coelbren in the past. They are also developing the use of information technology (IT) for data handling.

Shortcomings

- 160. In key stage 2, pupils' knowledge of work covered is insecure.
- 161. Pupils' knowledge of Welsh history in key stage 2 is under developed.

Subject 5: Geography

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

Good features

- 162. Younger pupils have studied the local area, such as the church, in work linked to religious education, and know how their local area fits into Wales as a whole. They have a good range of information about the local area and how that affects the lives of people in the village.
- 163. They describe their route from their homes to the school correctly and have planned a journey around Coelbren, marking where they live on the maps they have made.
- 164. They draw and write effectively about places they like and places they dislike and have learnt about different geographical terms, such as island, from studying the fictitious island of Struay.
- 165. They have a good knowledge about hot countries and cold countries and start to become aware of the different flora and fauna. For example, they learn that bananas grow in hot sunny countries.
- 166. Pupils in key stage 2 learn about change within communities. Their map work is undertaken with increasing attention to detail. Pupils are starting to develop a good awareness of the importance of location in population development.
- 167. They compare and contrast different geographical environments, such as Cherrapunji and the Thar dessert in India. They predict population growth and have a good knowledge of the major influences on environmental change and global warming.
- 168. Pupils have good opportunity to learn about local historical sites in their work on geography. They develop good research skills using a range of media and have a good knowledge of geological features of the area in which they live.
- 169. Older pupils have a good and developing awareness of sustainable development and what they can do to maintain the environment.

Shortcomings

170. There are no significant shortcomings.

Subject 6: Religious education

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

Good features

171. The school has maintained the high standards observed in the previous inspection.
172. Younger pupils in key stage 1 understand the significance of Christian symbols such as the cross and the significance of the candles in religious ceremonies.
173. They have visited the local church for first hand experience as part of their work on important places. They have listened to a talk by the local vicar and know about the vestments that he wears.
174. In work linked to geography they have studied “special places” and write and talk confidently about places where they feel safe.
175. Pupils in key stage 2 talk knowledgeably about Judaism. They know some of the important festivals and that these festivals are celebrated by Jewish people all around the world, including Jewish people living in Wales. They know about the state of Israel but also that “Jewish people can live wherever they want”.
176. Pupils in key stage 2 learn about the lives of famous people. They develop empathetic feelings and respect for others when learning about the lives of Elizabeth Fry and Guru Nanak.
177. Older pupils know many of the stories from both the Old and New Testaments and from other religious texts. They have a good memory of the story of the flight from Egypt.
178. All pupils are beginning to recognise the importance of religious belief in shaping the lives of believers. They have a good knowledge of different artefacts and have had good opportunities to learn about the artefacts of some of the major world religions.
179. Pupils use resources well and confidently look up the information they need in the good range of books available to them. This has a positive impact on developing their reading and research skills.

Shortcomings

180. There are no significant shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The report is very thorough and the judgements within it give a true and accurate picture of the school and the standards achieved.

Since the last inspection educational standards have been raised throughout the school. We are particularly pleased with the high grades achieved in early years and key stage 1 in addition to the improvements and good standards in key stage 2.

The inspection team agreed with four of our grades for the seven key questions, In the three remaining key questions inspectors graded us higher than we ourselves had modestly done.

The inspectors considered that the school enables all pupils to achieve well and that relationships and standards of behaviour were exceptionally good. The positives in the report and during the inspection process have boosted the morale and the confidence of the staff and will help us to improve our standards in future. This will develop the school and the education of our pupils.

An action plan will be put into place to address the recommendations within the report. Some of these are already being addressed by the school within our own development plan.

We were impressed with the supportive manner in which the inspection team carried out the inspection. It was a thorough and rigorous process that was carried out in a professional way but tempered with good humour and positive feedback. It was a positive experience that has benefited the whole of the community that is Coelbren Primary School.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Coelbren Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of School	Heol Eglwys, Coelbren, Nr Neath, West Glamorgan
Post-code	SA10 9PF
Telephone number	01639 700245
Head teacher	Mr. K. T. Hughes
Date of appointment	April 1 st 1997
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Rev. A. Brookfield
Registered inspector	Mrs. S. M. Barnes
Dates of inspection	17 th – 19 th October 2005

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	0	3	4	6	7	7	7	3	37

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	2	2.4

Staffing information	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	19.5:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/A
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	19.5
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

Term	R	Whole School
Autumn	88%	94.27
Spring	78%	93.62
Summer	93%	94.79

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10.5
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	5
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included.		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school	100	In Wales (in 2004)	80

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005	Number of pupils in Y6	3
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 was fewer than five, summary information is not included.		

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- Three inspectors were present at the school for six inspector days.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.
- Questionnaires were completed by parents and analysed.
- Discussions were held with the head and staff.
- School documentation and samples of pupils' work were examined.
- Fifteen lessons or sessions were observed.
- A sample of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group was examined.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtimes and at the beginning and end of the school sessions.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and observed extra-curricular activities.
- Meetings were held with the staff parents and the governing body.
- The head teacher undertook the role of nominee for the inspection.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs S. M. Barnes Registered Inspector	Special educational needs, information technology, geography, religious education, how well learners achieve, how effective teaching and assessment are, the effectiveness of leadership and management, how well leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards.
Mrs B. Llewelyn Jones Team Inspector	Early years, English, history, how well learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community, how efficiently leaders and managers use resources.
Mr J. K. Jones Lay inspector	How well learners are cared for guided and supported.

The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd
8 Fisher Close
Duxford
Cambridgeshire
CB2 4XU

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, head teacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.

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

**Coelbren Primary School
Heol Eglwys
Coelbren
Neath
West Glamorgan
SA10 9PF**

Summary for Parents

School Number: 6662108

Date of Inspection: 17-19 October 2005

by

**Mrs S. M. Barnes
W182/78732**

Date: 24 November 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/027/05P

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Basic information about the school

Name of School	Coelbren Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of School	Heol Eglwys, Coelbren, Nr Neath, West Glamorgan
Post-code	SA10 9PF
Telephone number	01639 700245

Head teacher	Mr. K. T. Hughes
Date of appointment	April 1 st 1997
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Rev. A. Brookfield
Registered inspector	Mrs. S. M. Barnes
Dates of inspection	17 th – 19 th October 2005

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	0	3	4	6	7	7	7	3	37

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	2	2.4

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

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

The inspection of Coelbren Primary School took place between 17th and 18th of October 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs S. M. Barnes 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 sections.

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 past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a standard inspection.

Summary

This is a school that enables pupils from all groups to achieve well. Relationships are exceptionally good, as is the behaviour of the pupils. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, due to the good leadership of the head teacher. There was a close match between the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation report and those made by the inspection team.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

Subjects and Areas of Learning Early Years

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	2
Physical development	2

The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning. Children in the early years make good progress overall and very good progress in their personal and social development.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Subject 1: Under Fives	N/A	N/A
Subject 2: English	2	2
Subject 3: Information technology	2	3
Subject 4: History	2	3
Subject 5: Geography	2	2
Subject 6: Religious education	2	2

Pupils' standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	86%	7%	0	0

Pupils' achievements are good and they make good progress towards their potential in virtually all subjects. The extremely small size of some year groups, (less than 5) prevents the school from publishing the results of national end of key stage assessments in English, mathematics and science to protect pupil confidentiality. For some year groups, (where there are between 5 and 10 pupils), only the core indicators (amalgamated averages) are published. The core indicator of the proportions of pupils in year 2, who took the test in 2005 and attained at least level 2 in English, mathematics and science was 100%.

The tracking by the school and the local education authority demonstrates the good progress and achievement of pupils, which is higher than local and national results. The trend of performance of the school is of steady improvement in most areas and maintenance of high standards in others, such as religious education, which was also identified as being good by the previous inspection. Lessons are planned well and incrementally pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding steadily develop.

Boys and girls from all groups and levels of prior attainment including those with special needs make good progress and achieve well overall. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The school sets challenging, but appropriate targets that are met. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are good throughout the school. Their skills in information technology are good at key stage 1, but with some shortcomings at key stage 2. Pupils demonstrate good problem solving skills throughout the school. The absence of a

structured programme which ensures progression in the speaking, reading and writing of Welsh, results in pupils having inadequate bilingual skills.

The overall average level of attendance for 2004/5 is good. Punctuality is very good at the start of the day allowing sessions to start promptly without interruption. Pupils understand that they are expected to attend regularly and punctually. Monitoring of attendance, punctuality and behaviour of pupils is efficient. The school takes account of the requirements of National Assembly of Wales (NAW) Circular 3/99.

The quality of education and training

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
14%	72%	14%	0	0

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and support staff are extremely dedicated and hard working. All adults in the school have consistently high expectations of the behaviour and concentration of all boys and girls, including pupils with SEN, who are all expected to do their best. As a result, pupils know very well what is expected of them and relationships are excellent.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is maximised effectively by their careful deployment. As a result, lessons are often exciting and innovative. Teachers' planning is good and teachers make good use of links with other subjects and ways to develop key skills, although not all these links are explicit in written planning. Pupils' individual needs including the needs of SEN pupils are met effectively.

The school meets all statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting. Teachers use schemes of work to support planning and teaching. Planning identifies assessment opportunities in both the long and short term. Baseline assessment for under-fives is analysed and the information gained is well used to target children's strengths and areas for development. Information gained from testing at year 4 is used to set targets for pupils in the core subjects.

The assessment in core subjects at the end of the key stages provides information that is used effectively to chart individual pupils' progress. It is also used effectively to set individual targets for pupils that are shared with parents and reviewed termly. Pupils are aware of their targets that are written in their books. The assessment of foundation subjects is not sufficiently rigorous. Although teachers gather a considerable amount of information from their assessments, the system needs to be more coherent and manageable in order to make optimum use of the information gathered. Teachers' marking identifies what pupils know and can do and supports pupils' learning by indicating what they need to do next in order to improve their work. Pupils are not, however, involved in planning their own progress and improvement and the school has identified this as an area for development.

Parents have termly opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers and review targets. The school provides very informative annual written reports for parents together with targets for improvement and comparative data at the end of year 6.

The school is successful, overall, in meeting pupils' needs and provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils which meets legal and course requirements. Pupils enjoy a broad and stimulating curriculum that ensures continuity and progression throughout the school. A good

range of extra-curricular activities is provided including residential courses, a French club and a recorder club which enhance the knowledge, interests and skills of pupils.

The school provides many opportunities for the development of the common requirements of the National Curriculum. Although there is no specific planning document for key skills, they are evident in practice and are generally well developed across the curriculum. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to use incidental Welsh, however the teaching of bi-lingual skills lacks the required structure in order to be fully effective.

The school addresses social disadvantage in a very positive manner. Adults encourage all pupils, regardless of personal circumstances, gender, ethnic background or ability to participate in all the school's activities. As a result, pupils demonstrate respect for one another, towards visitors and for all adults who contribute to the life of the school.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and very good in terms of their social development. The school encourages pupils to be self-disciplined and to exhibit good social skills that enhance the quality of school life. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude to learning and to acquire skills, which they will need when they enter the world of work. Collective worship meets statutory requirements. Acts of worship are broadly Christian in nature, but pupils learn to respect the other main religious traditions.

The school promotes *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* effectively through Saint David's Day celebrations, Welsh folk dancing and Welsh hymns and songs and stories from Welsh literature. However, pupils' awareness of Welsh culture, heritage and history and of their local area is less well developed. The school has identified the need to visit more places of historical and cultural interest both locally and further afield.

The school is developing its provision for sustainable development. Pupils have an adequate awareness of the effects of pollution on the environment and of the importance of recycling and need to minimise waste. Pupils' views, opinions and suggestions are provided through the elected School Council.

The partnership with parents is good. The school keeps parents well informed about its life and work. Some parents help on a regular basis in the life of the school. In some cases this has provided effective opportunities for recognised vocational training. The school is an integral part of the community, which is very supportive of the school and has replaced the resources that were destroyed as a result of dry rot. There are good links with other schools resulting in collective training opportunities in a cost-effective manner.

The current provision of effective work related education is minimal. Partly due to the remoteness of the community, the absence of local industry and the cost of transport there are no partnerships or formal links with industry.

The school provides a secure, welcoming, happy, safe and caring environment for pupils to learn. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. The school building provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn and play. The school regularly undertakes effective risk assessments.

A clear Child Protection Policy is in place and all members of the teaching staff have very recently received appropriate training. The school's race equality policy fully meets statutory requirements. Arrangements for pupils joining the school and transferring from year 6 to the High School are well established and effective.

Policies covering behaviour and anti-bullying are firmly established. Bullying or inappropriate behaviour is considered a serious matter and is not tolerated. Incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour are rare and any that are reported are dealt with promptly and effectively.

Leadership and management

The head teacher leads the school effectively. He ensures that the overall aims and specific targets take due account of national and local priorities and are understood by all the staff. The aims and values are understood by all parties and are reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The self-evaluation review produced by the school for inspection demonstrated a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Targets set for school improvement are realistic but also suitably challenging. The views of pupils are sought and taken into due consideration through the school council. Parents feel confident to approach the school and feel that their views are also considered.

Performance management is underway and is suitably linked to whole school development. Training is linked effectively to whole school as well as individuals' priorities. Co-ordinators' roles are being developed, focusing initially on the core subjects. School takes due account of the heavy responsibilities of staff, some of whom are part time, in planning to ensure a sensible balance in workload.

The governing body is supportive of the school and meets its statutory duties effectively. Currently nearly all of the positions on the governing body are filled, but half of the governors are new. As a result, they have swiftly identified the need for training to ensure they are going to be able to fully fulfil their roles. In recent times, many of the responsibilities, which are rightly those of the Governing Body, have fallen to the head teacher in addition to his own. The Governing Body is aware that it will need to develop skills and confidence to challenge the school and act more as a critical friend to reduce much of this extra workload.

The open and friendly nature of the school ensures that all parties are fully aware of self-evaluation procedures and lines of communication are good. Self-evaluation is honest and focused effectively on raising standards. Clear whole school priorities are set for improvement, which are understood by all. These are fully supported through careful allocation of the school's resources.

The school has sufficient qualified and experienced teachers for the numbers on roll. A good feature of the school is the way in which the head teacher deploys staff economically and efficiently in order to make the best use of staff expertise.

Learning resources are easily accessible to all pupils and match the demands of their learning experiences. The good range of resources is appropriate overall to pupils' age and needs. The accommodation, overall, is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. Storage facilities are limited but adequate. There are attractive displays around the inside of the school, which enhance and stimulate learning.

Despite some improvements over recent years, the aged school buildings require further maintenance attention. The requirements of the Disability Act are yet to be assessed.

The school manages its limited budget well in order to obtain optimum value for money and it provides good value for money overall.

Recommendations

In order to improve standards further, it is recommended that the school should:

- R1 Raise standards in bilingualism.
- R2 Raise standards in information technology and history at key stage 2.
- R3 Improve the use of assessment for foundation subjects and involve pupils more in setting their own targets.
- R4 Improve governors' confidence so that they can better undertake their role as a critical friend.

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.

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, head teacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.