

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

**Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School
Cefn Lane
Glyncoch
Pontypridd
Rhondda Cynon Taff
CF37 3BP**

School Number: 674/2225

Date of Inspection: 14-16 March 2005

by

**Mrs M E Evans
W202/78828**

Date: 19 May 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/176/04P

© Crown Copyright 2005

This Report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

Craig-Yr-Hesg 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 Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School took place between 14-16 March 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs M E Evans 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

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

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	6
Summary	8
Recommendations	13
Standards	14
Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?	14
The quality of education and training	19
Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	19
Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	21
Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	23
Leadership and management	26
Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	26
Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	27
Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	28
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	30
Early Years	30
English	32
Science	34
Welsh second language	35
Art	37
Music	38
School's response to the inspection	40
Appendices	41
A Basic information about the school	41
B School data and indicators	42
C National Curriculum assessments results	43
D Evidence base of the inspection	45
E Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	46

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School is a local authority community school which serves the village of Glyncoch near Pontypridd. It is a former coal mining village and is now a designated Communities First Area with a regeneration committee serving the socially deprived ward. The school considers its catchment area to be mainly economically disadvantaged with a few areas of relative prosperity; 38 per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals, which is much higher than the national average of 19 per cent.
2. The school caters for pupils from 3-11 years; nursery children are admitted to the school after their third birthday. There are currently 95 pupils on roll including 15 full-time nursery children. The number of pupils on roll for the last three years has declined slightly. All pupils are from English speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. Two per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds but do not require support in learning English as an additional language.
3. The nature of the intake is mainly disadvantaged and reflects the varying socio-economic backgrounds of families and the range of pupils' levels of ability on entry to the school. There are 45 pupils (46 per cent) on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register; there is one pupil with a statement of SEN. Baseline assessments are undertaken within the first half-term of entry to the school and results indicate a below average attainment for many children.
4. The school was last inspected in May 1999 and produced an action plan to improve curriculum provision and pupils' standards of achievement. The school is now housed on one site, in the former infant building. The former junior building is now a Special School for secondary age pupils. Two newly qualified teachers joined the staff in January 2004.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The school's main aims are:
 - to enable pupils to work towards becoming independent learners and to show regard and respect for others in a safe, secure, stimulating and caring environment;
 - to foster the moral, intellectual, social, physical and spiritual development of pupils so that each individual strives towards their potential;
 - to encourage self-discovery and develop pupils' social skills, self-discipline, self-confidence and self-expression with an understanding of right and wrong;
 - to promote oral and written fluency of expression combined with a willingness to communicate, participate and co-operate;
 - to encourage perseverance, compassion, tolerance and imagination;
 - to foster and develop the interdependence of pupils, teachers, parents and the community.

6.The school's main priorities and targets for 2005 are to:

- improve standards through self-evaluation procedures;
- involve pupils in their own assessments and target setting in English and mathematics;
- develop the progression of key skills in long term planning;
- achieve ECO environmental schools bronze and silver status;
- improve rates of attendance and punctuality.

7.The school's analysis of the National Curriculum (NC) Assessment results, school based tests results and comparative data is the basis for target setting to improve standards.

8.The school successfully gained the Basic Skills Agency 'Quality Mark' in 2002, the Investors in People Award in 2000 and the Communities First Status in 2004.

Summary

9. Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School is a much improved school with good features, some of which are outstanding, particularly the high standards of pupils' behaviour and their positive attitudes to work. The school's work in promoting lifelong learning and community regeneration is outstanding and is a strength of the school.

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?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

Subjects and Areas of Learning, Early Years

Standards of achievement in the areas of learning for children under-five are judged as follows:

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

Standards of achievement in the five subjects inspected are judged as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 3	Grade 3
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

10.Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
17%	61%	22%	0	0

- 11.Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons are well above the Welsh Assembly Government targets which are for 95% of pupils to attain grade 3 and above, and of those, 50% to attain grade 2 in lessons inspected.
- 12.The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make very good progress, from a low baseline, towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 13.Children under-five make very good progress overall in developing key skills in activities within each area of learning. They use speaking and listening skills confidently and make effective use of early reading, writing and numeracy skills to achieve good standards in language and numeracy. However, they make insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop their wider understanding and support their learning.
- 14.In both key stages, pupils' standards and progress in achieving key skills are satisfactory overall. Pupils make good progress in improving their speaking and listening skills; they listen attentively and speak confidently. Standards achieved in literacy skills in most subjects are good, although the use of extended writing and the drafting process are limited in some areas. Pupils make effective use of numeracy skills in different subjects. Their use of a range of ICT to support their learning across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- 15.Pupils are making steady progress in using bilingual skills; they take part in Welsh conversations with enthusiasm, especially in the early years. They read Welsh texts clearly but their use of incidental Welsh across the curriculum is limited.
- 16.In the 2004 key stage 1 NC teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 and above in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were below local and national averages. The core subject indicator of 21 per cent was much lower than the national average of 80 per cent. Of the cohort of 14 pupils who were assessed, seven were on the SEN register. The previous year's results at 73 per cent were much higher.
- 17.In the 2004 key stage 2 NC tests, the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 and above were well below local and national averages in the three core subjects; the core subject indicator of 47 per cent was well below the national average of 72 per cent. Of the cohort of 15 pupils who were assessed, seven were on the SEN register. However, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 in mathematics and science was above the national average. The previous year's results were higher than those achieved nationally.
- 18.When compared with similar schools locally and nationally, where up to 40 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, the results in both key stages indicate that the school is performing in the bottom 25 per cent of similar schools. In key stage 1,

there has been a significant change in staffing, and assessment strategies are being reviewed towards improving the moderation of standards. In key stage 2, English has been identified as an area for improvement, in particular to raise standards in writing.

19. Pupils' understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve is at an early stage of development. Pupils are beginning to be involved in assessing their own progress and setting targets for improvement in English and mathematics.
20. Levels of attendance have improved since the last inspection with an average attendance rate of 92 per cent but it is below the national average of 94 per cent. The school makes every effort to monitor and following up absences and to stress the importance of regular attendance to parents. Unauthorised absence at 3.2 per cent is too high. Punctuality at the start of the school day is variable, as there are a minority of pupils who are consistently late.
21. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and have a positive effect on learning and the quality of life in the school. Pupils make good progress in learning to take responsibility for their own work and often work in pairs or collaboratively in a group.
22. Pupils make very good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They have a very good understanding of equal opportunities issues and of the need for respect for diversity within society.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	56%	22%	0	0

24. The overall quality of teaching in lessons is higher than the Welsh Assembly Government targets. The quality of teaching of children under-five is very good. Throughout the school, teachers have good knowledge and understanding of subjects and areas of learning they teach. Lesson planning is well structured with clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils and a range of teaching techniques and strategies are used effectively to promote pupils' learning.
25. The quality of assessment and recording in the early years is very good and there are effective systems which provide a clear picture of children's progress. In both key stages, assessment procedures are appropriate in assessing pupils' achievements and progress.
26. The quality of reports to parents is satisfactory and they meet statutory requirements. They provide information of pupils' progress in the work covered but are less evaluative about what pupils can do, what they know and understand.

27. Learning experiences are effective in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and succeeds in promoting the Desirable Outcomes in all areas of learning. In both key stages, the schemes of work are effective in providing for progression and continuity in pupils' learning. The whole school planning for the teaching of key skills, particularly ICT skills, is in the process of being developed. Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced through a good range of educational visits and opportunities to participate in out-of-hours activities, including sport and music.
28. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and for moral and social development it is outstanding; pupils respond very well to this area. They achieve high standards in their personal and social development and understand the school's expectations for good behaviour and positive attitudes.
29. There are very effective partnerships between the school and parents, the community and other schools in the local cluster. There are strong links with the local community and parents and others in the locality make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and play an important part in the life of the school.
30. Pupils' bilingual skills are successfully promoted through school activities, such as the 'Welsh Week', although the use of incidental Welsh across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is integrated into most subjects and succeeds in promoting pupils' understanding of the language and culture of Wales.
31. The school is successful in providing a programme of work for the education for sustainable development, including re-cycling schemes and environmental projects. The school has achieved Eco status and is working towards the silver award. Work-related education is good. Their work in promoting lifelong learning and community regeneration is outstanding. This is a strength of the school.
32. The quality of care, educational support and personal guidance for pupils is good with outstanding features. The school ensures that all pupils are equally valued and treated with respect and understanding. There are very good procedures for promoting equality and the well-being, health and safety of pupils.
33. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good; it complies with the Welsh Assembly Government framework for inclusive education and with the SEN Code of Practice. Pupils receive good support and make steady progress in their learning towards targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs); they achieve good standards according to their level of ability.

Leadership and management

34. The quality of leadership and strategic management is good, in particular the high commitment of the head teacher and staff to improve pupils' standards of achievement. There are clear aims and policies, including a commitment to equality of opportunity for all, which promote a positive ethos and high standards; this is an outstanding feature. The head teacher and deputy provide effective caring

leadership and ensure a clear sense of purpose and direction for the work of the school.

35. The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its regulatory and statutory obligations. Governors help to set the school's strategic direction and carefully monitor the budget and educational provision; new governors are at an early stage in regularly monitoring the quality of provision and standards of achievement.
36. The school's self-evaluation report clearly identifies strengths and areas for further improvement. There is a very good culture of self-evaluation in the school which includes staff, pupils, governors and parents. There are very effective systems for monitoring provision and standards and subject leaders are developing action plans for their subjects which ultimately feed into the School Development Plan (SDP).
37. The overall provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good and has a beneficial impact on pupils' standards of achievement. Pupils are well supported by qualified and experienced staff who are effectively deployed. The provision and quality of resources are good and staff and pupils make effective use of all available books, materials and equipment.
38. The school has ample accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. Good use is made of all available space to provide an attractive working environment for pupils. The quality of the inside accommodation is generally good. Classrooms and shared areas are enhanced by good quality displays which celebrate pupils' achievements.
39. Resources are managed efficiently and budget planning reinforces the aims of the school, ensuring good value for money. Targets for improvement are set and are incorporated into the SDP which is a useful working document for prioritising areas for improvement over a three year period.
40. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and has met the targets set in an action plan, which address the key issues from the previous inspection report, although attendance and punctuality still need improving.

Recommendations

R1 Improve standards of achievement in subjects and key skills where there are shortcomings;

R2 Continue to involve pupils in the self-evaluation of their work and in setting targets for improvement;

R3 Continue to develop whole school planning of key skills, particularly ICT, across the curriculum;

R4 Improve information in written reports to parents by ensuring that comments are evaluative about pupils' progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding;

R5 Continue to improve rates of attendance and punctuality.

The school has identified these issues in the SDP as areas for development.

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 and no important shortcomings

41. The findings of the inspection team match the school's self-evaluation. Overall, pupils achieve good standards and make steady progress in acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills. All pupils succeed regardless of their social or ethnic background.

42. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons observed during the inspection are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
17%	61%	22%	0	0

43. These are well above the Welsh Assembly Government targets which are for 95 per cent of pupils to achieve grade 3 or more and of those, 50 per cent to achieve grade 2 in lessons inspected. All pupils, including those with SEN, achieve good standards according to their level of ability.

44. Standards of achievement in the five subjects inspected are judged as follows:

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	3	3
Science	2	2
Welsh second language	3	3
Art	2	2
Music	2	2

45. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make very good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Baseline assessments indicate that attainment on entry is below average for many children. They make very good progress in all the areas of learning and by the age of five, the majority of children achieve, and some exceed, the Desirable Outcomes.

46. Standards of achievement in the areas of learning for children under-five are judged as follows:

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

- 47.Children under-five make very good progress in using key skills in activities within the areas of learning. For three and four year old children, creative play activities are effective in promoting language skills and they make very good progress in developing speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They develop their numeracy skills and knowledge of mathematics through a range of practical activities as well as through scientific and technological investigations. They use computer equipment appropriately but make insufficient use of ICT to develop their wider understanding and support their learning.
- 48.In both key stages, pupils use their speaking skills well in a range of situations. Pupils are confident and speak clearly and audibly when responding to questions, describing events and taking part in discussions. Their listening skills are good; they listen attentively with interest and respond well to instructions, to questions and to the views of other pupils.
- 49.Pupils read a variety of books and improve their reading skills through taking part in group reading sessions. They benefit from the home/school reading system but the texts in some reading books are not challenging enough for the more able pupils. In both key stages, pupils make appropriate use of reference books and the Internet to find information about a range of topics. At the end of key stage 2, many pupils read accurately, with good expression and with an understanding of a variety of texts in different subjects.
- 50.Pupils make good progress in improving their written work in a variety of forms for different purposes across the curriculum. The general presentation and handwriting are of a good standard but pupils are not sufficiently involved in correcting their own spellings. Their use of good quality extended writing in subjects such as English, Welsh second language and history are limited in both key stages.
- 51.Pupils' standards in numeracy across the curriculum are good. They make good use of their numerical skills and measure and calculate accurately in a range of activities, especially in science. Their data handling skills are used well to record the results of investigations. Pupils confidently handle numbers in mental, oral and written tasks.
- 52.There are good examples of pupils using ICT to support their learning in both key stages. Pupils make good use of a range of programs to record, illustrate and present their writing and older pupils confidently use the Internet and CD ROMs to find information. However, the use of ICT across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- 53.Pupils make good use of problem solving skills in a range of tasks when asking questions, making predictions and coming to decisions. They use creative skills well when writing imaginatively and discussing ideas in groups.
- 54.Pupils make steady progress in using bilingual skills; they take part in Welsh conversations with enthusiasm, especially in the early years. They read Welsh texts clearly and benefit from listening to recordings of stories whilst following the texts. The use of incidental Welsh during lessons is inconsistent across the school and limits the development of bilingual skills.

55. In the 2004 key stage 1 NC teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 and above in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were well below local and national averages. The core subject indicator of 21 per cent was much lower than the national average of 80 per cent. Of the cohort of 14 pupils who were assessed, seven were on the SEN register. There were no significant differences between girls' and boys' achievements. The school has correctly identified the need to improve teacher assessment systems in order to ensure accurate levelling of pupils' work.
56. In the 2004 key stage 2 NC tests, the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 and above in the core subjects was well below local and national averages; the core subject indicator of 47 per cent was well below the national average of 72 per cent. Of the cohort of 15 pupils who were assessed, seven were on the SEN register. The number of pupils who achieved level 5 in science and mathematics was above the national average but below in English; this has been identified as an area for improvement, in particular to raise standards in writing. There is no significant difference between teacher assessment results and tests results.
57. When compared with similar schools locally and nationally, where up to 40 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, the core subject indicator results in both key stages are below the bottom 25 per cent of similar schools. The results for the previous year were much higher with 82 per cent of pupils in key stage 2 attaining level 4 and above. In key stage 1, 73 per cent of pupils attained level 2 and above. During the last year, there has been a significant change in staffing, and assessment strategies are being reviewed in order to improve the moderation of standards.
58. The school's NC results for key stage 2 have improved year on year in science and mathematics but English results are below local and national averages. Key stage 1 teacher assessment results have been consistently below local and national results for the last three years. A range of initiatives have been implemented to raise standards in writing which are beginning to improve standards, especially in key stage 1. All pupils, including those with SEN, make steady progress, from a low baseline, towards agreed goals and targets for improvement set by the school in relation to national criteria.
59. Pupils' understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to is at an early stage of development. They are beginning to be involved in assessing their own progress and setting targets for improvement in English and mathematics.
60. Good use is made of information from baseline assessments and appropriately challenging targets are set for children under five to achieve. Pupils with SEN make good progress towards the targets in their IEPs and achieve good standards relative to their abilities. All pupils are well placed to move on to their next stage of learning.
61. Pupils are very well motivated in lessons and settle to their tasks with interest. They manage their time well and complete work to the best of their ability. Pupils also work effectively as individuals, pairs and groups. They learn to co-operate well and share ideas and tasks when working collaboratively.

62. The school promotes the idea of continuous learning very effectively and, as a result, even the youngest children know that personal development is important. As a result of the way in which the school promotes family learning, pupils understand that even adults are never too old to learn. This helps pupils develop the capacity for lifelong learning.
63. Pupils in key stage 2 develop increasing independence through homework tasks, researching their own projects and through being given responsibilities, such as the running of the fruit shop and membership of the school council. Pupils make good use of the Internet and library as well as visiting museums and exhibitions and this helps them learn where to find the information they need for personal study. Pupils have begun working with their teachers to identify what they need to do to improve and set personal goals and targets. This helps them develop good learning habits for the future.
64. Pupils' progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development is very good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The message of caring and sharing is reinforced constantly in the early years and this lays strong foundations for pupils' later personal and social development. The school mission statement of 'Together we'll make a difference' promotes a strong ethos of community and this impacts on older pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school.
65. The school welcomes an increasing number of local visitors and this further develops pupils' social skills and their awareness of their place in the community. Visitors include the school nurse and the Police Schools Liaison Officer both of whom promote healthy lifestyles, safety and personal responsibility. The very good links with the local Road Safety Unit and Environmental Services also contribute effectively to pupils' wider development. Pupils develop a good understanding of the world of work through opportunities that the school provides for them to ask questions of visitors and members of staff.
66. Through collective worship and their work in religious studies, pupils learn to understand other beliefs and cultures and demonstrate respect for those from other religious backgrounds. Pupils have a great enthusiasm for charity work both locally and in the wider world. They do their utmost to raise funds for people less fortunate than themselves and they have been particularly touched by the plight of children suffering from Leprosy. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of equal opportunity issues because the school promotes this well. This not only increases their knowledge and understanding of the needs of others, but also impacts on pupils' own self-belief for their future lives.
67. In and around the school, pupils behave very well. The school's behaviour policy is effective in creating an atmosphere to enable effective teaching and learning to take place. Rewards and consequences for unacceptable behaviour are clearly outlined and the expectations of good behaviour are high. Teachers make effective use of behaviour management techniques and deal with incidences of inappropriate behaviour at an early stage. A few pupils have, as a result of behavioural difficulties, been subject to periods of exclusion; during the last year, four pupils were temporarily excluded. Pupils are involved in drawing up class rules of behaviour, and the school council frequently discusses behavioural matters.

68. Pupils are courteous, considerate and interact well with each other, with teachers and visitors. From the under-fives upwards, pupils understand right from wrong and willingly take on additional responsibilities. Pupils exercise a high degree of self-discipline as they move around the school and when entering assemblies or the dining hall. School council members wear bright coloured bibs during playtime and offer help and comfort to any child who may feel lonely or distressed. The 'friendship stop' is used by children who may feel ignored and in need of friendship.
69. The overall attendance of compulsory school age pupils during the three terms preceding the inspection was 92 per cent, which is an improvement since the previous inspection but remains below the national average of 94 per cent. Unauthorised absence averages 3.2 per cent which is far too high. The school makes every effort to improve regular attendance and monitor absences. Despite the efforts of the school in encouraging punctuality, a small but significant number of pupils arrive late for the morning session. Registration is completed promptly at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.
70. The weekly registration sheets are completed in accordance with statutory requirements. Good or improved attendance is acknowledged and rewarded. Most parents co-operate by informing school if their child is unable to attend. The school operates a second-day response for pupils who are absent without explanation. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) investigates any absence and where there are concerns. The school takes suitable account of the Welsh Assembly Government circular 3/99.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

71.The findings of the inspection team match the school's self-evaluation. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching in lessons was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	56%	22%	0	0

72.The quality of teaching in lessons is higher than Welsh Assembly Government targets. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of subjects and areas of learning they teach and are familiar with recent developments.

73.The quality of teaching of children under five is very good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and plan a very good range of experiences within the six areas of learning.

74.Lessons are well structured with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils. Lesson planning is clear and detailed but does not always include how specific key skills are to be taught, particularly the use of ICT.

75.A good range of teaching techniques and strategies are used effectively to promote pupils' learning; they stimulate pupils' interest and challenge them to achieve well in most subjects and areas of learning. Resources are used effectively to support the teaching and learning and classroom assistants are well deployed to provide support for pupils. Homework is set regularly and succeeds in supporting pupils' learning.

76.Throughout the school, teachers establish very good working relationships with pupils and have high expectations of their behaviour and learning. Introductions to lessons, in the best practice, often consolidate previous learning and encourage pupils to participate in discussion. Good quality questioning encourages pupils to explain their thinking and extend their understanding.

77.In lessons, work is challenging and well matched to the needs of all pupils. Appropriately differentiated tasks are set for individuals and groups, with extension activities planned for higher achieving pupils. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs or groups and to take responsibility for their own learning.

78.All pupils are treated equally, irrespective of their race, gender or disability. Pupils of all levels of ability, including higher achieving pupil and those with SEN, are well catered for. Pupils with SEN are well supported by learning support staff and their work is closely monitored to ensure that they make good progress towards the targets in their IEPs.

79. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons succeed in consolidating pupils' skills and knowledge and assessing their understanding. Pupils are beginning to be involved in assessing their progress and setting targets for improvement.
80. Teachers provide regular opportunities to promote bilingual skills, through a range of activities, including 'Welsh Week' but their use of incidental Welsh in lessons is inconsistent across the school. The use of incidental Welsh in the early years is very good and provides a firm foundation for building on pupils' bilingual skills.
81. Procedures for assessment, recording and reporting and their use are good overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The school has improved its systems for assessing pupils' work and has identified the need to improve and simplify recording and reporting systems. The school effectively uses performance data from tests to identify and address any underachievement or anomalies between groups of pupils or weaknesses in particular areas.
82. The school is working to improve the accuracy of teacher assessments by ensuring that teachers level pupils work consistently and use subject portfolios for moderation purposes. Currently the core subjects are assessed through structured activities retained in subject portfolios but these are not consistently levelled and annotated to give details of what pupils have achieved. Information on what pupils know, understand and can do in all subjects is not sufficiently clear and manageable.
83. Assessment procedures for children under five are very good. Activities are appropriately structured and any problems needing intervention strategies are quickly identified and addressed. Parents are also informed of the school's findings and invited to discuss any issues. Staff regularly share information and work well together to build continuous assessment into planned activities. Children are regularly assessed and their progress is monitored and recorded. Systems are highly organised, clear and manageable and this enables the school to easily provide accurate information to those with a legitimate interest.
84. There are good links between the early years class teacher and the year 1 and 2 teacher and information on pupils' stage of development is shared. This ensures that pupils are given suitable activities to build on their previous learning. This good practice is continued when pupils move into key stage 2. There are also very good arrangements with the local secondary school for providing detailed information on pupils.
85. Marking of pupils' work is carried out regularly and positive comments encourage pupils' self belief. Guidance on how pupils may improve their work and what they need to do next is not yet well established. Pupils are beginning to self-evaluate and share their views on their progress with teachers and older pupils have individual targets in English and mathematics. Most lessons include an opportunity for pupils' evaluation of their own work and the work of others.
86. Reporting procedures are good and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Reports to parents are of a good quality. The next stage of learning or 'way forward' is now clearly identified for the core subjects. In other subjects, however, comments still focus too heavily on a description of activities and do not

clearly state what pupils know and what they are able to do. Parents have appropriate opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss their children's achievements and progress. Parents of pupils with SEN are encouraged to be involved in their children's education and are kept fully informed of targets, progress and achievement.

87. Records and reports are freely available to all who have a legitimate reason to view them. Statutory requirements for the assessment and reporting on the National Curriculum are met.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

88. The findings of the inspection team match the school's self-evaluation.

89. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced; it meets the needs of all pupils and they are appropriately challenged and supported. Work for pupils with SEN is well differentiated and they receive good support. The school provides equal opportunities for both girls and boys in all activities and the small minority of pupils from other ethnic groups are included very well. There is no policy for provision for gifted or talented pupils. The school is able to meet the needs of any that may join the school in the future through a good relationship with the Local Education Authority Pupil Support Department.

90. The curriculum meets all legal requirements. Policies and schemes of work are of a good standard and provide for continuity and progression in pupils' learning. There are appropriate policies for the teaching of sex education, drugs awareness and personal and social education. The school takes account of the Personal and Social Education Framework to plan a good range of activities through the school.

91. Effective curriculum planning caters for differing needs of mixed age classes through a two-year planning cycle and differentiated work. Key skills are less clearly defined in planning and not always explicit, especially for ICT. The school has correctly identified the need to carefully plan and monitor the teaching of key skills across all curriculum subjects.

92. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and three and four year old children make very good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. There is a very good range of learning experiences in each area of learning which ensures children make steady progress.

93. A good range of extra curricular activities which include sewing, art, music, football, netball and basketball enhances the curriculum. Breakfast and after school clubs also provide a range of stimulating activities that further develop pupils' learning skills. A good number of visitors contribute to curricular enrichment and the school council further develops pupils' independence as they raise issues, plan and discuss

appropriate action. Educational visits enhance pupils' learning and older pupils develop confidence from their residential visits to the Ogmere Residential Centre.

94. The school's provision for the spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good and provision for their moral and social development is outstanding. Collective worship makes a significant contribution to this aspect of the school's work. The school promotes a caring ethos that celebrates the achievement of all pupils whatever their ability. Through the way in which it encourages pupils to care for the grounds, the school promotes stewardship of the environment. As a result, pupils begin to develop an appreciation of the natural world and a growing sense of spirituality. The opportunities that the school provides through personal, social and health education, the 'buddy' system and the school council allow pupils to develop confident social skills and a clear understanding of moral issues. Opportunities for all pupils to be involved in charity work enable them to develop a strong desire to address the needs of others. The school creates opportunities for pupils to reflect on differing cultures through their studies in religious education, music and art. Opportunities for pupils to reflect on the multicultural nature of Wales today are less well developed.
95. The school has very effective partnerships with parents and the wider community. Toddlers and their parents visit the school twice weekly through the 'Link Up' scheme. There are close links with secondary schools for the induction of pupils, information sharing and meeting teachers. Pupils benefit from close links with local schools in the cluster for sport and other activities. There are good partnerships with teacher training institutions and colleges and pupils benefit from the extra support which the students and trainees provide.
96. The community supports the school very well and there is a successful Parent Teacher Association. Strong involvement of the whole community helps parents engage with the aims of the school. This is further developed by links with Communities First Regeneration Scheme and the Surestart support group. A large number of community partners also provide an enriched curriculum. The school is part of a healthy schools initiative which promotes good health to pupils and their families. Pupils benefit from well-established links with Dragon Sports, Mid Glamorgan Education Business Partnership and the local museum and library. There are also very good links with the local church and chapel and this contributes very positively to pupils understanding of the role of the church in society.
97. Work related education is developing well. The Community First Project has arranged a number of educational visits and visitors to the school who help improve children's understanding of the world of work. Visits are curriculum related and add interest and realism to learning. They include the local radio station, where some pupils went live on air to discuss school and Community First activities. Visits have been made to the Safety Zone in Treforest where pupils' awareness of environmental issues are raised. Year 5 and 6 pupils have enjoyed a 'behind the scenes' visit to Cardiff City Football Club. Younger children are taken on walks around the community and visits to the local library.
98. Although there is no policy for the promotion of bilingual skills, the school successfully ensures that pupils use incidental Welsh in activities, such as registration and assemblies, although its use in lessons is inconsistent. The use of

incidental Welsh in the early years is very good which ensures that children are developing bilingual skills at an early age. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is successfully promoted across the curriculum and good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their Welsh heritage and culture.

99. The school is a very inclusive community where social disadvantage and equality of opportunity are taken extremely seriously. An outstanding feature in the school is its commitment to addressing disadvantage and raising the achievement and the opportunities available to all pupils, for instance, through links with the Communities First Regeneration Scheme.
100. Pupils' understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship is progressing well. Aspects are covered well within geography topics and through speakers who come to visit the school. Pupils are involved in environmental projects and the school has successfully gained ECO status and is working towards the Silver Award. Pupils took part in the Alupro Project to collect aluminium cans and received a tree to plant in recognition of their achievements. The school is in its third year of the Healthy Schools Initiative and is successful in promoting a healthy life-style for pupils and staff. Pupils carefully consider sustainable issues and all classrooms have bins to recycle paper. An effective school council has been established. Elections are democratic and pupils are keen and enthusiastic about the contribution that they can make towards school developments, such as establishing a healthy fruit tuck shop.
101. Visitors from the local area have talked to pupils about the work they do and given demonstrations, such as the puppeteer. Pupils make items to sell at the Christmas Fayre, and run the school's healthy-eating tuck shop. These activities help in understanding the world of work and in developing entrepreneurial skills. The school has links with Career Wales and staff development has benefited through temporary placements in commerce and industry, although this is an area which is underdeveloped.
102. Transition arrangements with the local secondary school are very good and pupils are well prepared for their transfer at the end of year 6. Induction days provide pupils with 'taster sessions' before the move takes place. There are very effective links with other schools in the cluster for curriculum development and sporting activities and pupils benefit greatly from these links.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

103. The findings of the inspection team match the school's self-evaluation.
104. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is consistently good with outstanding features. Pastoral care of pupils is given high priority. Very good procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' academic progress, their social development and their personal welfare. The head teacher and staff know pupils well.

105. The school makes very good efforts to work in partnership with parents and carers in supporting, caring for and guiding their children and take their views into consideration. They have regular access to the staff and to the head teacher.
106. The induction programmes for children entering school, moving to new classes and transferring to secondary school are very good and effective. Pupils settle well and feel safe and secure.
107. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good and this contributes to pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils work and play in a happy, supportive environment where they are secure and valued by staff.
108. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal and social education. This aspect permeates all areas of the curriculum with pupils freely discussing issues of concern in circle time and in lessons. Suitable arrangements are in place for any pupil withdrawn by their parents from acts of collective worship and religious education.
109. Extremely effective working partnerships have been developed with the Community First Regeneration Scheme, social services and other welfare agencies. These links are outstanding and succeed in supporting pupils' needs and enhancing their education. The school has established good links with the police, the fire service and school nurse.
110. The head teacher and secretary monitor attendance and punctuality effectively. There are effective systems of awards to promote good behaviour which are appreciated by all pupils. Attendance levels are improving, but remain below the national average despite the school's efforts to emphasise the importance of regular attendance. Parents and carers are encouraged to get children to school on time, but a few regularly arrive late. There is good support from the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). Registration periods are administered appropriately and the school complies with the statutory requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 3/99.
111. The school's provision for ensuring the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is very good. Staff are trained in first aid and there are good procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have an accident. Safety checks are carried out on all electrical appliances and fire safety equipment is tested regularly. Fire drill is exercised each term. Risk assessments are undertaken before any educational visit takes place.
112. There are well-developed policies and procedures in place for child protection. The head teacher is the designated member of staff responsible and ensures regular staff training. Staff understand and are aware of all child protection procedures.
113. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good and complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice and the Welsh Assembly Government framework for inclusive education. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with the learning support teacher to ensure high quality support for pupils and achievable targets in their IEPs.

114. Record keeping for pupils with SEN is thorough, well organised and up to date. Systems for assessing and identifying the learning and behavioural needs of pupils are good, especially in the early years where baseline assessments provide information for early intervention.
115. There is effective liaison with parents who are encouraged to support their children and attend review meetings. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and monitored through meetings of SEN staff, teachers and parents who are provided with copies of their child's IEP and encouraged to sign them.
116. The learning support teacher withdraws groups of pupils for extra support in language skills. These sessions are valuable in providing extra help for pupils to achieve the targets in their IEPs. However, the sessions sometimes coincide with other lessons because of timetabling difficulties which result in a few pupils missing parts of their lessons. Pupils are well supported in lessons and are well integrated; they are provided with appropriate tasks which allow them to work at their own pace and level of ability. There are a good range of resources and pupils make effective use of ICT to support their learning.
117. The school works closely with the Behaviour Support Service to provide very good support for pupils whose behaviour may impede their progress and those of others. Teachers use a range of effective behaviour management techniques which are useful for classroom management and allow pupils the opportunity to learn effectively.
118. All pupils with SEN, including those with disabilities, are provided with well planned tasks which ensure that pupils work at the appropriate level of ability. Liaison between the SENCO, class teachers, SEN support staff and outside agencies is very effective.
119. The school recognises the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and all pupils are treated equally with dignity and respect irrespective of social, educational and ethnic background. The very good practice observed is actively supported by policies which are monitored and regularly reviewed.
120. The school is very successful in actively promoting diversity and equal opportunities. The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate in school activities, for example boys and girls are encouraged to play in football and netball teams.
121. There are effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment. Clear policies exist and all staff and pupils know of the procedures when reporting bullying or discrimination of any sort. Strategies to increase pupils' awareness of bullying and harassment are being developed. The school follows up any incident of bullying and involves the parents when appropriate. The school council also suggests ways of dealing with any oppressive behaviour and bullying.

- 122.The school has an access plan and appropriate facilities to ensure any disabled learners receive equal access to the curriculum and other activities.
- 123.The school has clear policies on racial equality and effective measures in place to actively recognise and respect diversity. Pupils have a very good understanding of what constitutes racial discrimination and the need for racial equality. Diversity is promoted in assemblies and in the classroom where the importance of respect and tolerance is emphasised.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 124.The findings of the inspection team match the school's self-evaluation.
- 125.The quality of leadership and strategic management is good. There are clear aims and policies, including equality of opportunity for all, which promote a caring ethos and a commitment to improving standards. The school achieves its aims of providing a safe, secure, stimulating and caring environment to enable pupils to work towards becoming independent learners and to show regard and respect for others.
- 126.The head teacher and deputy provide effective, caring leadership and ensures a clear sense of purpose and direction for the work of the school. The staff work as an effective team and achieve their mission statement: 'Together we'll make a difference.' The head teacher, staff and governors are highly committed to improving pupils' standards of achievement.
- 127.The school makes good use of assessment data to evaluate standards and plan for improvement. A detailed analysis is made of pupils' assessment results, including the results of baseline, NC and school based assessment tests and appropriate targets are set to improve standards of achievement. However, information from the key stage 1 NC teacher assessments analysis is not used to best effect to identify areas for improvement for raising standards.
- 128.The school's performance management policy is effective in raising the quality of professional expertise and identifying priorities for improving standards of teaching and learning. Staff development needs are closely linked to school improvement priorities.
- 129.The school takes very good account of national priorities, local partnerships and developments within the local cluster of schools. Recent initiatives include curriculum development, physical activity within the cluster and promoting healthy schools. A very effective partnership has been developed with the regeneration project within the Communities First Area which has greatly benefited pupils. The school council is effective in helping pupils to contribute and influence decisions that affect them as well as promoting their understanding of citizenship.

130. The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils all its regulatory and statutory obligations. The governors are well informed through regular reports from the head teacher and understand their roles and responsibilities. They help to set the school's strategic direction through their work in setting and costing targets for improvement in the SDP. There is a well organised committee structure for managing aspects such as curriculum and finance.
131. Governors make regular visits to the school and are developing links with subject leaders in order to monitor the quality of education and pupils' standards of achievement.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

132. The self-evaluation report, produced by the school before the inspection, clearly addresses each of the seven key questions of the inspection framework. It identifies strengths and areas to improve. No judgement grades were made on the school's performance but the inspection findings match those of the school's self-evaluation.
133. There is a very effective culture of self-evaluation in the school which involves staff, governors, pupils and parents. The school's self-evaluation process is closely linked to monitoring systems and provides a highly effective framework for evaluating standards and quality in order to plan future developments. It clearly identifies strengths and areas for further improvement.
134. The roles of senior staff and subject leaders in monitoring the quality of provision and standards of achievement are very well established. The monitoring system enables leaders to evaluate the quality of teaching, curriculum planning and standards of pupils' work effectively. Subject leaders are very successful in monitoring and evaluating the subjects and areas of learning for which they are responsible and produce informative subject development plans which ultimately feed into the SDP.
135. Information obtained from assessment results is used effectively to identify pupils who require further support and to set targets for improved standards of achievement. In addition, pupils are beginning to be involved in evaluating their own progress and achievements in order to set targets for improvement. However, the analysis of key stage 1 NC teacher assessments is not used sufficiently to identify areas for improvement, especially in English.
136. The school council is very effective in providing an opportunity for pupils to contribute to the school's self-evaluation process. Parents and people in the community play a vital role, take an active part in school life and are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement. The school recently made an analysis of questionnaires sent to parents which was effective in evaluating parents' views on the school's activities and the way forward.

137. Key areas for improvement are identified from performance indicators and from self-evaluation systems. These are built into the SDP, giving a clear focus for school improvement. Action plans have clear priorities and targets, development actions, success criteria, responsibilities, planned expenditure and evaluations. The targets are realistic and appropriate and have been incorporated into the SDP as a result of the self-evaluation process. The head teacher's reports to governors contain detailed evaluations of progress towards achieving the targets.
138. The head teacher and deputy are very proactive in maximising opportunities in applying for grants and taking up offers of support for school improvement. Careful financial planning, extra funding and support from the local regeneration project ensure that resources are provided to meet the school's objectives. As a result, these actions have had a very positive effect on educational provision and measurable improvements in standards.
139. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and has met the targets set in the action plan, which addresses the key issues from the last inspection report, although punctuality and attendance still need improving.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

140. The findings of the inspection team match the school's self-evaluation. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The skills of teachers and support staff are used effectively to benefit learning.
141. There are sufficient qualified, specialist and experienced teaching and support staff who are well deployed. The ratio of pupils to teaching staff and the ratio of adults to children in the early years class is appropriate.
142. The two newly qualified members of staff are well-supported and receive appropriate continuing professional development. Curriculum leaders share good practice and support staff have clear roles and responsibilities. Specialist teaching in art is used to good effect to improve standards. This is particularly evident in the standard of creative work of the under-fives. The professional development of staff is ensured through performance management procedures, in-service training and attending training courses.
143. The school accommodation meets the needs of all staff and pupils, including those with disabilities. There is adequate space for withdrawal of pupils for specialist teaching or support and for pupils to work independently. An excellent caretaker keeps the school clean and tidy and works hard to attractively maintain the grounds. The building is well maintained and decorated externally. The interior of the school is bright and attractively painted to provide a pleasant working environment for pupils and staff. The school has worked hard to fund improvements to the building and parents have helped enormously in the refurbishment of the interior. There are good

quality displays of pupils' work which celebrate their achievements and contribute to an attractive learning environment.

144. The school has done a great deal of work to improve the building and recent improvements include suitable access for disabled pupils. The whole of the external building and the toilets for the infant boys have been completely refurbished. A new toilet block with wheelchair access and a toilet for the disabled has been built.
145. The grounds of the school are extensive, attractive and well maintained and these are used to particularly good effect to benefit learning. The school regularly uses the outdoor environment to encourage pupils' physical development and promote their appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the natural world.
146. The school has sufficient good quality learning resources to meet the needs of the curriculum and all pupils. Efficient and effective use is made of all available resources which are matched to priorities identified in the SDP and are reviewed regularly to ensure value for money. Very good use is made of human resources within the school and specialist staff are effectively deployed. The school makes effective use of visitors from the local community and the contribution of the police and health professionals has a significant impact on learning. The school has been proactive in accessing additional funding and support from the community. The Parent Teacher Association has been helpful in providing additional resources including interactive whiteboards.
147. The budget is reviewed regularly and spending is well managed to support the work of the school. The head teacher and finance committee monitor the budget closely and budget setting is linked to the priorities identified in the SDP. The school reviews resources regularly and prioritises on a rolling basis. The school complies with the recommendations of the most recent financial audit.
148. The school is effective in its management of resources and offers a quality curriculum that enables pupils to make steady progress from a fairly low starting point and achieve reasonable standards. The school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

EARLY YEARS

149. Standards of achievement in the areas of learning for children under five are judged as follows:

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

150. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make very good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children’s Learning.

Language Literacy and Communication Skills

151. Nursery and reception children’s listening and speaking skills are very good. They listen carefully to adults and to each other and speak with growing confidence using appropriate language. They pose appropriate questions for adults representing the world of work. Children in both age groups know a good range of songs and rhymes in both English and Welsh. They are confident Welsh speakers and make good progress in developing bilingual skills.

152. Nursery children handle books confidently and, as a result of visiting the library often, they begin to see themselves as readers. They describe the pictures and events in the books they choose. Many children recognise the sound and the initial letter of their own name. Most children know that print carries meaning and develop early writing skills through being encouraged to record their ideas and make notes.

153. Reception children listen intently and answer in complete sentences. Many children recognise the initial letter sounds of words found in their storybooks. When reading Big Books with an adult, children confidently retell the main points of a story and predict what will happen next. Some children correctly recognise and read a few basic words in books they have chosen independently. They make good use of early phonic strategies when reading individually. Most children have good pencil control when writing and many enjoy creating their own stories.

Personal and Social Development

154. Nursery children quickly develop confidence in exploring the learning environment. They respond well to adults and develop very good relationships with other children. The school places strong emphasis on caring and sharing and consequently children rapidly develop respect and consideration. They co-operate, take turns and play well together.

155.Reception children socialise very well with their peers and with adults. They are friendly and work collaboratively on activities. They encourage and support each other and help the younger children to settle into school. Children develop a real enthusiasm for school, concentrate well and persevere with their tasks.

156.Both nursery and reception children take increasing responsibility for their own personal hygiene and develop a very good understanding of health issues. From an early age children take on extra duties such as carrying messages and giving out milk and fruit. This helps them become increasingly independent and reliable.

Mathematical Development

157.Nursery children develop a good sense of number through singing songs and rhymes in English and in Welsh. They successfully engage in activities that help them sort, match, order and count. They accurately count objects and begin to match the number to the symbol. Most children sequence numbers to five correctly and some begin to notice when numbers are missing from a range. Some children recognise and understand numbers beyond five.

158.Most reception children successfully count up to twenty and some can go beyond this. Some children are able to count backwards confidently. They also develop a growing awareness of very large numbers when they measure liquids for cooking. Children have a good understanding of measuring capacity. They compare a range of containers and study water levels. Some children predict, with growing accuracy, how many times a small measure will fill a larger one.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

159.Nursery children have a well-developed appreciation of the beauty of the natural world through working and playing outdoors much of the time. They carefully examine and explore natural objects with an increasing sense of awe and wonder. They understand the importance of their senses when they discuss what they see and hear. Children welcome visitors from the local community and develop a good understanding of the work that people do.

160.Reception children have a very good understanding of their role in caring for the natural world. They are eager to take part in gardening activities such as planting seeds, watering and caring for plants and learn what they need to survive and grow. They show a developing sense of responsibility when looking after classroom pets and learning about the needs of other animals. Children successfully explore the outdoor environment in much of their learning across the curriculum and enjoy listening walks and treasure hunts. They use natural objects like shells, bark, twigs and pinecones when investigating floating and sinking. They correctly name them, describe their appearance and explain some of their properties.

161.Nursery and reception children understand the part that religion plays in the lives of believers through regularly visiting the local church. As a result of their role-play, they begin to understand some of the ways in which people celebrate marriage.

162.Children make steady progress in developing IT skills, such as control of the mouse and basic keyboard skills.

Physical Development

163. Nursery children demonstrate very good control when using a wide range of toys and equipment. They select and use small tools and drawing materials which they handle confidently. Children use wheeled toys and large play equipment with growing confidence to explore what their bodies can do.
164. Reception children have very good spatial awareness and balance. During movement activities they travel in different directions and stop with precision. They explore the space around them and hop and jump on alternate feet. Children show exceptional control of their bodies when moving both quickly and slowly.

Creative Development

165. Nursery children make very good progress in their creative development. They draw, paint and print very well using a range of media and techniques. Children make choices about what materials to use when working with textiles and creating collages. Music forms an integral part of their day and as a result children listen and respond to it well. Children develop a good sense of rhythm when singing and clapping because they receive many of their instructions in this form. They use their creative imagination very well when they move to sounds and engage in role play.
166. Reception children's art work is exceptional for their age. They explore lines and patterns with chalk and pastel and successfully annotate and evaluate their work. Children confidently mix colours and create a tonal scale in their art books. They collect examples of textures from around the school by making rubbings. Children achieve very good standards in their musical development. They sing very tunefully a variety of songs and nursery rhymes. They identify and name a range of musical instruments and confidently explore and investigate the different sounds they make. They have an extremely well developed sense of rhythm and move imaginatively in response to music.

Shortcomings

167. Children make insufficient progress in the use of ICT to develop their understanding and skills and to promote learning in all areas of learning.

ENGLISH

Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good and outstanding features

Key stage 1

168. Pupils make steady progress in achieving good speaking skills; they gain confidence in lessons to respond clearly to questions and to take part in discussion, using an appropriate range of vocabulary. Towards the end of year 2, pupils are improving their ability to contribute to discussion and show confidence to express their opinions.
169. Pupils' listening skills are good. They listen carefully to questions and instructions and respond appropriately and effectively to what they have heard. They listen

attentively with concentration to stories and respond well to questions, showing a good level of understanding. They listen with interest to other pupils' views.

170. Pupils make good progress in improving their reading skills. They successfully use a range of methods and strategies to help them read new words including letter sounds, word recognition and picture and contextual cues. By the end of the key stage, many pupils read fluently and discuss the contents of their books, re-tell the main events of stories, correctly sequence events and predict how stories will end. Pupils make good progress in reading text of Big Books, which they read and discuss as a class. The home/school reading system is effective in helping to raise standards.

171. Pupils' writing is showing good progress. Pupils make effective use of literacy strategies to identify word and sentence patterns, phonics and punctuation, which they use in their own writing. Year 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills using an effective range of structures, such as planning charts and word banks to produce their own independent writing and to aid spelling. They write good quality poems using word processing skills on the computer to present their work.

Key stage 2

172. Pupils are increasing their ability to contribute to discussion and confidently express their thoughts and opinions. Pupils achieve good standards in speaking skills and speak with confidence and articulate clearly in lessons. They listen attentively and purposefully, responding appropriately to questions and instructions.

173. Pupils enjoy reading and many choose to read for pleasure. Pupils begin to discuss their favourite authors and the types of books they enjoy most. Through regular practice they improve the fluency and accuracy of their reading. They discuss the content of the books they read and describe the characters and events. They have a sound understanding of different texts and explain clearly the structure and sequence of story writing.

174. Pupils in year 5 and 6 are acquiring a greater understanding of higher order reading skills through, for example, their ability to skim and scan text to look for relevant information. Their comprehension skills are good and they are beginning to use inference and deduction. Pupils benefit greatly from group reading sessions which increase their fluency, accuracy and confidence. They make good use of their knowledge of word patterns and phonics to read new words. They use the library appropriately to find information on a range of topics.

175. Pupils make good use of literacy strategies to structure their writing and write for a range of purposes including, stories, scripts, descriptive writing, comic strips and reports. They understand the grammatical structures in writing and most write in well constructed sentences with appropriate punctuation.

176. By the end of the key stage, pupils improve the standard of their writing and write capably about imaginary and factual events. They write in a variety of forms and for different purposes including stories, poetry, descriptive writing, letters, reports and script writing. They make good use of dictionaries to aid spelling and find meanings of words.

Shortcomings

In both key stages:-

177. Not all pupils are reaching the expected reading levels because the reading books chosen for them lack challenge. The texts and vocabulary in the reading books of some pupils are undemanding and they make insufficient progress as a consequence.
178. Pupils do not always produce high standards of more purposeful and sustained writing. They do not use the drafting process to extend the planning stage which involve pupils in self-correcting their spellings and punctuation, towards refining and improving the final piece of work.
179. The use of ICT to develop pupils' language and literacy skills is underdeveloped.

SCIENCE

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

Good and outstanding features

Key Stage 1

180. Pupils persevere with their work and make good progress, particularly during practical investigations. Pupils make good use of scientific vocabulary and use correct scientific terms. They successfully record their own ideas, describe their experiments and display the results of their findings.
181. Pupils have a good knowledge of the natural world and an awareness of themselves as living things. They begin to communicate scientific knowledge through their use of labelled diagrams. Pupils produce clear diagrams of the human body, accurately label body parts and describe their physical characteristics.
182. Pupils understand that different materials are used for different purposes. They have a good understanding of the properties of these materials. Pupils work independently to test a range of materials for their properties. They carefully investigate materials to find which ones are magnetic.
183. Pupils have a good understanding of forces and are aware that a force can be applied to an object to make it move. They know that this force can either be a push or a pull. When pupils investigate forces during practical investigations, they realise that the greater the force applied to an object the faster it travels.
184. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups and this makes a significant contribution to the development of their communication and problem solving skills.

Key Stage 2

185. Pupils work with enthusiasm when carrying out experiments and explaining what they have discovered. They begin to see themselves as scientists and understand

the purpose of hypothesis and prediction. This is effective in helping them to make good progress and achieve well.

186. Younger pupils test different types of absorbent paper to find out which soaks up the most water, they explain the term 'absorb' and clearly understand their results. They successfully explain how to ensure that the test is fair and begin to explain why there are sometimes differences in results.
187. Pupils make successful links between their work in science and their learning in mathematics by making the connection between purpose and cost. When they compare costs and quality of the different kitchen papers available, pupils realise that the most expensive is not necessarily the best.
188. As a result of their practical work, pupils have a good understanding of light and shadows; they know that shadows are created when objects block the light. They discover that the shape and size of shadows change according to the position of the light source. They correctly relate this to the position of the sun.
189. Older pupils independently decide on the best way to assemble equipment to test the effects of smoking on the lungs. They work collaboratively and discuss their plans and this impacts positively on their development of key skills as they explore ideas.
190. As a result of their practical work, pupils see the harmful effects of smoking on the lungs and understand the connection between health and smoking. Their knowledge of percentages helps pupils realise how much tar and chemicals are retained in the lungs of a smoker. This links with pupils' work in mathematics and personal and social education which contribute effectively to their understanding.

Shortcomings

191. In both key stages pupils do not regularly use ICT to support and enhance their learning. Pupils do not regularly and consistently use ICT for handling and displaying data.
192. In key stage 1, pupils' independence in planning and investigating for themselves is underdeveloped. In key stage 2, some pupils do not regularly make independent decisions and choices about their work.

WELSH SECOND LANGAUGE

Key Stage 1- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

Key Stage 1

193. Pupils respond well to questions showing good understanding of language patterns and vocabulary. They use the names of a range of colours, body parts and clothes. They respond well to questions about the weather and how they feel. Year 1 and 2 pupils suggest appropriate clothes for 'Tedi Twt' to wear for different weather

conditions. All pupils sing a range of simple rhymes and songs with confidence and good intonation.

194. Pupils' listening skills are good and they respond well to adults and other pupils. They listen with concentration and interest to stories in class Big Books, such as 'Dillad Tedi Twt', and respond well to questions showing good understanding.
195. Pupils make good attempts to read together from Big Books about 'Tedi Twt' and are keen to discuss aspects of the story and predict events. They repeat the text with good pronunciation.
196. Pupils use their knowledge of vocabulary appropriately to write labels for their drawings. They make good use of ICT to dress Tedi on screen and name the clothes and labels correctly; with help, they print out their work.

Key Stage 2

197. Pupils respond well to questions and to commands showing a good understanding of vocabulary and language patterns. They listen carefully to recordings of stories whilst following the text in the story books.
198. Pupils read word cards and short phrases accurately, developing an increasing knowledge of vocabulary and sentence patterns. By the end of the key stage, pupils follow the texts in story books whilst listening to a recording; this helps them to read texts with good fluency and accuracy.
199. Pupils write effectively in a range of styles including labelled drawings, charts and report writing. They make good attempts to write answers to questions using the affirmative or negative responses. By the end of the key stage, pupils improve their writing skills and begin to write accurately in paragraphs, such as a report of their visit to the theatre.
200. In both key stages, pupils show a positive attitude to learning Welsh and have a good awareness and knowledge of aspects of Welsh culture.
201. Pupils make good use of ICT, videos and CD recordings to consolidate vocabulary and to improve their reading skills.

Shortcomings

In both key stages:-

202. During oral activities pupils do not respond sufficiently in complete sentences in order to develop their knowledge of language patterns.
203. Pupils' use of role-play situations to ask and answer simple questions in order to develop conversations is underdeveloped.
204. Pupils do not use their knowledge of sentence patterns sufficiently to extend their writing on paper or on computer.

ART

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

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

Good and outstanding features

Key Stage 1

205. Pupils respond well to specialist teaching and achieve very high standards in drawing. They make good use of sketchbooks to record observations which are effective in building a personal portfolio on which to base future work.

206. Pupils effectively relate their knowledge of the properties of shape, learned in mathematics, to their work in art. When drawing a Wellington boot, pupils carefully recreate some of these shapes and this helps them achieve a high level of accuracy with the finished outline. Many pupils closely replicate the pattern of the sole by following the line carefully with a trained eye.

207. Pupils experience working in a broad range of media and have a good understanding of their properties and uses. They draw using pencil, charcoal and pastels and use different types of paint. They are encouraged to mix colours from an early age and they do this confidently and to good effect in their work. Pupils use pencils of different thickness and texture to make their drawings and understand that these create different types of lines and marks. Pupils successfully use printing techniques when they make their own printing blocks from plasticine and use them to print an attractive border.

208. Pupils successfully develop their artistic ideas through themed activities such as their work on houses and homes. They make careful observational drawings of architectural features, such as doors and windows and study photographs of houses in preparation to making detailed drawings of their chosen house style. Pupils use their drawing skills, combined with their imagination, effectively when creating a picture of their own bedrooms.

209. Pupils make effective use of their drawings of houses for 3D work in clay. They successfully make a tile in the shape of their original house design and carefully add the architectural details and markings.

Key Stage 2

210. Pupils study and appraise the work of famous artists and sculptors and this helps them think and explore some of the techniques in their own work. Older pupils use some of the techniques of Henry Moore and Giacometti when they study form.

211. The effective use of specialist teaching ensures that pupils draw very well. They have a good knowledge of the correct positioning of features when drawing portraits of their friends. They know that pastels are a good medium for this type of work because the colours blend well to create shading.

212. Older pupils successfully create different styles of lettering and which are the most appropriate for different purposes. They use this activity to further develop their

understanding of perspective and shading. This work also contributes effectively to their understanding of history because it is linked to the theme of World War 2 posters. When pupils design and make their own posters, they carry out research on the Internet using a search engine to find information and suitable material. Pupils also generate artwork for their posters using ICT and this further develops their skills in both subjects.

213. Pupils use their sketchbooks well to record their ideas and experiment with patterns and motifs when studying Mendhi patterns. Pupils know that body art is used in some cultures for religious and celebration purposes. This contributes well to pupils' personal and social development and understanding of other cultures and traditions. Pupils make informed decisions about the quality of their work and the effectiveness of the designs before carefully replicating these onto paper.

Shortcomings

214. Pupils have insufficient knowledge of the work of practising modern artists and craft workers in Wales and also in other parts of the world.

MUSIC

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

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

Good and outstanding features

215. In both key stages, pupils have a well balanced range of skills in composing, performing and appraising music and have a good understanding of the musical elements.

Key stage 1

216. Pupils confidently sing a wide variety of songs, hymns and rhymes in English and in Welsh. When learning new songs, they listen carefully to each phrase before repeating it. They sing in tune with clear diction and appropriate attention to the quality of sound.

217. Pupils play a range of instruments in time with the music, keeping a steady beat. They correctly sort instruments into different types: those they scrape, beat or shake. They follow clapping patterns and repeat them accurately.

218. Pupils successfully explore a range of sound sources. Pupils in year 1 and 2 listen to music and explore their own sounds on a range of instruments. They distinguish between light and gentle sounds and heavy and loud sounds; they know which instruments can be played to produce the desired sound effects. They respond well to music through dance to represent the movements of a range of mini-beasts.

Key stage 2

219. Pupils develop their performing skills well. They sing an expanding repertoire of songs and hymns in English and in Welsh with confidence, enjoyment and with increasing control of musical elements. Pupils successfully focus their listening skills

on elements such as pitch, rhythm, beat and dynamics whilst performing and composing. They skilfully sing in two parts, listening carefully to each others' parts and to the guitar or piano accompaniment.

220.Pupils have good listening skills and demonstrate good appraisal skills when listening to music, including the music of Welsh composers. They listen with appreciation to visiting musicians such as the String Quartet and the Welsh Brass Trio.

221.Pupils' musical knowledge and skills are enhanced by working with visiting musicians, for example, from the Welsh National Opera Company to rehearse a performance of 'The Magician's Cat'. Pupils' performance skills were greatly enhanced when they joined other schools, the opera company and the orchestra to perform the final production of the opera.

222.Pupils' musical compositions are developing appropriately. They confidently experiment with sounds and rhythms and compose their own music using a variety of instruments, for example, to represent Japanese music.

223.Pupils in year 5 and 6 listen carefully to African dance music, in particular the drum rhythms and the different musical patterns. Pupils successfully play a range of instruments to accompany the music, playing three different rhythmic patterns and keeping a steady beat. They observe dance patterns to African music on video clips and confidently perform them in time with the music

224.Musical performances enhance assemblies and school celebrations. Pupils are offered instrumental tuition in brass, strings, guitar and recorder playing which succeed in enhancing their musical skills. Pupils enjoy taking part in school and community performances.

Shortcomings

225.Pupils' composition skills are underdeveloped, especially in key stage 1.

School's response to the inspection

The Inspection findings recognise that in most respects, we have maintained high standards since our last inspection and improved standards in all subjects. We are pleased that the inspectors found that children's attitudes to their learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration was good. In addition, the care and support systems we have in place and that underpin our curricular provision are recognised as outstanding and considered to be a strength of the school. The skill and dedication of teachers and the care and talent of support staff are duly acknowledge. Most importantly, the inspection report makes clear the elements that make our school what it is. In particular, the report confirms that we are achieving our aim to make our school a happy and secure place in which children grow in confidence and independence.

An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report. Improving our curriculum planning for children's key skills, making wider use of benchmark data to compare ourselves with similar schools and improving our reports to parents are aspects that we believe we can confidently address. Staff have already started to address these issues.

Where it is possible to do so, staff and governors will address all the recommendations before the end of the school year. Raising children's standards of achievement in aspects of English, ICT and Welsh will be a major priority for us. We will make sure that these subjects are included in our School Development Plan. In addition, we will provide more opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and skills in these curriculum areas so that they can help children achieve higher standards in these subjects. Pleasingly, inspectors identified areas of good practice in the school that will help us address some shortcomings by sharing good practice more widely.

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

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3-11 years
Address of school	Cefn Lane Glyncoch Pontypridd Rhondda Cynon Taff
Post-code	CF37 3BP
Telephone number	01443 493427

Headteacher	Mrs M Hudson
Date of appointment	June 1995
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr L Moreton
Registered inspector	Mrs M E Evans
Dates of inspection	14-16 March 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	19	9	9	10	15	15	13	7	97

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	5	0	5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	9:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	20
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2-1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Spring 2004	94	90	94	93
Summer 2004	92	89	93	91
Autumn 2004	94	90	94	93

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	38
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	4

Appendix C

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y2:		14			
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	29	14	50	7	0
		National	0	4	13	63	20	0
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	29	7	57	7	0
		National	0	3	11	63	23	0
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	29	36	29	7	0
		National	0	5	14	69	11	0
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	29	7	57	7	0
		National	0	4	14	55	27	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	21	29	43	7	0
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	29	50	14	7	0
		National	0	2	10	65	23	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	21	In Wales	80

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

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004							Number of pupils in Y6		15			
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	27	20	27	27	0
		National	1	0	0	1	1	5	16	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	6	0	0	27	20	27	20	0
		National	1	1	2	0	0	4	13	42	37	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	20	47	0
		National	1	0	1	0	1	3	17	46	31	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	6	27	27	40	0
		National	1	2	1	0	0	3	15	43	35	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	33	47	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	11	50	37	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	47	40	0
		National	0	1	0	0	0	1	8	51	39	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	53	In the school	47
In Wales	72	In Wales	72

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

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who spent a total of six inspector days at the school.

Before the inspection:

- meetings were held with the head teacher and staff, the governing body and with the parents; 20 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting;
- questionnaires were distributed to all parents and the 23 completed questionnaires were carefully analysed;
- a scrutiny was made of school documentation.

During the inspection:

- evidence of lessons observed was based on approximately 12 hours of inspecting 23 lessons across the age groups;
- other observations included assemblies, registration, extra-curricular activities, lunch and break times;
- discussions were held with the head teacher, class teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff about their roles and responsibilities;
- discussions were held with pupils about aspects of their work and life in school, including the school council; inspectors listened to a representative sample of pupils read;
- a scrutiny was made of a sample of pupils' work from each year group as well as work in the classrooms and on display around the school.

After the inspection:

- meetings were held with the head teacher, the staff and the governing body to provide oral feedback on the inspection findings.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs M E Evans Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key Questions 1, 2, 5 and 6 English Welsh second language Music
Mrs J Marsden Team Inspector	Key Questions 3 and 7 and contributions to Key Questions 1 and 2 Early Years Science Art
Mr C Brentnall Lay Inspector	Key Question 4 and contributions to Key Questions 1 and 3

The contractor was:

Lincolnshire Inspection Team
37 Park Drive
Grimsby
North East Lincolnshire
DN32 0EG

Acknowledgement

The Registered Inspector and team wish to thank the governors, head teacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.

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

**Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School
Cefn Lane
Glyncoch
Pontypridd
CF37 3BP**

Summary for Parents

School Number: 674/2225

Date of Inspection: 14-16 March 2005

by

**Mrs M E Evans
W202/78828**

Date: 19 May 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/176/04P

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3-11 years
Address of school	Cefn Lane Glyncoch Pontypridd, Rhondda Cynon Taff
Post-code	CF37 3BP
Telephone number	01443 493427

Headteacher	Mrs M Hudson
Date of appointment	June 1995
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr L Moreton
Registered inspector	Mrs M E Evans
Dates of inspection	14-16 March 2005

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

Craig-Yr-Hesg 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 Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School took place between 14-16 March 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs M E Evans 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

Summary

Craig-Yr-Hesg Primary School is a much improved school with good features, some of which are outstanding, particularly the high standards of pupils' behaviour and their positive attitudes to work. The school's work in promoting lifelong learning and community regeneration is outstanding and is a strength of the school.

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?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

Subjects and Areas of Learning, Early Years

Standards of achievement in the areas of learning for children under-five are judged as follows:

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

Standards of achievement in the five subjects inspected are judged as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 3	Grade 3
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
17%	61%	22%	0	0

Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons are well above the Welsh Assembly Government targets which are for 95% of pupils to attain grade 3 and above, and of those, 50% to attain grade 2 in lessons inspected.

The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make very good progress, from a low baseline, towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Children under-five make very good progress overall in developing key skills in activities within each area of learning. They use speaking and listening skills confidently and make effective use of early reading, writing and numeracy skills to achieve good standards in language and numeracy. However, they make insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop their wider understanding and support their learning.

In both key stages, pupils' standards and progress in achieving key skills are satisfactory overall. Pupils make good progress in improving their speaking and listening skills; they listen attentively and speak confidently. Standards achieved in literacy skills in most subjects are good, although the use of extended writing and the drafting process are limited in some areas. Pupils make effective use of numeracy skills in different subjects. Their use of a range of ICT to support their learning across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

Pupils are making steady progress in using bilingual skills; they take part in Welsh conversations with enthusiasm, especially in the early years. They read Welsh texts clearly but their use of incidental Welsh across the curriculum is limited.

In the 2004 key stage 1 NC teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 and above in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were below local and national averages. The core subject indicator of 21 per cent was much lower than the national average of 80 per cent. Of the cohort of 14 pupils who were assessed, seven were on the SEN register. The previous year's results at 73 per cent were much higher.

In the 2004 key stage 2 NC tests, the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 and above were well below local and national averages in the three core subjects; the core subject indicator of 47 per cent was well below the national average of 72 per cent. Of the cohort of 15 pupils who were assessed, seven were on the SEN register. However, the percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 in mathematics and science was above the national average. The previous year's results were higher than those achieved nationally.

When compared with similar schools locally and nationally, where up to 40 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, the results in both key stages indicate that the school is performing in the bottom 25 per cent of similar schools. In key stage 1, there has been a significant change in staffing, and assessment strategies are being reviewed towards improving the moderation of standards. In key stage 2, English has been identified as an area for improvement, in particular to raise standards in writing.

Pupils' understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve is at an early stage of development. Pupils are beginning to be involved in assessing their own progress and setting targets for improvement in English and mathematics.

Levels of attendance have improved since the last inspection with an average attendance rate of 92 per cent but it is below the national average of 94 per cent. The school makes every effort to monitor and following up absences and to stress the importance of regular attendance to parents. Unauthorised absence at 3.2 per cent is too high. Punctuality at the start of the school day is variable, as there are a minority of pupils who are consistently late.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and have a positive effect on learning and the quality of life in the school. Pupils make good progress in learning to take responsibility for their own work and often work in pairs or collaboratively in a group.

Pupils make very good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They have a very good understanding of equal opportunities issues and of the need for respect for diversity within society.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	56%	22%	0	0

The overall quality of teaching in lessons is higher than the Welsh Assembly Government targets. The quality of teaching of children under-five is very good. Throughout the school, teachers have good knowledge and understanding of subjects and areas of learning they teach. Lesson planning is well structured with clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils and a range of teaching techniques and strategies are used effectively to promote pupils' learning.

The quality of assessment and recording in the early years is very good and there are effective systems which provide a clear picture of children's progress. In both key stages, assessment procedures are appropriate in assessing pupils' achievements and progress.

The quality of reports to parents is satisfactory and they meet statutory requirements. They provide information of pupils' progress in the work covered but are less evaluative about what pupils can do, what they know and understand.

Learning experiences are effective in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and succeeds in promoting the Desirable Outcomes in all areas of learning. In both key stages, the schemes of work are effective in providing for progression and continuity in pupils' learning. The whole school planning for the teaching of key skills, particularly ICT skills, is in the process of being developed. Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced through a good range of educational visits and opportunities to participate in out-of-hours activities, including sport and music.

The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and for moral and social development it is outstanding; pupils respond very well to this area. They achieve high standards in their personal and social development and understand the school's expectations for good behaviour and positive attitudes.

There are very effective partnerships between the school and parents, the community and other schools in the local cluster. There are strong links with the local community and parents and others in the locality make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and play an important part in the life of the school.

Pupils' bilingual skills are successfully promoted through school activities, such as the 'Welsh Week', although the use of incidental Welsh across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is integrated into most subjects and succeeds in promoting pupils' understanding of the language and culture of Wales.

The school is successful in providing a programme of work for the education for sustainable development, including re-cycling schemes and environmental projects. The school has achieved Eco status and is working towards the silver award. Work-related education is good. Their work in promoting lifelong learning and community regeneration is outstanding. This is a strength of the school.

The quality of care, educational support and personal guidance for pupils is good with outstanding features. The school ensures that all pupils are equally valued and treated with respect and understanding. There are very good procedures for promoting equality and the well-being, health and safety of pupils.

The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good; it complies with the Welsh Assembly Government framework for inclusive education and with the SEN Code of Practice. Pupils receive good support

and make steady progress in their learning towards targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs); they achieve good standards according to their level of ability.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and strategic management is good, in particular the high commitment of the head teacher and staff to improve pupils' standards of achievement. There are clear aims and policies, including a commitment to equality of opportunity for all, which promote a positive ethos and high standards; this is an outstanding feature. The head teacher and deputy provide effective caring leadership and ensure a clear sense of purpose and direction for the work of the school.

The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its regulatory and statutory obligations. Governors help to set the school's strategic direction and carefully monitor the budget and educational provision; new governors are at an early stage in regularly monitoring the quality of provision and standards of achievement.

The school's self-evaluation report clearly identifies strengths and areas for further improvement. There is a very good culture of self-evaluation in the school which includes staff, pupils, governors and parents. There are very effective systems for monitoring provision and standards and subject leaders are developing action plans for their subjects which ultimately feed into the School Development Plan (SDP).

The overall provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good and has a beneficial impact on pupils' standards of achievement. Pupils are well supported by qualified and experienced staff who are effectively deployed. The provision and quality of resources are good and staff and pupils make effective use of all available books, materials and equipment.

The school has ample accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. Good use is made of all available space to provide an attractive working environment for pupils. The quality of the inside accommodation is generally good. Classrooms and shared areas are enhanced by good quality displays which celebrate pupils' achievements.

Resources are managed efficiently and budget planning reinforces the aims of the school, ensuring good value for money. Targets for improvement are set and are incorporated into the SDP which is a useful working document for prioritising areas for improvement over a three year period.

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and has met the targets set in an action plan, which address the key issues from the previous inspection report, although attendance and punctuality still need improving.

Recommendations

R1 Improve standards of achievement in subjects and key skills where there are shortcomings;

R2 Continue to involve pupils in the self-evaluation of their work and in setting targets for improvement;

R3 Continue to develop whole school planning of key skills, particularly ICT, across the curriculum;

R4 Improve information in written reports to parents by ensuring that comments are evaluative about pupils' progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding;

R5 Continue to improve rates of attendance and punctuality.

The school has identified these issues in the SDP as areas for development.

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 Registered Inspector and team wish to thank the governors, head teacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.