

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10  
OF THE EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) ACT 1996**

**CRICKHOWELL COMMUNITY  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Crickhowell  
Powys, NP8 1DY**

School Number: **666/2113**

Date of Inspection: 20 – 23 May 2002

Registered Inspector: Mr. Goronwy Morris  
WO160/78283

Under ESTYN contract number: T/251/01P

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**CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

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

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

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

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

**GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

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

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

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## 1. CONTEXT

### **The school and its priorities**

Crickhowell Community Primary School is situated near the centre of the small rural town of Crickhowell at the southern tip of Powys. The area is described as relatively prosperous with the majority of the intake coming from private accommodation. The pupils are drawn from a range of social backgrounds from within the town, surrounding rural areas, nearby towns and the local army camp. A significant proportion of the school population comes from out of the catchment area due to active parental choice.

There are currently 271 full-time pupils on roll whose ages range from 3-11, the vast majority of pupils having attended the Nursery unit, fulltime for one or more terms. The full range of ability is represented in the intake with 11.2% entitled to free school meals and 19.5% being identified as having special educational needs. All of the pupils come from homes where English is the first language. The children are taught in 11 mixed-ability classes. The school also houses an Area Learning Support Unit (ALSU) for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. This unit serves the catchment area of the local High School.

The school's mission statement – *“to provide a welcoming, happy, caring and secure working environment for all, in which pupils will be educated appropriately in terms of the changing needs of the world in which they live”* is underpinned by a clear set of agreed aims which are regularly reviewed by the governing body. The school has carefully considered specific areas for development with regard to the curriculum, management and accommodation. Clear targets for improvement have been set.

The school was last inspected in May 1996. Since that time there have been a number of staff changes. A new headteacher was appointed in 1999.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### **The main findings of the report**

Crickhowell Community Primary School is a good school with many strengths. This is reflected in the ethos of the school, the commitment of staff to providing a high quality learning environment, the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils, the effective partnerships created with parents and the community, the objective analysis leading to self-evaluation and the clear sense of direction provided by the headteacher and governing body. Standards of achievement in all subjects are at least satisfactory and they are good overall.

- The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	<b>Nursery</b>	<b>Reception</b>
Language, literacy and communication skills	Satisfactory	Good
Personal and social development	Good	Good
Mathematical development	Satisfactory	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good	Good
Physical development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Creative development	Good	Good

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

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

- Since the last inspection, standards have improved in the Nursery and Reception classes. Standards have also improved in mathematics, design technology, information technology (IT) and geography. Standards have been maintained in all other subjects apart from music where standards have declined.
- National Curriculum Assessment Results in 2001 indicate that the school compares very favourably with both local and national figures. Test results at the end of KS1 are well above the national average for Wales. Results at the end of KS2 indicate that the overall core subject indicator for the school of 88% is significantly higher than that for Wales at 69%. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels is also significantly above the Welsh average at both key stages.
- Standards in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, the application of number and information technology are good. The school has developed a comprehensive policy for developing key skills and teachers' planning identifies opportunities for their development. The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) across the curriculum is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a friendly caring atmosphere and is a supportive community for all pupils. Relationships between pupils and adults and between the pupils themselves are friendly and positive. In their movements inside and outside the school building, pupils demonstrate a high level of care and consideration for others.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good and have a positive impact on

their progress and the standards they achieve. There is a pleasant and purposeful atmosphere in school where pupils apply themselves conscientiously to their work.

- Attendance levels are good. The majority of pupils are punctual and the school starts promptly. The school is making good progress to meet targets for improved attendance which have been set for the next three years, however, variations in the symbols used by teachers to mark registers means that reasons for absence are not accurately recorded.
- The school continues to provide good support and guidance for pupils' personal and educational development and good procedures for promoting pupils' welfare and health and safety are consistently followed.
- Very good partnerships have been developed with parents and community, these make a very good contribution to pupils' overall development and their standards of achievement.
- Overall, the school's partnership with industry is good. Effective strategies are in place to introduce pupils to the world of work which enhances pupils' standards of achievement, curricular and extra-curricular experiences.
- The school provides an appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum that complies with the statutory requirements of the NC and religious education. The Cwricwlwm Cymraeg is in the developmental stage.
- The curriculum provided for the under-fives is built around the six areas of the desirable outcomes for children's learning and the children are given a wide range of planned and structured activities.
- The school provides its pupils with a wealth of extra-curricular activities, within the school day, at lunch times, and through after school clubs.
- Teachers are hard working and conscientious. They display great pride and commitment to their school. Generally, their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach are good. Teachers' lack of confidence and knowledge in Welsh and music limits progress in these subjects. Very high-quality displays enhance the learning environment throughout the school. This provides a stimulating environment for pupils' learning.
- The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen. It was very good in 17%, good in a further 50% and satisfactory in 33% of lessons. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection.
- In the best lessons, teaching is energetic, teachers display high expectations, learning is seen as fun and learning objectives are clearly defined. The teachers use a range of appropriate strategies and resources, lessons progress with good pace and pupils are actively involved in their learning. Opportunities are sought to develop cross-curricular links and to foster the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. The work is appropriately differentiated and challenging targets are set which extend pupils' abilities.
- Where teaching is less successful, classroom activities are not linked closely enough to learning objectives and tasks are insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all

pupils. Insufficient opportunities are made available for pupils to investigate, solve problems and to take responsibility for their own learning. Opportunities are missed to use Welsh in an informal conversational way during the lesson.

- The school makes good provision to meet pupils' special education needs (SEN) both within the Area Learning Support Unit (ALSU) and in mainstream classes. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored. There is good liaison between the support teacher, class teachers and learning support assistants (LSA) which enables work in class to be suitably matched to the needs of the pupils.
- The ALSU provides places for pupils from within and beyond the schools' catchment area. Pupils make good and often very good progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy as a result of effective teaching based on some very good teamwork between the teacher and the support assistants. Pupils are thoughtfully included in the life of the school alongside their peers and supported well when integrated into mainstream classes for science and foundation subjects.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. The school has established a culture of self-evaluation among staff and governors. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. These findings inform the School Development Plan (SDP). The SDP is a useful and effective management tool and identifies a sound basis upon which to steer the school forward. The range and nature of priorities identified for improvement are informed, appropriate and suitably detailed.
- The overall leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governors are good. They have a clear vision for the school's future improvements. All staff display great pride in the school.
- The headteacher has initiated a number of structures and procedures to strengthen the involvement of the senior management team in school development planning. These are at an early stage of development.
- Members of the governing body are well informed. They adopt a prudent approach with regard to the school's finances that results in good levels of staffing, accommodation and resources for learning.
- The accommodation is well maintained and provides a high-quality, safe, secure and stimulating environment for pupils. Opportunities for physical development for the under-fives is limited by the access to outdoor play facilities.
- Significant fluctuations in the number of pupils limits the school's ability to forecast future class organisation to make best use of staffing and accommodation. Nevertheless, the school provides good value for money.
- Significant progress has been made since the last inspection. The role of curriculum coordinators is developing satisfactorily. Teachers now visit other classes and have carried out an audit of current strengths and weaknesses, however, their impact on the quality of teaching and learning is variable.

- Recent improvements in schemes of work together with a greater consistency in teacher planning are having an impact on pupils' learning schemes.
- Since the last inspection, the school has established good procedures and practices for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' achievement and uses them satisfactorily in planning to improve pupils' performance and promote higher standards.
- Pupils in the nursery are provided with a wider range of experiences than during the last inspection. Standards are at least satisfactory in all aspects.

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

#### **3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning**

Overall standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

- The educational provision for the children under-five is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. Standards achieved in the nursery are satisfactory. In the reception classes, children achieve good standards.
- In both KS1 and KS2, standards are good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information technology, history and art. Standards in Welsh as a second language, geography, music and religious education are satisfactory. Standards in physical education are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.
- Since the last inspection standards have improved in the nursery and reception classes. Standards have also improved in both KS1 and KS2 in mathematics, design technology, information technology and geography, and in physical education in KS1. Standards have been maintained in all other subjects apart from music where standards have declined.
- In all the lessons observed, standards achieved were satisfactory or better. In 38% of lessons observed standards achieved were satisfactory, in 47% they were good and in 15% they were very good.
- National Curriculum Assessment Results in 2001 indicate that the school compares very favourably with both local and national figures.
- Test results in KS1 indicate that in English 97% of pupils reached Level 2 or above in reading and 90% in writing. In mathematics, 100% of pupils achieved level 2 or above and the results for teacher assessment in science showed that 100% of pupils achieved Level 2 or above. These are well above the national average for Wales.
- Test results in KS2 indicate that 88% of pupils achieved level 4 or above in English and mathematics and 94% achieved level 4 or above in science. The overall core subject indicator for the school of 88% is significantly higher than that for Wales of 69%.
- In both KS1 and KS2, the percentage of pupils achieving the level 3 at the end of KS1, and level 5 at the end of KS2 were well above the national average.

- Evidence during the inspection together with an analysis of NC Test results indicate that boys and girls do equally well at the school.
- Pupils in the ALSU make good and often very good progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. In mainstream classes, pupils who have support for their numeracy skills make satisfactory progress. They make good and often very good progress in their development of literacy skills.

### **3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum**

The standard of achievement in key skills across the curriculum is good.

- Pupils' oral standards are good over both key stages. In the Early Years, pupils express their needs and wants coherently. They ask appropriate questions and readily respond to questioning. As they progress through the school they use an increasing variety of sentence patterns, have an awareness of syntax and have a wide-ranging vocabulary. Older pupils can express an argument to good effect.
- Listening skills are good. Pupils listen to instructions and respond appropriately. They listen to stories with concentration and interest.
- Pupils' reading skills are good and are used to good effect in work carried out in the foundation subjects. They read worksheets and instructions and search the internet for information.
- Pupils' write in a variety of forms and for different purposes across the curriculum. Most use correct spelling, syntax and punctuation and produce good pieces of extended writing. Standards are good.
- The school provides pupils with a numerate environment. Opportunities to use acquired mathematical skills across the curriculum are created and children use their knowledge of graphical representation, for example to express their findings in science and to enhance their studies in history.
- Standards in ICT across the curriculum are good, with the introduction of the new computer suite having a positive effect on standards. Pupils collect and collate data effectively and use software and CD ROMs to support their work. They use a variety of graphical forms to display results of data collected and have good word-processing skills.

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

### **4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a friendly caring atmosphere and is a supportive community for all pupils. This is a strength of the school.

- Care and consideration for others is given a high priority in the school. Relationships between pupils and adults and between the pupils themselves are friendly and positive. Responsible attitudes and good behaviour are encouraged at all times.

- In their movements inside and outside the school building, pupils demonstrate a high level of care and consideration for others.
- Pupils realise that there are children less fortunate than themselves and contribute willingly to a number of charities.
- In the daily act of Christian collective worship, pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their own and others' values and beliefs. Pupils make a valuable contribution to class assemblies.
- Pupils recognise and increasingly understand a diversity of beliefs, attitudes, and social and cultural beliefs. Other religions are studied in religious education and pupils' awareness of other cultural lifestyles is enhanced by visits to places of worship.
- The school has yet to formalise its policy on fostering racial equality, however, the right of equality of opportunity for all individuals is an integral part of the school's approach.
- Pupils' knowledge of their locality is good and is significantly extended by well planned educational visits. Visitors to school enrich the pupils' understanding and appreciation of their local heritage. Recent developments in the school grounds enhance the pupils' understanding of and respect for the environment.
- The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is developed through involvement in St.David's Day concerts and participation in eisteddfodau. Pupils' work in history and the study of local artists extends their appreciation of their cultural heritage. Incidental Welsh, however, is not a feature of school life.
- Pupils' social and cultural development is further enhanced by participating in a range of extra-curricular activities during the lunch-time and after school. School visits and residential experience make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils respond positively to the school's provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are happy in school and are very welcoming and polite to visitors.

## **4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good and have a positive impact on their progress and the standards they achieve.

- There is a pleasant and purposeful learning atmosphere in school where pupils apply themselves conscientiously to their work.
- Pupils and parents value the school's system of rewarding behaviour and achievement with badges, stickers and certificates. Parents support discipline through the home-school agreement.
- The school has very good measures in place to deal with bullying or any other form of discrimination. No instances of threatening behaviour were observed throughout the inspection.

### **4.3 Attendance**

Attendance levels are good.

- The great majority of pupils are punctual and the school day starts promptly.
- The school is making good progress to meet targets for improved attendance, which have been set for three years.
- Most parents inform the school immediately if their child is away. The headteacher and, where necessary, the educational welfare office (EWO) handle appropriately any of the rarely encountered problems with attendance.
- Occasions when attendance falls below 90% are often linked with sickness and pupils in transition, though parents taking their children on holiday during term also has an adverse affect.
- Variations in the symbols used by teachers to mark registers means that reasons for absence are not accurately recorded with the result that the school does not comply with statutory requirements.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen. It was very good in 17%, good in a further 50% and satisfactory in 33% of lessons. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection.

- Teachers are hard working and conscientious. They display great pride and commitment to their school. This is demonstrated in the way they have created such a high quality learning environment which has a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Teachers set high expectations in terms of pupil behaviour. They demonstrate a very high level of care for their pupils. This is evidenced in the high level of mutual respect between pupils and their teachers. Pupils are praised warmly and made aware of how pleased the teacher is when they make progress.
- Generally, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good. Teachers' lack of confidence and knowledge in Welsh and music limits progress in these subjects,
- Recent improvements in schemes of work together with a greater consistency in teacher planning are having an impact on pupils' learning schemes. These plans now need to be further developed and adapted to better meet the needs of the school.

- The contribution of LSAs is highly valued by the teachers. They have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Volunteer helpers also make a significant contribution to the educational provision.

In the best lessons:

- teaching is characterised by high expectations and pupils are actively involved in their learning,
- teaching is energetic and learning is seen as fun, learning objectives are clearly defined and teachers use a range of appropriate strategies and resources,
- opportunities are sought to develop cross-curricular links and to foster the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT,
- the work is appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and challenging targets are set.
- lessons progress with good pace and pupils are eager to begin their activities.

Where teaching is less successful:

- classroom activities are not linked closely enough to the learning objective and tasks are insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.
- the pace of learning is slow and as a result pupils lose interest and become easily distracted,
- insufficient opportunities are made available for pupils to investigate, solve problems and to take responsibility for their own learning,
- opportunities are missed to use Welsh in an informal conversational way during the lesson.

## **5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Since the last inspection, the school has established good procedures and practices for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' achievement and uses them satisfactorily in planning to improve pupils' performance and promote higher standards.

- A very good, comprehensive policy for assessment, recording and reporting (ARR) of pupils' achievements has been established with good guidance on whole-school procedures such as marking, which enables pupils to improve their work and ensure the transfer of assessment information from class to class. Good progress has been made in identifying assessment criteria in most subject schemes of work, which teachers can use to set learning targets for pupils in lesson planning.
- A good start has been made in developing the role of a co-ordinator for ARR. Very good portfolios of examples of pupils' work carefully matched to NC levels, are being developed in the core subjects, particularly in science. These are enabling teachers to

make more consistent assessments of the standards being achieved by pupils. The school plans to develop these portfolios in all subject areas.

- Teachers keep good records of their assessments of pupils' work in relation to the NC, together with results of half-yearly tests on key skills such as reading and spelling.
- The very good assessment criteria identified for ICT is used effectively by teachers to record pupils' attainment and progress, and to motivate pupils by providing them with clear targets for them to achieve and assess their own attainments. This is a good model for development in other subjects.
- Annual school reports on pupils' attainments and progress are satisfactory overall. They clearly inform parents of their child's attitude, behaviour, personal skills and attainments compared to NC expectations or the Early Learning Goals. Generally, reports on the core subjects include clear information on what the pupils know, understand and can do, but information about progress in the non-core foundation subjects is variable. Some reports tend to focus on the work that has been covered and not on what the pupil has achieved. Information on the pupil's priorities for future learning is rarely given.
- Good analysis of the results of assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of the key stages is carried out and has enabled the school to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning of the different elements within the core subjects. For example, in science, those test questions that are answered incorrectly by most pupils are identified and steps are taken to improve provision in that topic.
- The good data on pupils' attainments in reading and spelling as they progress through the school is used effectively to identify pupils' individual progress and needs, but is not sufficiently collated and used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in overall provision.

### **5.3 Curriculum**

The school provides an appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum that complies with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The Cwricwlwm Cymraeg is in the developmental stage.

- The curriculum provided for the under fives is built around the six areas of learning of the desirable outcomes. The quality of the early years curriculum is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the parallel reception classes.
- Children are given a wide range of planned and structured activities. However, there is some imbalance in adult intervention and support in the nursery which results in many opportunities to further develop the children's language, mathematical and scientific skills not being maximised.
- Opportunities for developing physical development during outdoor play are limited by a lack of focus when structuring and observing appropriate activities.

- The curriculum is planned co-operatively in the parallel reception classes while the nursery class plans independently. Meetings are held on a weekly basis to ensure parity of provision in the reception classes.
- The quality of the curriculum provided for children with SEN in mainstream and in the ALSU is good. No pupils receive a modified curriculum and there are no disapplications.
- The school plans well with long-term, medium-term and short-term objectives being clearly defined. The curriculum is presented through topics and the discrete teaching of some subjects.
- Time allocated to teaching each subject is appropriate. Some non-core foundation subjects, for example history and geography, are taught within alternate half terms and are blocked accordingly. This approach is seen as effective.
- The school has a wide range of policies and schemes of work. Some, for example music and geography, are in the process of being trialed and evaluated. These provide a good basis for planning the teaching and learning of the curriculum in each year group. Schemes have been revised recently to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000.
- The quality of whole-school planning for key skills is good. The school has a comprehensive policy and teachers' planning identifies opportunities for their development. The use of ICT across the curriculum is a strength of the school.
- Homework is used to good effect to enhance pupils' learning. Homework is given from reception to Y6 on a regular basis. It is marked appropriately to inform pupils of their progress and of the way forward.
- The school's arrangements for the personal and social education of the pupils are good. Pupils are welcoming and at ease with visitors within the school and have visited many places of interest. They are encouraged to take on some responsibility for a range of simple classroom tasks during the day, but opportunities to develop initiative are limited. There is equal opportunity for all pupils, including those with SEN, in all aspects of school life.
- The school provides its pupils with a wealth of extra-curricular activities, within the school day, at lunch time, and through after-school clubs. These are wide ranging and include a poetry club, mathematics club and a school choir. This is a very good feature of the school. Some pupils also receive guitar and recorder tuition during lunch-time. Opportunity is given for some pupils to attend a residential course at Llangrannog and to all pupils to attend residential courses at Staylittle, Ty Gwyn and France in Y5 and Y6.

#### **5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare**

The school continues to provide good support and guidance for pupils' personal and educational development and good procedures for promoting pupils' welfare and health and safety are consistently followed.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils talk confidently and respectfully with staff and know that any concerns or problems will be taken seriously and resolved. There is a strong ethos of care and mutual respect.
- A suitable programme of personal, social and health education, including issues of substance abuse and race is in place. Plans are in place to develop the school's policy on race relations. Good attention is given to health in science and physical education. Good arrangements are in place for sex education. Issues are addressed as they arise naturally in topics and questions and appropriately. Parents are given the opportunity to view the material to be used for lessons on "growing up" provided for pupils in Y6. Overall, the support and guidance for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Parents are confident that any concerns will be listened to and promptly acted upon.
- Good attention is given to pupils' well-being and safety. Staff are up-to-date with First Aid procedures in which several have a qualification. Good arrangements for risk assessments are in place and regular site-safety audits and fire drills are carried out. Sensible steps have been taken to maintain site security. Safety aspects have a prominent place in teachers' planning.
- Procedures for child protection are good and followed by all staff. They comply with National Assembly for Wales (NAW) requirements.
- Pupils' educational progress is regularly monitored and in a few subjects pupils are becoming involved in self-assessment. In ICT, for example, pupils check-off the skills they have achieved and write their own next-step targets to be mastered. This is very good practice. Teachers are steadily extending their good use of assessment to meet the range of pupils' needs in the core subjects to the non-core foundation subjects. Mostly, teachers make positive comments when marking pupils' work to help them understand what they need to do to improve.
- Very good procedures are in place for pupils' transition from class to class and to the secondary phase of their education. Assessment data is passed on with supporting comments on pupils' individual needs and priorities. Good liaison is maintained with the receiving secondary schools to ensure pupils' smooth transfer.
- Pupils in Y6 make an extra-curricular visit to France. The pupils are very well prepared to meet the language and cultural differences they will experience by learning useful conversational, social language and vocabulary and about the differences in meals and attitudes to food.
- Pupils with SEN are thoughtfully included in the life of school alongside their peers and supported well when integrated into mainstream classes for science and the non-core foundation subjects.

## **5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

The school makes good provision to meet pupils' SEN both within the ALSU and in mainstream classes.

Forty-six pupils within mainstream classes have been identified as having some learning difficulties and they receive support for developing their literacy and numeracy skills from a visiting SEN support teacher.

- Good procedures are followed, in line with the SEN Code of Practice, to identify the needs of pupils as soon as a concern is raised and individual education plans (IEPs) are drawn up for all pupils on the school's SEN register. Their progress is regularly monitored and IEPs up-dated accordingly, with suitable involvement from parents.
- Pupils make good and often very good progress in their development of literacy skills as a result of effective teaching that helps pupils sound-out new words as well as use textual clues to improve their reading and spelling skills.
- Pupils who have support for developing their numeracy skills make satisfactory progress. Insufficient attention is given to the identification of their difficulties with underlying concepts, such as place value, and providing appropriate practical experiences to secure their understanding and develop their confidence.
- There is good liaison between the support teacher, class teachers and involved LSAs that enables the work in class to be suitably matched to the needs of the pupils.
- The school plans to improve its procedures and provision to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils, but at present insufficient attention is given to extension work that effectively challenges the thinking of the more-able pupils.

The ALSU provides places for pupils from within and beyond the school's catchment area including two pupils from a neighbouring LEA. Half of its pupils have statements of SEN and others are categorised as 'school action plus'. Their learning difficulties include moderate or specific learning difficulties, communication and language difficulties and/or physical difficulties.

- All pupils have suitably detailed IEPs and their personal and educational needs are well met within the unit and when working alongside their mainstream class-mates.
- In the ALSU they make good and often very good progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy as a result of effective teaching based on very good teamwork between the teacher and the support assistants.
- Pupils across the age range make very good progress in learning letter names, sounds, blends and phonic skills and develop confident keyboard skills through an enthusiastic approach to well planned routines resulting from appropriate staff training. They learn to apply these skills well to identify the number of phonemes in spoken words and sound out new words when reading. They are gaining confidence in writing.
- Pupils' programmes in numeracy are well matched to their learning needs and they make steady progress through good practical activities that enable younger and less-able pupils to understand basic concepts such as the value of coins. Older, and more-able pupils add time using a clock face. They achieve good basic counting, addition and subtraction skills and the majority of pupils in KS2 count confidently in twos, fives and tens to 100.

- All pupils from the unit are very well integrated with pupils in their respective year groups for registration, science, non-core foundation subjects of the curriculum and the general life of the school. They are well supported in these integrated opportunities by the unit staff and benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum experience.
- Pupils' particular needs are supported by the involvement of other professionals. Pupils with speech and language difficulties have been assessed by a speech therapist and the resulting guidance is followed well by staff, despite the lack of follow-up therapy sessions. The school is provided with educational psychology advice, but the referral procedures result in delays before assessment of pupils' needs, such as emotional and behavioural difficulties, are undertaken. This has an adverse effect on the effectiveness of provision for individual pupils.

## **5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions**

The school has very good partnerships with parents and community which make a very good contribution to pupils' overall development and their standards of achievement. The partnership with schools and other institutions is good.

- The school benefits from the support of about 14 parents and community members who regularly help in school with activities including reading, cookery and craft. Many more support outdoor pursuit and other trips and school events.
- Well planned activities, such as the visit of six members of the Royal British Legion to a Y6, history class make a very good contribution to pupils' academic and social development and their understanding of World War Two.
- Pupils regularly contribute to the community newspaper thus strengthening links with the community.
- The very active home-school association, Family and Friends, raises significant amounts of money, sometimes more than £4000 a year, through well supported events. The additional resources provided make a very good contribution to provision in school, for example the new ICT suite.
- The school has good liaison arrangements in place with receiving secondary schools, particularly Crickhowell High School where pupils have undertaken work in mathematics.
- The school is in partnership providing initial teacher training places and PGCE and B.Ed placements with Newport and Aberystwyth.
- Good quality information in the form of newsletters, the prospectus, open evenings and the new school notice board keep parents well informed of school activities and events. They find staff friendly and approachable and often take informal opportunities to discuss any concerns at the start and end of the school day.
- A small number of parents expressed the wish for more and regular information about the curriculum their children undertake.

## **5.7 Partnership with Industry**

Overall, the school's partnership with industry is good.

- The school has some effective strategies to introduce pupils to the world of work which enhances pupils' standards of achievement, curricular and extra-curricular experiences.
- Pupils throughout school are to visit a local farm in connection with their work, for example Y6 to develop mapping skills.
- Speakers including people from the National Park and a vet discuss their work with pupils.
- Pupils from Y5 are to visit a local timber factory to see the building of a shed for the school and later visited a wood-turning demonstration.
- The school has a good relationship with Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) which provides funds towards educational visits and the new ICT suite.
- Army personnel organise an obstacle course at the summer fair and support teachers on a fund-raising hike.
- Some staff development through commercial links is in progress.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement**

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

- The school has established a culture of self-evaluation among staff and governors. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. These findings inform the SDP and identify a way forward. Teachers contribute to the process of reviewing the seven key areas that define the life and work of the school. Evidence gleaned from first-hand observations by the headteacher and the Senior Management Team (SMT) is used to gauge the quality of the standards achieved by the pupils and of the school's educational provision.
- Good procedures are in place to evaluate pupils' progress in the core subjects. NC test results are analysed and the information obtained is used to inform further teaching and learning. National and local benchmarking data is used to compare aspects of the school's performance against that of other similar schools. This information is used to set quantitative targets for improvement that are included in the SDP.
- The school is developing a culture of monitoring and has embarked upon a programme. The headteacher and SMT have undertaken some classroom observations and have monitored pupils' books in the core subjects. At best, this has resulted in points for further subject development being identified and has informed in-service education and training (INSET). As yet, the role of subject co-ordinators in the monitoring process is

variable. This has, however, been identified as a focus in the SDP and is at its developmental stage.

- The school has embarked upon a system of target setting but has not yet identified a structured whole-school method of tracking individual pupils' progress effectively.
- The SDP is a useful and effective management tool and provides a sound basis upon which to steer the school forward. The SDP and current School Action Plan is regularly reviewed and progress on initiatives reported to governors. The range and nature of priorities identified for improvement are informed and appropriate and suitably detailed. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for improvement for all pupils.

## **6.2 Leadership and Efficiency**

The overall leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governors are good. They have a clear vision for the school's future improvements. All staff display great pride in the school.

- The headteacher has initiated a number of structures and procedures to strengthen the involvement of the SMT in school development planning. These are at an early stage of development.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinators, an issue in the last inspection, is developing satisfactorily. Teachers now visit other classes and have carried out an audit of current strengths and weaknesses. Their impact on the quality of teaching and learning is variable.
- Staff meetings are well documented and indicate purposeful activity. All staff who support learning in the classroom have a positive effect on standards.
- Members of the governing body are well informed and take a keen interest in the schools' work as members of sub-committees that deal with curricular issues as well as administrative and managerial issues.
- They have a good knowledge of the school's finances and adopt a prudent approach, which results in good levels of staffing, resources and accommodation. Visits to school by members of the governing body enable them to judge for themselves the success of initiatives being undertaken.
- Appropriate priorities for spending are established, which are linked to the SDP. The deputy headteacher provides good support in this area. Spending decisions are carefully evaluated to ensure that they provide value for money.
- Significant sums of money are donated to the school and these enhance the schools' ability to provide quality educational opportunities for pupils.
- The last auditors report was in April 2000. The school has yet to fully comply with the recommendations contained within the report.

- Budget figures indicate a significant carryover of funds for 2002/2003. Fluctuations in pupil numbers limit the school's ability to project forward accurately.
- Administrative procedures and daily routines are effective. The headteacher and staff are accessible and approachable and the secretary, caretaker, cleaners and mid-day staff all make a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school and the pupils' well being.

### **6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources**

The quality of staffing, accommodation and resources for learning are good and contributes significantly to the standards achieved by the pupils across the curriculum.

- The staffing provision of the school is adequate to its needs and the staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the pupils in their care, with the exception of Welsh and music. The contribution of support staff and volunteer helpers has a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Teachers attend a range of courses, which they feed back to staff through staff meetings. Professional development interviews with the headteacher are making a positive contribution in terms of identifying future professional development needs. The recent General Teaching Council (GTC) grants have enabled teachers to visit other classes. This has had a positive effect on the work of subject co-ordinators
- The accommodation is well maintained and provides a high-quality, safe and secure environment for pupils. Opportunities for physical development for under-fives is limited by the access to outdoor play facilities. Some parents expressed concern about the security of perimeter fencing.
- Very high-quality displays enhance the learning environment throughout the school. This provides a stimulating environment for pupils' learning and has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Good use is made of the extensive school grounds to enhance the pupils' understanding of and respect for the environment.
- Significant fluctuation in pupil numbers limit the school's ability to forward plan sufficiently to ensure that future class organisation make best use of accommodation and staffing. Nevertheless, the school provides good value for money.
- The school is well resourced to meet the needs of most curriculum areas. The recent investment in ICT is having a significant impact on standards. The potential of the school's library to promote pupils' independent research skills is under-developed. There is a lack of control equipment to develop pupils' use of design and technology skills and practical equipment to develop pupils' investigative and problem solving skills.

## **7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING**

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

#### **Provision for the under fives**

Standards of achievement in the Early Years are satisfactory in nursery and good in reception.

The educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. Children of nursery age, and those at reception achieve good standards in creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development. Nursery children achieve satisfactory standards in mathematical development and language, literacy and communication skills while reception children achieve good standards. Standards in physical development are satisfactory in both nursery and reception.

#### **Language, literacy and communication**

##### **Good features**

- In the nursery class, children respond readily to questions and instructions and use their developing knowledge of language to express themselves with confidence. They are beginning to understand that written symbols have sounds and meaning and practice "pretend writing". They enjoy mark making and basic writing experiences using chalk, crayon and pencils. They trace letter shapes in sand. Children know how to hold a book and are beginning to picture read.
- Pupils in reception listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. They can overwrite, copy a teacher model and many are beginning to write independently. They are making good progress in early reading and are developing sound phonic skills. They match sounds to letters and recognise key words consistently. They listen with concentration to stories and retell the broad thrust of a story in their own words. Many are beginning to understand the moral of a story.

##### **Shortcomings**

- There is some imbalance in adult intervention and support in the nursery, which results in many opportunities to further develop the children's language skills not being maximised.
- Children are inactive for too long a period during some story telling and singing periods, which results in loss of concentration and interest.

## **Personal and Social development**

### **Good features**

- The under-fives are comfortable and confident with their known routines. They relate well with each other and are comfortable with adults. They will happily ask for help and will help each other. They have friends within their peer groups and know that friends care for, and are kind to, each other.
- Pupils sustain concentration on a given task for an appropriate length of time and take turns and share. They know that at the end of an activity they must tidy up and do so happily.
- Most pupils are developing the ability to dress and undress themselves, with some help, for physical education for example. They help each other to dress in the imaginative play corners.
- Pupils are beginning to take responsibility for personal hygiene and will wash their hands when they have been engaged in working with clay or when they have been to the toilet.
- They are keen to explore new activities presented to them and do so with enthusiasm and confidence.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Mathematical development**

### **Good features**

- Children in the nursery are developing their mathematical concepts. They know a variety of number rhymes and count consistently to five with one-to-one correspondence. They have had matching and sorting experiences. They have knowledge of sets and are beginning to see that number is a property of a set. They have had some experience of threading beads and pattern making. Through their sand and water play activities, they are beginning to acquire the language of size and position.
- Reception children build upon their knowledge of number. They recognise numbers and can match number to sign and sound. They can count consistently to 20 with 1:1 correspondence and many have progressed to carrying out simple addition and subtraction activities. They have knowledge of one more and one less and are beginning to understand the purpose and use of money through their imaginative play opportunities.

### **Shortcomings**

- Adults within the nursery are too sedentary at table activities with some groups of children to enable them to interact with all children, and to maximise upon the opportunities presented to accelerate the acquisition of mathematical skills and language during sand and water play.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

### **Good features**

- Pupils talk confidently about their homes and where they live. They are beginning to understand about different places and explain simply the difference between Crickhowell and Tenby, for example.
- They observe the weather and celebrate birthdays. In the nursery they are beginning to have a basic understanding of time, for example, lunch-time and milk time while in reception pupils can identify hours on the clock and tell the time in hours. Pupils in reception know that you must wear a sun hat and sun cream to protect yourself in hot weather.
- Pupils are beginning to understand a variety of information sources. Pupils at reception enjoy looking at books and picture read for information. They also use computer programs with increasing mouse control.
- They have had experience of a wide range of materials and have explored their potential through tearing, cutting and folding.
- Pupils identify some kinds of workers and know what they do, for example a farmer cares for animals and a dentist, doctor or nurse makes you feel better if you are ill.
- Many are developing an understanding of the need to care for living things through their experiences in growing and caring for seeds. Children in reception have classified seeds according to size and have grown a sunflower from seed. They have studied the life cycle of a frog.

### **Shortcomings**

- These are no significant shortcomings.

## **Physical development**

### **Good features**

- On the playground the under-fives show good control as they move around in space. They run, jump, skip and hop and know that although a range of movements are acceptable in free space, they must walk in the school.
- Both the nursery and reception have access to a hard-surfaced outdoor play areas. The children handle large toys confidently.
- The children's gross manipulative skills develop as they handle hoops, balls and other small play equipment. Many throw and catch confidently and kick or dribble a ball effectively.

- Fine manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination develop as children handle scissors, paintbrushes, crayons and pencils with growing confidence. They are given opportunities to handle small toys and jigsaws and to experience many threading and weaving activities. Most children handle a pencil appropriately and are developing the correct grip.

### **Shortcomings**

- The lack of a covered outdoor play area limits opportunities for outdoor play with large apparatus during inclement weather. This results in the under-fives being given insufficient opportunities to develop their gross motor skills and to express themselves freely through movement in space.
- Opportunities for developing pupils' physical development through outdoor play are restricted by a lack of focus in structuring and observing appropriate activities.

### **Creative development**

#### **Good features**

- Children in both the nursery and reception have had a good variety of creative experience. They name colours and use them appropriately when painting. They choose colours for their purpose and justify their choice.
- Pupils have had varied experiences in printing and pattern making.
- Pupils enjoy their music making. They clap along to a steady beat, clap out their names and recall a variety of songs and rhymes. They know the names of familiar instruments, for example tambourine, tambour, triangle, and drum and know how to obtain sounds from them. They sing enthusiastically.
- The children enjoy role playing activities in designated imaginative play areas, for example the Pirate Ship, the hairdresser's, or when interacting with their puppets.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **English**

Standards of achievement in English are good in both key stages.

#### **Good features**

- In both key stages, pupils speak articulately and confidently when conversing with each other or answering questions in class. They have a good wide range of vocabulary and language patterns and adapt their speech to suit the occasion. In upper KS2, they debate and present an argument logically.
- Pupils listen attentively to instructions and carry them out appropriately. They listen to stories with sustained concentration and recall events sequentially.

- In KS1, pupils express and justify a preference and suggest how a story might end. As they progress through the school they develop good strategies of prediction using previously acquired knowledge or their own imaginations.
- Good progress is made in reading. In KS1, pupils have good book skills and are making a good start to their reading using the school's reading scheme. Pupils throughout the school, including the ALSU, are developing a secure knowledge of phonics. The recent introduction of THRASS is seen as having a beneficial effect in this area. By the end of KS1, some pupils have graduated onto library books. Pupils in KS2 read with increasing fluency, expression and understanding. They use a variety of strategies using illustrations and context to decode print. They read both fiction and non-fiction for information and for pleasure.
- Pupils in both key stages use conventions in their written work, commensurate with their age, and know how to construct and demarcate sentences correctly. In KS2, they demonstrate an increasing awareness of conventions and use punctuation confidently and accurately.
- Pupils write in many different genres. They write notes and instructions, produce book reviews, letters, diaries, poetry, biographies, narrative and descriptive pieces. They write purposeful letters stating an opinion clearly and debate issues, expressing an argument quite confidently.
- In KS2, pupils plan their tasks purposefully, write in appropriate paragraphs and draft and re-draft their work to best effect. They use a wide variety of adjectives and adjectival clauses in their descriptive work to produce work of high quality and empathy. Pupils in upper KS2 write at length using imaginative detail to produce creditable creative pieces of empathetic prose and poetry.
- In KS1, pupils use word processing with increasing competence to present their work. In KS2, pupils utilise the skill to best effect to draft and redraft their work.
- As a result of an internal audit the handwriting scheme is now adhered to more consistently with the result that pupils throughout the school are beginning to develop good quality handwriting. Pupils in KS1 form their letters correctly with knowledge of ascenders and descenders. Written work is neatly presented. In upper KS2, pupils are developing their own fluent handwriting style.

### **Shortcomings**

- The school has a well resourced library area, which is not used to full effect. Although some story telling activities take place within the library, the facility and its potential for learning is under-used.

### **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement in mathematics are good in both key stages

### **Good features**

- Pupils enjoy their mathematics and study with confidence and a sense of achievement. They are encouraged to talk about their own work, ask questions and make predictions based on experience.
- Numeracy sessions which begin with an oral mental starter, consolidate and extend previous work and end with a short plenary session which summarises key ideas have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils in the ALSU make good progress appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- In KS1, pupils have a good grasp of basic number processes. Younger pupils have a good understanding of number bonds up to ten and beyond. They make sensible estimates, add up single digit numbers accurately and recognise patterns in number.
- They confidently sort objects into sets given a certain criteria and are developing appropriate mathematical language, including odd and even, fewer and more than. They sequence the days of the week and identify circles, triangles, rectangles and squares.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils count confidently to 100. They add digits with two numbers and divide by two, three and five. They insert missing numbers on a square and draw a pattern following numbers in a sequence.
- They recognise halves and quarters and tell the time confidently using the half and quarter hours.
- In KS2, pupils add and subtract confidently. Mental agility is an important aspect of their work and features prominently at the beginning of every lesson. They generate sequences of numbers and show a good understanding of table facts and of the concept of common multiples. They respond enthusiastically and accurately to a series of directions and correctly interpret information presented in the form of Venn diagrams.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils demonstrate a quick recall of table facts. They understand the concept of a magic square and confidently offer strategies to describe how they, as individuals, worked out their answers. They check their answers for accuracy using a calculator.
- They use the four rules of number confidently and accurately including multiplication and division by two digit numbers.
- They understand and use the different units of measurement for time, weight, length and capacity. They construct graphs from information, including distance time graphs. Older pupils use correctly mathematical terms such as median, mean and co-ordinates.
- Pupils understand about lines and angles and correctly identify angles as acute, right, obtuse and reflex. They understand the principles of probability and the relationship between vulgar fractions, decimals and percentages.
- NC assessment results indicate that pupils perform well in comparison with like schools. Results indicate that boys and girls perform equally well.

- Key skills in numeracy are promoted in other lessons, such as science. Pupils no longer see mathematics in isolation.

### **Shortcomings**

- The challenge and pace in mental activities is not consistently applied in all classes.
- Problem solving opportunities are not progressively developed to stretch the more-able pupils.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' investigative abilities are limited.

### **Science**

Standards of achievement in science are good in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- Pupils achieve a good knowledge and understanding of science in all the required elements of the curriculum as a result of a well planned experimental and investigative approach.
- In KS1, pupils learn to make careful observations and explain their ideas. They predict outcomes and compare results during investigations of forces, sources of light and sound.
- They know what basic conditions are needed for plants and animals to live and identify different habitats. When studying the life cycle of a frog they understand that tadpoles' gills are used to get oxygen from the water and compare it to the way we breathe using our lungs. More-able pupils recognise the similarities between the changes from tadpoles to frogs and from caterpillars to butterflies.
- By the end of KS1, pupils complete a circuit to light a bulb, group materials according to similar properties and explain changes according to different conditions.
- Younger pupils in KS2 continue to enjoy their work in science. They work well in groups during investigations, for example when studying how light travels they use torches, cards and cylinders purposefully to discover that light travels in a straight line and small balls and mirrors to learn about reflection.
- Older pupils learn to plan their own experiments and investigations. They co-operate well in groups to formulate a question to investigate, identify and control variables to ensure fair testing, hypothesise, set-up and use apparatus and record their results. They describe their ideas clearly and listen attentively to each other.
- By the end of KS2, pupils have a good all-round knowledge and understanding of science facts, processes and concepts. They understand the processes of photosynthesis, pollination, and seed dispersal. They have a good knowledge of the main organs of their own bodies such as the heart and understand how blood circulates. They are aware of how the properties of materials affect their usage as insulators and conductors and how heating and cooling can change materials both reversibly and irreversibly. They construct

circuits and know the difference between parallel and series circuits. They have an understanding of the forces of friction and gravity. They have an understanding of the solar system and how night and day and the seasons arise.

### **Shortcomings**

- Occasionally, when pupils are uncertain of how to carry out a task or do not sufficiently understand the work set for them they lose interest and attention. In some lessons, teachers need to ensure that tasks as well as outcomes are suitably matched to pupils' abilities.

### **Welsh second language**

Standards of achievement in Welsh are satisfactory in both key stages. A peripatetic Athrawes Bro teaches Welsh to all classes.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils can understand simple instructions and respond appropriately. They ask and answer basic questions within the range of patterns they have been taught. They have a basic knowledge of parts of the body, weather, name some colours and count in Welsh. Their pronunciation and intonation is appropriate. They sing some Welsh songs related to the themes they have studied, for example Lliwiau'r Enfys.
- Pupils read captions and recognise familiar words in print. By the end of KS1, the majority of the pupils read sentences and short dialogues with some accuracy. They record the oral patterns they have learnt by recording them in their books.
- In KS2, for the main part, pupils respond appropriately during Welsh lessons. At times they are loath to take part and many pupils are passive unless called upon specifically to contribute. They work in pairs to practise dialogues and questioning and answering techniques. They have a satisfactory grasp of an increasing range of vocabulary and sentence patterns, for example Welsh place names and questioning strategies.
- In KS2, pupils read simple picture book texts, dialogues and paragraphs with appropriate understanding and intonation. They write independent sentences with much support and use their books as resources for required language patterns and vocabulary. They write simple dialogues and construct short paragraphs describing their activities within a given range of structures they have learnt. They have an understanding of the past tense and can change the tense of a sentence within familiar texts.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise the Welsh language in situations other than the formal lesson. Teachers do not create sufficient opportunities to reinforce taught language patterns and vocabulary. There is an over-reliance on worksheets for consolidation of work taught by the peripatetic teacher.

- Insufficient use is made of incidental Welsh throughout the school day to develop a Welsh ethos. Teachers' use of incidental Welsh is limited to simple greetings and questions and responses when marking the register.
- Pupils' range of language is narrow and a significant number have an insecure grasp of the sentence patterns they use.
- Pupils' reading and writing is within a limited range. Pupils' independent writing skills are under-developed.

## **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement in design and technology are good in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- In both key stages, there is a good balance between designing and making and evaluating. There is an adequate range of resources and pupils work with a wide range of materials
- In KS1, food technology is well developed with pupils investigating different types of fruit with a view to designing a new school pudding.
- They design and make useful presents for mother's day which involve planning, drawing designs, cutting and stitching. They use paper fasteners to make movable joints and develop their understanding of construction by building castles from recycled materials.
- Models of homes for different creatures show imagination and skill in cutting and joining a range of junk material.
- In KS2, activities are appropriate and are often designed to extend and enhance pupils' understanding in other subjects.
- Pupils plan their work in detail, listing equipment and resources they will need. Models are well made and finished carefully. Designs are carefully followed and pupils work diligently to ensure that the finished product is fit for purpose.
- Younger pupils investigate different joins for photo frames and their work with bridges extends their understanding of structures.
- They use mechanisms for pop-up Christmas cards and enhance their models of lighthouses by adding electrical circuits. Older pupils develop this work by designing and making fairground rides incorporating an electrical circuit.
- The models designed and made to represent structures in Crickhowell demonstrate a good use of a range of materials and the work in designing and making a pair of slippers is of particularly high quality.

### **Shortcomings**

- Insufficient opportunities are offered to develop pupils' understanding of control.

- Pupils' recording and communication skills are not consistently developed.

## **Information technology**

Standards of achievement in information technology are good in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- The well structured scheme of work with clearly identified learning objectives enables all staff to suitably challenge pupils to develop their IT skills. The establishment and use of the new computer suite enables all pupils to have access to a wide range of learning opportunities in IT. Classes also make good use of the digital and video cameras.
- All staff have had training in the use of IT and their improved expertise positively affects pupils' progress. The support provided by the 'specialist' learning support assistant / technician makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- In KS1, pupils make rapid progress and gain confidence in the use of computers. They confidently edit and improve text, demonstrating good keyboard skills and mouse control.
- By the end of KS1, pupils search previously entered data, generate text, tables and pictures and use the appropriate vocabulary such as database, file, view, sort and search. They use the mouse with good dexterity to locate icons, scroll backwards and forwards, select from menus, print out their work, save and log on and off independently.
- Younger pupils in KS2 transfer data from their own surveys onto the computer and convert this into bar graphs. They use menus confidently to select colours for different items and save and print out their work independently. They make good progress in word-processing skills and support their learning in English effectively, for example they enjoy using the computer suite to compose humorous epitaphs which they print out and share with the class.
- Older pupils use CD ROMs and the internet to research information and visit an authorised range of websites. For example, pupils studying history downloaded recipes so that they could make cakes similar to those cooked during the Second World War. They also visit and make contributions to the school's well established website.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils are confident and proficient users of computers. They have good keyboard skills, use a word processor effectively with good use of the toolbar to select fonts, bold and underline, bullets and numbering, and the spell-checker. They enhance the presentation of their work with borders, headers and footers. They keep their own work files, use spreadsheets for entering data and understand the use of formulae for handling the data.

### **Shortcomings**

- In some lessons, suitable extension work is not provided for more-able pupils and time is lost while they wait for others to complete their work.

- Insufficient attention is given to pupils' experience of control technology.

## **History**

Standards of achievement in history are good in both key stages

### **Good features**

- In both key stages, pupils' interest and awareness of the past is stimulated through using a wide range of approaches and resources. Visits are a regular and important feature of pupils' work and visitors to school make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- In KS1, work is made accessible and interesting for pupils by focussing on aspects within their understanding, for example the development of toys and their understanding of the lives of people and children in the past is enhanced by experiencing what it was like to be at school during the Victorian era.
- Their study of the development of houses and homes and castles enables pupils to develop a firm understanding of the lives of people in the past and of how changes occur over time.
- In KS2, historical activities are enhanced by the contribution of other areas of the curriculum, most notably art and design technology.
- Younger pupils benefit from well planned practical activities which enable them to develop an understanding of chronological awareness. This understanding is further developed by older pupils through the study of religious sites in the locality.
- Pupils display a good knowledge of the local area. Local visits are used to develop a sense of the past and follow-up work enhances the pupils' key skills of research and ICT.
- Pupils make good use of primary and secondary sources, timelines, artefacts, memorabilia and books to establish a clear understanding of life in the past. The learning environment created in classes contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of studying life 60 years ago
- Learning is enhanced by visitors to the school who share their experiences. Pupils ask pertinent questions and make informed judgements. Their writing displays that they empathise sensitively with peoples of the past.
- Pupils are keen to share ideas, discuss opinions and present their work in a variety of forms which enhances their work in other subjects.

### **Shortcomings**

- The contribution of history to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is not consistently and progressively developed.

## **Geography**

Standards of achievement in geography are satisfactory in both key stages.

## **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils have a sound knowledge of the main features of their locality and identify many of these on a plan of their area. They know their way around the school. They have made simple maps of their way to school and know their addresses. Many have a basic understanding of the use of a key.
- In upper KS1, pupils have studied aerial photographs of their area and identified many features. They have a basic understanding of simple co-ordinates.
- In their study of Our World, pupils have looked at a map of Britain and locate and identify Wales on the map.
- Pupils have used their knowledge of ICT to construct a Treasure Island following instructions as to where the treasure is located.
- Pupils are aware of the various jobs people do, including those associated with the school. They have a basic knowledge of the months of the year, the seasons and the effect of different weather conditions on their lives.
- The school has initiated a link with Manchester, but this is, as yet, in its very initial stage.
- In KS2, younger pupils use geographical terms when comparing their locality with Ebbw Vale. They are aware of the different land usage and how that impacts on the environment.
- They have a good knowledge of their immediate locality and a good understanding of the course of a river, concentrating on the River Usk.
- Older pupils build upon their knowledge of mapping skills in their study of their locality. They investigate photographs and Ordnance Survey maps. They make use of CD ROMs, for example Map Detective, to develop their mapping skills. Pupils in Y6 also visit Bayeux in France in connection with their study in history of World War 2. Pupils in upper KS2 have a basic knowledge of Burkina Faso in West Africa and have carried out some fundraising activities for this area.

## **Shortcomings**

- Although pupils have a detailed knowledge of their immediate environment, their awareness of other areas of Wales is limited.
- Although the pupils have a basic understanding of patterns and processes in physical and human geography the places drawn upon are from a narrow range of contexts and scales.
- The study of contrasting localities is under developed.

## **Art**

Standards of achievement in art are good in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- All pupils enjoy creating works of art and artefacts to take home. Throughout the school pupils have experience of working with a wide range of materials, including pencils, crayons, paint and clay and a good range of techniques including sketching, drawing, printing and modelling.
- The balance of activities is appropriate and they are often designed to extend and enhance pupils' understanding in other subjects.
- Work is often linked with the study and appreciation of the work of different artists and art history. Good use is made of visits to exhibitions and of artists' work to stimulate high quality responses from pupils.
- Standards in art are raised by the very high-quality displays of pupils' own work throughout the school. The work based on flowers, on display in the hall, shows clear and progressive development of style and technique. Regular opportunities to display their work in a variety of settings develops pupils' care and pride in producing work of good quality.
- In KS1, pupils learn how to mix paint and to express their ideas openly and freely. They create imaginative pictures from favourite books and respond to the work of Monet that enhances their understanding of colour mixing.
- They develop their ability to work with different materials by producing hand puppets of good quality and highly decorative coil pots.
- In KS2, there is a progressive development of style and technique. Older pupils blend colours effectively to produce different effects and engage in active discussion that enables them to develop their observation skills and explore different approaches to the same subject matter.
- The ceramic Tudor Roses created following a visit to a Tudor manor house and other artefacts of mermaids and leaves are of a particularly high quality.

### **Shortcomings**

- Access to artistic opportunities are not consistent across the key stages.

### **Music**

In the aspects of the music programme observed, standards of achievement are satisfactory in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in both key stages sing enthusiastically and in tune. They sing a wide repertoire of songs including some in Welsh.

- In KS1, pupils sing confidently and with evident enjoyment. They have a basic knowledge of rhythm and pulse as they repeat simple rhythmic patterns and beat out the rhythms of their names accurately.
- Pupils listen to a wide variety of music in many different genres from classical to rock and roll. They enter and leave assembly to music and are encouraged to listen and respond to the music they hear.
- Pupils know the names of a variety of musical instruments and how they are played. They explain their preference for certain musical instruments by alluding to the sounds they make. Pupils have had opportunity to explore more unusual musical instruments through workshops held at the school.
- Pupils' musical experiences have been enhanced through a variety of visitors to the school. These have included music-making through stories, workshops and opportunities to make instruments and discover how they work.
- Pupils combine voice and instruments effectively to perform. For example, some pupils, who are learning the guitar, accompanied their peers as they sang Greensleeves.
- In KS2, pupils sing an expanding repertoire of songs and are developing an awareness of performance. They talk simply about pitch, dynamics and pace. Individual pupils receive tuition in guitar, woodwind and brass and this is used to good effect in school concerts.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' skills in composing are under-developed.
- Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to appraise their own and others' work in music.
- Teachers' knowledge and expertise in music is limited and this has a direct effect on pupil achievement.

### **Physical education**

Standards of achievement in physical education are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils achieve good standards in gymnastics. Younger pupils achieve good standards in running, hopping, skipping, jumping and rolling and confidently combine these into movement sequences on the floor and on apparatus. They are developing good body awareness, a sense of space and direction and are making good progress in catching and passing skills.

- Older pupils use different parts of the body to move along benches and across mats and develop good sequences of different movement. They explain the things that they like about each other's movements and sequences and demonstrate confidently to the class. They handle apparatus safely and confidently, enjoy the activity and understand that exercise makes their heart beat faster.
- Younger pupils in KS2 achieve satisfactory standards when moving to music, such as when interpreting the sounds to represent the story of a river. Good standards are achieved in more structured country dance lessons where they quickly learn the routines of 'eights' and 'square' sets. They demonstrate good rhythmic steps as they perform competently to the music.
- Older pupils in KS2 achieve satisfactory standards in gymnastic activity, such as working in pairs to devise sequences of movement and balances on apparatus. Most pupils gain competence in swimming.
- Overall, pupils have a good range of physical education, which suitably includes gymnastics, dance, games, athletics and swimming. Older pupils in KS2 attend residential courses at outdoor pursuits centres and experience activities such as abseiling, canoeing and orienteering. Many pupils take part in extra-curricular games and gymnastic clubs and achieve good standards. School teams do well in local and national competitions, particularly in football and netball and a few talented individuals are selected for county and area teams.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils in KS2 do not sufficiently observe and evaluate the performance of others in order to improve their own performance.
- When games lessons are cancelled due to inclement weather, there are insufficient planned contingencies to use indoor facilities and this results in a loss of continuity and restricts pupils' progress.
- Resources for physical education, although adequate, include a significant amount of ageing and worn equipment. However, in the SDP the subject will be a target for development during the next school year.

### **Religious education**

Standards of achievement in religious education are satisfactory in both key stages.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils visit the local church regularly and have a good understanding of the uses and meanings of some artefacts such as the font, pulpit, lectern and cross.
- Christian celebrations and festivals are shared with the local community, both in school and in local churches.
- In KS1, pupils recall Bible stories and write them in their own words.

- They explore feelings through story and discussion. Older pupils write about feelings such as happiness and about right and wrong.
- They are introduced to some of the other world religions including some of their festivals and the practices associated with them.
- In KS2, pupils develop their understanding of the significance of places of worship by visiting religious sites in the locality.
- Pupils are aware that people can have different beliefs and faiths that should be respected.
- Good use is made of artefacts to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths. This is extended by visits to a Mosque and synagogue. Older pupils discuss the ceremony of Bar Mitzvah and relate it to a ceremony such as confirmation.

### **Shortcomings**

- Insufficient time is devoted consistently to the subject to ensure that pupils gain a progressive knowledge and understanding.
- Cross-curricular links do not consistently extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion progressively and coherently.
- The way in which the national language, culture and heritage provide a context for religious belief in Wales is under-developed.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection**

Following an inspection in the summer of 1996, the previous inspection report identified four key issues for action covering the need to:

1. develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality and standards of work and ensure dissemination of existing good practice;
2. establish a clearer focus on learning objectives to guide teaching and learning;
3. ensure a more consistent use of on-going assessment to promote pupils' learning and ensure that tasks are suitably differentiated to meet pupil' needs;
4. provide pupils in the nursery class with a wider range of experiences appropriate to their age and stage of development and enhance provision for imaginative play.

Since the last inspection significant progress has been made.

1. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is developing satisfactorily; curriculum responsibilities have been reassigned and roles and expectations clarified. Co-ordinators have accessed training, carried out an audit of current provision in their

subjects, reviewed policies, produced schemes of work and allocated time to visit other classes. Their impact on the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is variable.

2. Recent improvements in schemes of work together with a greater consistency in teacher planning are having an impact on pupils' learning. An agreed format for planning has been adopted which provides for a greater focus on learning objectives. These plans have contributed to an improvement in the quality of teaching, but now need to be further developed and adapted to better meet the needs of the school.
3. The school has established good procedures and practices for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' achievement and uses them satisfactorily in planning to improve pupils' performance and to promote higher standards.
4. Pupils in the nursery class now enjoy an improved range of activities. Standards are at least satisfactory in all aspects, however, there is some imbalance in adult support and intervention.

## **8.2 Key Issues for Action**

In order to build on its existing strengths the school needs to:

1. maintain and disseminate the many good and very good features of the school;
2. raise standards in those aspects and subjects identified as satisfactory overall;
3. further develop teaching strategies which enable pupils to become independent learners;
4. implement the planned procedures for curriculum co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning in their area of the curriculum;
5. further develop the role of the Senior Management Team to secure the improvements identified by the self-evaluation process;
6. fully comply with the requirements for recording and monitoring attendance.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Crickhowell Community Primary School
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Oakfield Drive Crickhowell Powys
Post-Code	NP8 1DY
Telephone Number	01873 810300

Headteacher	Sian Elizabeth Fielding
Date of appointment	September 1999
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Alyson Moon
Registered Inspector	Goronwy Morris
Dates of inspection	20 May 2002 to 23 May 2002

### B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	33	44	28	21	31	30	42	42	271

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	2	11

<i>Staffing information</i>		
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	21.9	:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10.5	:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	3	:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26.7	
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	24.1	:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Term 1	91	90	94	93
Term 2	92	92	95	94
Term 3	96	99	97	97

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	0
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## C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

### NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2001

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2001			Number of pupils in Y2: 32					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	63	33	0
		National	0	4	13	62	21	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	60	37	0
		National	0	4	13	54	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	3	60	37	0
		National	1	3	13	53	30	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	7	70	23	0
		National	0	5	13	70	12	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	10	73	17	0
		National	0	5	10	75	9	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	63	37	0
		National	0	3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	57	43	0
		National	0	2	9	60	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	0	47	53	0
		National	0	2	6	56	36	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	77	23	0
		National	0	2	10	67	21	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:	97	In Wales:	81

- 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: 2001**

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2001											Number of pupils in Y6: 35	
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	0	6	47	47	0
		National	0	0	0	1	1	6	19	48	25	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	41	47	0
		National	0	2	2	0	0	5	14	47	30	0
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	47	44	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	4	20	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	44	44	0
		National	0	2	2	0	0	4	18	42	32	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	59	35	0
		National	1	0	0	0	0	3	15	52	29	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	68	26	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	2	13	51	31	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:	84	In the school:	86
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

- D Pupils who are exempted 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

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	11.2%
Number of pupils excluded during the 12 months prior to inspection	0

## D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The school was inspected by a team of four inspectors who were in school for a total of 11 inspector-days.

Observation notes were made from 60 teaching sessions or activities. Discussions took place with governors, parents, teachers, support and ancillary staff, volunteer helpers and pupils from all teaching groups. Samples of work from each class, covering the whole curriculum, were looked at and noted.

In addition, the inspection team examined policies, curriculum plans, minutes of meetings, financial reports, school reviews and plans and the school development plan. Evidence from a pre-inspection meeting with the governing body was taken into account. Similarly there was a separate meeting attended by the parents of 18 pupils and views also expressed in the 92 questionnaires completed.

## E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

<b>Team Members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mr. G. Morris Registered Inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, history, art, religious education	Context. Main findings. Standards achieved in subjects. Quality of Teaching. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leadership and efficiency. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Mrs S. Mewies Lay Inspector		Behaviour. Attendance. Partnerships.
Mrs J. Mitchell Team Member	Early Years, English, Welsh as a second language, geography, music.	Key skills. Curriculum. Self-evaluation and school improvement.
Mr. J. Phillips Team Member	Science, information technology, physical education.	Assessment, Recording and Reporting. Special educational needs. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare.

The inspection team would like to thank all parents, governors, staff and pupils for their assistance and co-operation at all stages of the inspection.