

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

***NORTH ROAD INFANT SCHOOL
CROESYCEILIOG
CWMBRAN***

School Number: 670-2210

Date of Inspection: 12-16 November 2001

by

***MRS M E EVANS
Registered Inspector***

Date: 3 January 2002

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

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

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

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

CONTENTS

1. CONTEXT	1
THE SCHOOL AND ITS PRIORITIES	1
2. MAIN FINDINGS	1
THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT	1
3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	4
3.1 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	4
3.2 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN KEY SKILLS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM	5
4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL	6
4.1 PUPILS' SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	6
4.2 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES	7
4.3 ATTENDANCE	7
5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION	8
5.1 TEACHING	8
5.2 ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING	8
5.3 CURRICULUM	9
5.4 SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PUPILS' WELFARE	10
5.5 PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SEN	11
5.6 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS	11
5.7 PARTNERSHIP WITH INDUSTRY	12
6. MANAGEMENT	12
6.1 QUALITY OF SELF-EVALUATION AND PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT	12
6.2 LEADERSHIP AND EFFICIENCY	13
6.3 STAFFING, ACCOMMODATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES	14
7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	15
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	15
PROVISION FOR THE UNDER-FIVES	15
ENGLISH	18
MATHEMATICS	18
SCIENCE	19
WELSH (SECOND LANGUAGE)	20
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY	21
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	21
HISTORY	22
GEOGRAPHY	23
ART	24
MUSIC	24
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	25
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	26
8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	26
8.1 PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION	26
8.2 KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION	28
APPENDIX	28
A. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL	28
B. SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	28
C. RESULTS OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS AND PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS	30
D. THE EVIDENCE BASE OF THE INSPECTION	30
E. COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSPECTION TEAM	31

1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

North Road Infant School is a local authority maintained school which serves the area on the outskirts of Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran. The school is a 3-7 infants' school and includes part-time nursery provision for 52 children. There are 233 pupils on roll. Children are admitted to the nursery class in the September after their third birthday and baseline assessments results indicate an average attainment for most children. The numbers of pupils on roll for the last three years have decreased slightly. Approximately 98 per cent of pupils are from English speaking homes and two per cent are from minority ethnic groups. There are no pupils from Welsh speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. The school aims to create a caring and happy environment in which all pupils are encouraged to develop to their full potential.

The school considers its catchment area to be neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged; ten per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals. The nature of the intake is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged and the intake comprises the full range of ability. There are 12 pupils (five per cent) on the school's Special Educational Needs (SEN) register; there are no pupils with a statutory statement of SEN.

The school was last inspected in 1995 and has met the targets set in its post-inspection action plan to improve curriculum provision and pupils' standards of achievement and most of the targets in the current School Development Plan (SDP). The focus for the year is to raise pupils' standards of achievement in literacy and the development of personal and social education. An analysis of the National Curriculum (NC) Assessment results is the basis for target setting to improve standards.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

North Road Infant School is a good school with high standards of achievement. The commitment of staff to raise standards, the pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to their work, contribute to the success of the school. The headteacher provides efficient, caring leadership and is ably supported by the deputy and staff who work well as an effective team.

Educational standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

- The educational standards achieved by children under five is good overall. They make good progress in all the areas of learning towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Baseline assessments indicate that attainment on entry is average for most children.
- Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

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

- Pupils' standards of achievement were very good in four per cent of lessons observed, good in 80 per cent and satisfactory in 16 per cent.
- Pupils' standards of achievement in the NC subjects and religious education are as follows:

English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Welsh second language	Good
Design and technology	Good
Information technology	Good
History	Good
Geography	Good
Art	Good
Music	Good
Physical education	Good
Religious education	Good

- Standards are good overall in English and pupils achieve very good standards in speaking and have good listening skills which they use effectively and confidently in many aspects of their work. They achieve good standards in reading and have good writing skills. Pupils benefit from the structured literacy sessions.
- Standards are good in mathematics and there is evidence that the numeracy strategies are having a beneficial effect on improving pupils' standards of achievement. In science, standards are good and pupils make good use of their investigative skills.
- The school's 2001 NC assessment results reflect the standards achieved in the core subjects, especially for level 3 in English, mathematics and science which are well above the national average.
- Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills across the curriculum are good. Standards achieved in literacy skills are good, especially in the use of speaking skills which are very good. The use of numeracy skills in different subjects is good. Pupils' use of a range of information and communication technology (ICT) for different purposes is good.

Ethos of the school

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The high standards in values promoted by the school reflect the positive and caring ethos which permeates all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good and have a positive impact on standards achieved. There is a very small minority of pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour, which at times, affects the learning of others.
- Levels of attendance are good. Punctuality at the start of the school day and for individual lessons is satisfactory.

Quality of education

- The quality of teaching was very good in eight per cent of lessons observed, good in 76 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 16 per cent. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the majority of the subjects they teach but are less

secure in the Desirable Outcomes for Children under Five. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks to increase pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Lesson planning does not always clearly identify learning objectives and key skills across the curriculum.

- The school has good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress. The accuracy and consistency of the school's procedures for assessing pupils are satisfactory. Summative assessments are good but continuous assessments are not always directly linked to clear learning objectives of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The quality of reports to parents is good. They provide a clear picture of pupils' progress in all subjects.
- Curriculum provision is satisfactory and complies with statutory requirements. The quality of the curriculum for children under five is satisfactory with elements of good practice. The schemes of work in each subject are effective in providing for progression and continuity of skills, knowledge and understanding but do not address the key skills across the curriculum. The quality of planning is satisfactory but is inconsistent in focusing on clear learning objectives, linked to assessment opportunities.
- The school provides a good standard of educational support and personal guidance for pupils. There are good procedures for promoting the well-being, health and safety of pupils. However, there are concerns regarding the safety of pupils due to the unsatisfactory condition of the school boundary fence and front entrance.
- The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good and complies with the Code of Practice. Pupils make good progress in line with the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs).
- Partnerships between the school and parents, the community, schools and other institutions are good. Parents are well informed about the activities of the school and together with the community, play an important part in promoting high standards. The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

Management

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. There are effective procedures for evaluating pupils' standards of achievement and the school carefully monitors the progress made towards achieving targets.
- The school manages its resources efficiently and budget planning reinforces the aims of the school, ensuring good value for money. The school's monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are effective in identifying areas for development and training needs of staff. Targets for improvement are set and are incorporated into the SDP.
- The SDP is an effective, working document which identifies appropriate priorities and targets and includes success criteria, identified responsibilities, planned expenditure, time schedules and evaluations. The governing body ensures that budget setting relates efficiently to the school's educational priorities in the SDP, over a three year period.
- The overall provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good and has a beneficial impact on pupils' standards of achievement. There are a good number of staff who are well qualified and experienced. The teachers and pupils are well

supported in the classroom by nursery and classroom assistants. All staff are deployed to good effect to promote pupils' learning.

- The school has ample space for the number of pupils and the building is well maintained. Good use is made of all available space to provide a good standard of working environments for pupils. There are good quality displays of pupils' work which are effective in celebrating their achievements. The provision and quality of resources is good and staff and pupils make effective use of all available books, materials and equipment.
- The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors are informed of the work of the school through the curriculum committee and there are formal curriculum links with subject co-ordinators in order to monitor provision and standards of achievement.
- The quality of leadership and management of the school is very good. The school's aims and values promote a caring ethos and high standards; they give a clear sense of purpose and direction for the school.
- Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in meeting the targets set in the action plan which addresses the key issues from the previous inspection report. These include improved co-ordinator roles, the provision of support staff, improved resources and improved reports to parents.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Pupils' standards of achievement were very good in four per cent of lessons observed, good in 80 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 16 per cent.

- Standards of achievement of children under five are good, overall. They make good progress in all the areas of learning, especially in personal and social development, where standards are very good. By the age of five, the majority of children exceed the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Baseline assessments indicate that attainment on entry to the nursery is average for most children.
- In KS1, standards are good overall in English and pupils achieve very good standards in speaking skills which they use confidently, especially in drama and assemblies. Their listening skills are good and pupils listen attentively in lessons and respond well to questions and instructions. They achieve good standards in reading and writing skills and make good progress in both. Pupils benefit from the structured literacy sessions and the study of text in 'Big Books'.
- Standards are good in mathematics and the use of numeracy strategies are having a beneficial effect on improving pupils' standards of achievement. In science, standards are good and pupils are making good progress in developing their investigative skills.
- The 2001 NC Assessment results reflect the high standards achieved in the core subjects. In English, 97 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above in the reading test with 52 per cent achieving level 3. In the writing test, 97 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above with 37 per cent achieving level 3. In the mathematics test, 99 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above with 63 per cent achieving level 3. All these results are well above the national average. Teacher assessments in science indicated

that pupils' achievements were well above the national average with 97 per cent of pupils achieving level 2 or above and 41 per cent of pupils achieving level 3. When compared with other schools nationally, where 9-16 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, the results are in the upper quartile of best performing schools.

- In the foundation subjects, standards of achievement are good in all NC subjects and religious education; pupils make good progress in improving their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- All pupils make good progress towards targets for improvement set by the school in relation to national criteria. The targets are based on the effective assessment of pupils' achievements as well as the results of standard assessment tests (SATs). Those pupils with SEN make good progress towards the targets set in their IEPs.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills across the curriculum are good. Standards achieved in literacy skills are good, especially in speaking skills which are very good. The use of numeracy skills in different subjects is good. Pupils' use of a range of ICT for different purposes is good.

- Children under five make good use of the key skills in many aspects of their work in all the areas of learning. They benefit from the strong support provided in the nursery to help them listen with interest and concentration and speak clearly. The provision of creative play activities is very effective in promoting language skills in the nursery. Children make effective use of their early reading and writing skills across the curriculum. They consolidate their knowledge of mathematics through counting, ordering and matching activities as well as through scientific and technological investigations. They use computer equipment confidently in order to enhance their learning.
- In KS1, pupils use their speaking skills very well in both English and Welsh. They speak clearly and audibly when responding to questions, describing events and taking part in discussion. They speak with confidence during drama performances and assemblies. Pupils' listening skills are very good and they listen carefully with concentration, responding appropriately and effectively to what they have heard.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and they value reading as a source of information and pleasure. By the end of the key stage, pupils are beginning to read accurately, expressively and with an understanding of a variety of texts in different subjects.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good use of their writing skills for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. They write fluently and accurately and successfully write in a variety of forms, including reports, stories, poems, letters and extended writing.
- Pupils' overall standards in numeracy across the curriculum are good. They make good use of their numerical skills in problem solving tasks and measure and calculate accurately. They make effective use of data handling skills particularly in geography and science. They handle numbers confidently in mental, oral and written tasks.
- The overall standards in using ICT are good and this successfully supports pupils' learning. Pupils use information technology equipment and software confidently and

develop basic key skills systematically through the school. Pupils make good use of ICT to record and present their writing and in handling information to produce graphs in subjects such as geography and science. Good use is made of CD-ROMs and pupils are beginning to develop their research skills.

- Pupils with SEN make good progress in improving basic language skills in line with the targets set in their IEPs and they make appropriate use of ICT to support their learning.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

- The aims of the school provide a sound basis for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils respond well to the good provision and achieve good standards.
- Based upon its overriding aim of courtesy and respect towards others at all times, the school is a caring community. Pupils enjoy school life and are eager to participate in a variety of activities. Staff provide good role models and pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and supportive towards each other. The quality of relationships within the school is good and, with a few exceptions, pupils are respectful to each other and to adults.
- In planned daily acts of collective worship and in everyday activities, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop an understanding of their own and other people's lives, together with a growing awareness of the impact their actions may have upon others. The quality of pupils' singing and their contribution in taking assembly adds significantly to the general ethos of worship. Prayers of thanks held during the school day and suitable opportunities for reflection provided during collective worship also contribute towards the spiritual development of pupils. Teachers give all pupils appropriate opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings in class lessons known as 'circle time'.
- Pupils helped to formulate the school's 'pupil promise' which forms part of the Home/School Agreement and, from a young age, are fully aware of the difference between right and wrong. Solid foundations for personal and social development are laid in the nursery for the good behaviour seen across the school. Pupils understand the consequences of undesirable conduct. They demonstrate respect for property and the environment.
- Pupils work happily alongside each other and collaborate in small groups. They can be relied upon to undertake given tasks without immediate adult supervision, but opportunities for them to take initiative and to have responsibilities are limited.
- The school moves out into the community to share harvest gifts to local senior citizens and helps pupils to become aware of others less fortunate than themselves by contributing to a variety of charitable organisations.
- The curriculum successfully reflects the language, culture and heritage of Wales. A suitable range of visits and visitors make a good contribution to the development of pupils' cultural understanding.

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- Suitable opportunities to learn of other faiths, cultures and traditions are successfully provided within religious education, history, art and music. Where possible, visitors are invited to talk to the pupils about their customs and traditions.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The quality of pupils' attitudes and behaviour is good. Standards of behaviour in the school are good and show an improvement over the previous inspection.

- The school is a happy, caring and orderly community, and the headteacher and her committed staff have successfully created an environment conducive to learning.
- Throughout the school day pupils are polite and courteous and relationships within the school are mutually supportive.
- Attitudes to learning amongst the vast majority of pupils are good. The pupils are eager to acquire knowledge, being attentive and interested in their work. These attitudes make a good contribution to standards of achievement.
- There is a very small minority of pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour, which is demanding of teacher time and attention adversely affecting the learning of others. This situation is exacerbated where classroom management is inappropriately focused.
- The school has a good behaviour policy and continually explores strategies and procedures to maintain, and improve upon current levels. They make good use of an advisory teacher in behaviour management and have effective support from the educational psychologist.
- Rewards are used as an effective part of the management of behaviour. Teaching and supervisory staff have a consistent approach to behaviour management.
- The school has appropriate policy guidelines for the prevention of bullying. It is effective in preventing incidences of bullying through care and attention and the good ethos that permeates the community.

4.3 Attendance

Pupils' attendance levels are good. The school has maintained the good attendance levels shown in the previous inspection.

- The school works diligently to improve attendance levels, which are approximately an average of 93 per cent. Parents are reminded of their responsibilities through regularly contact and through the Home/School Agreement.
- Pupils' attendance is monitored regularly by the headteacher and the deputy head. They consistently examine registers to check accuracy, identify patterns of absence and to produce weekly and monthly reports.
- When concerns arise regarding individual performance parents are consulted and the school receives good support from the Educational Welfare Officer.
- The large majority of pupils arrive on time. However, a few pupils are late at the start of the school day and their lack of punctuality does, on occasion, interfere with the learning of others. Occasionally, lessons do not start punctually, which results in loss of teaching and learning time.

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- Class teachers are efficient in registration procedures and the completion of registers meets the requirements of Circular 3/99.
 - The school has a good attendance policy. However, whole school targets are not set to improve upon current performance.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching was very good in eight per cent, good in 76 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 16 per cent.

- The quality of teaching of children under five is good in the nursery and satisfactory with elements of good practice in the reception classes. The staff in the nursery have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and set high expectations to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in the six areas of learning. This is less secure in the reception classes where planning is based on NC subjects rather than the Desirable Outcomes in each of the areas of learning.
- In KS1, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of all the subjects they teach. They make good use of professional training to improve their expertise. Their training in the use of literacy and numeracy strategies is having a beneficial impact on improving standards.
- Teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks to improve pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The preliminary oral session often consolidates previous learning and encourages pupils to participate in discussion. On occasion, this session tends to be too long and slows down the pace of the lesson. Lesson planning does not always identify learning objectives, matched clearly to assessment opportunities.
- In the majority of lessons, work is well matched to the needs of all pupils with appropriate differentiated tasks set for them as individuals, pairs or groups. All pupils are provided with good support especially those with SEN, who are well supported by the classroom support assistants.
- Lessons are well organised and teachers manage their pupils well and have good relationships with them. A good range of teaching techniques and organisational strategies are used effectively for different activities and purposes. The plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used well to consolidate skills and knowledge, to assess understanding and to evaluate progress.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good overall. The system is manageable and provides a good record of summative assessments, but there is a lack of consistency across the school in the recording of pupils' on-going achievements related to teachers' planning, especially in the foundation subjects.

- There is a detailed policy in place that clearly outlines the requirements for each year group and offers helpful practical suggestions.

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- In the nursery, the standards of assessment are very good. Baseline assessments are used effectively as a basis for lesson planning and focused activities are assessed and later revisited to ensure progress has been made.
 - In English and mathematics, the results of standardised tests are used effectively to identify any areas of weakness and to give additional support. Useful target sheets for the year are placed at the front of pupils' books then highlighted and dated when achieved. Pupils are suitably encouraged to be involved in the assessment of their work and in the setting of their targets.
 - Pupils with SEN are assessed thoroughly using appropriate tests and good records of pupils' progress are kept by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The IEPs for pupils with special needs are good and appropriate targets are set for pupils to achieve.
 - Teachers' short-term plans include an area for evaluation of the week's lessons and some teachers make useful notes of pupils' achievements to help with future planning. However, this practice is not applied consistently across the school.
 - Portfolios of accurately assessed work from each year group are kept and provide a good record of achievement from across the ability range. Examples of work for English, mathematics and science have priority, but examples of some other subjects are beginning to build a fuller picture of standards in the school.
 - The quality of reports to parents is good. They outline the strengths and weaknesses of pupils and, especially for pupils at the end of Y1, have clear guidance for their future needs.
 - Teachers mark pupils' work regularly which, at its best, is encouraging and makes suitable assessment comments.
 - Arrangements for consultation meetings with parents are good. Parents are invited to discuss the progress of their children with teachers at termly meetings and access to speak to staff at other times is good.

5.3 Curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory.

- The curriculum for children under five is good in the nursery and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. There is an effective scheme of work for each of the six areas of learning with clear learning objectives for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in each area. A good range of relevant experiences and practical activities are provided and they stimulate interest, curiosity and enjoyment, promoting good progress in the acquisition of basic skills and ensuring that children become confident and enthusiastic learners.
- The curriculum for children under five in the reception classes is satisfactory but is based more on NC programmes of study rather than the Desirable Outcomes of practical investigation, exploration and physical activity.
- In KS1, the curriculum is broad, relevant and suitably balanced. It complies with statutory requirements, including the teaching of religious education and a daily act of collective worship. The organisation of the curriculum is good with sufficient time allocated to all subjects.

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- There are appropriate policies and schemes of work for all subjects. The schemes of work are effective in providing for continuity and progression of the NC Programmes of Study across the key stage but do not address the key skills across the curriculum.
 - Curriculum planning is detailed and is based on termly themes and half-termly topics. The medium and short-term planning is not clearly focused on learning objectives and the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The planning of assessment opportunities is not directly linked to learning objectives.
 - The planning of key skills across the curriculum is not clearly focused in promoting pupils' standards of achievement in the key skills of literacy, numeracy, ICT and problem solving skills in subjects such as science and design and technology.
 - The school makes good use of home/school tasks to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. It is effective in enlisting the support of parents, especially in monitoring and supporting their children's progress towards achieving individual targets for improvement.
 - The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for pupils to undertake educational visits, such as 'The Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagans' and succeeds in extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of Wales and its heritage.
 - The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social education and includes health and hygiene education and sex education through pupils' study of living things in science.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The quality of support and guidance and the attention paid to pupils' welfare is good.

- The school provides a welcoming and caring environment in which pupils feel safe and happy. The headteacher and staff know pupils well and take a keen interest in their personal development, well-being and academic progress. The views of parents, where these are known, are that the overwhelming majority of pupils are very happy to come to school.
- The policy for the promotion of equal opportunities ensures all pupils have equal access to every aspect of school life. Despite a clear statement to the contrary in the policy however, pupils are sometimes organised and divided according to their gender.
- The school makes good arrangements for pupils' personal and educational guidance. Staff know their pupils well and are responsive to their needs. Pupils' achievements are celebrated and targets for further improvement are clearly communicated to them.
- The arrangements for Child Protection are satisfactory. The headteacher is the named person with responsibility for Child Protection and has received appropriate training and shared the information with staff. The school follows the procedures in the local education authority (LEA) guidelines, but the recently formulated school policy has yet to be discussed by the staff. There are appropriate procedures in place for the prevention of bullying.
- Aspects of sex education and drugs awareness are incorporated appropriately into the science and personal and social education programmes.

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- The school has good quality statements and procedures for dealing with routine matters such as educational visits, contacting parents and the administration of medicines.
 - Although it has previously been noted by the school and plans made to rectify the situation, there are concerns regarding the safety of pupils and staff due to the unsatisfactory state of the school boundary fence and front entrance.

5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their IEPs.

- There is a comprehensive policy for SEN which complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. It gives clear guidance to all those involved in the SEN procedures. There is a named governor for SEN who provides good support to the SENCO and successfully monitors the implementation of the policy and pupils' progress.
- The SENCO, in consultation with the class teachers, is responsible for overseeing all SEN provision according to the Code of Practice and ensures the effective liaison between class teachers and outside support staff, including the SEN support teacher.
- There are 12 pupils on the school's SEN register, eight at Stage 1, 13 at Stage 2, six at Stage 3. Teachers and the classroom assistants provide good support for pupils in language and numeracy skills.
- There are good systems for identifying and assessing the needs of pupils with SEN, especially in the early years where baseline assessments provide information for early intervention. The quality of IEPs is good and realistic targets are set for pupils to achieve. At Stage 1 a 'concern sheet' is completed for any identified learning difficulties and class teachers are responsible for planning the targets and for their implementation. At Stage 2 onwards, the SENCO prepares the targets in the IEPs, in consultation with the class teachers. Pupils' progress is reviewed termly, the IEPs are modified, parents are informed of developments and are encouraged to be involved in supporting their children. Detailed records are kept of pupils' progress.
- All pupils with SEN are provided with equal access to the curriculum through well differentiated tasks, which ensure that pupils work at the appropriate level of ability. There is effective liaison between the SENCO, the class teachers, the SEN support teacher and outside agencies.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good and makes a good contribution to standards.

- The school has good, mutually supportive relationship with parents and has an established Home/School Agreement.
- Parents appreciate the welcome shown by the school and a significant number of parents help in day-to-day activities making a good contribution to standards of achievement.

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- There is a small but effective Parent Teacher Association, that raises funds for the school.
 - The school successfully informs parents of the educational programme. There are effective initiatives to enable parents to assist their children in enjoying reading and with home/school activities. Almost all parents take advantage of the opportunity to attend the three formal consultation evenings held each year.
 - Community partnerships are well established and wide ranging; these links, of which the 'Roots Torfaen Project' is particularly impressive, enrich pupils' understanding of the local community and provide a positive sense of identity.
 - Links with other schools are fostered to develop educational programmes. Pupils from four local comprehensive schools undertake work experience in the school.
 - Transition is well established, carefully managed and provides a smooth progression for pupils into the adjacent junior school. Entry into the nursery is sympathetically managed.
 - The school has a primary partnership agreement with University of Wales College Newport that provides teacher training opportunities for students. Also, NNEB students from a local college take placements in the school. These relationships bring educational benefits to the school.
 - The school has a good relationship with the LEA who provides good support to the school.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Partnership with industry is satisfactory. The school has established satisfactory partnerships with the world of work.

- The school does not have a policy on partnership with industry to provide a focus for further development of current links.
- Existing links are in place with a number of organisations and have successfully enhanced pupils' learning in a range of subject areas and provided an understanding of the world of work.
- The 'Roots of Torfaen' project and the information technology project with a major local engineering company have been effective in bringing educational benefits to pupils and assisting in staff development.
- In general, work placements as part of staff development programmes are not currently undertaken.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- The school has effective procedures for evaluating its strengths and weaknesses. The school has begun to implement a self-evaluation procedure which has a clear framework for evaluating performance and quality. The headteacher and staff are committed to improving standards. They make good use of assessment data,

monitoring procedures and the action plan from the previous inspection to evaluate standards and plan for improvement. A detailed analysis is made of pupils' assessment test results, including the results of baseline and NC standard assessment tests.

- Targets have been set for improving pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy and ICT skills. The targets are realistic and appropriate and have been incorporated into the SDP as a result of the self-evaluation process.
- The SDP is effective in moving the school forward. Each action plan has clear targets, success criteria, planned expenditure, time schedules and evaluation of progress towards achieving targets. The plans are reviewed regularly by staff and governors in order to improve the quality of provision and raise the standard of pupils' achievements.
- The school monitors the progress made towards achieving the targets through monitoring pupils' work, teachers' planning and the quality of teaching. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the school has met the targets in the action plan to improve curriculum provision and the quality of teaching.
- Monitoring procedures are developing well and are effective in identifying areas for improvement. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum co-ordinators monitor the provision and standards in each subject.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The quality of leadership and management of the school is very good. The school's aims and values promote a caring ethos and high standards, and give a clear sense of purpose and direction for the school.

- The school has a very good ethos, including a commitment to equal opportunity, which is successfully promoted by staff and governors. They succeed in achieving the school aims in providing a caring community in which pupils feel valued and encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and support for the staff in improving educational provision and standards of achievement.
- All staff are responsible for an aspect of the curriculum and are effective in providing leadership in those areas and in monitoring provision and standards. Resources are managed efficiently, standards are carefully monitored and regular audits are made to identify areas for development and staff training needs.
- The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. The governors are well informed and understand their roles and responsibilities. There is a well organised committee structure for managing aspects such as finance and the curriculum. The governing body is well informed of curriculum developments. There are formal curriculum links with subject co-ordinators in order for each governor to monitor the quality of education and pupils' standards of achievement. The governors make regular visits to the school; some help in the classrooms and with ICT support.
- The headteacher and governing body aim to maintain and improve standards of achievement and the quality of educational provision by setting targets in the SDP

and through the process of self-evaluation. The current targets are to raise standards in literacy and personal and social education.

- The governing body, through its finance committee, ensures that budget-setting relates efficiently to the school's educational priorities in the SDP over a three year period.
- The school has a delegated budget which is well administered. The LEA finance department provides effective advice and support. The governing body finance committee monitors spending and sets the budget which is ratified by the whole governing body. There is a surplus under-spend, a contingency budget, which will be used to counteract costs due to falling rolls and the long-term absence of two members of staff.
- The school had a recent financial audit and is addressing the recommendations made in the audit report. The school manages its resources efficiently and ensures good value for money.
- There is a clerical assistant who manages the financial administration efficiently, and working with the headteacher, undertakes administration tasks to ensure the efficient day-to-day running of the school.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The overall provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good and has a beneficial effect on pupils' standards of achievement.

- The school is generously staffed, with class sizes ranging from 19 to 26 pupils. This contributes greatly to the good standards achieved in the school. All teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced to teach this age group.
- Job descriptions are in place for all members of staff. Curriculum roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- Valuable support is provided by all non-teaching staff, who contribute to the smooth running of the school.
- There is a good system in place for continuing professional development. Training is linked to the SDP, teachers' co-ordinator roles and personal professional development, as funds allow. Staff attend appropriate in-service training (INSET) and feed back the relevant points at staff meetings.
- For support and guidance, newly appointed teachers are allocated a mentor, a teacher of the same age group. Newly qualified teachers have suitable access to meetings and training organised specifically for them.
- Staff take part in confidential, annual professional discussion meetings with the headteacher. An evaluation of current practice is made and areas for future personal and professional developments are identified.
- The school is situated in a large, pleasant site shared with the junior school. The well-maintained buildings provide adequate space for the number of pupils on roll and the delivery of the curriculum. It is used effectively and pupils achieve high standards. Colourful displays in classrooms and common areas celebrate pupils' achievements and provide a cheerful environment.

- The fenced outdoor play area adjoining the nursery affords the appropriate space for physical development, but children in the reception year do not have access to a similar provision. They do not receive their daily entitlement to partake in physical development skills of climbing, swinging and balancing, according to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- The hiring of a security guard by the schools during summer holidays combated the vandalism and inappropriate use of the grounds that had been experienced. Despite plans being made to replace the boundary fence, it remains in a poor condition in places and the safety of all in the school is a cause for concern.
- Resources for the teaching of the NC subjects and areas of learning are plentiful and of good quality. The school makes good use of the local and wider community resources and pupils undertake appropriate visits to support their learning.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the Under-Fives

The educational provision for children under five is good in the nursery and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. In the reception classes, provision is satisfactory with elements of good practice but is based more on subjects rather than the promotion of the Desirable Outcomes of practical investigation, exploration and physical activity within the areas of learning. Standards of achievement for all children are good overall, in all the areas of learning; they are very good in personal and social development. By the age of five, the majority of children meet and some exceed the Desirable Outcomes. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis, at the beginning of the year after their third birthday and baseline assessment results indicate an average attainment for most children.

Good features

Language, literacy and communications skills

- In the nursery, three-year-old children make a good start in developing their skills in language, literacy and communication. They respond well to stories, poems and rhymes and they enjoy listening to stories, including those on the listening centre. They listen attentively to the teacher and follow instructions appropriately. The children talk with increasing confidence about their experiences and are developing their vocabulary to express their thoughts coherently. They take part enthusiastically in role play situations, such as the 'Birthday Parties' and make good attempts to talk and write about their activities. Through Welsh language activities, they are becoming familiar with vocabulary and respond well during question and answer sessions. They handle books carefully and enjoy sharing them with others. They recognise and write their own names and recognise letters by their shape and sound, which they use successfully in their early attempts at writing.
- In the reception classes, four-year-old children are confidently developing their language skills and enjoy taking part in the role-play activities in the play areas. They take part in conversations, they contribute well to group discussions and communicate their own ideas and beliefs. They listen attentively to others and take account of what they say. They take turns and speak clearly and audibly and use an increasing range of vocabulary. Children are developing their reading skills well; they have a good

knowledge of phonics and can read words and sentences in books. They enjoy sharing books with others, especially those in the story sacks. They make good attempts at writing and some successfully read what they have written. Children are familiar with Welsh language patterns and respond well to oral activities.

Shortcomings

- Four-year-old children have limited opportunities to practice emergent writing skills in their play activities.

Personal and social development

- In the nursery, children make very good progress in their personal and social development. They show confidence and self-respect and are able to establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They are well behaved and understand the difference between right and wrong.
- In the reception classes, children's behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to their work. They respond well to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to new areas of learning. During 'circle time' children are confident to express their feelings about what is special to them and respond with empathy to the thoughts of others.

Mathematical development

- In the nursery, children use mathematical language appropriately when sorting by colour, size and shape. They match numbers to pictures and count, order and compare everyday objects. They recognise and name simple 3-D shapes. They successfully use mathematics as an integral part of activities such as cooking, building with bricks, sand and water play. They recognise and count numbers up to 10 and can order the numbers successfully. They enjoy singing number rhymes and action songs.
- In the reception classes, children are increasing their knowledge and understanding of number during oral work. They can count to 10, some are able to count backwards, they recognise and write numbers to 10 and order them correctly. They use mathematical language appropriately and use apparatus successfully to aid calculations. They understand the purpose of money and recognise the value of coins. They recognise and name 2-D and some 3-D shapes correctly and are beginning to use non-standard measures confidently.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- In the nursery, children demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the environment by talking about their families and where they live, and by describing events in their lives in the past and the present. Through their investigations of fruit and vegetables, children clearly describe their colour and shape and recall their names. They correctly identify the missing fruit or vegetable when one is removed from the tray. They explore and select appropriate materials to make collage pictures using cutting and sticking skills successfully. They use a computer and roller-ball mouse confidently to select different options.
- In the reception classes, children are developing their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. They have a good knowledge of materials and recognise and

name the materials from which objects are made. Whilst making jelly, children understand that it changes from a solid to a liquid when dissolved in hot water. Whilst reading the Big Book about 'The Journey' children are able to name geographical features such as rivers, mountains and waterfalls. Children enjoyed observing the duck eggs hatching and the development and growth of the ducklings. They are developing manipulative skills well, using scissors, glue and a range of tools for different activities. They use computers confidently, including word games and a program for drawing and designing pictures.

Physical development

- In the nursery, children are confidently developing their physical skills during movement lessons. They move confidently with increasing control and co-ordination and have a good awareness of space and others around them. They know which parts of the body to move and successfully vary the pace and direction of movements. Good use is made of the outside area to develop children's physical skills of climbing, balancing and sliding. They handle tools and construction equipment competently and make good use of malleable materials, such as dough, to make shapes and models.
- In the reception classes, children increase their confidence and co-ordination when moving and when using apparatus. They understand and explain clearly the necessity for warm-up activities. They perform different movements at varying levels, speeds and directions with good awareness of space and others around them. They handle apparatus carefully and safely and successfully transfer their movements to the apparatus. When using the 'parachute', children listen carefully to the music and to instruction to move the balls that represent characters in the story.

Shortcomings

- Four-year-old children make limited use of the outside play area and equipment to develop their physical skills of climbing, swinging, sliding and balancing.

Creative development

- In the nursery, children use paint and brushes confidently to produce a variety of artwork. They experiment with printing techniques using sponge, leaves and finger printing to make attractive printed patterns. They use a variety of media and textures to make effective class friezes. In music, they enjoy singing a variety of songs and nursery rhymes. They confidently explore sounds and instruments to create their own music. They can play instruments in time with their singing, keeping a steady beat.
- In the reception classes, children experiment with paint mixing to produce effective hand prints. They investigate pattern-making techniques by successfully making stained glass window patterns in tissue paper within the outline of Elmer the elephant. In music, they are becoming more familiar with different styles of music and songs. They successfully accompany their singing with a variety of instruments, keeping a steady beat. They experiment with sounds from a range of instruments to create their own music. They recognise and correctly name different instruments and describe clearly whether they are shakers, tappers or scrapers.

Shortcomings

- Children have limited experiences to draw from observation and to work in three dimensions during creative art activities.

English

Pupils' standards of achievement are good overall. Standards are very good in speaking skills and good in listening, reading and writing. There is evidence that standards have improved since the introduction of the literacy strategy.

Good features

- Very good standards are achieved in speaking and pupils speak clearly and confidently in lessons. They enjoy taking part in drama activities; they speak confidently and audibly to an audience, especially in assemblies and school productions. Their listening skills are good and pupils respond well to questions and instructions. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils are improving their ability to contribute to discussion and show confidence to express their opinions. They work well together in groups and pairs to share their ideas and opinions, especially during 'circle time'. During plenary sessions, pupils confidently evaluate their work and offer clear suggestions for improvement.
- Standards in reading are good and pupils use a range of methods and strategies, including phonics to read new words. They make good progress to improve their fluency and accuracy, supported by class reading of Big Books and shared reading activities. Pupils are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents. There is a useful home/school reading system whereby parents and pupils choose books to read together. By the end of the key stage most pupils are reading fluently from a range of texts. They are able to discuss the contents of their books, re-tell the main events of stories and predict how stories will end. Pupils successfully locate information using non-fiction books and make good use of CD-ROMs to consolidate skills and find information about various subjects.
- The standard of pupils' writing is good and is varied in its range and purpose. There are good examples of descriptive writing, stories, poems, reports and letters. Good use is made of literacy strategies to identify word patterns, sentence patterns and punctuation in text, which pupils use in their own writing. They are familiar with the structure of a poem and recognise pairs of rhyming words. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils are confidently structuring their writing and use interesting phrases to create their stories.
- Pupils make good progress in improving their handwriting skills and sentence structure in their development towards independent writing. This is well presented with appropriate punctuation. Older pupils organise their work well and they plan, draft and improve their writing on paper and by using word processing skills. Pupils make good use of word books and dictionaries to find appropriate vocabulary.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress in developing their language skills in line with the targets set in their IEPs.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

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- Pupils show a good grasp of basic number processes and the language of mathematics.
 - Mental calculation is a prominent feature of numeracy sessions. Pupils in Y1 add and subtract numbers to 10 and beyond, they calculate missing numbers and count small amounts of money. Pupils have a good recall of simple addition and subtraction bonds to 10 and beyond.
 - A good understanding of place value is demonstrated in Y2, with pupils adding 10 to randomly chosen two-digit numbers.
 - In Y2, pupils read two-digit numbers and recognise sequences including odd and even numbers. They use their knowledge to sort numbers into sets using separate and intersecting Venn diagrams. They are starting to learn the multiplication tables.
 - Pupils learn to name familiar 2-D shapes and older pupils build upon this with less frequently encountered shapes such as hexagon, pentagon and octagon. They learn to name and recognise properties of well-known 3-D shapes. They use regular and irregular shapes to look for lines of symmetry and sort them accordingly.
 - In measurement, pupils in Y1 learn the mathematical language of comparison and older pupils use standard measures of length and capacity, for example, to support their scientific investigations. They recognise the relationship between metres and centimetres and estimate lengths using these units of measurement.
 - Through the programming of a floor robot, pupils develop an appropriate awareness of angles and turns.
 - Pupils collect data and present it in different graphical forms on paper and on computer. Pupils in Y1 use a frequency table to collect information about their favourite season and translate this information into a block graph and Y2 produce graphs about the types of homes they live in. They interpret the information with confidence.
 - Older pupils undertake simple investigations and present their results mathematically. For example, they produce a block graph to show the frequency of totals made when throwing two dice.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Pupils carry out a good range of practical activities and focused scientific investigations. They record their findings neatly in a variety of suitable ways, such as tables, charts, and drawing, and through ICT.
- Pupils are successfully developing their skills of scientific enquiry and, by the end of the key stage, higher achieving pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of the notion of fair testing. Younger pupils make related observations while older pupils

make predictions, measure length, volume and time and, on occasion, attempt to give reasons for their findings.

- In their study of life processes and living things, younger pupils learn about foods that are healthy or unhealthy and the rudiments of the life cycle through watching caterpillars metamorphose. Older pupils learn about various habitats and investigate the needs of plants by keeping a diary of their growth. During their observations of duck eggs hatching in an incubator, pupils understand the life-cycle process of ducklings and observe their development and growth.
- When learning about materials and their properties, younger pupils sort materials according to their magnetic qualities and older pupils know that there are natural and man-made materials. They explain why the properties of materials are suited to specific purposes when looking at the way houses are built in various countries.
- Older pupils undertake a variety of investigations related to physical forces. For example, they predict what they think will happen before they find out how far cars travel on different surfaces. They measure the distances in centimetres and make attempts to explain their observations. Pupils in Y1 learn that pushing and pulling affects the speed at which objects travel. They understand that sounds are heard when they enter the ear.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh (second language)

Standards of achievement are good.

Good features

- Pupils respond well to incidental spoken Welsh at specific times during the day. They are able to greet each other in Welsh and respond well to commands. They confidently discuss simple likes and dislikes and the weather. Pupils know the words of poems and songs which they recite and sing with good pronunciation. They enjoy singing and performing a selection of songs and action rhymes in Welsh.
- The pupils are familiar with a range of vocabulary; they know their colours, can count, name different foods and everyday objects. Older pupils know the vocabulary associated with parts of a house and successfully write the words as labels on their drawings of houses.
- Pupils enjoy stories in Welsh Big Books and make good attempts to read the texts. They listen carefully to questions and instructions, focusing on known sentence patterns and respond appropriately, showing an understanding of vocabulary. They use their knowledge of sentence patterns and vocabulary well, to write their own sentences.
- They respond well to questions about members of the family and make good attempts to answer in complete sentences, using known language patterns. They take an active and enthusiastic part in role-play activities, as they become more familiar with sentence patterns.
- Most pupils show a positive attitude to learning the language and teachers make it an enjoyable experience.

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- Pupils' awareness of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good and it promotes a sense of pride and belonging in the community.
 - Pupils make good use of computer programs and CD-ROMs to consolidate and record their use of the Welsh language.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement are good.

Good features

- Pupils make good progress in their skills of designing and making. They work with a good variety of new and reclaimed materials to make an appropriate variety of objects.
- By Y2, pupils make increasingly detailed plans that identify which materials will be used. During the construction of their artefacts, pupils modify and make new plans as necessary, giving reasons for the changes.
- Pupils design and make original and unique products choosing from a bank of skills and methods they have previously been taught. They learn about properties of materials, for example, air drying clay when making diva candle holders, to help them to understand the capabilities and limitations of use.
- An evaluation of commercially produced cards is made before pupils design and make cards with moving parts, for Mothering Sunday and Easter. Pupils use a computer program to design and print cards for Christmas, which are then enhanced in ways chosen by pupils.
- Pupils use basic mechanisms appropriately such as axles and moving joint when making vehicles and 'skeletons'.
- At the end of Y2, pupils make moving vehicles to their own designs. They use construction kits to aid design and assembly before using a variety of materials to make and finish the vehicles in methods of their own choosing. The products are made and finished carefully.
- Older pupils evaluate their own and the work of others, for example, after having made board games, voicing opinions and sometimes making suggestions for improvement.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

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- Pupils make good use information technology in a wide range of subjects. They are developing an appropriate range of skills.
 - Younger pupils write simple sentences related to topic work. They change the colour and size of the font and make lists using the 'enter' key.
 - They use the keyboard to choose from menus and word banks and use the printer with increasing confidence.
 - Older pupils develop their skills and produce longer pieces of text and poems. They use capital letters, spaces between words and correct punctuation. Mistakes are rectified using delete and backspace and the arrow keys help them to move around the text.
 - A change of font and the addition of a border improve presentation when, for example, pupils make posters in Welsh. They know how to save and, with help, retrieve their work.
 - Pupils make good use of the symmetry tool to draw teddy bears that are then flooded with colours of pupils' own choosing. The drawing program is also used to good effect to make attractive firework pictures and cards for Christmas or other events.
 - Pupils use a variety of data and printouts effectively to support several subjects. They devise their own questionnaire to find their favourite teddy and enter data, produce pictograms and block graphs to show, for example, their eye colour and favourite colours. In geography, they record weather patterns over a given period of time. Older pupils label the axes of their graphs.
 - Pupils develop decision-making skills through the modelling of rooms and completion of weather maps.
 - A programmable floor robot helps pupils to understand measures and turns.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Pupils are developing a sound understanding of how changes occur over time. They demonstrate an awareness of the passing of time by using the correct everyday language.
- They communicate orally and through written accounts and pictures.
- To develop an understanding of chronology, pupils make time lines related directly to different stages in their own lives, comparing activities they could undertake at various ages.
- Younger pupils learn about people from the past whose lives made changes that affect our lives today, such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes.
- Pupils in Y2 develop their understanding of their families' past through the 'Roots to Torfaen' project. They are encouraged to involve their family in finding out where they originated from and whether there is a family story that could be shared. Many

interesting and poignant tales have been related through this topic, which give added meaning and interest in the past.

- When learning about changes in the way we live today, pupils compare household goods from the Victorian era. They draw information from real objects and consider how difficult life must have been for the majority of people, for example, before electricity was invented.
- The pupils' ability to write well enhances their accounts of visits and other related topics. They use a sequence of correctly punctuated sentences to, for example, describe their visit to St Fagans.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Younger pupils study the local area, starting from the front door of their house. They learn their address and discuss what can be seen and heard on the way to school. They use their observations to answer simple questions and identify physical and human features of the area.
- Visits to the local shops and to a large supermarket help them to broaden their awareness of the wider world. They express opinions of what they like and dislike and plan a route around the store.
- Mapping skills are developed through the study of routes taken by fictional characters in familiar stories.
- Older pupils are developing a sound understanding of the local area and use appropriate vocabulary to describe it. They locate their homes on a large-scale map and use simple co-ordinates to describe the positions. Pupils are starting to develop an awareness of the points of the compass.
- Pupils use local and world maps, photographs and plans. They are able to recognise and name the countries of the United Kingdom on a map and are starting to use simple keys.
- Pupils make comparisons between their own school and a school in a village, exchanging photographs and information.
- Pupils develop an awareness of places beyond their own locality through the study of houses in other countries. They learn about the differences in climates and how these affect the way houses are built and the materials used.
- The use of ICT is successfully incorporated into pupils' geography lessons. They make graphs of weather data they have collected, place weather symbols on maps, make keys and write captions.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Art

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Younger pupils use paint confidently and use different types of brushes to paint effective portraits and paintings of characters in stories. Older pupils successfully experiment with mixing powder paint colours to paint their house from a preliminary sketch.
- Pupils worked with a local artist to create an impressive clay mural in the front entrance of the school, which successfully illustrates aspects of the local area. Year 2 pupils experiment with clay and make effective diva candle holders. They use a variety of tools to make attractive patterns in the clay.
- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists from different times and cultures. They study the work of Van Gogh and produce an attractive mural of sunflowers using pastels to add shades of colours. Older pupils study the drawings of a local artist, in particular a row of terraced houses, and produce their own effective charcoal drawings.
- Younger pupils study the work of Mondrian and make close observations of the use of line, shape and colour. They make good attempts to produce their own patterns on paper and on computer using lines, colours and shapes in the style of Mondrian.
- Year 2 pupils explore Hindu art and patterns, such as Rangoli patterns, and create their own symmetrical patterns by drawing shapes on black paper. They carefully use glue and coloured sand to 'flood' the shapes to create attractive colourful patterns.
- All pupils make good use of a drawing and graphic design computer system to enhance their work.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' skills of drawing from observation are underdeveloped.

Music

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Pupils have a well-balanced range of skills in composing, performing and appraising music.
- Pupils sing a good range of songs, hymns and rhymes in English and in Welsh with enjoyment and enthusiasm. They sing in tune with clear diction and appropriate attention to breathing and the quality of sounds.
- Pupils follow singing and clapping patterns and repeat them correctly adapting to different rhythms. They can clap and play untuned instruments in time with the music, keeping a steady beat. Younger pupils can name and correctly sort instruments into those which they tap, shake and scrape.
- Year 1 pupils successfully compose a simple rhythm, using body sounds and percussion instruments, based on the rhythms and syllables in their names.

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- Pupils create sounds which are produced from voices, body sounds and instruments, to enable them to compose short pieces of music. Pupils in Y2 explore sounds with instruments to illustrate the words 'scissors, paper, stone'. They successfully perform their sounds on instruments to accompany a song, in groups and as a class performance.
 - Pupils have good listening skills and demonstrate good appraisal skills. They appreciate particular effects in music which create impressions and images and use them well in movement and dance lessons. They particularly enjoy listening to live performances such as the visiting harpist and to the percussionist who led instrumental workshops for the pupils.
 - Pupils' musical performances successfully enhance assemblies and school productions. The extra-curricular recorder club is well attended and further develops pupils' musical skills.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not work collaboratively to experiment and combine sounds to compose music.

Physical education

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Pupils understand the necessity for warm-up activities and explain clearly the beneficial effects of exercise on body fitness and general health. They listen attentively and respond appropriately to instructions.
- Pupils show evidence of good planning by thinking ahead and anticipating the response of others as they move around the hall during gymnastics activities. They have a good awareness of space, moving at different levels and respond well to instructions.
- Pupils have good control of body movements; they use body parts effectively to make different shapes and move at different levels and directions. They move confidently with increasing control and co-ordination and make good use of the space around them.
- They handle apparatus safely and sensibly. They successfully transfer floor movements on to a range of apparatus and confidently perform movements of stretching, rolling and travelling using different parts of the body.
- During dance lessons, Y2 pupils demonstrate good imagination to perform heavy/light and soft/spikey movements. They work well in groups to create a dance which exemplifies falling autumn leaves. Effective use is made of instruments to enhance the movements.
- Pupils respond well to music and perform a variety of movements in response to changes in tempo and rhythms from a range of instruments, adjusting their movements easily to the changes. When performing traditional Welsh dances, they listen carefully to the music and dance in time with the rhythm in the music.
- Pupils make good attempts to evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

Standards of achievement are good and pupils make good progress.

Good features

- Pupils are developing a good understanding of Christianity and the celebration of festivals in the Christian calendar. They have increasing knowledge of the beliefs and practices of other faiths and are familiar with a variety of artefacts.
- Pupils re-tell a range of Bible stories and understand the moral values in the stories, such as being kind and helpful towards others. They develop a sense of right and wrong from discussing their own school rules and the 'pupils' promise', and from messages in Bible stories.
- Pupils in Y2 understand the significance of the Hindu festival of Diwali. They can recall the sequence of events in the story of Rama and Sita and explain clearly how the story relates to the festival of light and the use of diva candles.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of the importance of religion within the community. They visit local churches to celebrate Christmas and Easter. They receive visits from local clergy who often lead school assemblies.
- During collective worship, pupils join in singing prayers and songs with enthusiasm and respond well to prayers, including prayers they write themselves.
- They understand the need for caring and sharing and are aware of children less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are challenged to think about their own actions of sharing and caring for others.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The school was inspected in 1995 and produced an action plan to address the key issues; all have been successfully implemented.

Key Issue 1

'Continue the development of the role of co-ordinator in both monitoring and dissemination of good practice throughout the school.'

- Co-ordinators received training in the monitoring of provision and standards in their subject. Non-contact time was provided for staff development and for classroom visits to monitor standards.

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- Curriculum documents and materials were purchased to support the assessment of standards.
 - Co-ordinators continue to monitor their subjects and collect samples of pupils' work, which exemplify standards, in school portfolios. Exemplar lessons are taught in physical education and mathematics.
 - The current inspection found that the subject co-ordinators monitor pupils' standards of achievement and curricular provision.

Key Issue 2

'Consider the level of provision of support staff throughout the school.'

- In 1995 the school identified areas where support for pupils' learning was most needed. The governing body finance committee considered the financial implications and employed a new teacher for the nursery and two nursery assistants to support pupils in Y1 and reception classes.
- The headteacher, staff and governors continue to evaluate the support for pupils' needs and allocate support appropriately, within budget constraints.
- During the current inspection there were two classroom assistants supporting children in the reception classes and one nursery nurse in the nursery. All are well deployed to support children's learning.

Key Issue 3

'Extend the amount and range of available resources to enhance and support the curriculum.'

- An audit was made of curriculum provision and a needs analysis was made of resources in each subject. The governing body finance committee considered the financial implications and new resources were purchased to support and extend pupils' learning and improve the quality of teaching.
- The school continues to make an audit of resources, purchases are made according to shortfalls and are linked to the developments and costings in the SDP. The current inspection found that the provision and quality of resources are good and are used effectively by staff and pupils.

Key Issue 4

'Ensure that written reports to parents convey a clear notion of pupil progress in the foundation subjects.'

- The SDP for 1995/6 identified assessment, recording and reporting as a major priority. The assessment co-ordinator attended training courses; staff meetings and INSET took place to revise the policy and procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress and reporting to parents.
- The format of reports to parents was revised to include comments on pupils' progress in all subjects and targets for improvement.
- The current inspection found that the quality of reports to parents is good and provide a clear picture of pupils' progress in all subjects.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

To build on the good standards already achieved by the pupils and to improve aspects of provision, the school needs to:-

- maintain and improve the good standards achieved by pupils across the curriculum;
- review curriculum provision for children under five in the early years classes to ensure the promotion of investigation skills, creative exploration and physical activity, in line with the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning;
- improve curriculum planning to ensure that learning objectives are clearly focused and linked to assessment opportunities;
- continue to review and develop schemes of work with specific reference to key skills across the curriculum;
- ensure the safety of pupils and staff with improvements to the school boundary fence and main school entrance.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	North Road Infant School
School type	Infant
Age-range of pupils	3-7
Address of school	North Road Croesyceiliog Cwmbran Torfaen
Post-Code	NP44 2LL
Telephone Number	01633 482352

Headteacher	Mrs C Scammell
Date of appointment	1 January 1995
Chair of Governors	Mr A S Morgan
Registered Inspector	Mrs M E Evans
Dates of inspection	12-16 November 2001

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	27	73	51	57	0	0	0	0	208

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	0	10

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	14:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	22
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
Term	N	R	KS1	Whole school
Spring 2001	92	92	94	93
Summer 2001	92	92	93	93
Autumn 2000	98	99	97	98

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

END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2000

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2000			Number of pupils in Y2: 73						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	1	55	42	0
		National	0	0	4	14	64	18	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	1	40	58	0
		National	0	0	4	14	57	25	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	1	1	45	52	0
		National	0	0	4	14	56	26	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	3	59	37	0
		National	0	0	5	14	70	11	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	1	1	60	37	0
		National	0	0	6	11	74	9	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	7	53	40	0
		National	0	0	3	12	64	21	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	0	41	58	0
		National	0	0	2	10	65	23	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	1	0	33	63	0
		National	0	1	2	7	63	27	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	0	56	41	0
		National	0	0	2	11	70	17	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: 96 | In Wales: 80

- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence.

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who spent a total of 11 inspector days at the school.

Before the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher and staff, the governing body and with the parents; 13 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting;
- questionnaires were distributed to all parents and the 66 completed questionnaires were analysed; the inspection team took note of the results, including a further nine additional submissions;

- a scrutiny was made of school documentation.

During the inspection:

- evidence of lessons observed was based on approximately 31 hours of the inspection of classes in a total of 57 lessons across the age groups;
- other observations included assemblies, registration and extra-curricular activities;
- discussions were held with the headteacher, class teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff about their roles and responsibilities;
- discussions were held with pupils about aspects of their work and life in school; inspectors listened to a representative sample of pupils read;
- a scrutiny was made of a sample of pupils' work from each year group as well as work in the classrooms and on display around the school.

After the inspection:

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

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Subject Responsibilities	Aspect Responsibilities
Mrs M E Evans	Rgl	Under-fives; English; Welsh second language; Music; Art; Physical education; Religious education.	Main Findings; Standards of achievement; Standards in key skills; Quality of teaching; Curriculum; SEN; Quality of self-evaluation; Leadership and efficiency; Progress since the last inspection; Key issues for action.
Mrs C Llewellyn	Team	Mathematics; Science; Design and technology; Information technology; History; Geography.	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Assessment, recording and reporting; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Mr R Pexton	Lay		Attendance; Behaviour and attitudes; Partnership with parents and the community; Partnership with industry.

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