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Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Inspection under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

**Cwm Ifor Primary School
Heol Aneurin
Penyrheol
Caerphilly
CF83 2PG**

Report by H M Inspectors

School Number: 676 2252

Inspection 26 – 29 April 2004

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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
Year	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; key stage 2 of Y3 to Y6; key stage 3 of Y7 to Y9; key stage 4 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 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

Cwm Ifor Primary School was formed in 1996 by the amalgamation of Cwm Ifor Junior and Infant Schools. In 1998, Cwm Ifor Nursery School was added and the school now caters for children aged 3-11 years on a single site.

The school is situated at the northern edge of Caerphilly and serves the communities of Penyrheol and Cwm Ifor Park. There are 218 (fte) pupils on roll. Ten pupils attend a special class and eight have a statement of special educational needs. A further 32% of pupils are on the special needs register. There are three pupils who are 'looked after' by the local authority.

Children are admitted to the nursery class soon after their third birthday on a part-time basis. Baseline assessments are undertaken soon after entry to the nursery class and results indicate many children have language needs.

Around 52 % of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school considers that fifty percent of the area served by the school is described as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged and the remainder as being economically disadvantaged. There are no pupils from Welsh speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. There are no ethnic minority groups that make up the school population and no pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language.

The school aims 'to create a warm, stimulating and caring environment where all children will feel safe, secure and experience a sense of worth, with all children being given equal opportunities appropriate to their maturity'. During the last year the school's priorities have been to further develop aspects of English, mathematics, science, information technology, history, key skills and assessment, recording and reporting arrangements.

In November 1998, the school was inspected under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996. The inspection identified important shortcomings in the quality of educational provision and the standards of pupils' achievements. The key concerns related to standards of achievement, the quality of teaching and assessment, and aspects of leadership and management.

Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) undertook a visit to the school in October 2001 to monitor the progress made in addressing the key issues identified in the inspection of November 1998. HMI found that overall the school had made unsatisfactory progress in addressing the key issues and there were continuing shortcomings in important areas. Consequently, in accordance with Section 14 of the School Inspections Act, 1996, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools was of the opinion that the school required special measures.

Since then, the school has been visited regularly by HMI to evaluate the progress made. Throughout this period, the local education authority has also provided support for the school.

2. Main findings

Main findings of the report

Cwm Ifor Primary School was placed in special measures in October 2001. Since then school staff, governors and the local education authority have worked hard to make progress in those areas that were unsatisfactory. Substantial progress has been made. Almost all areas of school life are now at least satisfactory and most are good. Standards in almost all subjects are now good.

It is the view, therefore, of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales that the school has made good progress in relation to the key issues for action and should no longer be subject to special measures.

Educational standards achieved by pupils

- Standards of achievement are good or better in about two-thirds of the lessons or sessions observed and satisfactory in about a third.
- The educational standards achieved by children under five are at least satisfactory in all six areas of learning. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make satisfactory progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Personal & Social Development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematical Development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Knowledge & Understanding of the World	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical Development	Satisfactory	Good
Creative Development	Good	Good

- Pupils' standards of achievement in the National Curriculum subjects are as follows:

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Good	Good
Welsh second language	Very good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Satisfactory
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	Good	Good
Religious education	Satisfactory	Good

- In key stage 1, National Curriculum assessment results for 2003 show a significant improvement in the number of pupils attaining level 2 or above in mathematics and science since 2002.
- In comparison with schools of a similar nature, the attainment of key stage 1 pupils in mathematics and science is close to the average for these schools. In English, however, the attainment of pupils is close to the bottom 25% of these schools.
- In key stage 2, National Curriculum assessment results for 2003 show a significant improvement in the number of pupils attaining level 4 or above in each of the core subjects since 2002. The number of pupils attaining level 5 in English and science has also significantly increased.
- The number of pupils attaining at least level 4 in each of the subjects of English, mathematics and science together is 65%. In comparison with other similar schools, Cwm Ifor is close to the top 25% of these schools.
- Teachers' analysis of pupils' progress feeds into appropriate targets for improvement in National Curriculum assessments.
- In the early years, childrens' standards of achievement and progress in key skills across the curriculum are satisfactory in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy. They are good in information and communications technology.
- In all other classes, standards are good in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy, and very good in information and communications technology.

- Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their abilities.
- The special unit caters for ten key stage 2 pupils from within the Caerphilly area who have statements of special educational needs. Pupils in the unit are fully involved into school life and they follow a similar curriculum to other pupils in the school. Standards of achievement for these pupils are good and often very good.

Ethos of the school

- Provision for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good overall. The school has a caring ethos to which pupils respond well. Staff and pupils value and respect each other and relationships are good.
- The daily acts of collective worship help to promote pupils, very good moral development. Planned opportunities where pupils sit in a large group and share ideas, express thoughts and feelings and listen appropriately to others ('Circle Time') also support good moral development. Achievement awards contribute well to good social development.
- Visits to places of interest help develop good cultural awareness and appreciation of Welsh culture.
- All members of staff promote care and consideration for others, mutual respect and good manners.
- Links with the local community, in particular with St. Andrew's church, are well developed.
- The school does not have a formal policy on Racial Equality. This is not satisfactory.
- The school is, however, effective in ensuring that pupils understand issues of racial equality.
- Standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning are good throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' progress and standards.
- Attendance levels and punctuality are unsatisfactory. The average attendance figure for the year prior to inspection (not including nursery) was 89%, with 2.5% unauthorised absence. The main causes of absence in school are sickness and holidays taken during term time. A significant number of pupils are also late arriving at school.

Quality of education

- The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, 20% of teaching was very good, 57% good, 18% satisfactory and 6% unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' planning is thorough and lessons are well structured. The grouping of pupils according to their ability in English and mathematics in years 5 and 6 also helps teachers to provide appropriate work for all pupils.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and use a good range of techniques. The quality of feedback to pupils is good. Occasionally, however, whole class teaching sessions are too long and pupils do not have enough time to complete tasks.
- Assessment, recording and reporting processes are good. Teachers analyse the results of tests to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This information is used effectively for target-setting processes and to group pupils in some classes for English and mathematics. It also helps inform the allocation of different work for pupils according to their abilities. The arrangements for assessing and recording the progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. Reports to parents are generally satisfactory and there are appropriate opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress.
- Curriculum provision is good overall. The school provides all pupils with equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum. Good attention is given to health and personal and social education.
- The curriculum provided for 3 and 4 year old children in the nursery and reception classes is good. It is relevant to children's ages and needs and successfully promotes progress in all six areas of the Desirable Learning Outcomes.
- Appropriate schemes of work are in place for all subjects. They are of a good quality and include the development of key skills.
- Educational visits enhance the curriculum. Homework or home projects are set regularly and the school also provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Games organised on an area basis support the development of pupils' team skills.
- The Cwricwlwm Cymreig has a suitably prominent role within the school.
- The quality of provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good. Staff know pupils well and cater for their individual needs sensitively.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the main school is good. In the special unit the provision is very good. The school makes good use of support staff. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

- The school's partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is good. Partnership with industry is satisfactory.

Management

- The quality of the school's self-evaluation and its planning for improvement are satisfactory. However, first-hand monitoring of standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning is only taking place in English and mathematics. The school does not produce an overview of progress that clearly identifies strengths and areas for development
- The leadership and efficiency of the school are satisfactory overall. However, the senior management team does not yet have a strategic role.
- The governing body supports the school well and fulfils its statutory obligations. Most governors, however, do not visit the school in session or discuss pupils' progress with subject leaders enough.
- School finances are well managed. Resources effectively support priorities in the school action plan and development plan.
- There are no formal procedures for the induction and integration of new staff. The school does not evaluate enough the impact that staff training has on standards and the quality of teaching.
- Provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Support staff provide good support to pupils, especially those with special educational needs.
- All classes provide a pleasant and stimulating learning environment and pupils' work is attractively displayed. The caretaker and cleaning staff work well to maintain high standards in the accommodation.
- Learning resources are generally good. They are good in information technology and the three interactive white boards are used to good effect.
- Since the last inspection in 2001, the school has generally made good progress in addressing the key issues for action. The school was left seven key issues for action. It has made good progress in addressing five of the issues and satisfactory progress in addressing the other two.

3. Educational standards achieved by pupils

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Standards of achievement are good in about two-thirds of the lessons or sessions observed and satisfactory in about a third. They are unsatisfactory in one lesson.

- In both key stages, standards of achievement are good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in Welsh second language are very good at key stage 1 and good at key stage 2. In information and communications technology, design technology, history, geography, music and physical education, standards are good in both key stages. In art, standards are good at key stage 1 and satisfactory at key stage 2. In religious education they are satisfactory at key stage 1 and good at key stage 2.
- In both the nursery and reception classes, children under five years of age make at least satisfactory progress in all six areas of learning. Children make good progress in creative development in the nursery and reception class and good progress in physical development in the reception class.
- In key stage 1, National Curriculum assessment results for 2003 indicate that 64% of pupils gained level 2 or above in English, 80% in mathematics, and 84% in science. These results show a significant improvement in the number of pupils attaining level 2 or above in mathematics and science since 2002. The number of pupils attaining level 3 in mathematics and science also increased, although it decreased in English.
- In key stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in each of the subjects of English, mathematics and science together increased from 54% in 2002 to 60% in 2003.
- In comparison with schools of a similar nature, the attainment of key stage 1 pupils in mathematics and science is close to the average for these schools. In English however, the attainment of pupils is close to the bottom 25% of these schools.
- In key stage 2, National Curriculum assessment results for 2003 indicate that 68% of pupils gained level 4 or above in English, 71% in mathematics, and 77% in science. These results show a significant improvement in the number of pupils attaining level 4 or above in each of these subjects since 2002. The number of pupils attaining level 5 in English and science has also significantly increased.

- In comparison with schools of a similar nature, the attainment of key stage 2 pupils is improving. In English, mathematics and science, the results fall between the top 50% and 25% of these schools. The percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in each of the subjects of English, mathematics and science together is 65%. In comparison with other similar schools, Cwm Ifor is close to the top 25% of these schools.
- Overall, the difference between the attainment of boys and girls in both key stages is not significant.
- The school sets appropriate targets for improvement in National Curriculum assessments. These are well informed by teachers' analysis of pupils' progress.
- Pupils with SEN in mainstream classes make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their abilities. In the special unit, standards of achievement are good and often very good

3.2 Standards achieved in the key skills across the curriculum

In the early years, childrens' standards of achievement and progress in key skills across the curriculum are satisfactory in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy. They are good in information and communications technology. In all other classes, standards are good in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy, and very good in information and communications technology.

- Children under five make satisfactory use of the key skills in most aspects of their work. Most children listen well and speak clearly. They develop satisfactory reading, writing and mathematical skills. They are able to access a range of computer programs, and their information and communications technology skills develop well in interactive whiteboard sessions.
- In key stages 1 and 2, pupils concentrate and listen well in lessons. They are attentive, especially when listening to stories and to other pupils. In most cases, they carry out instructions well.
- Pupils express their thoughts clearly and confidently. They improve their speaking and listening skills through discussions, assemblies, 'Circle Time' and good teacher questioning and encouragement.
- Pupils' use their reading and writing skills effectively in all subjects to extend their learning across the curriculum. Older pupils use their reading skills well when researching topics in history, geography and religious education. They can use books, CD ROMs and the Internet to find information and develop good writing skills.
- Pupils apply their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. In science and geography, pupils use standard units of measure and can illustrate their findings with graphs and tables. In design and technology, pupils can measure accurately when doing investigative work.
- In information and communications technology, pupils in all year groups use equipment and software confidently. They make effective use of word processing programs to record and present their writing. They also make good use of data handling programs to produce graphs in mathematics, science and geography. Pupils show increased confidence in working with the interactive whiteboard. Pupils in the special class can draw images on the computer, save their work to disk and print images.

4. Ethos of the school

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Provision for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good. The school has a caring ethos to which pupils respond well. Staff and pupils value and respect each other and relationships are good.

- The daily acts of collective worship and 'Circle Time' help to promote pupils' very good moral development. Pupils listen and contribute well, responding to questions appropriately. Achievement awards and the special weekly achievement assemblies also contribute to pupils' good social development.
- Visits to local places of interest contribute to pupils' good cultural development and enhance their appreciation of Welsh culture. This aspect is also developed well through the weekly Welsh assembly for pupils.
- Some pupils have played a part in developing their own class rules. They understand why these are important and do their best to follow them. All members of staff promote mutual respect, good manners, care and consideration for others.
- Links with the local community, in particular with St Andrew's church, are well developed.
- Pupils support charities well.
- The school does not have a formal policy on Racial Equality. This is not satisfactory. Pupils' understanding of race equality issues, however, is developed through studying the work of such people as Martin Luther King.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

Standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They have a positive impact on pupils' progress and the standards they achieve.

- When moving in and around the school, pupils behave well. Most are courteous and friendly and treat one another and adults with respect.
- The headteacher and staff set and expect high standards of pupils' behaviour. The school has effective policies and strategies in place for managing and dealing with inappropriate behaviour.
- During break times, pupils play happily together. The school takes effective measures to prevent bullying and other forms of discrimination. No instances of bullying or any form of discrimination was observed during the inspection.
- Supervision in and around the playground and the school canteen is adequate and effective.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. During lessons, they generally concentrate well and show interest.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance levels and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

- The average attendance figure for the year prior to inspection (not including nursery) was 89%, with 2.5% unauthorised absence. Currently, the school has a target attendance figure of 90%. These figures are below the national average of 94%.
- The main causes of absence in school are sickness and holidays taken during term time.
- Parents are rightly expected to notify school with reasons for their child's absence, and most do. However, the school only investigates third day absences. This is unsatisfactory and leads to absences not being monitored effectively enough.
- Pupil records are detailed and contain contact names, addresses and telephone numbers.
- The school recognises and rewards pupils whose attendance records are good.
- A significant number of pupils, particularly young ones, are late arriving in the morning.
- The school complies with the requirements of National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99.

5. Quality of education

5.1 Teaching

The overall quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, 20% of teaching was very good, 57% good, 18% satisfactory and 6% unsatisfactory.

- Teachers' planning is thorough. Lessons are well structured with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils.
- Lessons generally move along at a good pace and build on pupils' previous experiences.
- In all classes, tasks for pupils are different to allow all children to achieve at their own pace and level. The grouping of pupils according to their ability in English and mathematics in years 5 and 6 also helps teachers to provide appropriate work for all pupils.
- The sharing of teachers for different subjects in key stage 2 is effective in ensuring that strengths of individual teachers are used to full advantage.
- Overall, teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach.
- A good range of teaching techniques including individual work, group work and whole class lessons is used.
- Good use is made of recent technology such as interactive whiteboards. This is having a positive impact on pupils' standards of work.
- Teachers generally have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. Pupils respond well to these.
- The quality of feedback that pupils receive is good and focused on individual progress.
- Teachers use whole class sessions well to check pupils' learning and assess if learning objectives have been achieved.
- Homework clubs are effective in helping pupils take responsibility for their own learning.
- Support staff work effectively in partnership with teachers to help with pupils' work.
- Occasionally whole class teaching sessions are too long, and as a result pupils do not have enough time to complete tasks.

- In some classes, the pace of lessons is slow and teaching is not based enough on planning.
- At times, teachers are over-generous in their praise of pupils' work.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting to parents

Assessment, recording and reporting processes are good.

- Assessment procedures are consistent across the school and clearly linked to the lesson objectives.
- Marking is generally thorough. Teachers' comments are often detailed and identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses so that next steps for improvement are clear.
- Teachers analyse the results of tests to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This information is used for target-setting processes and to help teachers in the way they teach. The information is also used to group pupils in some classes for English and mathematics and to provide different work for pupils appropriate to their abilities. This is a strength of the school.
- In key stage 2, targets for pupils of different ability are provided each term in English and mathematics. These help pupils to know clearly what is expected of them.
- Pupils' progress is carefully tracked through the school.
- Some pupils are involved in their own assessments but opportunities for this are limited.
- The arrangements for assessing and recording the progress of pupils with special educational needs are good.
- Moderation of pupils' work in some subjects is being undertaken in line with National Curriculum level descriptions. However, there is still work to be done in this area.
- The school analyses National Curriculum tests in detail in order to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. Staff are aware of progress year on year by subject, and of the difference in progress of boys and girls. They are also aware of how well pupils are achieving in comparison with pupils in other similar schools.
- Reports to parents are generally satisfactory. Targets are given for pupils' further development but these are often too general. In one year group, reports do not contain figures for pupil's attendance.
- There are appropriate opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress with class teachers.

5.3 Curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of its pupils.

- The curriculum closely reflects the aims of the school and successfully promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical developments of pupils.
- The school provides all pupils, including those with special educational needs, with full equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum.
- The curriculum provided for 3 and 4 year old children in the nursery and reception classes is good. It is relevant to the children's ages and needs and successfully promotes progress in all six areas of the Desirable Learning Outcomes.
- The curriculum in both key stages meets statutory requirements and is of a good standard. In the last academic year, there were no pupils for whom the National Curriculum was modified or for whom it was disapplied.
- The amount of teaching time in both key stages meets the Welsh Assembly Government's recommendations.
- Existing curriculum policies and schemes of work have been reviewed and amended to meet the requirements of the Wales Curriculum 2000 with a programme for review and revision appropriately identified in the School Development Plan.
- Good quality schemes of work are in place for all subjects. These include learning outcomes, opportunities for assessment and evaluation and the development of key skills.
- The school gives good attention to health and personal and social education. Healthy eating schemes are well-established features in the school day.
- The school's coverage of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good and well planned.
- Teachers' short-term planning is detailed and well-linked to medium and long-term plans. In all subjects, learning objectives are well defined and provide clear guidance for assessment. These learning objectives are shared with pupils during teaching sessions and help to contribute to raising levels of achievement.
- Additional teachers and support staff provide valuable help for those who have particular learning or behavioural needs. For older key stage 2 pupils, the provision made to meet their differing needs is particularly good in English and mathematics lessons. Pupils in the special unit are well supported by experienced staff.

- Educational visits enhance the curriculum. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs that enhances and supports the school curriculum. Games organised on an area basis support the development of team skills.
- Teachers set homework or home projects regularly. These successfully contribute to pupils' personal development and the standards they achieve. In addition, they prepare them for the transition to the next stage of their education.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The quality of provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good.

- The school cares for its pupils well and there is good supervision of pupils by staff and lunchtime supervisors.
- Staff know pupils well and cater for their individual needs sensitively. Those with special needs are well supported.
- The school has adopted the local education authority's policy on health and safety.
- The headteacher is the named person for child protection issues. The school appropriately follows local education authority guidance and staff are aware of procedures.
- The school effectively addresses personal and social education of pupils through the curriculum and 'Circle Time'. Health and hygiene are promoted through science lessons and there is a policy for sex education that has been approved by the governing body.
- Currently the school has three looked-after pupils on roll. These are well supported and their progress monitored.
- Equal opportunities and racial equality issues are appropriately addressed in lessons.
- The school's policy on anti-bullying is consistently applied and is effective in ensuring that any instances of bullying that arise are appropriately dealt with.

5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs

The provision in the main school for pupils with special educational needs is good. They make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their abilities.

- Currently there are 69 pupils on the special needs register. Eight pupils in the special unit have statements of special educational needs.
- Special educational needs co-ordinator's duties are shared between two teachers who take responsibility for different key stages. This works effectively.
- There is a good special needs policy.
- Individual Education Plans set clear targets that are matched to the pupils' needs and enable them to make good progress. Targets are set in enough detail to show the necessary small steps in learning required.
- The quality of support provided by adult helpers is good.
- The school's arrangements for involving pupils and parents in the review process are good.
- There is effective liaison with external agencies, with the school having regular visits from the educational psychologist and a language support teacher.

Special unit

The special unit caters for ten key stage 2 pupils from within the Caerphilly area who have, or might receive, a statement of special educational needs. Pupils in the unit are fully involved in school life and they follow a similar curriculum to other pupils in the school. The provision for pupils in the special unit is very good.

- Standards of achievement are good and often very good. There are clear learning outcomes that are appropriate to the pupil's maturity and capability.
- Pupils in the special unit receive very good support through a good range of activities, stimulating teaching and the thorough use of assessment to monitor progress and guide planning. They have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Effective personal programmes of work help to ensure that pupils are able to develop and apply key skills appropriately.

- The personal and social development of all pupils is very good. There are clear procedures for behavioural support. There is also good support for the development of key skills.
- All staff contribute well towards developing pupils' self esteem by encouraging them to become aware of themselves and their achievements. Pupils are praised and guided appropriately.
- Teaching in the special unit is very good. Lessons are well planned and the class teacher works in a calm but motivating manner. All staff have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and lessons are well planned.
- There are good links with parents who are well informed about their children's progress.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good.

- The school prospectus provides useful information. However, it does not include reference to the school's policy for religious education or acts of collective worship and the school's arrangement for pupils with a physical disability.
- Newsletters are sent to parents to inform them of the school's general activities, achievements and future intentions.
- Parents receive the annual report of the governors, and have the opportunity to discuss this with governors.
- Formal contact between parents and teachers appropriately occurs twice yearly, and at other times by arrangement. School reports, that provide satisfactory information about pupils' progress and achievements, are issued annually.
- A Family Learning group effectively supports the work of younger children by involving parents and relatives in their development.
- The school arranges successful fund-raising activities during the year. These activities receive good parental and community support.
- Community links are well established. Local clergy regularly attend school to talk to pupils, assist with religious education and take assembly. Pupils visit the parish church for Christmas and harvest celebrations. Play schemes and numeracy courses take place in the school hall during holiday time.
- The school has raised funds for a number of local and international charities.
- Arrangements for transfer of pupils to receiving schools are appropriate.
- The school provides sound training opportunities for trainee teachers and nursery nurses and, occasionally, work experience for secondary school students.

5.7 Partnership with industry

The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

- The school has no written policy school on its partnership with industry.
- Educational visits to local commercial and industrial sites give children an appropriate insight into the world of work.
- Pupils' understanding of the world of work is broadened significantly by talks and demonstrations given by visitors such as the police, fire service, postman and health workers.
- The school has benefited financially from its partnership with industry.
- The school has not yet taken advantage of staff development opportunities provided by industry and commerce.

6. Management

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

The quality of the school's self-evaluation and its planning for improvement are satisfactory.

- The school is at an early stage of developing self-evaluation processes to help monitor progress and set targets.
- Subject leaders have begun to monitor, first-hand, standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. This is only taking place in English and mathematics. Although they produce monitoring reports, the school does not produce an overview of progress that clearly identifies strengths and areas for development.
- There is good use of school, local and national data to evaluate progress. There is also additional help from the local authority adviser who undertakes a detailed annual review of school performance data.
- The action plan following the last inspection and the school development plan contain a realistic set of priorities.
- Governors are well informed of school improvement initiatives, and a school improvement group meets regularly to discuss and monitor progress.
- Self-evaluation so far has been limited to the views of staff. The school has not yet considered what pupils and parents think.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

The leadership and efficiency of the school are satisfactory overall.

- There is evidence that leaders have clear policies to help the school move forward.
- The school has a caring ethos. There are shared values and norms that result in a generally good standard of behaviour.
- The senior management does not have a strategic role. It does not meet often enough to effectively monitor, plan and manage the work of the school.
- The role of the deputy-headteacher is at an early stage of development.
- The role of subject leaders is developing. They monitor the quality of pupils' work in their subjects but only carry out a limited amount of first-hand monitoring of standards and the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school is implementing well a performance management strategy.
- The governing body supports the school well and fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors meet regularly to consider school progress and are active in making decisions. The school improvement and finance groups are particularly active. Most governors, however, do not visit the school in session or discuss progress with subject leaders enough. Their first-hand knowledge of standards and progress is therefore limited.
- School finances are well managed. Appropriate resources support the school action plan and development plan.
- The school has had a very recent financial audit. No major areas of concern were identified and the majority of key controls were found to be in place and operating effectively. The school has plans in place to address the number of minor issues identified.
- There are no formal procedures for the induction and integration of new staff. This is not satisfactory. The school does not evaluate enough the impact that staff training has on standards and the quality of teaching.
- Day-to-day communication is satisfactory. Regular staff meetings provide staff with essential information.
- Administrative procedures and daily routines are effective.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.

The staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.

- Teachers are appropriately qualified and their deployment is suitably matched to their qualifications and experience.
- There is a good number of support staff and they play an important role in supporting learning as well as contributing to the day-to-day running of the school.
- There are an adequate number of classrooms and a separate canteen for the pupils on roll.
- All classes provide a pleasant and stimulating learning environment for pupils. Staff organise the rooms effectively and pupils' work is attractively displayed in classrooms, school halls and corridors.
- The accommodation is very clean and well cared for. The caretaker and cleaning staff work well to maintain standards.
- The school has extensive grounds with separate play areas for infants and juniors. The surrounding grassed areas are well maintained and when conditions allow, are used for physical education, games and sports.
- Decoration in some areas of the school is in need of attention.
- Learning resources are generally good. They are good in information and communications technology with enough multimedia computers for all classes. The three interactive white boards are put to good use. Resources for music and library are good.
- The reception and nursery classes are well resourced to cater for outside play and have a good number of toys and large play equipment.

7. Subjects and areas of learning

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The educational standards achieved by children under five are at least satisfactory in all six areas of learning. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make satisfactory progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Language, literacy and communication skills are satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes.

Good features

- In the nursery, children develop their speaking and listening through a variety of role-play experiences and also through listening and joining in with stories, poems, music and songs. Most can answer questions about what they listen to. A few children are able to make suggestions about what might happen next in a story.
- Children participate in a range of appropriate experiences to encourage mark making and to develop basic writing experiences.
- Some children enjoy choosing and looking at books and can describe, in simple terms, the reason for their choice. They hold books correctly and are beginning to make the distinction between words and pictures.
- In the reception class, children listen and respond to a range of poems, stories and music. They are developing their ability to express opinions, make choices and answer questions. Children are developing skills to sequence and retell a story in simple terms.
- Some children are beginning to read independently from books and they enjoy this. They know the sounds that some letters make and are beginning to be able to blend and sound simple words. A few children can sustain concentration when they read and are able to talk about their book.

Shortcomings

- In both classes, a minority of children have listening skills that are not well developed.
- Children in the reception class have too few opportunities to allow them to become independent writers.

Personal and social development

Personal and social development is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes.

Good features

- Children in the nursery generally move confidently and independently from one activity to another. Some are developing their concentration skills, particularly when using the good range of role-play areas provided. In some instances, children co-operate well, for example, when tidying up equipment.
- On occasions, children show care and affection for others during such activities as Circle Time when working with puppets. Most children readily seek help from an adult when needed.
- In the reception class, children enjoy exploring and experimenting with a range of learning opportunities.
- Children understand the importance of hygiene when handling food and wash their hands thoroughly. They generally co-operate well with each other and with adults during such occasions as the milk and fruit time. Most children sit sensibly to eat and drink and display good manners.

Shortcomings

- In both classes, children do not always take turns and use good manners.
- Children's powers of concentration are limited in both classes during such activities as 'Circle Time'.

Mathematical development

Mathematical development is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes.

Good features

- In the nursery, children participate in a range of activities to encourage their awareness of maths. They enjoy completing large number jigsaws and sequencing and threading activities with beads to produce patterns.

- Many children are beginning to recognise a range of two and three-dimensional shapes and are able to select a shape according to its name.
- More able children recognise and name numbers to ten and are developing an awareness of one to one correspondence. Some children are able to add small numbers together using practical equipment.
- In the reception class, children continue to develop their knowledge of shape and can name and recognise cubes, cylinders and cones. Some are able to sort shapes according to certain features.
- Most children can order numbers between one and ten on a number line and understand such concepts as bigger/smaller than, before and after. They can order objects according to size and carry on a pattern.

Shortcomings

- Children do not use mathematical language enough in everyday situations.
- Children do not experiment and play enough with sorting, matching and grouping in their role-play situations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes.

Good features

- In the nursery, children talk about their homes and their families. They can describe simple features of their houses and some know their address. Children can name and describe their pets.
- Children are confident in experimenting with floating and sinking.
- They are beginning to use computers confidently, showing good control of the mouse and asking for help when they need it.
- Children in the reception class can talk about and understand why air, light and water are important through planting and growing bulbs. They can name and identify the main parts of a flower.
- When using the interactive whiteboard, children can change the font colour, match shapes and rub out.

Shortcomings

- Some children are unable to distinguish between heavy and light objects.
- Children in the reception class do not understand time sequences.

Physical development

Physical development is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception class.

Good features

- In the nursery children use paintbrushes, scissors, pencils and pens confidently.
- During outside play, they enjoy using wheeled bikes, scooters and trucks. Some children display good control and manoeuvring ability. They use large balls for playing football.
- In the reception class, children confidently use a range of large equipment, including climbing frames to develop their agility. They enjoy using bikes and scooters in a controlled manner. They share equipment and co-operate well.
- Children can throw and catch large balls with some accuracy.

Shortcomings

- In the nursery, childrens' ball control skills and safe use of wheeled equipment are not well developed.

Creative development

Creative development is good in the nursery and reception classes.

Good features

- In the nursery, children use a variety of materials to create work in two and three dimensions. For example, after looking at several abstract paintings by a famous artist, they used colour washing techniques, finger painting and chalk to produce their own pictures.
- Children take part in dance and enjoy playing simple homemade musical instruments.
- Children in the reception class use their imagination well in role-play.
- Children use a range of mediums to produce good quality work.

Shortcomings

There are no major shortcomings.

English

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in most classes listen attentively to their teachers, to others and to visitors.
- The majority of pupils speak well. They are able to articulate their ideas with clarity and expression in a confident manner.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Many read confidently and are able to choose from a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils effectively use indexes, dictionaries and thesauruses to decipher unfamiliar words. They display good skills of comprehension and can explain their preferences when reviewing books. Older pupils are able to use their reading skills to search for information, for example, when using the Internet.
- Pupils have opportunities to write for a wide range of different purposes. They do so with increasing confidence and make good progress. Most pupils in year 1 know when to use full stops and capital letters. Many pupils in year 2 write well and with imagination.
- Pupils in the special class are developing their comprehension and sequencing skills well. They can use punctuation correctly.
- In years 3 and 4, pupils can distinguish between formal and informal letter writing. They are able to plan a letter, showing good understanding of adjectives. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, are able to write for a range of different audiences. They are able to plan, develop and sustain their ideas. Many write in complex sentences and paragraph their work correctly.
- Throughout the school, pupils' work in writing is effectively developed through other subjects such as religious education and history.
- Standards of handwriting are generally good. Older pupils write in a clear, legible and flowing script.
- Spelling is appropriately developed with good emphasis on key words. Pupils in key stage 1 use phonics effectively in their spelling. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' work shows good command of a range of spelling patterns.

Shortcomings

- Pupils are not always given enough opportunity to evaluate the quality of the work they produce.
- In some classes, pupils' listening skills are not developed enough.

Welsh second language

Standards of achievement are very good in key stage 1 and good in key stage 2.

Good features

- In key stage 1, pupils listen attentively and understand what is said to them throughout the day, when there is extensive use of incidental Welsh.
- Most pupils speak with clear pronunciation and intonation. They demonstrate confidence and enjoyment and their attitude to the language is positive.
- Most pupils are able to perform simple Welsh action songs, count to 20, name colours and can comment on how they feel. They are beginning to write simple statements about themselves, using set phrases. They identify and name parts of the body and they are beginning to read simple statements from the large class books.
- Pupils are able to sing a range of songs and hymns with clarity, confidence and enjoyment during Welsh assemblies.
- In key stage 2, most pupils understand a variety of everyday classroom instructions and questions. They complete a succession of written tasks in their workbooks correctly and read with increasing confidence and understanding.
- Pupils in the special class make good progress in their oral work through the use of role-play.
- Most pupils have a strong awareness and knowledge of a wide range of aspects of Welsh culture.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Mathematics

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

Good features

- In key stage 1, pupils quickly become familiar with number symbols, recognise sequences and start to identify patterns, including odd and even. They are confident with simple addition and subtraction and are developing a good knowledge and use of number with a good recall of number bonds.
- Key stage 1 pupils recognise the value of coins and are able to buy items and calculate the change correctly.
- In key stage 1, pupils can estimate and measure with non-standard units accurately and are beginning to appreciate and use standard units. They tell the time, understand simple fractions and create graphs using data about themselves.
- Key stage 1 pupils are able to identify and name two and three-dimensional shapes.
- In key stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of place value, show good recall of mathematical tables and are confident in the computation of number.
- Many pupils are able to clearly explain the procedures used and to express their own way of thinking. They have good mathematical vocabulary.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are able to collate data, which is often based on class questioning or on investigations in other subjects. They can create and analyse graphs.
- They are able to name and describe features of two and three-dimensional shapes.
- Pupils are able to choose and use appropriate standard of measures in investigative work on capacity and make sensible estimates.

Shortcomings

- Pupil's independent mathematical research skills are underdeveloped.

Science

In science, standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils develop their scientific enquiry skills well through a good range of practical investigations. They are able to plan, carry out, record and conclude investigations appropriately. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the scientific processes of prediction and fair testing.
- They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study in life processes, materials, and physical processes.
- Pupils in both key stages have a good range of scientific experiences.
- In the special class, pupils can recall how many bones there are in the body and are able to assemble a simple cut-out skeleton accurately.
- Pupils in key stage 1 are able to sort materials into groups on the basis of whether or not they are attracted by a magnet. They can appropriately describe changes caused to some everyday materials by heating and cooling.
- In key stage 2, pupils can compare a range of objects on the basis of strength. They can investigate materials and whether light can pass through them.
- Pupils in years 3 and 4 are able to make detailed observations of food that has been affected by micro-organisms and understand facts about food hygiene and storage.
- Pupils in years 5 and 6 use scientific terms accurately to describe and record their findings. They are able to investigate whether solids can be separated from liquids by filtering. They are also able to test whether there is a relationship between physical height and lung capacity. They make sensible predictions and consider carefully how to carry out a fair test. They are able to draw relevant conclusions.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement in both key stages are good.

Good features

- In key stage 1, pupils have good skills in planning, making and evaluating the designs. They can discuss their designs and recognise the purpose of the product. They make choices about cutting, folding and sticking. Their evaluating skills show good development.
- Key stage 1 pupils make good use of information and communications technology skills to develop their work. Clipart and digital photography is well-used to support project work.
- In both key stages, pupils have sound knowledge and skills in food technology. Pupils in key stage 2 are able to describe the importance of a healthy diet.
- Pupils show good techniques in researching for information on their products.
- In key stage 2, pupils show a good understanding of the design process.

Shortcomings

- Some pupils are unable to develop their own ideas through an overuse of worksheets.
- The use of control technology is underdeveloped at key stage 2.

Information technology

Standards of achievement in both key stages are good.

Good features

- Pupils in both key stages handle computers confidently. They are able to enter and store information and retrieve, process and display information. Pupils are able to describe what they are doing and explain how they control their work.
- Displays of pupils' work in information and communications technology throughout the school show a good range of achievement in word processing, computer generated graphs, charts and artwork.
- Key stage 1 pupils successfully use a 'Roamer' to develop programming and control skills.
- In key stage 1, pupils use a range of programmes confidently to develop their writing skills and use simulations to enhance their topic work. Writing skills are further developed in key stage 2, where pupils draft their work directly at the computer, then modify and edit it, combining graphics and text. They make good use of programmes such as PowerPoint.
- Key stage 2 pupils are able to use CD-ROMs and the Internet to access information. They recognise the need to use key questions to find information specific to their enquiry.
- Key stage 1 pupils effectively use computers to create their own artwork and show increasing confidence in digital photography in presenting their ideas. Older pupils in key stage 2 show developing design skills in designing sand yacht sails using various graphic programmes.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Standards in history are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in both key stages are developing an appropriate awareness of chronology.
- They are beginning to understand aspects of the past and how it has helped to shape the present.
- In both key stages, visits to places of historical interest, for example, St Fagans Museum and Caerleon, add to pupils' historical understanding.
- Pupils in key stage 1 are able to distinguish how the past is different from the present by studying homes, toys and seaside holidays.
- In year 2, pupils are able to infer information about Florence Nightingale from videos and written accounts. They are beginning to understand why she acted as she did and to identify reasons for her actions. They also know why she is remembered today.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are developing an appropriate awareness of the characteristics of different periods.
- In year 5, pupils have undertaken a detailed study of the local area. They have studied a range of sources, including census information, large scale ordnance survey maps and have talked to local people about the past. They are able to organise the information they collect and present their work in a variety of different ways.
- In year 6, pupils have studied the growth of the coal industry and how it affected Wales and its people. They can distinguish between the positive and negative effects of coalmining on Caerphilly.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

In geography, standards are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in both key stages are able to use maps, diagrams, graphs and photographs appropriately to study places and themes.
- In key stage 1, pupils draw simple maps of their immediate environment and can plot the location of familiar landmarks.
- Key stage 1 pupils find out about different places in the world through the travels of Barnaby Bear. They can discuss how to travel to these places and what the places are like.
- Older key stage 1 pupils study Tocuaro in Mexico as a contrasting location. They are able to identify the similarities and differences between houses, shopping, food and going to school in their own area and in Tocuaro.
- Pupils in key stage 2 have studied the Snowdonia area of Wales as a contrasting locality. They have compared maps, photographs and the contrasting physical and human features of the area appropriately.
- In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the features of the local area using maps and photographs. They are able to link the photographs to the maps and can sort the photographs in terms of features and land use.
- Older key stage 2 pupils are able to link land height and temperature and to draw accurate conclusions from their work.

Shortcomings

- Pupils in both key stages do not make and use maps at a variety of scales often enough. Map work is not progressively developed through the school.

Art

Good features

Standards in Key Stage 1 are good and satisfactory in Key Stage 2.

- Pupils in key stage 1 are able to use a good range of materials and techniques to express their ideas in two dimensions and through work with textiles.
- Pupils study the work of a variety of famous artists and produce their own work in a similar style using different mediums. They experiment with colour mixing and apply this technique effectively.
- Pupils' drawing skills are well developed by computer art programs.
- In key stage 2, pupils sometimes use sketchbooks to develop their ideas and draw from observation. They are beginning to use shading appropriately to enhance their work.
- Pupils have worked with a local artist to produce an effective wall mosaic.
- In the special class, pupils made good quality models of different types of homes.

Shortcomings

- In both key stages, work in three dimensions is underdeveloped.
- In some classes, pupils do not use sketchbooks for recording experiences and drawing from observation enough.

Music

Standards of achievement are good in both Key Stages.

Good features

- All pupils are able to participate well in activities involving composing, performing and evaluating.
- In key stage 1, pupils can describe the features of a piece of music. Pupils recognise, name and play a variety of untuned percussion instruments. Most are able to follow correctly and play from simple musical notational patterns.
- Older pupils in key stage 1 write their own simple pictorial scores. They confidently follow the score to produce imaginative musical compositions.
- Pupils in the special class enjoy their musical experiences. Most pupils are able to maintain a steady beat and rhythm. They are able to copy a series of movements and perform these in time to a piece of music.
- Older key stage 2 pupils are introduced to a wide range of musical terms. They have appropriate opportunities to appraise music and can pick out the different instruments being played.
- In both key stages, pupils have opportunities to sing a range of songs in English and Welsh. Their singing is generally tuneful and enthusiastic. An after school singing club enables pupils to learn to pitch music correctly in enjoyable ways. Pupils are also benefiting from additional tuition.

Shortcomings

- In key stage 1, pupils find it difficult to produce sounds of different lengths using percussion instruments.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use a greater range of percussion instruments as they progress through the school.

Physical education

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in key stage 1 have effective control of their body movement. They are able to develop a sequence of gymnastic movement using travelling, jumping, balancing and rolling.
- Pupils improve their performance by being enthusiastic.
- Key stage 2 pupils pay due attention to safety during their activities. They are aware of the beneficial effect of exercise.
- Pupils are aware of the importance in preparing for and recovering from an activity such as short circuit running. They are able to refine and improve their performances in athletic skills.
- They listen well to instruction, respond promptly to the teacher and collaborate sensibly in pairs or in groups. Pupils are able to participate well in a small team game.
- Pupils in the special class show increasing confidence and good body control in their swimming lessons.

Shortcomings

- The ability to evaluate their own performance and the performance of others is underdeveloped at key stage 2.

Religious education

Standards are satisfactory in key stage 1 and good in key stage 2.

Good features

- Pupils in both key stages understand that religion is important to many people.
- In key stage 1, pupils listen carefully and show good recall of events. Most pupils are able to express simply their own ideas about, for example, how they could be a Good Samaritan.
- Pupils write about their friends and can explain why they are special.
- Younger pupils in key stage 2 are also able to consider issues such as why the Bible is important. They are able to talk about special books of their own. They understand the difference between the Old and New Testaments and can recall stories.
- In key stage 2, pupils know about important events in the church year and how these are celebrated.
- Pupils are able to develop their own rules for living good lives by studying the Muslim and Christian faiths.
- Older pupils in key stage 2 study the lives of people such as Martin Luther King and formulate their own opinions of oppression.

Shortcomings

- In key stage 1, pupils do not study religions other than Christianity.
- In key stage 2, the study of other world religions is not detailed enough.

8. School improvement

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

The key issues identified in the last inspection report have, for the most part, been effectively addressed. Progress has been good overall.

- **Raise standards of achievement in all subjects of the National Curriculum, particularly English, information technology, Welsh and religious education.**

Overall, good progress has been made. Standards of achievement in almost all subjects are now good. In English and information technology, standards are good in both key stages. In Welsh, standards are very good in key stage 1 and good in key stage 2. In religious education, standards are good in key stage 2 but still only satisfactory in key stage 1.

- **Raise standards of achievement in pupils' key skills, particularly in all aspects of language.**

Good progress has been made. Standards in key skills are good in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy, and very good in ICT.

- **Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that planning is much more focused on what pupils are expected to learn and how to cater for different age groups and ability levels in the same class. The teaching needs to develop more pace and variety in lessons.**

Good progress has been made. The overall quality of teaching was good or better in about three-quarters of the lessons observed. Teachers' planning is now thorough. Lessons are well structured, with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils. In all classes, tasks for pupils are different to allow all children to achieve. The grouping of pupils according to their ability in English and mathematics in years 5 and 6 also enables teachers to provide appropriate work for all pupils. Lessons are now generally conducted at a good pace.

- **Develop and implement a whole-school policy on effective teaching and learning so as to better share existing good practice.**

Satisfactory progress has been made. The overall quality of teaching is now good and teachers share existing good practice. A fifth of teaching is satisfactory with a small amount still unsatisfactory.

- **Improve the planning of continuity and progression in pupils' learning especially in the key skills and to develop more consistent expectations of what pupils can achieve.**
- Good progress has been made. Good quality schemes of work are in place for all subjects. They include learning outcomes, opportunities for assessment and evaluation and the development of key skills.
- **Improve the school's leadership and management through developing a more thorough system of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, and using this as a means of ensuring more effective self-evaluation and planning for school improvement.**

Satisfactory progress has been made. The school is at an early stage of developing self-evaluation processes and subject leaders have begun to monitor teachers' plans and pupils' work each term. Some first-hand monitoring of standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning is taking place, but only in English and mathematics.

- **Further develop and improve whole school assessment; teachers' assessment skills and practices need to develop and be used more effectively in planning work and helping pupils improve.**

Assessment, recording and reporting processes are now good. Teachers analyse the results of tests to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This information is used for target-setting processes and for the evaluation of teaching strategies. The information is also used to group pupils in some classes for English and mathematics and to provide different work for pupils appropriate to their abilities.

8.2 Key issues for action

The school now needs to:

- further raise standards of teaching and learning in the Early Years;
- raise standards in those subjects and aspects that are only satisfactory;
- further improve the school's leadership and management through extending the current monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning; and
- improve attendance and punctuality.

The inspectors wish to thank everyone associated with the school, especially, the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.

Appendix

A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Cwm Ifor Primary School
School type	Primary
Age -range of pupils	3-11 years
Address of school	Heol Aneurin Penyrheol Caerphilly
Post-Code	CF83 2PG
Telephone Number	02920 852509

Headteacher	Mr S Jenkins
Date of appointment	September 1996 – as headteacher of the newly created primary school,
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mrs A Collins
Reporting Inspector	Mr M Maguire HMI
Dates of inspection	26 April – 29 April 2004

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	17	21	30	33	26	28	32	31	218

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	1	10.3

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	21:1
Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in special classes	5:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.03: 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection					
	N	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School (excluding Nursery)
Summer 03	85.5	86.6	91.5	87.6	88.4
Autumn 03	82.1	85.4	90.3	89.4	89.7
Spring 04	79.0	85.1	88.1	87.3	87.6

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	52%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	5 (temporary exclusions)

C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2003			Number of pupils in Y2: 25						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	12	24	40	24	0
		National	0	0	4	13	63	20	0
EN: Reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	12	28	32	28	0
		National	0	0	4	14	54	28	0
EN: Writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	16	20	56	8	0
		National	0	0	5	13	71	10	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8	8	52	32	0
		National	0	0	2	11	64	22	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	20	48	32	0
		National	0	0	2	9	61	26	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	12	52	32	0
		National	0	0	2	10	68	20	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) by Teacher Assessment			
In the school:	60%	In Wales:	80%

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2003								Number of pupils in Y6: 34					
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	9	0	15	9	35	32	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	16	45	29	0
	Test/Task	School	0	3	9	0	0	0	12	9	29	38	0
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	4	12	41	38	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	9	0	9	12	41	29	0
		National	0	0	3	0	0	1	4	19	46	27	0
	Test/Task	School	0	5	0	9	0	0	3	12	44	27	0
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	4	19	43	30	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	9	0	6	9	50	27	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	50	33	0
	Test/Task	School	0	5	0	9	0	0	0	9	50	27	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	10	47	38	0

- The above data includes the results of stated pupils in the special class

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:	64.7	In the school	64.7
In Wales:	69	In Wales:	70

- D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
B Pupils not entered for tests because they are working outside the level of the test
W Pupils who are working towards level 1
N Tests do not cover these levels
N/A Not applicable

D. The evidence base of the inspection

A team of four inspectors spent a total of 13.5 inspector days in the school.

Before the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher and staff, the governing body and parents; four parents attended the pre-inspection meeting;
- questionnaires were distributed to all parents. The 51 completed forms were analysed and the inspection team noted the results; and
- school documentation was examined.

During the inspection:

- 51 lessons or sessions were observed across a range of subjects in all year groups;
- other observations included assemblies, registration, extra-curricular activities, lunch and break times;
- a sample of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group was examined;
- inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading and talked to them about their work and about the life of the school;
- pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the school sessions; and
- discussions were held with the headteacher, class teachers, staff with specific responsibilities and support staff.

After the inspection:

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

E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspectors	Aspects	Subjects
Mr M Maguire HMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context – the school and its priorities • The main findings of the report • Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning • Assessment, recording and reporting • Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement • Leadership and Efficiency • Staffing, accommodation and learning resources • Progress since the last inspection • Key issues for action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science • Geography • History
Mr A Walters AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum • Curriculum • Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • Welsh • Design and technology • Information Technology • Physical education
Mrs R Edwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development • Teaching • Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-fives • English • Music • Art • Religious education
Mr C Brentnall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and attitudes • Attendance • Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions • Partnership with industry • Accommodation 	



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi Dros Addysg
A Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate
For Education and Training in Wales

...Rhagoriaeth i bawb... Excellence for all...



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Inspection under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

Cwm Ifor Primary School
Heol Aneurin
Penyrheol
Caerphilly
CF83 2PG

A Summary Report for Parents

Report by H M Inspectors

School Number: 676/2252

Inspection 26 – 29 April 2004

Under Estyn Contract Number: T/299/03P

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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 Local Education Authorities 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" (Year 1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Year 13 the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	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 Year 1 and Year 2; key stage 2 of Year 3 to Year 6; key stage 3 of Year 7 to Year 9; key stage 4 of Year 10 and Year 11 (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 shortcomings
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas
5. Poor: many shortcomings

Cwm Ifor Primary School, Caerphilly

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

The inspection of Cwm Ifor Primary School took place between 26 - 29 April 2004. It was undertaken by a team of four inspectors, led by Mr M Maguire HMI.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the efficiency with which financial resources were used and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Cwm Ifor Primary School
School type	Primary
Age -range of pupils	3-11 years
Address of school	Heol Aneurin Penyrheol Caerphilly
Post-Code	CF83 2PG
Telephone Number	02920 852509

Headteacher	Mr S Jenkins
Date of appointment	September 1996 – as headteacher of the newly created primary school,
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mrs A Collins
Reporting Inspector	Mr M Maguire HMI
Dates of inspection	26 April – 29 April 2004

Context

The school and its priorities

Cwm lfor Primary School was formed in 1996 by the amalgamation of Cwm lfor Junior and Infant Schools. In 1998, Cwm lfor Nursery School was added and the school now caters for children aged 3-11 years on a single site.

The school is situated at the northern edge of Caerphilly and serves the communities of Penyrheol and Cwm lfor Park. There are 218 (fte) pupils on roll. Ten pupils attend a special class and eight have a statement of special educational needs. A further 32% of pupils are on the special needs register. There are three pupils who are 'looked after' by the local authority.

Children are admitted to the nursery class soon after their third birthday on a part-time basis. Baseline assessments are undertaken soon after entry to the nursery class and results indicate many children have language needs.

Around 52 % of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school considers that fifty percent of the area served by the school is described as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged and the remainder as being economically disadvantaged. There are no pupils from Welsh speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. There are no ethnic minority groups that make up the school population and no pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language.

The school aims 'to create a warm, stimulating and caring environment where all children will feel safe, secure and experience a sense of worth, with all children being given equal opportunities appropriate to their maturity'. During the last year the school's priorities have been to further develop aspects of English, mathematics, science, information technology, history, key skills and assessment, recording and reporting arrangements.

In November 1998, the school was inspected under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996. The inspection identified important shortcomings in the quality of educational provision and the standards of pupils' achievements. The key concerns related to standards of achievement, the quality of teaching and assessment, and aspects of leadership and management.

Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) undertook a visit to the school in October 2001 to monitor the progress made in addressing the key issues identified in the inspection of November 1998. HMI found that overall the school had made unsatisfactory progress in addressing the key issues and there were continuing shortcomings in important areas. Consequently, in accordance with Section 14 of the School Inspections Act, 1996, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools was of the opinion that the school required special measures.

Since then, the school has been visited regularly by HMI to evaluate the progress made. Throughout this period, the local education authority has also provided support for the school.

Main findings

The main findings of the report

Cwm Ifor Primary School was placed in special measures in October 2001. Since then school staff, governors and the local education authority have worked hard to make progress in those areas that were unsatisfactory. Substantial progress has been made. Almost all areas of school life are now at least satisfactory and most are good. Standards in almost all subjects are now good.

It is the view, therefore, of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales that the school has made good progress in relation to the key issues for action and should no longer be subject to special measures.

Educational standards achieved by pupils

- Standards of achievement are good or better in about two-thirds of the lessons or sessions observed and satisfactory in about a third.
- The educational standards achieved by children under five are at least satisfactory in all six areas of learning. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make satisfactory progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Personal & Social Development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematical Development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Knowledge & Understanding of the World	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical Development	Satisfactory	Good
Creative Development	Good	Good

- Pupils' standards of achievement in the National Curriculum subjects are as follows:

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Good	Good
Welsh second language	Very good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Satisfactory
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	Good	Good
Religious education	Satisfactory	Good

- In key stage 1, National Curriculum assessment results for 2003 show a significant improvement in the number of pupils attaining level 2 or above in mathematics and science since 2002.
- In comparison with schools of a similar nature, the attainment of key stage 1 pupils in mathematics and science is close to the average for these schools. In English, however, the attainment of pupils is close to the bottom 25% of these schools.
- In key stage 2, National Curriculum assessment results for 2003 show a significant improvement in the number of pupils attaining level 4 or above in each of the core subjects since 2002. The number of pupils attaining level 5 in English and science has also significantly increased.
- The number of pupils attaining at least level 4 in each of the subjects of English, mathematics and science together is 65%. In comparison with other similar schools, Cwm Ifor is close to the top 25% of these schools.
- Teachers' analysis of pupils' progress feeds into appropriate targets for improvement in National Curriculum assessments.
- In the early years, childrens' standards of achievement and progress in key skills across the curriculum are satisfactory in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy. They are good in information and communications technology.
- In all other classes, standards are good in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy, and very good in information and communications technology.

- Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their abilities.
- The special unit caters for ten key stage 2 pupils from within the Caerphilly area who have statements of special educational needs. Pupils in the unit are fully involved into school life and they follow a similar curriculum to other pupils in the school. Standards of achievement for these pupils are good and often very good.

Ethos of the school

- Provision for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good overall. The school has a caring ethos to which pupils respond well. Staff and pupils value and respect each other and relationships are good.
- The daily acts of collective worship help to promote pupils, very good moral development. Planned opportunities where pupils sit in a large group and share ideas, express thoughts and feelings and listen appropriately to others ('Circle Time') also support good moral development. Achievement awards contribute well to good social development.
- Visits to places of interest help develop good cultural awareness and appreciation of Welsh culture.
- All members of staff promote care and consideration for others, mutual respect and good manners.
- Links with the local community, in particular with St. Andrew's church, are well developed.
- The school does not have a formal policy on Racial Equality. This is not satisfactory.
- The school is, however, effective in ensuring that pupils understand issues of racial equality.
- Standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning are good throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' progress and standards.
- Attendance levels and punctuality are unsatisfactory. The average attendance figure for the year prior to inspection (not including nursery) was 89%, with 2.5% unauthorised absence. The main causes of absence in school are sickness and holidays taken during term time. A significant number of pupils are also late arriving at school.

Quality of education

- The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, 20% of teaching was very good, 57% good, 18% satisfactory and 6% unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' planning is thorough and lessons are well structured. The grouping of pupils according to their ability in English and mathematics in years 5 and 6 also helps teachers to provide appropriate work for all pupils.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and use a good range of techniques. The quality of feedback to pupils is good. Occasionally, however, whole class teaching sessions are too long and pupils do not have enough time to complete tasks.
- Assessment, recording and reporting processes are good. Teachers analyse the results of tests to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This information is used effectively for target-setting processes and to group pupils in some classes for English and mathematics. It also helps inform the allocation of different work for pupils according to their abilities. The arrangements for assessing and recording the progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. Reports to parents are generally satisfactory and there are appropriate opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress.
- Curriculum provision is good overall. The school provides all pupils with equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum. Good attention is given to health and personal and social education.
- The curriculum provided for 3 and 4 year old children in the nursery and reception classes is good. It is relevant to children's ages and needs and successfully promotes progress in all six areas of the Desirable Learning Outcomes.
- Appropriate schemes of work are in place for all subjects. They are of a good quality and include the development of key skills.
- Educational visits enhance the curriculum. Homework or home projects are set regularly and the school also provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Games organised on an area basis support the development of pupils' team skills.
- The Cwricwlwm Cymreig has a suitably prominent role within the school.
- The quality of provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good. Staff know pupils well and cater for their individual needs sensitively.

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the main school is good. In the special unit the provision is very good. The school makes good use of support staff. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is good. Partnership with industry is satisfactory.

Management

- The quality of the school's self-evaluation and its planning for improvement are satisfactory. However, first-hand monitoring of standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning is only taking place in English and mathematics. The school does not produce an overview of progress that clearly identifies strengths and areas for development
- The leadership and efficiency of the school are satisfactory overall. However, the senior management team does not yet have a strategic role.
- The governing body supports the school well and fulfils its statutory obligations. Most governors, however, do not visit the school in session or discuss pupils' progress with subject leaders enough.
- School finances are well managed. Resources effectively support priorities in the school action plan and development plan.
- There are no formal procedures for the induction and integration of new staff. The school does not evaluate enough the impact that staff training has on standards and the quality of teaching.
- Provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Support staff provide good support to pupils, especially those with special educational needs.
- All classes provide a pleasant and stimulating learning environment and pupils' work is attractively displayed. The caretaker and cleaning staff work well to maintain high standards in the accommodation.
- Learning resources are generally good. They are good in information technology and the three interactive white boards are used to good effect.
- Since the last inspection in 2001, the school has generally made good progress in addressing the key issues for action. The school was left seven key issues for action. It has made good progress in addressing five of the issues and satisfactory progress in addressing the other two.

Key issues for action

The school now needs to:

- further raise standards of teaching and learning in the Early Years;
- raise standards in those subjects and aspects that are only satisfactory;
- further improve the school's leadership and management through extending the current monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning; and
- improve attendance and punctuality.

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 working days (or 45 working days where a translation is necessary) of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the issues. This action plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

The inspectors wish to thank everyone associated with the school, especially, the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.