

**Inspection under Section 28 of the  
Education Act 2005**

**Cwm Primary School  
Canning Street,  
Cwm,  
Ebbw Vale,  
Blaenau Gwent  
NP23 6RD**

**School Number: 6772253**

**Date of Inspection: 13/11/06**

**by**

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Registered Inspector 5539**

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Cwm Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Cwm Primary School took place between 13/11/06 and 16/11/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Glyn Gaskill undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	many important shortcomings

“There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

**Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.**

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. The school is situated in the community of Cwm, Ebbw Vale. The school provides for boys and girls from the age of three to eleven years. The number of pupils on roll is 235, including 35 children in the one nursery class. The school admits children into the nursery in the term after their third birthday. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is well below average particularly in language skills and on entry to reception is below average. There are seven classes for pupils from reception to year 6.

2. The socio-economic background of the area is described as economically disadvantaged and is a designated *Communities First* area. Twenty per cent of pupils have free school meals entitlement which is similar to the all-Wales average of 19% and much better than the local education authority average of 29%. This unexpected and relatively low claim by parents for free school meals entitlement does not reflect the economic disadvantage of the area. There is an above average proportion of pupils, some 20 per cent, with special educational needs including two pupils with statements for their moderate learning difficulties. The home language of virtually all pupils is English. No pupils have Welsh as a mother tongue.

3. The school was last inspected in March 2001. The present head teacher and deputy head teacher were in post at the last inspection. Much of the school buildings has been recently renovated with more improvements planned and budgeted for. The school has been awarded the *Quality Mark for Basic Skills*, it has *Healthy School* status and is actively pursuing *ECO School* recognition.

### The school's priorities and targets

4. The school aims to provide a secure, stimulating and happy environment so that all pupils achieve to the best of their ability and become valued members of a caring society.

5. Priorities for improvement include:

- Establishing the Parents and Children Together [PACT] scheme in school.
- Preparation for the implementation of the Foundation Phase for the under-fives, year 1 and year 2 pupils.
- Further raising standards in numeracy, literacy and problem solving in year 1 and year 2 through the RAISE initiative.
- Extending the promotion of pupils' self-esteem through *Circle Time* and role play.
- Reviewing the provision for key skills and bilingualism.

## Summary

6. Cwm primary school has many strengths. It is particularly successful at enabling pupils to fulfil their potential in both their academic and personal development. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The inspection team agreed with all the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

### Table of grades awarded

7. The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

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

### Standards

8. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons observed for subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	80%	10%	0%	0%

9. Pupils' overall standards of achievement in these lessons compares most favourably with the 2007 targets set out in "The Learning Country 1" which states: "*Standards of achievement are at least satisfactory in 98% of classes we inspect*" (i.e. Estyn grade 3) and "*Standards of achievement are good or very good in 65% of classes we inspect*" (i.e. Estyn grade 1 and 2)

10. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below average.

11. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

12. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology. Standards of achievement in these key skills are good with the exception of the speaking of nursery children which is average.

13. In all classes, pupils' creative skills are very well developed and their problem solving skills are good. Overall, pupils' achievement in their bilingual skills is good. Throughout the school, pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the culture and heritage of Wales is good.

14. At the end of key stage 1, in 2006, pupils' overall attainment in the National Curriculum assessments, in comparison with all schools in Wales and with schools having a similar free school meals entitlement, the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 and above in English, mathematics and science was below average. In comparison with local education authority schools, the results are similar. There were no higher level 3 results identified but inspection evidence indicates that there was evidence of level three attainment in the work of several of these pupils. Over the last several years, the number of pupils attaining level 2 and above in all the core subjects [the core subject indicator] has been similar to the average for all schools in the local education authority but below that of all and similar schools in Wales.

15. At the end of key stage 2, in 2006, pupils' overall attainment in the National Curriculum assessments, in comparison with all schools in Wales and also those having a similar free school meals entitlement, the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 and above was just below average in English, average in science but below average in mathematics. In comparison with local education authority schools, results in English and science were above average but below in mathematics. In comparison with all schools in Wales, the higher level 5 results in 2006 were above average in English and science but below average in mathematics. Over the last four years, the core subject indicator at the end of key stage 2 has significantly improved to become generally similar to that of the local education authority average but is below the national average.

16. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils are being suitably catered for. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

17. Pupils are regularly set targets in the core subjects but they are not fully aware of what these targets are. Pupils take good care in their written work but their individual sheets of paper soon become disorganised. These aspects make it difficult for them to check and plan their own progress.

18. The development of all pupils' personal, social and learning skills is good. Pupils take a good interest in their lessons and apply themselves well to their work. Throughout the school day the behaviour of all pupils is consistently good.

19. Pupils are friendly, polite, courteous and helpful towards adults and each other. Across the school pupils respond very well to being involved in musical and drama performances. Pupils respect the views of others and value equal opportunities for all people. They have a good understanding of the world of work, heritage, their own and other cultures.

20. Attendance rates are below average. Punctuality at the start of the day gives concern but time keeping during the day is good. Each term there are about 17 pupils who have full attendance certificates.

### **The quality of education and training**

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

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
11%	78%	11%	0%	0%

22. The overall quality of teaching across the school compares very favourably with the findings in the 2004-2005 Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales which states: *In primary schools, teaching is good with no important shortcomings in 79% of lessons, of which 18% of lessons have outstanding features.*

23. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good at all levels. Teachers and learning support assistants work very closely together, sharing ideas and plans very effectively. This contributes well to good teaching.

24. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. There is good planning for individual lessons. Teachers explain to pupils what they are expected to learn at the start of a lesson. At the end of the lesson, the class considers how well they have met expectations. This helps progress and pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve and how well they are doing. At times too many things are attempted in a lesson and this slows down progress.

25. Teachers are well informed about developments in their work and plan well for pupils' different abilities. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. In all classes pupils' work is regularly marked. Whilst this marking gives pupils' appreciated encouragement it does not guide their future work enough. Teachers promote incidental Welsh well throughout the day.

26. Assessment is very effective in raising standards for the under-fives and for the core subjects in the rest of the school. Assessment for the other subjects is less

effective. Targets are set for pupils in the core subjects. These targets are used well by teachers but pupils are not aware of them enough. Assessment for pupils with special educational needs helps them make good progress.

27. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress with two reports and two well attended parents' evenings each year. Parents have good access to staff at other times.

28. The school provides a well balanced curriculum. Pupils' of all abilities and backgrounds are well catered for and have full access to all the relevant activities the school offers.

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

30. Planning for the teaching of key skills is developing well across the curriculum. There is very good provision for clubs which are well attended and promote healthy living very well. Educational visits and visitors to the school provide a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

31. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The geography, history, language and heritage of Wales is strongly reflected in the life of the school. Partnerships with the community and other schools are very good and have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

32. The overall quality of care support and guidance given to pupils is very good. Pupils have confidence in staff to deal with their problems and concerns. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good with no important shortcomings.

### **Leadership and management**

33. There is a common sense of purpose amongst all members of staff and governors to do the best for all pupils in the school.

34. The head teacher provides good leadership. The deputy head teacher is a good role model. The work of subject leaders has improved greatly since the last inspection and is having an increasing impact on raising standards but is not consistent.

35. All members of staff have a clear understanding of their duties and benefit from continuing professional development. The governing body is well organised in its responsibilities and organisation of meetings.

36. The school takes good account of national priorities. Taken together; sustainable development; community regeneration; lifelong learning; healthy living; citizenship and inclusion are a strength of the school. The school promotes bilingualism well.

37. The school is self-critical and always looking for ways to improve. The school has established systems to gather the views of teachers, parents and pupils and put them in order of priority in a school development plan. There are many aspects of this system which are effective but it could be even better in guiding improvement.

38. The school is well staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and learning support assistants.

39. Administration of the school is efficient with well established routines. The caretaker and mid-day staff make valuable contributions to the well being of the school.

40. There is a good range of learning resources which are well maintained. Overall, accommodation is good and well managed. The lack of a covered way between the two buildings limits the infants' access to the specialist rooms and hall in the junior building.

41. Finances are managed well. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and addressed the key issues well. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

## **Recommendations**

In order to further improve the school needs to:

- R1 Put right the reported shortcomings in all subject areas.
- R2 Further improve the management and impact on standards of assessment procedures, including pupils' involvement.
- R3 Refine the existing systems by which subject leaders check standards and provision.
- R4\* Establish a sheltered link between the two separate buildings.
- R5\* Continue to promote pupils' better attendance and punctuality.

\* The school has identified these areas in its development planning.

A number of health and safety issues were raised with the school during the inspection and brought to the attention of the governors.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## Standards

### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

43. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons observed for subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	80%	10%	0%	0%

44. Pupils' overall standards of achievement in these lessons compares most favourably with the 2007 targets set out in "The Learning Country 1" which states: "*Standards of achievement are at least satisfactory in 98% of classes we inspect*" (i.e. Estyn grade 3) and "*Standards of achievement are good or very good in 65% of classes we inspect*" (i.e. Estyn grade 1 and 2)

45. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below average.

46. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

47. When pupils start in the nursery, their attainment is well below the local education authority average. During the nursery and reception years, children make good progress and achieve good standards, in using the key skills of listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology in their activities in the six areas of Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Their achievement in the key skill of speaking is average. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils' continue to make good progress and achieve good standards in their use of all the key skills across the curriculum.

48. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively to their teachers' instructions and explanations and give careful consideration to what their classmates have to say. The vast majority make good oral contributions to lessons, speaking clearly and

articulately when giving their views or asking questions. However, several of the under-fives have difficulty in speaking clearly. Pupils write for a good range of purposes. Children in reception write words to describe the features of their faces. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils write clearly when they explain their ideas about forces in their science studies. Across the school pupils respect books as sources of information or for pleasure.

49. Numeracy skills progress well in nursery with children developing a good understanding of the passage of time through their engrossed involvement with the chicks hatched and kept in their area. Pupils in year 4 are familiar with Venn diagrams in their study of food chains and year 6 are skilled in presenting relevant data in various graphs formats in their geography studies.

50. Pupils' use of information and communications technology supports many areas of the curriculum. In the nursery, children correctly use programs to sequence events and are very familiar with the use of bar codes in the supermarket checkout. The use of draw and paint programs features strongly across the school with some exceptionally good work in key stage 2. Word processing is used very well, for example when pupils produce a class book in their English. Year 6 pupils use information and communications technology for research and final presentation of homework projects on *Welsh Heroes* by year 6. The range and quality of this work is excellent.

51. Pupils' creative skills are well developed and used to good effect to enhance work in many subjects, most notably in art, music and design technology. Reception children create and perform good sound pictures of their route to school. Pupils in year 6 complete an unfinished script for a radio play and make good use of sound effects. In the subjects inspected, problem solving is developed well across the school. Pupils in year 2 solve challenges involving grid co-ordinates. Pupils' skills in science investigations are well established with pupils aware of raising their own questions. Problem solving in mathematics is inconsistent.

52. Overall, pupils' achievement in their bilingual skills is good. Across the school, listening skills in Welsh are good and they respond positively to daily instructions. Pupils are increasingly using their reading and writing skills in Welsh across the curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the culture and heritage of Wales is good.

53. At the end of key stage 1, in 2006, pupils' overall attainment in the National Curriculum assessments, in comparison with all schools in Wales and with schools having a similar free school meals entitlement, the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 and above in English, mathematics and science was below average. In comparison with local education authority schools, the results are similar. There were no higher level 3 results identified. Inspection evidence indicates that there was evidence of level three attainment in the work of several of these pupils. Attainment in 2006 was, as the school predicted, lower than previous years. Pupils with identified reading problems are now responding very positively to the special provision made for them. Over the last several years, the number of pupils attaining level 2 and above in all the core subjects [the core subject indicator] has been similar to the average for all schools in the local education authority but below that of all and similar schools in Wales.

54. At the end of key stage 2, in 2006, pupils' overall attainment in the National Curriculum assessments, in comparison with all schools in Wales and also those having a similar free school meals entitlement, the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 and above was just below average in English, average in science but below average in mathematics. In comparison with local education authority schools, results in English and science were above average but below in mathematics. In comparison with all schools in Wales, the higher level 5 results in 2006 were above average in English and science but below average in mathematics. Over the last four years, the core subject indicator at the end of key stage 2 has significantly improved to become generally similar to that of the local education authority average but is below the national average.

55. Overall, pupils are making good progress in acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils are being suitably catered for. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress toward the individual, realistic targets set for them. The school meets the challenging targets it sets for pupils' performance in the National Curriculum assessments at the end of key stage 2.

56. Pupils' appreciate the encouragement given to them verbally by teachers but marking has less of an impact on their standards. Pupils are regularly set targets in the core subjects but they are insufficiently aware of what these targets are. Pupils take good care in their written work but their use of individual sheets of papers, which are kept loosely in folders, makes it very difficult to trace the progress they are making. This makes pupils' self-evaluation difficult.

57. The overall development of all pupils' personal, social and learning skills is good with no significant shortcomings. Pupils take a good interest in their lessons and apply themselves well to their work. They make full use of their time. They are keen to talk to visitors about the work they do. A very high proportion of pupils enjoy the after-school clubs and take part sensibly and enthusiastically. Pupils' positive attitudes to their work and school life in general are developing good skills to promote lifelong learning.

58. Throughout the school day the behaviour of all pupils is consistently good. They know what is expected of them and are involved in setting out classroom rules. They respond well to positive strategies to promote good behaviour. Bullying is not seen as an issue by pupils and they are confident that, should it occur, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively. There has been one temporary exclusion in the last year, the first one in several years.

59. Pupils are friendly, polite, courteous and helpful towards adults and each other. From the nursery onwards, pupils work and play well together, often with minimal supervision. There are many examples of pupils collaborating very well together. Older pupils negotiate roles and responsibilities, for example when performing a radio play. Across the school pupils respond very well to being organised into groups, particularly when they are involved in musical or dramatic performances. This was seen in assemblies and also in lessons. These aspects also contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual well being.

60. Pupils show a very good awareness of equal opportunity issues and are developing a good respect for the diversity within society. They understand that they must respect the views of others and that all people are equally important. Pupils appreciate the fact that all pupils are given encouragement to take part in all relevant school activities.

61. Pupils develop a positive sense of belonging within the school and their own community through their roles in the well-established school council and recently formed Eco committee. In addition they are very involved in the community festival and projects and events such as the annual Remembrance Day service. Pupils are involved in the planning and development of the community commemorative garden through the school's link with the *Communities First* initiative. Through well planned educational visits and visitors to the school, pupils have a good understanding of the world of work, heritage, their own and other cultures.

62. At 90 per cent, the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is below both the local education authority and national averages. Absences are caused mainly by sickness and an increasing number of family holidays in term time. Of most concern, is punctuality at the start of the day throughout the school and the low attendance of children in the early year's classes. A significant number of pupils in most classes arrive late at the start of the day. They miss the important start of lessons and this adversely affects their progress. Punctuality during the day is good.

63. The school frequently reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and punctuality and the detrimental effects of absence and lateness on their children's learning. However, despite the school's best efforts a small number of families continue to give concern. The school works very closely with the educational welfare officer in these cases. Each term there are about 17 pupils who have full attendance which the school recognises by the presentation of valued certificates. The school complies with the Welsh Assembly Government's guidance on pupils support and social inclusion.

## The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	78%	11%	0%	0%

66. The overall quality of teaching across the school compares very favourably with the findings in the 2004-2005 Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales which states: *In primary schools, teaching is good with no important shortcomings in 79% of lessons, of which 18% of lessons have outstanding features.*

67. The quality of relationships between all members of the school community, both adults and pupils, is very good. This effectively stimulates pupils' positive response to learning and their good progress. Teachers and learning support assistants work very closely together, sharing plans and ideas very effectively. This significantly enhances the quality of teaching. Teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils and the community well. This knowledge is used effectively to promote pupils' good attitudes to work. Learning support assistants are very effective in their work both in following agreed plans and also in using their own initiative.

68. The quality of the teaching for children under five is good across all areas of learning. Adults stimulate and challenge pupils to do well. The teacher and learning support assistant intervene effectively and provide children with a good range of practical, exciting activities to extend their knowledge and understanding. They are aware of recent developments in the Early Years curriculum and are adapting their teaching accordingly.

69. The quality of teaching across key stages 1 and 2 is good. Planning for individual lessons is methodically based on whole school scheme of work for individual subjects and identifies key skills. Teachers are efficient in explaining realistic and attainable learning objectives to pupils at the start of lessons. In the best practice, these objectives are used to guide pupils' work during the lesson with direct or indirect reference made to them by teachers. There is a well established final part of the lesson where the success in attaining the learning objectives is evaluated by the teacher with the pupils. This promotes very effective teaching, learning and pupils' awareness of their own self-assessment. In a very small number of instances, this approach is not consistently used, for example when there are too many learning objectives for a lesson or too much time is allocated to one learning objectives. Both these instances lead to a lack of pace in pupils' learning.

70. Teachers are well informed about developments in their work and use a broad range of teaching strategies which are well matched to lesson content and pupils' needs. The vast majority of lessons are planned with good attention paid to the differing abilities of pupils. This is a noticeable improvement since the last inspection. The effectiveness of lessons is evaluated and this guides future planning. In all classes pupils' work is regularly marked, often with encouraging written comment. There are examples of written guidance giving pupils an indication of what they need to do to improve, but this is inconsistent and not always obviously followed up by the pupils. Whilst no members of staff are Welsh speakers, they promote incidental Welsh positively throughout the day.

71. Assessment arrangements for the under-fives are effective and firmly linked to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. In key stages 1 and 2, there are very thorough procedures to effectively raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is a well established sequence of testing for all years using a good range of standardised testing linked securely to National Curriculum requirements. Results are methodically recorded. In addition the school rigorously maintains an individual record of the work of every pupil, with samples of their work, as they move through the school. This information leads to realistic targets being formally set for all pupils in all the core subjects. Teachers carry out an on-going review of pupils' progress towards these targets and also a formal review twice a year. Where appropriate, teachers set new targets. These targets are suitably used to guide lesson planning. Pupils are not sufficiently aware of their individual targets and this reduces effective use of these targets. Whilst these procedures are effective in raising standards they are over-demanding on teacher's administrative time.

72. Assessment arrangements for the foundation subjects are less formal but are directly linked to National Curriculum requirements. The assessment of these subjects is left to individual teachers. The assessment for pupils with special educational needs is thorough and effective in helping them make good progress. The arrangements pay close regard to the special educational needs Code of Practice.

73. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. There are two written reports sent to parents. The first is a short version in the spring term which gives their child's targets in the core subjects. The main report is sent out in the summer term. This report is very clearly laid out and gives a very clear picture of the pupil's efforts, achievements and areas for development. There are two opportunities for parents to formally meet with members of staff, in addition to access at other times should the need arise. These parents' meetings are well attended. The school fully complies with the statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

75. The school provides a well balanced curriculum which motivates pupils and provides a coherent and well structured programme for learning. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils and meets their needs and interests and meets statutory requirements. There is continuing development of the curriculum and planning for learning in order to meet the aspirations of the school. The curriculum pays due regards to national priorities including bilingualism and sustainable development. Pupils' of all abilities and backgrounds are well catered for and have full access to all the relevant activities the school offers.

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

77. The school has done a considerable amount of work in ensuring that key skills are integrated into schemes of work. The school is further refining this aspect. Planning for the teaching of key skills, in both the long and short term, is developing well across the curriculum. This is particularly the case in the use of literacy where 'skills ladders' give good guidance for increasing demand of activities. Planning for problem solving is well established, for example in science, and creativity features strongly particularly in art and music.

78. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school are very good and contribute very effectively towards pupils' personal and social development and health education. The activities involve several sporting activities, music, dance, board games, computer and art club. There is appropriate access for all pupils to these activities. These activities have been well thought out so that pupils from year 2 onwards can be involved. A very good feature is the school walking club which successfully encourages a healthy lifestyle for younger pupils, parents and teachers. The club takes place in all weathers with, uniquely, a one mile walk taking place indoors when the weather is bad.

79. Carefully planned educational visits by pupils and visitors to the school, successfully raise pupils' awareness of the world of work, the community, their own and other cultures and bring added relevance to their learning. Pupils benefit from professional sports coaching and working with specialists such as poets, theatre, drama and circus groups and musicians. The police and fire service effectively support the school's personal, social and health education programme, including personal safety and abuse awareness. Members of the community willingly contribute to projects and share their experiences, for example in relating their memories of life during World War II and by practical support from the local football team.

80. Pupils visit places of interest relevant to their studies, such as St. Fagans' Folk museum and the Big Pit at Blaenavon. The oldest pupils broaden their understanding of the world when they visit Belgium. Pupils gain a good insight into the world of work from visitors and visits they make, such as to a bread factory. One teacher has undertaken an industrial placement with a beneficial effect on drama productions in the school.

81. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The head teacher, members of staff and governors are successful in creating a caring ethos built on consideration and respect for others. There is a very pleasant atmosphere in school assemblies which offer guidance in spiritual and moral issues, and promote a strong sense of community. The local parish priest is a member of the governing body and a regular visitor to school assemblies. Prayers are said reverently in classes at appropriate times during the day. An annual Remembrance Day service takes place in school with the full complement of British Legion standard bearers and bugler. Opportunities are created for pupils to help others less fortunate than themselves and, along with parents, generous support is given to a number of local, national and world charities.

82. The geography, history and heritage of Wales is strongly reflected in the life of the school. A sense of pride in being Welsh is fostered and pupils' awareness of Welsh heritage, especially its rich local heritage, is promoted well through the several areas of the curriculum. Displays, such as the old school bell and memorial plaque rescued from the demolished miners' institute provide valuable, tangible reminders of the heritage of the community. Bilingualism is promoted well. These aspects are strengths of the school.

83. The school is involved in several initiatives with local education authority to raise standards which are having a positive impact on standards. Additional support is provided by qualified staff who visit the school regularly to work with individual pupils and groups of pupils. Good relationships exist with the adjacent community centre. Although no parents attended the pre-inspection meeting, they are involved in school activities such as running the library and the organisation of fruit for the healthy eating initiative. Parents are very supportive of the schools' concerts, fetes and parents evenings.

84. There are good links with the local secondary school where years 5 and 6 pupils visit the school for sample lessons. Year 6 pupils are involved in projects in subjects, such as geography, English and mathematics, which they complete when they move to the secondary school. Key stage 3 teachers visit the school and teach French, mathematics, art and information technology. The school also has good links with the local playgroup, from which children move to the nursery. The aspirations of year 6 pupils are raised by working with a link tutor and student teachers from a teacher training institution on the Schools and Jobs Challenge.

85. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop understanding of sustainable development. The whole school are involved in the Living Egg project. All pupils take a great interest in the hatching of hen eggs and the chicks' growth. The nursery children take the responsibility of caring for the chicks very seriously. Pupils and parents are involved in a recycling project and there is a composting scheme for the new garden project. The under-fives and key stage 1 pupils harvest a rich and

varied crop from an established school garden they look after. The school acts in a sustainable way, for example with the lights in many areas operated by motion sensor switches.

86. Pupils' awareness of global citizenship is raised through the school's well established link with a school in Australia. Year 6 pupils are matched to pen pals in the partner school. They exchange letters, gifts and photographs. This enriches many areas of the year 6 curriculum and benefits the whole school through displays of their work and visits by teachers from the partner school. This is an outstanding feature.

87. The well established school council gives pupils a very good insight into the democratic process and local citizenship. All pupils have the several opportunities to take on roles appropriate to their age and ability. They take their roles very seriously and show great commitment.

88. Older pupils develop an understanding of economic development through their involvement in running the fruit tuck shop and stalls at school fairs. They make decisions on types of fruit and goods sold. Firm plans are in place to involve older pupils in packing fruit and vegetables in the community food store co-operative through the school's link with the *Communities First* initiative. This has the potential to further enhance the school's healthy eating project and additionally support community regeneration.

#### **Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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89. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

90. All adults in the school provide consistently good care and support in a welcoming, happy environment. Relationships are very good. The school has a positive ethos and every child is valued and included. Pupils are secure in that they know what is expected of them. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school.

91. There is very good daily informal contact with parents, particularly in the Early Years and key stage 1. In meetings with a small number of parents during the inspection, parents are quick to say that they value the approachability of all members of staff. They feel the school has a genuine open door policy. Parents are kept well informed about activities and events through newsletters. Termly curriculum information sheets and booklets provide valuable information about topics being taught and strategies to enable parents to help their children. The school takes good account of parent's views through questionnaires and meetings. A small number of parents provide valuable support in school, for example they run the whole school lending library and help with tasks particularly in key stage 1.

92. Induction arrangements for children into the nursery are carefully planned and implemented. A brochure for parents and carers provides very useful information about daily procedures. There is a very effective period of gradual induction of children into the nursery. There are very good links with the local playgroup run by a governor. Parents and children are well supported and as a result children settle well into school life. Pupils moving across key stages take part in "moving up" day to meet their new teachers. There are effective procedures for pupils joining the school during the school year. New pupils quickly learn routines. There are well established transition arrangements with the receiving secondary schools which enable pupils to settle to new routines.

93. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are rigorous. The school operates a first day response to absence system and works closely with the education welfare officer on cases that give concern. The school sets targets and good attendance is rewarded termly and at the year end. However despite the school's best efforts, a small number of families do not support the school's arrangements for the attendance of their children.

94. There are effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' behaviour and performance. All members of staff, including mid-day supervisors, apply policies for behaviour management consistently and act as very good role models. Arrangements to encourage pupils to behave well are very effective in class, around the school and on the playgrounds. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond well to the reward system. The appropriate procedures have been followed in the case of the first temporary exclusion for several years.

95. Adults in the school are well aware of pupils' particular needs and are knowledgeable about procedures in the event of accidents and emergencies. They are alert to issues relating to the well being of the pupils. The health and safety policy is comprehensive. There is a named link health and safety governor. Risk assessments are systematic and safety audits are appropriately carried out.

96. The school is in the third year of the *Healthy School Award* scheme. It promotes health and fitness for pupils, and often adults, through the formal curriculum including a very good range of extra-curricular activities. A unique feature is the weekly all-weather walking club enjoyed by pupils, members of staff and family members. The harvest from the vegetable garden gives pupils a good understanding of wholesome food. Games and playground equipment encourage team work and enjoyable active play at breaktimes. Many pupils cycle to school. There is a daily fruit tuck shop and healthy options are available at lunchtime. The mid-day supervisors liaise effectively with parents to ensure that the children eat well at lunchtime.

97. There are effective policies and procedures in place for child protection. The headteacher and his deputy are the named persons and there is a very experienced, named governor. All members of staff including mid-day supervisors are fully aware of their responsibilities in this aspect.

98. There is a very effective pastoral care policy with procedures in place for equal opportunities and separate policies for race equality, anti bullying and harassment. The school council and buddies systems have significant roles in maintaining very good relationships. Members of staff work hard to ensure that pupils have equal

access and an equal chance to succeed. Pupils are not stereotyped because of their gender, ethnic origin or ability. Pupils accept each other as equal members of the school community.

99. The school recognises its responsibility to promote good race relations across all areas of activity. Pupils in both key stages have been involved in a *One World* conference. They have formulated whole school statement that is effectively displayed, together with their perceptive views of world citizenship, on *One World* boards in both halls. The school is accessible to disabled pupils and adults. The requirements of the Disability Rights act are met well.

100. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning difficulties is good with no significant shortcomings. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are fully met. The school identifies any concerns at an early stage and has a effective monitoring system. Parents are informed of concerns and are included from the outset. The special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants work together very well as a team. They are dedicated to all pupils in their care and ensure effective delivery of support. All members of staff work together effectively in assessing pupils' needs and evaluating progress. Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed and movements on and off the special educational needs register are logged. Targets in individual education plans are modified in the light of progress made. Pupils make good progress towards these targets.

101. Individual education plans are drawn up by the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and the full involvement of learning support assistants. Individual education plans are of good quality and contain clear and measurable targets, useful advice and specific information on the role of those adults who provide support. Parents are kept well informed through regular meetings and the sharing of information. There is good collaboration with outside agencies and the school benefits from grants and local authority support. Close links are made with pre-school groups and health agencies to the benefit of pupils.

## Leadership and management

### Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

103. There is a common purpose amongst all members of staff and governors to do the best for all pupils in the school. There is a keen sense of teamwork with all members of staff being valued and their views influencing the continuing development of the school. The school ensures that all pupils have full access to the formal curriculum and other activities.

104. The head teacher provides good leadership. His care and concern for pupils and members of staff is a very significant factor in successfully promoting the very good quality of life in the school. The deputy head teacher ably takes on significant management responsibilities and is a good role model for members of staff and pupils. The senior management team works well on an informal basis.

105. The role of subject leaders has improved dramatically since the last inspection. Their job descriptions are clearly defined and routines have been established for their work. This includes their clearly timetabled to review provision in their areas of responsibility. With falling roles and inevitable redundancies, remaining staff have been flexible in taking classes of a different age to that which they have previously taught. These moves have successfully aided by continuing professional development. Redundancy procedures have followed local education authority guidelines.

106. Assessment is used particularly effectively in the core subjects to set realistic and challenging targets for pupils' attainment. Learning support assistants know their duties well and have opted to have a team job description to make their working flexible. This arrangement is very effective. Teachers and learning support assistants are involved in monitoring the progress of pupils in their personal and academic development. This has a positive effect on standards.

107. Performance management is well established for all teachers and it meets the needs of both whole school development and also their individual continuing professional development. Learning support assistants have full access to all whole school in-service events in addition to specific courses from which they benefit.

108. The school takes good account of national priorities. Taken together; sustainable development; community regeneration; healthy living; lifelong learning; citizenship and inclusion are a strength of the school. The school promotes bilingualism well.

109. The governing body is well organised in its responsibilities and organisation of meetings. Governors are kept well informed of school matters through their own informal visits and regular reports from the head teacher. They know the community

very well. The governing body closely studies the school development plan, which is prepared by the head teacher, and raise issues where they see the need. In a similar manner they approved the school's self-evaluation report for this inspection. The school development plan is used by the governors to check progress against the targets set.

110. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents has minor omissions and statutory requirements are not fully met. With this exception, the governing body meets its statutory obligations.

### **Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?**

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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111. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

112. The school is self-critical and there is a positive culture to maintain its good features and improve provision where the need is identified. There is an established schedule to gather evidence of provision and standards, prioritise areas identified for improvement and set out a costed school development plan. Teachers make a significant contribution to this process and the views of pupils and parents are taken into account.

113. The school has a range of systems that enable subject leaders and managers to gather information in order to evaluate standards and provision in their area of responsibility. Time is allocated to for them to carry this out and produce an annual self-evaluation report of their subject area. These useful reports have a common and clear structure which enables quick understanding by the reader. This procedure is being well linked to relevant key questions from the Estyn inspection framework.

114. Good use of the school's own assessment data together with national and local comparisons to bring about improvements in standards in the core subjects. This aspect is not as rigorously developed in the foundation subjects. The detail of evaluating standards varies between subjects with sampling ranging from the very thorough to the brief. The head teacher monitors teaching and learning as part of performance management and has an accurate picture of strengths and areas for improvement. On occasion, subject leaders make informal, direct observation of teaching and make constructive observations on what they see.

115. The reports of the subject leaders, together with comment from parents and pupils, are formally considered in whole staff meetings. From these meetings, a manageable number of major priorities are allocated to the school development plan with minor priorities allocated to individual staff meetings or separate action as appropriate. The school development plan is clearly laid out and effectively allocates human and financial resources to proposed developments. Success criteria is included but this lacks quantified criteria, particularly involving standards, so that improvements can be accurately measured.

116. The self-evaluation report produced by the school before the inspection carefully considers each of the seven key questions of the inspection framework. Areas of strength together with areas for development are clearly stated. The inspection team agreed with the school's grade for each key question.

117. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and addressed the key issues well.

### **Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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118. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

119. The school is well staffed by appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and makes good use of their specialisms, interests and expertise. Teachers are well supported by skilled learning support assistants who work effectively with small groups and individual pupils. The work of learning support assistants has a significant impact on pupils' progress. Very good and efficient support is given by administrative, catering and lunchtime staff so that the school day runs smoothly. The work of the caretaker and cleaning staff ensures that the buildings are kept in good order. There are effective arrangements for the training and professional development of all members of staff of the school.

120. Members of staff are deployed well to meet the needs of the pupils and the school has made good use of Welsh Assembly Government grants to provide additional staffing support where required.

121. The school has a good range of resources for every age group and subject. These are monitored and maintained by subject leaders. Replacement and new items purchased when the need is identified. A good range of visual aids, artefacts, commercial and school-made resources support pupils' interest and motivation in lessons. The school has invested well in practical equipment and books to support schemes of work in science and literacy.

122. All classes have a small number of computers with appropriate internet access through the local education authority intranet. There is a well equipped computer suite which gives access to a single interactive whiteboard. Pupils make good use of these facilities. However during the inspection a few computers in the school were not working. Repairs to information technology equipment are usually quickly carried out which minimises disruption to the pupils' learning. The school has two libraries, one in the junior and the second in infant building. Both are well stocked with a range of modern and classic books, poetry, fiction and non-fiction.

123. Good use is made of the accommodation in the school. Specialist room in the junior building provide very good accommodation for design technology and music. The use of these rooms has a positive effect on standards across the school. There

are spacious areas support practical activities in subjects such as art and science. Physical education is well provided for with the two halls and extensive outdoor facilities. Tarmac surfaces are in generally good condition with parts of the outdoor play area having recently been resurfaced. The grassed areas are well used during the summer months. There is a field available for games lessons. Fencing around the site is in good repair.

124. Access by the reception and key stage 1 pupils to the specialist rooms is limited in bad weather because there is no covered access. The hall in the junior building is used for whole school assemblies and mid-day meals. This again causes problems for members of staff and pupils based in the infant building.

125. The internal environment is bright and attractive. Display boards with bilingual headings show the pride pupils and members of staff have in their work, their local heritage and in being Welsh. Through informative displays, the school promotes the activities of the school throughout the year such as educational visits, clubs and the school council.

126. The school organises its planning, preparation and assessment time well using an additional teacher for lesson coverage. This time contributes directly to the raising of standards is carefully monitored by the head teacher.

127. The headteacher ably oversees all resource use and expenditure including that set against the school development plan. Subject leaders review resources and advise the head teacher of requirements. The governing body is involved in prioritising spending and is well informed by the head teacher of the impact on provision. The school uses its available resources carefully and effectively.

128. The head teacher, school clerk and the local education authority finance support officer regularly meet and to plan and monitor financial issues. The head teacher reports half-termly to the governing body to confirm agreed spending, monitoring and evaluation of finances. The most recent audit report shows that the school is administered well.

129. The school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects

### English

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

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

#### Good features

130. In key stage 1, pupils develop a good understanding of English. They generally listen attentively, especially when a story is being told. They speak clearly in question and answer sessions and listen respectfully to their classmates. They have a good recall of a plot in a story and understand aspects of character.

131. Key stage 1 pupils contribute well in group discussions and communicate with increasing confidence. They make very good progress in their speaking and listening as they progress through the key stage.

132. Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in reading skills according to their age and ability. They have a good grasp of phonics and respond well to visual cues and sounds. Their appreciation and understanding of books is good. They name authors and their favourite books. They recall favourite stories and confidently explain why they like or dislike a particular character

133. Pupils make steady progress in writing. Close attention is paid to the spelling of simple words and basic punctuation to define sentences. Pupils' writing develops from completing labels and shopping lists to their correct sequencing of stories. By the end of key stage 1, many pupils are developing individual and original ideas.

134. In key stage 2, many pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and information. On the whole, pupils read with appropriate expression and at the expected levels for their age and ability. The most able read confidently and develop characterisation and good expression. Pupils know how a dictionary can help them with their work and use them regularly. They confidently use reference books to find relevant information.

135. Pupils listen attentively, recalling and applying previous knowledge in a range of oral activities. In year 3, pupils re-enact excerpts from Jack and the beanstalk in clear and well sequenced manner. Through role play they confidently used expression and actions to convey their story. An outstanding feature of this work was the way in which all pupils showed an empathy with the character they were portraying.

136. Pupils in key stage 2 write in a range of styles and genre. In years 5 and 6, pupils analyse stories and illustrations for emotional and atmospheric content. Working in groups they discuss and debate styles of writing and apply their findings in their own writing. In year 6, pupils write well constructed letters to pen pals in Australia. As a class, they critically discuss the elements of a good, informative letter. In small groups they apply the agreed general principles, becoming 'critical friends' to their classmates when they draft letters. Handwriting is generally clear and punctuation used to good effect.

137. In key stage 2, pupils speak confidently in group sessions. The oldest pupils thoughtfully put together reasoned arguments and discuss problems in subjects such as geography. They make good use information and communications technology for research and produce good quality individual projects that become part of the school library.

## Science

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

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

### Good features

138. In all classes, pupils have a good, broad knowledge of biological and physical science. Pupils appreciate the everyday contexts or applications of their science studies. They have a good understanding of 'fair testing', gathering and presenting information and making predictions and drawing conclusions based on their science or everyday knowledge. These aspects develop well as pupils move through the school.

139. In key stage 1, the youngest pupils complete given table regarding their likes and dislikes of foods. They base their study of the diversity of life by considering the different animals in a pet shop and their needs for different types of 'homes'. The oldest pupils write clearly and correctly about forces that change the shape of objects or cause movement. They correctly use technical terms such as 'gravity'. Their investigative skills are applied to toy cars travelling down slopes with a few pupils making good attempts at producing their own table of results.

140. Pupils in year 3 thoroughly study the care, structure and function of teeth. They carry out experimental work into tooth decay and its prevention. They consider the type of teeth found in meat and plant eating animals. Pupils build on their study of materials by considering the footwear and instruments used by a visiting clog dancer. This leads to their better understanding of how different quality sounds are produced. In year 4, pupils talk knowledgeably about their well structured investigations into the needs of plants for healthy growth. They know the requirements of a healthy diet for themselves when they devise and play their own 'food group bingo'. They accurately use the terms herbivore, carnivore and omnivore.

141. Year 5 pupils carefully use a meter to measure forces in newtons. They produce good written work with interesting facts about Isaac Newton. Pupils carry out well organised practical work and investigations into forces by studying magnetism, air resistance and friction. The information gathered is presented in clearly labelled bar graphs. In year 6, pupils carry out extensive studies into the working of the heart and lungs. They make good use of the internet and models to find out how the heart and lungs work. They measure their own pulse rate before and after exercise and construct line graphs from which they draw correct conclusions about personal fitness.

## Shortcomings

142. Overall, there are no important shortcomings but pupils are not sufficiently raising their own questions to investigate.

## Design technology

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

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

### Good features

143. Pupils in both key stages use equipment safely and are well aware of risks and dangers. They are also know about the importance of hygiene when handling food. Across the school, pupils have a good grasp of the processes of designing, making, testing and evaluating products. Finished products of good quality are varied and match the design brief. By the end of key stage 2, pupils have developed good independent working skills.

144. In key stage 1, pupils investigate different fruits though appearance, smell, colour and texture. They sort the fruit by what it tastes like. Healthy eating features well when they consider the parts of a fruit salad. They make a fruit salad which they evaluate by eating. Pupils investigate different types of puppets. They begin to develop sewing skills by threading a needle and knotting the thread, before practising running stitches on open-weave material. They refer to their design sheets throughout the making process.

145. In year 3, pupils research and investigate the contents of sandwiches. They design their own sandwiches choosing between different types of bread and fillings. They take their finished product home and logically evaluate whether the process should be changed and if improvements could be made to improve the finished article. Pupils in year 4 study commercially made money containers. For their first ideas they consider materials, for whom they are making the product, what it will hold, how it will be carried and fastened, its shape and decoration. They say why they have chosen a particular design. They practise sewing and other joining techniques before making templates and completing their task.

146. Year 5 pupils investigate the most durable and waterproof materials for building a shelter, testing them with water in a syringe. They test the best way to fasten material to a frame. Pupils experiment to find the strongest structures by testing to find which will hold the greatest weight. The conclusions of their researches are used in their final design and constructions.

147. In year 6, pupils research the materials and structures used in the commercial manufacture of musical instruments. They correctly apply their knowledge from science and music about how sounds are made and changed. They design and make the musical instruments and use them as sound effects in a radio play. They evaluate their instruments, bearing in mind the listeners to the radio play, and suggest practical methods of improvement.

## Shortcomings

148. Overall, there are no important shortcomings but in key stage 2, pupils use LOGO but do not sufficiently build on their control technology skills.

## Geography

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

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

### Good features

149. Throughout the school, pupils have a good understanding of sustainable development and the use of different types of map.

150. Pupils' work in key stage 1 is firmly based on the local environment. Pupils talk about where they live, describe their observations of their local area confidently and talk knowledgeably about local shops and landmarks. In year 1, pupils confidently plan their routes to school based on their knowledge of local landmarks. Pupils in year 2 have a good practical understanding of good and poor aspects of an environment and are involved in litter picking. Pupils understand the basic concepts of grid patterns and can locate items on a large two column grid. Mapping skills are developing well with pupils understanding simple coordinates. Many pupils correctly locate Wales and England on small scale maps, with more able pupils pointing out Cwm on the large scale map of Wales. Pupils have a clear understanding of the differing seasons and their associated weather patterns.

151. In key stage 2, pupils know about the changing pattern of life and the built features in their community as a consequence of the loss of traditional industries. They study these aspects through discussions resulting for the study of paper based material and visits to Big Pit at Blaenavon. They also are familiar with a number of contrasting areas through their studies of Abergavenny, Blaenavon and Cardiff Bay. They correctly identify buildings and their various functions in these locations and are well aware of the importance of roads and railways for improving communication.

152. By the end of key stage 2, pupils successfully build on their knowledge of environmental issues of the locality and also the wider world. They compare their own locality with the contrasting environment of Montreuil in Western France. Using information from the internet and photographic evidence, pupils produce comparative graphs of geographical aspects of the two locations, such as population figures, businesses and amenities. They use their investigative skills to solve hypothetical problems related to their geographical studies. For example, the case for additional car parking in Montreuil as to the financial and environmental costs against need. The comparative study also involved the use of maps of different scale and historical development. Year 6 pupils have an excellent link with a school in South Australia. Pupils benefit from the study of each others' culture and environment.

<b>Art</b>
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**Key Stage 1** - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

**Good features**

153. In both key stages, pupils achieve good standards in their increasing knowledge of line, tone, colour, pattern, shape and texture. They use a wide range of materials, equipment and processes very effectively, with increasing confidence and ability. Pupils discuss their own work, and that of others, with pleasure, pride and understanding. Across the school, pupils' art skills are used effectively to enhance many subjects in high quality displays around the school.

154. In key stage 1, pupils experiment with cotton buds, brushes and sponges in applying paint to effectively create the texture of a teddy-bear's fur. Pupils study the local environment and experiment with pastels to compare the colours of nature with the colours of the built environment. They successfully experiment mixing paints to create hues of green and superimpose their landscapes on a green background.

155. In key stage 2, pupils discuss and evaluate their work with confidence. They ably discuss processes, techniques and style using appropriate language. They use examples of local and famous artists' portraits and self-portraits, as a stimulus for their own self-portraits. Pupils make interesting collages from magazines by cutting out faces. They improve their observational skills by sketching different components of these faces. They produce effective self portraits by cutting a photograph of themselves in half and completing the other side. Finally, pupils complete their study with colourful self-portraits in paint.

156. Pupils are influenced by local artist Anthony Cooper's technique of a pixel effect, using natural autumn colours on manufactured objects. They use colour mixing skills well, shading and blending colours. They make effective use of view finders to produce well observed paintings of built and natural landscapes. Pupils thoughtfully compare their work to Thomas Rathmell and LS.Lowrie's landscapes of Ebbw Vale and Six Bells.

157. In their studies of miners, influenced by the work of Nicholas Evans, pupils' work is attractive and of a high standard. Their charcoal studies of each other posing as miners, successfully convey movement and mood. Their string portraits and prints are simple but empathetic. Pupils use a variety of different media and papers to create a gallery of miners' heads using plate printing and rubbing techniques. Pupils use their information and communications technology skills to create dramatic images of coal drams.

158. Pupils' understanding of pattern using natural forms and geometric shapes is enriched by their study of the works of William Morris and Laura Ashley. They create appealing wallpaper and fabric designs experimenting with leaf prints and use their information and communications technology skills very effectively to create repeating patterns. Pupils evaluate a piece of commercially printed fabric and produce prints

with computer generated designs and also the use of templates on squared paper. They produce eye-catching prints on plain fabric.

### Shortcomings

159. Overall, there are no important shortcomings but pupils do not sufficiently transfer their skills and knowledge to three dimensional work.

<b>Music</b>
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**Key Stage 1** - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

### Good features

160. The quality of singing is good in both key stages. Across the school, pupils know a good range of songs in English and Welsh. Singing in assembly is joyous and tuneful. The oldest pupils have good diction, use well controlled dynamics and skilfully change key. Pupils in key stage 2 sing in rounds radiating great enjoyment, keeping to their parts well. Pupils have a good understanding of the best posture for singing and the need to 'warm up' before a performance. They regularly listen to recordings of their performances. Pupils are appreciative each others performance, at times making their views clearly known.

161. Musical performances, which feature pupils' singing and use of untuned percussion, are a great strength across the school. There is a tradition of separate public performances involving all pupils in years 1 and 2, years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6. These take place at different times of the year and range from the traditional Christmas story to formal choral singing when the oldest pupils present *The Burning Bush*. Pupils take part with a good sense of theatrical presentation. The oldest pupils use information and communications technology to produce professional looking posters and programmes. All pupils make very good use of the facilities in the specialist music room for their performances in lessons.

162. Musical composition features strongly from year 1 onwards. Across the school, pupils are familiar with the need for a musical director to guide their collaborative performances. Pupils achieve good standards in understanding the function and production of graphic scores. They develop a good knowledge and performance of the different elements of music as they move through the school.

163. In year 1, pupils consider sounds which are loud and quiet and those they like and don't like and arrange representative pictures in a score. In year 2, pupils create and perform a very representational sound story of their journey to school using voice and instruments of their choice. They make good choices of instrument and very good progress in layering different sounds together.

164. Pupils in year 3 use their listening skills well to develop their performance in Polynesian rhythms. They confidently sing and use untuned percussion instruments to perform *Migildi Magildi* for a whole school assembly. Pupils in year 4 make

outstanding use of many musical elements when they perform a well adapted version of *Ode to Joy*. They make very good use of pitch, pulse and dynamics in their singing, use percussion instruments with precision and finish their performance cleanly. They are self critical and make many practical suggestions to improve their performance. They know Beethoven suffered from deafness in later life and appreciate the talent of Evelyn Glennie.

165. A small number of pupils benefit from brass lessons from a visiting tutor.

### **Shortcomings**

166. Overall, there are no important shortcomings but the use of tuned instruments is limited.

## **School's response to the inspection**

As a school we welcome the findings of the inspection team and agree with them that Cwm Primary School has made good progress since the last inspection.

The inspection team recognizes the fact that the overall quality of teaching and standards of achievement are good in both key stages. This acknowledges the abilities and dedication of our teaching staff.

The report also highlights the important contribution made by learning support assistants in achieving good standards. In addition, we are pleased to note the positive contribution by the administrative staff, dinner supervisors, catering and cleaning staff.

The report accurately describes the positive attitudes the pupils have to learning. The inspection team also congratulated the pupils on their courtesy, good manners and behaviour displayed during the inspection.

We are also pleased to note the overall quality of care, support and guidance given to pupils is very good, and this is appreciated by pupils and parents.

Following receipt of this report the governors will put in place an action plan to address all recommendations made in the report.

In particular the plan will include strategies for assessment to further improve the management and impact of assessment on standards, including pupils' involvement. We will also further refine the existing systems by which subject leaders check standards and provision.

We will continue to promote pupils' better attendance and punctuality. In addition, we will put right the few shortcomings in the subject that were inspected along with raising standards in mathematics.

As a school, in conjunction with the local education authority, we will actively seek to establish a link between the two separate buildings.

All these areas will be identified in the school development plan for 2007. An action plan will be sent to all parents and to the director of education. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress made in addressing the recommendations in the inspection report.

On behalf of everyone in the school, the head teacher would like to thank all members of the inspection team for the professional, sympathetic and unobtrusive way they conducted the Inspection.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Cwm Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Address of school	Canning Street, Cwm, Ebbw Vale Blaenau Gwent
Postcode	NP23 6RD
Telephone number	01495 370437

Headteacher	Mr Alan Phillips
Date of appointment	September 1991
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Sue Evans
Registered inspector	Mr Glyn Gaskill
Dates of inspection	13-15 November 2006

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	32	32	28	26	27	23	36	28	232

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	9	1	9.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23.5
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28.6
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Summer 2006	85	90	91
Spring 2006	85	85	90
Autumn 2005	89	85	90

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	20
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1

## Appendix 3

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2006			Number of pupils in Y2: 26				
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	24	72	0
		National	0	4	12	64	20
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	28	0	56	16
		National	0	4	14	56	26
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	32	64	0
		National	0	5	14	69	12
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	28	72	0
		National	0	2	11	64	23
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	24	72	0
		National	0	2	10	63	24
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	24	72	0
		National	0	2	9	65	24

[National figures are most recently available and are for 2005 results.]

D- disappled or absent.

W- working towards level 1

### Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment

In the school:	72	In Wales:	81
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### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006						Number of pupils in Y6					28
Percentage of pupils at each level											
		D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	
English	School	0	0	0	0	0	4	17	43	36	
	National	0	0	1	0	1	4	15	47	32	
Mathematics	School	0	0	0	0	0	4	32	50	14	
	National	0	0	1	0	1	3	15	47	32	
Science	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	46	43	
	National	0	0	1	0	0	2	11	51	35	

### Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment

In the school:	64	In Wales:	74
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D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum

A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence

F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of ten inspector-days in school.

Before the inspection:

- The school produced a self-evaluation report.
- Separate meetings were held with the headteacher, members of staff, governors. A meeting was organised for parents but none attended.
- Six questionnaire responses from parents were analysed.
- All documentation made available by the school was examined.
- A pre-inspection commentary outlining preliminary views from the inspection team was shared and discussed with the school.

During the inspection:

- Pupils were observed several times throughout the school day.
- Twenty-seven lessons or part lessons were observed covering all classes.
- Inspectors had formal and informal conversation with pupils about school life and listened to several reading.
- Inspectors had formal and informal conversations with members of staff regarding different aspects of the school.
- Registration sessions and assemblies were observed.
- Samples of pupils' work from all classes were examined.
- Attendance and budget data, pupils' records and other evidence made available by the school was examined.
- The headteacher was the school's nominee and was present when inspectors held meetings.

After the inspection:

- Findings were shared with the school staff and the governing body in separate meetings.
- The school received a near final draft of the report for comment and response before final publication.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Glyn Gaskill Registered Inspector	Context Summary and Recommendations Appendices Key Question 5 Contributions to: Key Questions 1 and 2 Science and music.
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to: Key Questions 1, 3 and 4
Mr Glyn Scott Team Inspector	Key Question 6 Contributions to: Key Questions 3 and 4 English and geography.
Mrs Ann Williams Team Inspector	Key Question 7 Contributions to: Key Questions 1, 2 and 3 Design technology and art.
Mr Alan Phillips Nominee	Liaison between inspection team and school Attending team meetings

There was no peer assessor allocated to the inspection.

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

#### The contractor was:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd.  
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