

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

**CWMBACH JUNIOR SCHOOL
Llangorse Road
Cwmbach
Aberdare
Mid Glamorgan
CF44 0HS**

School Number: 674/2240

Date of Inspection: 3rd – 5th May, 2005

by

**Mr C R Palmer
W259/78650**

Date: 7th July 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/247/04P

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

The inspection of Cwmbach Junior School took place between 3rd – 5th May 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr C R Palmer undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Cwmbach Junior School is situated within an established housing estate to the northern side of the village of Cwmbach in an area still referred to locally as “Pant Farm School”. The school is six years old and the building offers modern, airy accommodation and remains in a first class state of repair.

There are currently 141 KS2 pupils on roll aged between 7 and 11 years old. This represents a fall in roll since the last inspection, though numbers have been constant over the past four years. Pupils are catered for in five mainstream classes and one Special Educational Needs (SEN) class which serves a wider catchment area. The school describes the local area as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Some 21% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. No pupils come from Welsh speaking homes and 4% come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Two pupils are formally “looked after” by the Local Authority and four pupils carry a formal statement of SEN. A further 26.9% of pupils are designated as requiring SEN support. No pupil was excluded in the previous year.

2. The school was last inspected in 1999. Since that time a new deputy headteacher and two assistant class teachers have been appointed.

The School’s motto is Cwmbach Children Care / Gofal Plant Cwmbach.

The school’s priorities and targets

3. The school strives to achieve the following aims:
 - To promote high personal standards of work and behaviour.
 - To provide a stimulating and structured learning environment so that pupils may develop those high standards.
 - To recognise the individual worth of each child.
 - To encourage each pupil to participate in a positive way in the life of the school and its community and to become responsible citizens.
 - To work in close partnership with parents to ensure that each child works and develops to his or her full potential.
4. The school’s major priorities and targets for 2004-2005 include:
 - Improving standards in design technology (DT), language, key skills, incidental Welsh and personal and social education (PSE).

- Improving provision in assessment, in the reading environment, in key skills and in PSE resources and policy.
- Reviewing the quality of learning and teaching in DT.
- Reviewing approaches to racial equality and SEN.
- Reviewing approaches to Performance Management, Professional Development, and approaches to Self-Review as part of the role of the co-ordinator.
- Further improve the internal structure of the school.
- Continue developments to include Governing Body involvement, Schools Council and to re-establish a Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Summary

5. Cwmbach is an improving school. Considerable improvement has been achieved since the last inspection. The school is very well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who are ably supported by a dedicated staff.
6. The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgements in six of the seven key questions. In key question 3 the teams judgement is good with no important shortcomings rather than good with outstanding features.

Table of grades awarded

7. Grades relating to the overall work of the school are 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?	1
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 of achievement

8. In the lessons observed pupils' standards of achievement were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	53%	41%	0%	0%

9. Figures are above the targets of the Welsh Assembly Government which expect 95% of pupils to achieve standards which are Grade 3 or better and 50% which are Grade 2 or better. Percentages in this case are 100% and 59% respectively.
10. Standards in the six subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	KS2
English	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2
History	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 3

11. Pupils' standards in the key skills of listening are very good, and good in the key skills of reading, writing, numeracy and information technology. Pupils' skills in speaking are satisfactory.
12. Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes and in the LEA resource class consistently make good progress, some pupils make very good progress.
13. National Curriculum (NC) test results in 2004 in terms of the expected Level 4 or above, were in line with the average scores for similar schools in Wales when account is taken of the pupils in the LEA resource class. Test results were significantly higher in science and mathematics than in English. Also the test results for girls are considerably higher than those of boys in English.
14. Pupils' attitudes to learning and the enthusiasm they show for their work is very good. They listen attentively and show sustained concentration. They co-operate very effectively when working in pairs or groups on shared activities.
15. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Whether in class, whole school assemblies, meal times or while at play, they relate well to each other and to the adults who are present in school.
16. Pupils' personal moral and social development is progressing very well. Their opinions are valued and they are developing a secure range of moral values such as honesty, fair play and consideration for others.

17. Attendance rates are satisfactory, averaging 94% for the past three terms and most pupils are punctual and keen to attend school.

The quality of education and training

18. Lessons observed during inspection indicate the quality of teaching as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	50%	44%	0%	0%

19. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection exceeding the Welsh Assembly targets for the number of lessons Grade 3 and above and Grade 2 and above.
20. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and respect them as individuals. In all classes effort is recognised and praised, creating a positive learning environment. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and evaluate their own performance and teachers use a range of different questioning techniques.
21. Where teaching is good and very good introductions are brisk, balancing information giving with pupils' contributions. Tasks are stimulating allowing pupils of different abilities to reach their full potential and group activities are characterised by effective discussion and collaboration. The plenary session further illustrates pupil understanding and continues to engage and excite all pupils.
22. In some lessons questioning is more limited and individuals do not participate in discussion. Although the activities are relevant pupils are not challenged sufficiently to move all abilities forward at an appropriate pace.
23. Lessons are carefully planned with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils and re-visited in the plenary session. Opportunities to use key skills and the NC common requirements are incorporated into the planning and are effectively practised but not always at different levels appropriate for pupils of different abilities. In some classes teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their bilingual skills.
24. Teachers have a good awareness of the needs of children with SEN, plan appropriately, maintain useful records and review progress carefully. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and address the needs of specific groups of pupils including those with SEN.
25. The school has a homework policy with a detailed programme of work for each year group. Some parents are unclear about the policy and its application in different classes.

26. The quality of assessment in the school is good. All work is marked with supportive comments that in the best examples indicate what pupils can do to improve. Children are encouraged to evaluate their own work and working practice. They are involved in identifying aspects that need improving and setting their own targets.
27. The school responds well to pupils' needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The pupils benefit from a range of extra curricular activities and school visits that enrich and extend the curriculum. Pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of the tradition, culture and heritage of Wales.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop a good sense of values, understand how to behave and know right from wrong. Collective Worship helps pupils understand moral issues and to respect one another. Spirituality is well fostered.
29. Pupils are well cared for and the school gives high priority to their welfare and guidance. Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs.
30. Links with parents, the community, schools and other organisations are good. Parents are provided with a range of information and the majority are pleased with home school liaison. A small minority of parents express some concerns about the effectiveness of communication between school and home.
31. The school raises pupils' awareness of environmental issues and supports recycling and sustainability. Pupils' understanding of Global Citizenship is enhanced by the school's European Awareness Programme and the close links with a range of schools throughout Europe.

Leadership and management

32. The quality of leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good. They work as an effective team and this relationship has served the school very well during the headteacher's recent absence from school. They provide the school with very good day to day management and a clear and effective sense of direction.
33. The governing body is very well informed and is active in setting the strategic direction of the school. Individual governors are involved in all aspects of school life including the monitoring of provision and standards. An effective committee structure supports the work of the full governing body.
34. All staff are involved in the school's self-evaluation process. Staff analyse statutory assessment scores, standardised test results and 'Snapshot' numeracy data. They use a range of methods to familiarise themselves with the position of their subject across the whole school. The school's own future planning recognises that there will need to be an increased emphasis on listening to learners and a focus on the standards that pupils achieve.

35. There is an effective performance management system that promotes continuous professional development and supports overall improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
36. The school's 'Improvement Plans' are detailed documents that clearly set out short, medium and long term targets. Priorities are clear, costs identified and lead responsibilities are spelt out. The governing body receives informative reports and is able to intervene to re-set priorities when required. For example the financing of a temporary role for the deputy headteacher to assist the headteacher's effective return to work.
37. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed all key issues as set out in the previous report. For example, there are now comprehensive policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Also DT which was previously judged as unsatisfactory is now judged to be at Grade Description 2.
38. The quality of the accommodation is very good and the quality of displays is an outstanding feature of the school.
39. Staff are well deployed and there are a range of good quality learning resources.
40. The school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

41. In order to build on the very good improvement since the last inspection the school needs to:
 - R1** raise standards in aspects of English and religious education (RE);
 - R2** increase the proportion of lessons where teaching is good and very good;
 - R3** further develop the role of the subject co-ordinator in order to:
 - i) focus on pupils' standards of achievement
 - ii) evaluate curriculum initiatives in terms of their impact on standards of achievement.
 - R4** review communication with parents;
 - R5** improve the consistency of the development of pupils' bilingual skills.
42. 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

43. The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgements in six of the seven key questions. In key question 3 the team's judgement is good with no important shortcomings rather than good with outstanding features.
44. Work observed during the inspection indicates that pupils' overall standards of achievement are as follows:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Pupils' standards of achievement	6%	53%	41%	0%	0%

45. In the subjects inspected, the standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	KS2
English	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2
History	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 3

46. In 2004 NC test results, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 4 or higher, were in line with the average scores for similar schools in Wales when account is taken of the LEA resource class.
47. Test results have improved steadily over the past three years and at a faster rate than most schools in the LEA.
48. Test results are higher in science and mathematics than in English. The English test results of girls are considerably higher than those of boys.
49. Internally applied standardised and reading tests show that pupils make considerable improvement in both mathematics and science achievement from Year 3 to Year 6.
50. Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum are good. Listening skills are very good and pupils' skills in speaking are satisfactory.

51. Pupils with SEN, both in mainstream classes and in the LEA resource class make good progress. Some pupils make very good progress. Pupils with SEN are very well integrated into the life and work of the school and they generally achieve the targets set for them.
52. Pupils' attitudes to learning and the enthusiasm they show for their work is very good. They listen attentively and show sustained concentration when working on individual tasks. They co-operate very effectively when working in pairs or groups on shared activities.
53. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Whether in class, whole school assemblies, meal times or while at play, they relate well to each other and to the adults who are present in the school. The whole school behaviour policy has a positive effect on supporting this outstanding feature of school life which contributes to the standards pupils achieve.
54. Attendance rates are satisfactory, averaging 94% for the past three terms, and most pupils are punctual and keen to attend school. The governing body has demonstrated concern about the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. The school is working hard to further improve attendance rates and complies with attendance requirements set out in the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99 Pupil Support and Inclusion.
55. Pupils' personal, moral and social development is progressing very well. The very good relationships between staff and pupils underpin this development. Pupils' opinions are valued and they are developing a secure range of moral values such as honesty, fair play and consideration for others.
56. Pupils participate in a range of activities within the local community. They eagerly support local initiatives and fundraising events.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

57. Overall, the judgement of the inspection team matches that of the school.
58. In lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged to be as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	50%	44%	0%	0%

59. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. The percentage of lessons at Grade 3 and above (100%) is well above the Welsh Assembly Government target of 95%. Similarly the percentage of lessons at Grade 2 and above (56%) is also above the target of 50%.
60. The vast majority of lessons observed displayed elements of good and very good teaching but these elements were not always consistently maintained throughout sessions.
61. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and respect them as individuals. In all classes effort is recognised and praised, creating a positive learning environment which encourages pupils to work independently and to evaluate their own performance.
62. Where teaching is good and very good introductions are brisk, balancing information giving with pupils' contributions. Teachers use a range of different questioning techniques, pupils' tasks are stimulating allowing different abilities to reach their full potential and group activities are characterised by effective discussion and collaboration. The plenary session further enhances pupil understanding and continues to engage and excite all pupils.
63. In some lessons questioning is more limited and individuals do not participate in discussion. Although the activities are relevant pupils are not challenged sufficiently to move all abilities forward at an appropriate pace.
64. Lessons are carefully planned with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils and re-visited in the plenary session. Opportunities to use key skills and the NC common requirements are incorporated into the planning and are effectively practised but not always at different levels appropriate for pupils of different abilities. In some classes teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their bilingual skills.

65. Teachers have a good awareness of the needs of all children, plan appropriately, maintain useful records and review progress carefully. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and address the needs of specific groups of pupils including those with SEN.
66. The school has a homework policy with a detailed programme of work for each year group. Some parents are unclear about the policy and its application in different classes.
67. The quality of assessment in the school is good. All work is marked with supportive comments that in the best examples indicate what pupils can do to improve. Children are encouraged to evaluate their own work and working practice. They are involved in identifying aspects that need improving and setting their own targets, which are regularly reviewed.
68. A range of assessments and standardised tests are administered in the core and some foundation subjects and together with detailed record keeping, particularly in the core subjects, these provide a clear picture of each pupil's progress and achievement.
69. Record of Achievement files are kept for each child that provide useful evidence of progress over time. In best practice examples of work are annotated and given a NC level.
70. Portfolios of work have been developed for all subjects. These are used to celebrate achievement and support consistency in assessment. In some subjects teachers use assessment data effectively to identify areas of weakness and revise the planning accordingly.
71. Annual reports to parents are detailed and give information on standards achieved and include targets for improvement. The reports of year 6 pupils transferring to secondary school include end of KS comparative data. Parents are given regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress with teachers and are given ideas on how they can support their child's learning.

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings
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72. Overall the judgement of the inspection team does not match the judgement of grade 1 made by the school in the self-evaluation report. The inspection team judges that there is a good match between the needs and interests of pupils and the learning experiences provided by the school (Grade 2).
73. The school responds well to pupils' needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum which encompasses all areas of the NC programmes of study and meets all statutory requirements.
74. Subject policies and schemes of work fully comply with requirements. '*Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' is promoted across a range of curricular areas however pupils' bilingual skills are less well developed. There is a detailed and appropriate policy for the development of pupils' basic and key skills across the curriculum which includes reference to the common requirements of the NC programmes of study. Key skills are included in teachers' short term planning and are referred to in lessons during the plenary sessions.
75. The school has policies and established procedures for ensuring that equal opportunities are available for all pupils. The school offers good opportunities for extra – curricular activities and school visits, which enrich and extend the curriculum.
76. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop a good set of values, understand how to behave and know right from wrong. They have a clear sense of belonging and responsibility to the school and its environment. Collective Worship of a broadly Christian nature helps pupils understand moral issues and to respect one another. Spirituality is well fostered with good opportunities for pupils to contemplate issues that affect their own personal circumstances.
77. Planning and provision for personal and social education is good. Pupils develop confidence and are given opportunities and responsibilities. The curriculum includes the promotion of a healthy, safer lifestyle and pupils learn how to develop good relationships and respect the differences between people. 'Circle Time' is used effectively to address a range of learning needs and personal issues. Pupils are keen members of the recently developed school council.
78. Overall, the school's partnerships with parents, other schools, institutions and the local community are good and enrich the learning experiences of pupils.
79. The quality of information provided for parents in the annual report of the governing body, in the prospectus, in newsletters to parents and on the school's web site is good and provides parents with extensive information about the life

and work of the school as well as celebrating pupils' achievements. A small minority of parents express some concern about the effectiveness of communication between school and home.

80. The school works diligently to ensure effective pastoral, administrative and curriculum links are developed with the receiving secondary schools and with the infant school from which pupils transfer. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils are good.
81. The school has developed a good working partnership with an initial teacher training institution and regularly provides training facilities for student teachers and students undertaking work experience placements.
82. The school promotes pupils' understanding of the world of work through educational visits to a range of sites in the locality and further afield. Pupils have experienced the expansion of retail, commercial and recreational sites such as the development at Cardiff Bay and receive visits from a range of personnel linked to different occupations and professions. The school enjoys productive links with local employers and with relevant agencies including the Education and Business Partnership (EBP).
83. The school successfully promotes equal opportunities, tackles social disadvantage and challenges stereotypes. Pupils succeed regardless of their gender, race or backgrounds and all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and all other facilities in the school.
84. Pupils are beginning to be aware of environmental issues and the impact they have on their school and local community. The school acts in a sustainable way by recycling used paper and reducing energy consumption. Pupils' understanding of Global Citizenship is enhanced by the school's European Awareness Programme and the close links pupils enjoy with a range of schools throughout Europe.
85. Pupils have some opportunities to develop their entrepreneurial skills through involvement in fund-raising for local and national charities. They have opportunities to develop their problem solving skills during lessons and contribute to decision-making through their involvement in the school council.
86. Pupils are developing an understanding of their local community and what is needed for its regeneration and continued success. They are beginning to recognise the contribution they can make through active citizenship, education and partnership with others.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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87. The inspection team findings match the judgement given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
88. Pupils are well cared for and the school gives high priority to their welfare and guidance. The school provides personal support and guidance of high quality to pupils including access to personal and social education, special programmes and services. Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Staff work effectively as a team and implement support systems consistently and efficiently.
89. Induction programmes for Year 3 pupils are good and pupils settle well into class and feel safe and secure. There are good links with the three local comprehensive schools which effectively support the transition of pupils from Year 6 to Year 7.
90. All pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities such as computer club, European club, and rounders.
91. The school has a policy on child protection which identifies appropriate arrangements. The headteacher is the nominated staff member and there is also a designated governor with responsibility for child protection. All members of staff have received training in child protection procedures.
92. Procedures for the identification and provision for pupils with SEN are very good and comply with the requirements of the latest Code of Practice. There is a clear policy and teachers and support staff work very well together with pupils from mainstream and unit placements. Pupils in the SEN resource class are very successfully integrated into the life of the school and receive very good support from both teachers and support assistants. The school successfully promotes a number of initiatives to support pupils with special needs such as 'support classes' and the 'CatchUp' programme.
93. Individual Education Plan's (IEP) set appropriate programmes and targets for pupils which properly cater for the full range of their needs.
94. Pupils' achievements are celebrated during a weekly Awards Assembly and these are then posted on the school website.
95. The management of pupils' health and safety and welfare is an outstanding feature. The school provides a safe and secure environment for pupils. There are well established policies for first aid, sex education, fire prevention, PSE and for promoting an understanding of disability and diversity and equal opportunities.

96. The headteacher, working in close partnership with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), monitors attendance, punctuality and behaviour very carefully. The school's policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are very effective.
97. The headteacher and staff recognise the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and ensure that all pupils are valued equally and are treated with respect and dignity. The school's equal opportunities policy is implemented effectively. The school successfully challenges stereotypes and promotes gender equality.
98. Good race relations are promoted successfully and the school values and celebrates diversity. The school's commitment to the inclusion of all pupils, including those with disabilities, is exemplary. Clear, effective documentation underpins good practice and the headteacher and governing body monitor and evaluate the school's work in this area.
99. The measures taken by the school to eliminate inappropriate behaviour including racial discrimination, bullying and all other forms of harassment are very effective. Such incidents are very infrequent and the school functions well as an inclusive, supportive community where all pupils are valued equally.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

100. Overall, the findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
101. The quality of leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good. They work as an effective team and this relationship has served the school very well during the headteacher's recent absence from school. They provide the school with very good day to day management and a clear and effective sense of direction.
102. The school has clear aims and values that are shared by all members of staff, these promote equality for all and are reflected in the life and work of the school.
103. The governing body is very well informed and is active in setting the strategic direction of the school. Individual governors are involved in all aspects of school life including the monitoring of provision and standards. An effective committee structure supports the work of the full governing body.
104. There is an established performance management system that promotes continuous professional development and supports overall improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. This system, together with self-review evidence, informs training needs and supports continuous professional development.
105. There are subject co-ordinators in place for all NC subjects and RE. They have sound subject knowledge and attend relevant update training sessions. The school system for the auditing of provision and curriculum coverage is systematic across all subjects. New initiatives are planned and appropriate resources are allocated. As yet co-ordinators do not fully evaluate the impact of their initiatives on standards of achievement or on the standards of teaching in their respective subjects.
106. There are good links with the feeder infant school and with the local secondary school, the latter provides good support for pupils during transition. The school achieved the Basic Skills Primary Quality Mark in November 2003 which helps provide another perspective to the organisation and management of the support for pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
107. The school takes careful account of national priorities and recent initiatives such as workforce remodelling, sustainability and global citizenship. A school council has recently been established.

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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108. Overall the findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
109. The headteacher, deputy, staff and governors are committed to school improvement. The quality of guidance policies, schemes of work and standards of achievement have all improved year on year since the last inspection.
110. The school's 'Improvement Plans' are detailed documents that clearly set out short, medium and long term targets. Priorities are clear, costs identified and lead responsibilities are spelt out. The governing body receives informative reports and is able to intervene to re-set priorities when required, for example, the financing of a temporary role for the deputy headteacher to assist the headteacher's effective return to work.
111. Governors receive detailed information on standards achieved and curriculum initiatives designed to improve standards. They are able to analyse trends in performance over time.
112. The school's self-evaluation report produced prior to inspection identifies strengths and areas where improvements are required. The inspection team broadly agrees with the school's judgements in their report assigning the same grade description to six out of the seven key questions. There is also much agreement in key questions 3 where the inspection team's judgement is that there are good features rather than outstanding ones. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement of standards in four out of the six subjects being inspected.
113. The school makes good use of NC test results to compare its performance with other similar schools. These results, along with other internally applied tests are used to set individual pupil targets and set whole school priorities.
114. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed all key issues as set out in the previous report. For example, there are now comprehensive policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Also DT which was previously judged as unsatisfactory is now judged to be at grade description 2.
115. All staff are involved in the school's self-evaluation process. Staff analyse statutory assessment scores, standardised test results and 'Snapshot' numeracy data. They use a range of methods to familiarise themselves with the position of their subject across the whole school such as lesson observation, reviews of planning and examining pupils' work. The school's own future planning recognises that there will need to be an increased emphasis on listening to learners and a focus on the standards that pupils achieve.

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings
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116. The judgement of the inspection team matches that of the school.
117. Sound budgetary planning has maintained a good pupil teacher ratio. Qualified teachers and support staff are well deployed and effectively developed. They provide good support for pupils. There is a balance of experienced and recently qualified staff. The school also benefits from a number of volunteers who support staff and pupils and significantly enhance provision.
118. The school has a range of good quality learning resources for work across the curriculum. These are appropriately deployed and accessible to pupils. Some rooms are effectively used for specialist subject teaching such as DT and art. There are two very well resourced library areas that are well used and raise the profile of reading
119. Three computer bays serve the lower and upper school and these are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Interactive whiteboards are installed in the library and numeracy resource room. Although sessions are timetabled for each class this resource is under-utilised.
120. The quality of the accommodation is very good and is adequate for the number of pupils on role. Teachers are successful in providing a bright, stimulating environment for pupils; the quality of display throughout the school is often outstanding and effectively celebrates pupils' achievements and stimulates learning. The newly refurbished foyer is bright and welcoming to pupils and visitors.
121. The school is successfully implementing a range of initiatives to improve the external environment of the school. Pupils have planted bulbs and flowers and take an active role in the development of their school grounds. The playground is relatively small and limits opportunity for a range of safe games and activities.
122. The administrative officer, midday supervisors, canteen staff, cleaner and caretaker all make positive contributions to the efficient running of the school and the sense of community.
123. Budget planning is linked to identified priorities in the School Improvement Plan with the finance committee monitoring expenditure and guiding financial decisions. The school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

124. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and their peers. They pay careful attention to and reflect on the contributions of others in group and plenary sessions and respond appropriately.
125. The majority of pupils participate confidently in whole class and group discussion making relevant contributions. In role play and presentations the more able pupils express their views fluently using reasoned argument and a wide range of vocabulary.
126. Many pupils read fluently and with expression. Younger pupils use phonic knowledge to build unfamiliar words. Older pupils read books from a variety of genre and can talk about books they have enjoyed giving reasons for their choice. Pupils' research skills are developing through work across the curriculum. They know how to use reference books to access relevant information.
127. Pupils write for a variety of purposes in language lessons and in other curriculum areas. In displays and class books there are examples of good work across the school including a range of poetry, information books, letters, book reviews, play scripts, and reports. These examples show progression through the school and are well presented with good handwriting, punctuation and grammar.
128. Older pupils are beginning to understand the genre of persuasive writing and produced good work in response to 'Tom's Midnight Garden'.

Shortcomings

129. The quality and presentation of work in pupils' books is inconsistent.
130. Pupils do not sufficiently use editing and redrafting to improve the quality of their work
131. Pupils' speaking skills do not progress sufficiently through the school. Older pupils are not always aware of the audience when making spoken contributions in different class contexts.
132. A minority of pupils' reading skills are under developed.

Mathematics

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

Good Features

133. Pupils are able to choose suitable strategies to solve problems. They explain their methods confidently, giving reasons and logical explanations and use appropriate mathematical language.
134. Pupils are able to calculate using the four number operations and most become competent at working with decimals, simple fractions, percentages and negative numbers. Older pupils demonstrate a good developing knowledge of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.
135. Pupils participate with enthusiasm in practical mental activities. They recall mathematical facts quickly and accurately and use a wide range of mental strategies during these sessions. Pupils have a secure understanding of multiplication facts and are able to use these during calculations.
136. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a sound understanding of symmetry and are able to identify lines of symmetry and understand how to complete a shape to make it symmetrical.
137. Pupils with special needs know and can recognise common two and three-dimensional shapes and are able to explain their properties. More able pupils make three dimensional shapes and patterns and are able to measure the area of various shapes effectively.
138. Pupils are able to understand the concept of estimation and older pupils are able to estimate distance in standard measures such as metres and kilometres.
139. Pupils make good progress in data handling. The more able can interpret different graphs and explain their working and answers. Pupils use appropriate software programmes with confidence to support and consolidate their work.

Shortcomings

140. Some pupils do not record their work accurately which results in simple errors and misunderstanding.

Design Technology

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

Good and outstanding features

141. Pupils use a range of materials to create their product assignments. They devise their own plans and are able to make simple evaluations of the products they have made.
142. Year 3 pupils show a very good understanding of pneumatics and hydraulics when designing and making moving monsters.
143. Pupils enthusiastically take part in design technology sessions and can speak confidently about their work.
144. Pupils make good use of construction kits to enhance their understanding of design technology. They make very good use of control technology to enhance their skills and knowledge.
145. Pupils are very aware of health and safety issues when working with food technology or when using conventional tools such as saws, benches and clamps.
146. Older pupils have a developing understanding of the importance of design technology in everyday life.

Shortcomings

147. Pupils' abilities to design and evaluate products they have made does not always show sufficient progression as they move through the school.

Information Technology

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

Good Features

148. Pupils use ICT equipment and a range of software packages confidently and competently in a variety of contexts.
149. Pupils have developed a number of basic and more advanced skills such as saving and retrieving work, following on screen instructions and have good mouse control. Some pupils display more advanced skills linked to specific software programmes which they use to enhance their work.
150. Year 3 and 4 pupils use a 'Paint' programme and a data handling programme effectively to organise information about themselves.
151. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use PowerPoint to present their information about a project on Cardiff Bay. They evaluate and make critical judgements about the appropriateness of some effects on a presentation advertising crisps. Pupils know how to edit a presentation and add sound and animation.
152. Year 5 and 6 pupils use the interactive whiteboard confidently. They demonstrate examples of their work and make judgements about where it can be further improved.
153. Pupils with special needs use appropriate software programmes confidently to consolidate the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, to promote creative work and to enhance its presentation.
154. Pupils are able to use a search engine effectively in order to research information to support their work in a variety of subject areas. They are able to import pictures and information into their work.
155. Pupils are able to research the answers to a set of questions using a CD Rom of an encyclopaedia.

Shortcomings

156. There are no significant shortcomings.

History

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

Good features

157. Pupils have a very secure understanding of chronology and can sequence major historical events in different periods, making good use of time lines. Even the youngest children use correct vocabulary and terminology and are aware of the difference between opinion and fact.
158. Younger pupils can make logical suggestions about the use of Roman artefacts and can prepare simple PowerPoint presentations to present their findings. Through role play they are able to demonstrate awareness of some of the features of life in that period.
159. Pupils' enquiry skills are good. They make good use of a range of information sources including photographs, interviews, reference books, old newspapers, artefacts and the internet. Quality displays further enhance pupils' historical awareness.
160. Pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of the past when recalling visits to places of historical interest, such as, Caerleon, Llancaiach Fawr, the local museum and St. Fagans. They show a developing awareness of the Welsh dimension.
161. Pupils are able to use photographs of the locality to compare shops and shopping in the 1930s and today. They can talk knowledgeably about the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to the different social classes and know that the Co-operative society was founded to protect the poorer mine workers from exploitation.
162. Older pupils talk confidently about life in the Victorian times. They collaborate well to research and produce information leaflets in the style of estate agents, who would sell houses from the different historical periods.
163. Year 6 pupils can empathise with Jewish people living in Germany in the 1930s and with children in Britain who were evacuated. They have produced some good written accounts and original poems following these studies.

Shortcomings

164. There are no significant shortcomings

Religious Education

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features:

165. Younger pupils can talk about a church service with a developing sense of reverence. They can name some of the artefacts that support worship and know that candles are used in Christian worship symbolising that Jesus is the light of the world.
166. Pupils know the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and can talk about their significance. They know that the Bible is God's Word and that Jesus is God's son.
167. Pupils understand that the different religions have rules. They can explain why rules are necessary in different situations and know there are consequences when people break rules.
168. Pupils can explain the meanings of the Baptismal and Holy Communion Services. Visits to places of worship have further extended their knowledge of Christian practice and custom.
169. Pupils are aware of some of the beliefs and traditions associated the Islamic religion. They can talk about their visit to a Mosque, the significance of the Qur'an and the festival of Eid-al-Fitr. They can explain how the lifestyle of a Muslim is influenced by faith.
170. Older pupils are aware that prejudice can be associated with religious belief. They display empathy when discussing the treatment of the Jewish people during the second world war

Shortcomings

171. Pupils have a limited knowledge of Bible stories in the old and new testaments
172. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Islam does not progress sufficiently through the school.
173. Pupils' cannot talk about the beliefs and traditions associated with their chosen study of Hinduism.

School's response to the inspection

Having considered the outcomes of the inspection report, the staff and governors are delighted with the findings that 'Cwmbach Junior School' is an improving school and acknowledges the considerable improvement achieved since the last inspection.

Governors and staff are very pleased that the vision for our school, provided by clear leadership with the support of a dedicated staff, has been recognised by the inspectors. The care, guidance and support provided within a stimulating, attractive environment, was judged to be an outstanding feature.

We are delighted that pupils were found to have enthusiastic attitudes to learning. Our whole school policy for behaviour has a positive effect on supporting pupils' behaviour and was identified as an outstanding feature of our school. This is reinforced by the finding that relationships between teachers, support assistants and pupils are very good.

The governors and staff are delighted that the findings recognise the school's commitment to the inclusion of all pupils, including those with disabilities, as exemplary.

The finding that the school provides good value for money reflects the success of the strategic involvement of the governing body.

All parties conducted the inspection professionally. Pleasingly inspectors identified good practices within the school that can be shared to address some of the shortcomings and assist in continuing to move the school forward.

An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations of the report. The school has already highlighted most aspects in its self-evaluation report and some of the issues are already being addressed.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Cwmbach Junior School
School type	Foundation School
Age-range of pupils	7 - 11
Address of school	Llangorse Road Cwmbach Aberdare Mid Glamorgan
Post-code	CF44 0HS
Telephone number	01685 876115

Headteacher	Miss Sian Yeo
Date of appointment	May 1994
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Lynda Williams
Registered inspector	Mr C R Palmer
Dates of inspection	3 rd – 5 th May 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	-	-	-	-	40	28	36	37	141

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	2	7+

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22.4 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	-
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	5 : 1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26.2
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1 : 1.1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Summer 2004	-	-	95.05%	95.05%
Autumn 2004	-	-	93.81%	93.81%
Spring 2005	-	-	93.10%	93.10%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	21%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	Nil

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y6									
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0	0	0	3	8	61	25	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31	0
	Test/Task	School	3	0	0	0	0	3	28	44	22	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	5	12	38	40	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0	0	0	0	13	58	25	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	4	19	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	3	0	0	0	0	0	20	50	28	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	18	42	33	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0	0	0	0	8	55	33	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35	0
	Test/Task	School	3	0	0	0	0	0	9	61	28	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	1	9	48	39	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	81%	In the school	58%
In Wales	70%	In Wales	71%

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

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors over a period of 3 days, in addition the Headteacher acted as nominee to the inspection team.

Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.

18 parents attended a pre-inspection meeting with three members of the inspection team.

83 parental questionnaires were returned, analysed and summarised.

A wide range of documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the school self-review report, school improvement plans, policies and schemes of work, assessment and planning documentation and communication with parents and the community.

Pupils were observed at play, lunchtime and after school, as well as during lesson time.

Inspectors attended acts of collective worship.

32 lessons were observed.

Inspectors talked with pupils about their work and wider school issues during lessons and on a more formally planned basis.

A wide range of pupils written work, including the work of pupils with special educational needs, was examined.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and with the curriculum co-ordinators of the six subjects being judged by the inspection team.

Documents relating to financial management, budget figures, and attendance were discussed with the headteacher and schools administrative officer.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Type	Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr C Palmer	Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key Questions 1, 5 and 6	Design Technology
Mrs C Phillips	Team Inspector	Key Questions 2 and 7	English History Religious Education
Mrs S Crowley	Team Inspector	Key Questions 3 and 4	Mathematics Information Technology
Mrs J Warr	Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4 and 7	

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Acknowledgement

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

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

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

**CWMBACH JUNIOR SCHOOL
Llangorse Road
Cwmbach
Aberdare
Mid Glamorgan
CF44 0HS**

School Number: 674/2240

Date of Inspection: 3rd – 5th May, 2005

by

**Mr C R Palmer
W259/78650**

Date: 7th July 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/247/04P

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

The inspection of Cwmbach Junior School took place between 3rd – 5th May 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr C R Palmer undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Name of school	Cwmbach Junior School
School type	Foundation School
Age-range of pupils	7 - 11
Address of school	Llangorse Road Cwmbach Aberdare Mid Glamorgan
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Headteacher	Miss Sian Yeo
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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Cwmbach Junior School is situated within an established housing estate to the northern side of the village of Cwmbach in an area still referred to locally as “Pant Farm School”. The school is six years old and the building offers modern, airy accommodation and remains in a first class state of repair.

There are currently 141 KS2 pupils on roll aged between 7 and 11 years old. This represents a fall in roll since the last inspection, though numbers have been constant over the past four years. Pupils are catered for in five mainstream classes and one Special Educational Needs (SEN) class which serves a wider catchment area. The school describes the local area as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Some 21% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. No pupils come from Welsh speaking homes and 4% come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Two pupils are formally “looked after” by the Local Authority and four pupils carry a formal statement of SEN. A further 26.9% of pupils are designated as requiring SEN support. No pupil was excluded in the previous year.

2. The school was last inspected in 1999. Since that time a new deputy headteacher and two assistant class teachers have been appointed.

The School’s motto is Cwmbach Children Care / Gofal Plant Cwmbach.

The school’s priorities and targets

3. The school strives to achieve the following aims:
 - To promote high personal standards of work and behaviour.
 - To provide a stimulating and structured learning environment so that pupils may develop those high standards.
 - To recognise the individual worth of each child.
 - To encourage each pupil to participate in a positive way in the life of the school and its community and to become responsible citizens.
 - To work in close partnership with parents to ensure that each child works and develops to his or her full potential.
4. The school’s major priorities and targets for 2004-2005 include:
 - Improving standards in design technology (DT), language, key skills, incidental Welsh and personal and social education (PSE).

- Improving provision in assessment, in the reading environment, in key skills and in PSE resources and policy.
- Reviewing the quality of learning and teaching in DT.
- Reviewing approaches to racial equality and SEN.
- Reviewing approaches to Performance Management, Professional Development, and approaches to Self-Review as part of the role of the co-ordinator.
- Further improve the internal structure of the school.
- Continue developments to include Governing Body involvement, Schools Council and to re-establish a Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Summary

5. Cwmbach is an improving school. Considerable improvement has been achieved since the last inspection. The school is very well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who are ably supported by a dedicated staff.
6. The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgements in six of the seven key questions. In key question 3 the teams judgement is good with no important shortcomings rather than good with outstanding features.

Table of grades awarded

7. Grades relating to the overall work of the school are 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?	1
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 of achievement

8. In the lessons observed pupils' standards of achievement were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	53%	41%	0%	0%

9. Figures are above the targets of the Welsh Assembly Government which expect 95% of pupils to achieve standards which are Grade 3 or better and 50% which are Grade 2 or better. Percentages in this case are 100% and 59% respectively.
10. Standards in the six subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	KS2
English	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2
History	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 3

11. Pupils' standards in the key skills of listening are very good, and good in the key skills of reading, writing, numeracy and information technology. Pupils' skills in speaking are satisfactory.
12. Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes and in the LEA resource class consistently make good progress, some pupils make very good progress.
13. National Curriculum (NC) test results in 2004 in terms of the expected Level 4 or above, were in line with the average scores for similar schools in Wales when account is taken of the pupils in the LEA resource class. Test results were significantly higher in science and mathematics than in English. Also the test results for girls are considerably higher than those of boys in English.
14. Pupils' attitudes to learning and the enthusiasm they show for their work is very good. They listen attentively and show sustained concentration. They co-operate very effectively when working in pairs or groups on shared activities.
15. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Whether in class, whole school assemblies, meal times or while at play, they relate well to each other and to the adults who are present in school.
16. Pupils' personal moral and social development is progressing very well. Their opinions are valued and they are developing a secure range of moral values such as honesty, fair play and consideration for others.

17. Attendance rates are satisfactory, averaging 94% for the past three terms and most pupils are punctual and keen to attend school.

The quality of education and training

18. Lessons observed during inspection indicate the quality of teaching as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	50%	44%	0%	0%

19. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection exceeding the Welsh Assembly targets for the number of lessons Grade 3 and above and Grade 2 and above.
20. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and respect them as individuals. In all classes effort is recognised and praised, creating a positive learning environment. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and evaluate their own performance and teachers use a range of different questioning techniques.
21. Where teaching is good and very good introductions are brisk, balancing information giving with pupils' contributions. Tasks are stimulating allowing pupils of different abilities to reach their full potential and group activities are characterised by effective discussion and collaboration. The plenary session further illustrates pupil understanding and continues to engage and excite all pupils.
22. In some lessons questioning is more limited and individuals do not participate in discussion. Although the activities are relevant pupils are not challenged sufficiently to move all abilities forward at an appropriate pace.
23. Lessons are carefully planned with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils and re-visited in the plenary session. Opportunities to use key skills and the NC common requirements are incorporated into the planning and are effectively practised but not always at different levels appropriate for pupils of different abilities. In some classes teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their bilingual skills.
24. Teachers have a good awareness of the needs of children with SEN, plan appropriately, maintain useful records and review progress carefully. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and address the needs of specific groups of pupils including those with SEN.
25. The school has a homework policy with a detailed programme of work for each year group. Some parents are unclear about the policy and its application in different classes.
26. The quality of assessment in the school is good. All work is marked with supportive comments that in the best examples indicate what pupils can do to

improve. Children are encouraged to evaluate their own work and working practice. They are involved in identifying aspects that need improving and setting their own targets.

27. The school responds well to pupils' needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The pupils benefit from a range of extra curricular activities and school visits that enrich and extend the curriculum. Pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of the tradition, culture and heritage of Wales.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop a good sense of values, understand how to behave and know right from wrong. Collective Worship helps pupils understand moral issues and to respect one another. Spirituality is well fostered.
29. Pupils are well cared for and the school gives high priority to their welfare and guidance. Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs.
30. Links with parents, the community, schools and other organisations are good. Parents are provided with a range of information and the majority are pleased with home school liaison. A small minority of parents express some concerns about the effectiveness of communication between school and home.
31. The school raises pupils' awareness of environmental issues and supports recycling and sustainability. Pupils' understanding of Global Citizenship is enhanced by the school's European Awareness Programme and the close links with a range of schools throughout Europe.

Leadership and management

32. The quality of leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good. They work as an effective team and this relationship has served the school very well during the headteacher's recent absence from school. They provide the school with very good day to day management and a clear and effective sense of direction.
33. The governing body is very well informed and is active in setting the strategic direction of the school. Individual governors are involved in all aspects of school life including the monitoring of provision and standards. An effective committee structure supports the work of the full governing body.
34. All staff are involved in the school's self-evaluation process. Staff analyse statutory assessment scores, standardised test results and 'Snapshot' numeracy data. They use a range of methods to familiarise themselves with the position of their subject across the whole school. The school's own future planning recognises that there will need to be an increased emphasis on listening to learners and a focus on the standards that pupils achieve.
35. There is an effective performance management system that promotes continuous professional development and supports overall improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

36. The school's 'Improvement Plans' are detailed documents that clearly set out short, medium and long term targets. Priorities are clear, costs identified and lead responsibilities are spelt out. The governing body receives informative reports and is able to intervene to re-set priorities when required. For example the financing of a temporary role for the deputy headteacher to assist the headteacher's effective return to work.
37. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed all key issues as set out in the previous report. For example, there are now comprehensive policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Also DT which was previously judged as unsatisfactory is now judged to be at Grade Description 2.
38. The quality of the accommodation is very good and the quality of displays is an outstanding feature of the school.
39. Staff are well deployed and there are a range of good quality learning resources.
40. The school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

41. In order to build on the very good improvement since the last inspection the school needs to:
 - R1** raise standards in aspects of English and religious education (RE);
 - R2** increase the proportion of lessons where teaching is good and very good;
 - R3** further develop the role of the subject co-ordinator in order to:
 - i) focus on pupils' standards of achievement
 - ii) evaluate curriculum initiatives in terms of their impact on standards of achievement.
 - R4** review communication with parents;
 - R5** improve the consistency of the development of pupils' bilingual skills.
42. The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Acknowledgement

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