

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

***DANESCOURT JUNIOR SCHOOL
DANESCOURT WAY
LLANDAFF
CARDIFF***

School Number: 681-2158

Date of Inspection: 5-7 July 2004

By

***Ms Stephanie James
Registered Inspector***

Date: 23 August 2004

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

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

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

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Danescourt Junior School is an open-plan school situated in the centre of a large, modern housing estate of mainly privately-owned homes serving the community of Danescourt, to the north of Cardiff. It caters for pupils aged from seven to 11 years, the vast majority of whom have attended the infant and nursery school that shares the same building. The school is a focal point for the community and the building is also used by a number of local groups. The school was last inspected in November 1998. Since then, it has built new extensions to the Year (Y) 5 and Y6 classrooms, which have substantially improved the quality of the accommodation.

There are 218 pupils on roll, who are housed in eight classes, two per year group. Approximately 86 per cent of pupils are of white ethnic origin, the remainder are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Ninety-five per cent of pupils come from English-speaking backgrounds. None of them speaks Welsh as a first language. The school considers its catchment area to be neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged and pupils represent the full range of ability. Approximately six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the average for both Cardiff, and Wales as a whole. Twenty-three pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN).

The school's main aims are:

- to have a broad, flexible curriculum that is responsive to change but recognises the importance of basic skills;
- to help children acquire the knowledge, skills and practical abilities relevant to life and employment in a rapidly changing world;
- to help children appreciate human achievement in art, music, science, technology, literature and sport;
- to help children understand the world around them and the inter-dependence of individuals, groups and nations;
- to help children to become self-confident;
- to provide experiences which foster co-operation and respect for moral values, other races, religions and ways of life.

During the school year 2003-2004 the main targets for development have been to review the schemes of work for English and history and the use of assessment in science. A major priority over the last 18 months has been the improvement and enlargement of the building. Other key targets for improvement have been to continue to raise the achievement of boys and to develop further the wide range of links already established with the local community.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

Danescourt Junior School is a very good school where the quality of teaching is consistently good, and sometimes very good. Pupils therefore make good progress and achieve good, and sometimes very good standards. The quality of leadership is very good and the curriculum offered is rich and broad. It gives good value for money.

Educational standards achieved by pupils

- In Key Stage 2 (KS2), pupils' standards of achievement in the National Curriculum (NC) subjects and religious education are as follows:

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

- Standards are consistently good or better across the school in all subjects of the curriculum with the exception of Welsh, where they are satisfactory. In Y6, pupils achieve a very good standard of work in English, science and information technology. Across the school, pupils also achieve very good standards of painting in art lessons.
- Throughout the school, standards of achievement were very good in 17 per cent, good in 76 per cent and satisfactory in seven per cent of the work seen during the inspection.
- The school's results in the 2003 NC assessment tests at the end of KS2 were well above the national and Cardiff averages; 85.7 per cent of pupils achieved at least a Level 4, the standard expected for their age, in English, mathematics and science, in comparison with the national average of 70 per cent.
- The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was high: 70 per cent in English, 45 per cent in mathematics and 72 per cent in science. When compared with the performance of pupils in similar contexts, the school's results are still above average. Boys achieve well, often out-performing girls, even in English, which is against the national trend.
- All pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress towards their targets and often exceed them. Pupils with SEN achieve well in relation to their abilities.
- Pupils' standards of achievement in applying their skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing, numeracy and in using information and communications technology (ICT) in all subjects of the curriculum are very good. The standard of presentation of pupils' work is consistently high in all subjects.

Ethos of the school

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school has a warm and welcoming ethos.
- Assemblies are well-organised and meaningful occasions where moral and religious values and a positive community spirit are fostered.
- Pupils know and observe the rules set by the school and have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They display respect for people, property and their environment and are aware of the importance of truth and honesty.

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- Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils appreciate the diversity of other cultures and respond positively to the values of tolerance, equality and inclusion that are well promoted by the school.
 - Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. They move around the school in an orderly fashion and exhibit very good attitudes to learning. They mix well, play happily and display tolerance and consideration for each other. Members of staff deal with any incidences of inappropriate behaviour firmly and effectively.
 - Parents and governors are pleased with standards of behaviour promoted by the school.
 - The level of pupils' attendance is very good. Punctuality is good.

The quality of education provided

- The quality of teaching in the school is consistently good. In the 45 lessons or part-lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was very good in 22 per cent, good in 69 per cent and satisfactory in nine per cent of them. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of most of the content of the subjects they teach and some teachers have considerable personal expertise in particular areas. They make positive efforts to develop pupils' knowledge and use of Welsh, but their knowledge of this subject is sometimes less certain.
- Very well organised, collaborative teaching arrangements enable teachers to plan and teach those subjects which they most enjoy, and with which they feel most confident, to both classes in their year group, to the benefit of the pupils. Learning support assistants (LSAs) make a very valuable contribution to the quality of education provided.
- A feature of the quality of teaching, where it is very good, is the willingness of some teachers to share their personal expertise and interests with pupils. For example, pupils are fascinated by teachers' examples of their personal artwork or creative writing. The standard of pupils' work is then enhanced by what they learn from their teachers' work.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching techniques and organisational strategies. Sometimes, however, whole-class discussions are too prolonged and pupils therefore begin to lose concentration and interest in the topic. Opportunities for more pupils to engage in discussion, using a variety of approaches, are sometimes missed.
- The quality of assessment, recording and reporting on pupils' progress is very good overall. Written reports to parents on pupils' progress and achievement are good, but could sometimes indicate more clearly the individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses. At present, there is no space for parents to comment in response to reports.
- The overall quality of the curriculum is very good and meets the statutory requirements of the NC and for religious education.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in upper KS2. The current provision for pupils in lower KS2 is not as extensive as in previous years, due to temporary staffing arrangements, but this will shortly be rectified.
- Pupils engage in a range of worthwhile homework activities. Most parents are happy with the range and quantity of homework, although some would like clearer information about expectations, such as deadlines for its completion. Some Y6 pupils would like more homework in the summer term in preparation for secondary school.
- Visits within the local area, and visits from professional artists and musicians and from members of the community enhance pupils' learning. There are, however, a limited

number of visits to art galleries and museums to stimulate pupils' curiosity, and no residential visits further afield to enhance the curriculum provided.

- Provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good. The academic, musical, sporting, artistic or personal achievements of individuals are recognised and celebrated in many ways. Talented pupils have opportunities to perform and their talents are appreciated.
- All pupils are very well supported academically and personally because teachers know them well and carefully monitor their progress throughout the school. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is also very good.
- Partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good. The vast majority of parents are appreciative of the work of the school and endorse its high expectations. They particularly value the smooth transition between key stages and the approachability of the headteacher and all staff.

The management and efficiency of the school

- The school has a wide range of effective procedures to evaluate standards achieved and the quality of its provision. A self-critical culture has been successfully established.
- Governors and members of staff, as well as the headteacher, are fully involved in the self-evaluation process and draw on first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. Pupils and parents are not formally involved, but their views are taken into account informally.
- The quality of leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and governors is very good.
- The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction to the school. Other members of staff with management responsibilities ably assist her and a warm, mutually supportive team spirit pervades all aspects of their work.
- Governors are well informed and actively involved in the school. In partnership with the headteacher, they manage the budget very efficiently in the light of future planned expenditure and in line with priorities identified in the school development plan (SDP).
- The outcomes of major expenditure, such as the investment by the school in a new extension, are evaluated to ensure best value for money and to check that the extra space is put to optimum use, for the benefit of the pupils.
- The school secretary provides very good support, and routine administration and organisation are very efficient.
- The quality of staffing and learning resources is very good. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory. The design of the building often necessitates pupils passing through one learning area in order to access another learning area or the school hall. This can be disruptive for pupils and staff.
- The learning areas are compact in size, though a recent extension to the upper KS2 area has provided more space. Generally, however, the restrictive accommodation impinges upon the teaching strategies available to staff and the learning opportunities available to pupils. Staff work very hard to reduce the impact of the size and design of the building upon the standards achieved in the school, and are broadly successful in achieving this.
- The caretaker and cleaning staff ensure a high quality of cleanliness and orderliness in the school. The lunchtime catering staff manage to serve a large number of pupils in the time available efficiently and smoothly.

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- The effectiveness with which issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed.
 - The school has addressed all the issues raised during the last inspection.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Overall, standards of achievement are good or better in the vast majority of lessons.

- Throughout the school, standards of achievement were very good in 17 per cent, good in 76 per cent and satisfactory in seven per cent of the work seen. Pupils achieve very good standards in some subjects in Y6.
- Standards are consistently good or better across the school in all subjects of the curriculum with the exception of Welsh, where they are satisfactory. In Y6, pupils achieve a very good standard of work in English, science and information technology. Throughout the school, pupils also achieve very good standards of painting in art lessons.
- The school's results in the 2003 NC assessment tests at the end of KS2 were well above the national and Cardiff averages; 85.7 per cent of pupils achieved at least a Level 4, the standard expected for their age, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, in comparison with the national average of 70 per cent.
- The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was particularly high: 70 per cent in English, 45 per cent in mathematics and 72 per cent in science.
- When compared with the performance of pupils in similar contexts, the school's results are still above average. Boys achieve well, often out-performing girls even in English, which is against the national trend.
- All pupils make good progress towards their targets and often exceed them. Pupils with SEN also make good progress and achieve well in relation to their abilities.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Pupils' standards of achievement in applying their skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing, numeracy and in using ICT in all subjects of the curriculum are very good.

- Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to one another, which has a very positive impact on their learning in all subjects. By Y6, they have developed their listening skills to a high level, so that they can record accurately the views of people they interview about their experiences in the Second World War.
- When given the opportunity to speak at length, pupils express their views confidently and use a rich and apposite vocabulary. In the Y6 Debating Society, for example, the standard of some pupils' speeches for or against the motion is outstanding and members of the audience persuasively propose their counter arguments.
- Pupils read with understanding from a wide variety of sources to further their learning in all subjects. They follow instructions carefully and scrutinise sources of evidence on a range of topics efficiently to extract information.
- Pupils write fluently for a range of purposes and achieve a high standard of presentation in all subjects. For example, pupils' accurately and neatly completed tables recording the colour, opacity, appearance and smell of a range of teas during a design and technology lesson in Y5.

- They apply their numeracy skills effectively in science lessons, where they use their measuring skills to ensure that a test is fair, and in geography lessons where they use co-ordinates in their work with maps. Opportunities are occasionally missed in design and technology lessons for pupils to apply their measuring skills in design and make tasks.
- Pupils use ICT for a very good range of purposes in their work in all subjects. For example, Y5 pupils use a digital camera to record aspects of Cardiff Bay for their work in geography and use the Internet to conduct research about plants found in Great Britain and in other countries for their work in science.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

- Acts of collective worship are based on Christian values and make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are well-organised and meaningful occasions where moral and religious values are well promoted. They comply with statutory requirements.
- During assemblies and in the personal and social education (PSE) programme, pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on their own and others' beliefs. Spiritual awareness is enhanced through the school's PSE programme and other subjects.
- Pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils know the rules and expectations set by the school and have a good awareness of the difference between right and wrong. They help those less fortunate than themselves and regularly raise money for charities. They display respect for people, property and their environment and are aware of the importance of truth and honesty.
- Pupils' social development is very good. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils are friendly and polite to each other, to teachers and to visitors. Members of staff are good role-models for pupils. The school has a warm and welcoming ethos.
- Older pupils undertake appropriate responsibilities. They act as 'buddies' to younger pupils in Y3 and participate in elections to be representatives on the 'School Watch'. With minimal adult supervision, they discuss and organise fund-raising events, charity support and possible school improvements, which are then referred to the headteacher.
- Pupils' personal and social development is enhanced through a wide variety of extra-curricular activities inside and outside school time.
- Pupils' cultural development is very good. The contribution of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, the Welsh dimension, within the school is good. Appropriate emphasis is also placed on developing pupils' awareness of the diversity of other cultures and encouraging them to respect the beliefs of others in their own country and abroad.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have positive attitudes to learning and school life.
- Pupils respond positively to the values of tolerance, equality and inclusion that are well promoted by the school. A number of policies, such as equal opportunities, give proper attention to the need to prevent racism of any kind and the governing body is aware of its responsibilities in this respect.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good.

- Pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion. They enter and leave the open-plan learning areas, assemblies and the dining hall quietly, and with a regard for others.
- The school has clear expectations for pupils' behaviour, expressed in its aims, Code of Conduct and in 'Golden Rules', which are prominently displayed around the building. Classes also agree their own rules and these are displayed in their learning areas. Pupils are familiar with the rules and consequences of any misbehaviour.
- In the shared, open-plan learning areas, pupils exhibit very good attitudes to learning. They are attentive, industrious and concentrate well to complete tasks. When required to change class groupings, they move quietly and efficiently to their new positions. This very good standard of behaviour makes a significant contribution to the learning environment and the quality of life in the school.
- In the playground and on the school field, at playtime and lunchtime, pupils mix well, play happily together and display tolerance and consideration for each other, developing more fully their social interaction skills.
- The very good behaviour is underpinned by positive structures for managing inappropriate behaviour. Comprehensive behaviour, discipline and anti-bullying policies are in place, emphasising praise, rewards and encouraging good behaviour.
- As part of the school's merit system, pupils are rewarded with badges, stickers, certificates and trophies for achievement, hard work, good behaviour and attitudes and for being caring and helpful both in and outside school. They are encouraged to display their achievements in assembly and class news time.
- Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with firmly and effectively, often with a quiet word from the teacher. More serious offences are referred to the headteacher and dealt with as appropriate. Parents state that any instances of bullying are reported and dealt with promptly. There have been no exclusions during the previous 12 months.
- Parents and governors are pleased with standards of behaviour promoted by the school.

4.3 Attendance

The level of pupils' attendance is very good. Punctuality is good.

- The average rate of attendance for the past three years has been consistently around 96 per cent. Although the average rate over the past three terms has been affected by long-term illness, at 95 per cent it is still above the local education authority (LEA) and all Wales averages.
- Absences are caused mainly through illness, although families taking long weekend breaks and holidays in term time adversely affect the overall rate, causing disruption to pupils' learning. The school regularly reminds parents of the detrimental affects of absences on their children's learning, but a very small number are slow to respond.
- Almost all pupils arrive promptly at the start of the day. Individual lessons and sessions start on time.
- Procedures are in place to monitor and follow up absences in consultation with the Education Welfare Officer as necessary. The school operates a fast track system and telephones parents on the first day of absence for a small number of targeted pupils.

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- Registers are completed meticulously at the beginning of each session and fully comply with Welsh Assembly Government circular 3/99.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

- Forty-five lessons or part-lessons were observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching was very good in 22 per cent, good in 69 per cent and satisfactory in nine per cent of them. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.
- The quality of teaching in the school is consistently good or better, which results in consistently good standards of achievement.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of most of the content of the subjects they teach and some teachers have considerable personal expertise in particular subjects. They make positive efforts to develop pupils' knowledge and use of Welsh, but their knowledge of this subject is sometimes less certain.
- Very well organised, collaborative teaching arrangements enable teachers to plan and teach those subjects which they most enjoy, and with which they feel most confident, to both classes in their year group, to the benefit of the pupils.
- An unusual feature of the quality of teaching, where it is very good, is the willingness of some teachers to share their personal expertise and interests with pupils. For example, pupils are fascinated by teachers' examples of their personal artwork or creative writing. The standard of pupils' own painting and imaginative writing is much enhanced by what they learn from their teachers' personal work.
- The learning objectives of lessons are clear and specific, shared with the pupils and planned effectively to build on their previous learning.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching techniques and organisational strategies. Sometimes, however, whole-class discussions are too drawn out. Pupils sit on the carpet for a lengthy period and therefore begin to lose concentration and interest in the topic. Opportunities for more pupils to engage in discussion, using a variety of approaches, are sometimes missed.
- Opportunities for pupils to plan and conduct independent investigations in science could also be developed.
- Learning support assistants are well trained for their role and give very good support to pupils. Specialist instrumental tuition provided by peripatetic music teachers, and regular visits from the specialist Welsh teacher (Athrawes Fro) have a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve in those subjects.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of both achievement and discipline. They set tasks that are appropriately challenging for pupils of different abilities, based on their knowledge of their prior attainment. They display a caring attitude towards them with a firm, fair and consistent approach to discipline.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and have a very positive impact on the quality of learning.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is very good overall.

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- The school complies with statutory arrangements for NC assessment and for recording the progress of all pupils, including those with SEN. The NC assessment results are analysed effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in performance. Assessment information is used effectively to promote higher standards.
 - The accuracy and consistency of assessment is very good. Progress is continuously and systematically assessed throughout the key stage. A range of commercially produced tests is used each year to assess pupils' performance in reading, language, mathematics and non-verbal abilities.
 - Assessment information is used well to inform planning and to set targets for improvements. There is a tracking system for individual pupils, which is designed to support teachers' assessment and measure progress in core subjects. The extent to which the work of individual pupils is used to promote higher standards is very good. Teachers know their pupils well and make accurate assessments of pupils' abilities.
 - There are good systems for assessing pupils with SEN and the information is used to set targets in individual education plans (IEPs).
 - The arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress are very good. Teachers keep class record books and assess samples of pupils' work in core subjects against NC levels, to inform their assessments and to monitor pupils' progress. They also keep a regular record of pupils' reading progress.
 - The quality of marking is good and provides helpful comments to pupils to guide their future work. Pupils also receive supportive feedback during lessons about the quality of their work and are aware of their individual targets. They are also encouraged to self-assess, which gives them a good understanding of their rate of progress.
 - The quality of written reports to parents on pupils' progress and achievement is good. However, reports could indicate more clearly the individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses. At present, there is no space for parents to comment in response to reports.
 - The school makes good use of data supplied by the LEA, and the results of NC assessment tests in mathematics, English and science are carefully analysed in order to assess the school's performance, compared with LEA and national averages.
 - The school also monitors its equal opportunities policy through careful analysis of NC assessments, in order to identify trends in the performance of boys and girls, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with SEN.

5.3 Curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum provided is very good and meets the statutory requirements of the NC and for religious education.

- There are clear policies and comprehensive schemes of work for all subjects. They are carefully structured to ensure balance, breadth, continuity and progression in pupils' learning and to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.
- Relevant opportunities to develop pupils' key skills of speaking and listening, literacy, numeracy and use of ICT are identified in schemes of work and in teachers' short-term plans in different subjects.
- Pupils engage in a range of worthwhile homework activities. Most parents are happy with the range and quantity of homework, although some would like clearer information about expectations, such as deadlines for its completion. Some Y6 pupils would like more homework in the summer term in preparation for secondary school.

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- The arrangements for PSE, including drugs, health and sex education, are effective. Aspects of PSE are taught through subjects such as science, geography and physical education. ‘Circle Time’ in Y3 and Y5 provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and ability to express their feelings.
 - *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* (the Welsh dimension of the curriculum) is developed well through subjects such as music and geography, through assemblies and participation in the Eisteddfod.
 - Visits within the local area, and visits from professional artists and musicians and from members of the community enhance pupils’ learning. There are, however, a limited number of visits to art galleries and museums to stimulate pupils’ curiosity, and no residential visits further afield to enhance the curriculum provided.
 - There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in upper KS2. The current provision for pupils in lower KS2 is not as extensive as in previous years, due to temporary staffing arrangements, but this will shortly be rectified. The extra-curricular provision includes gardening, dance, netball, football, basketball and athletics clubs and a variety of musical activities. The Y6 debating society is very well attended.
 - A notable feature of the provision is that it ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with SEN. The school actively promotes the principles of equality of opportunity and racial equality.
 - Provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good. The academic, musical, sporting, artistic or personal achievements of individuals are recognised and celebrated in many ways. Talented pupils have opportunities to perform and their talents are appreciated.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils’ Welfare

The provision for supporting and guiding pupils, and for their welfare, is very good.

- Pupils are very well supported academically through very good teacher-pupil relationships and the careful monitoring of progress throughout the school. Academic achievement and progress, personal development, behaviour and attendance are regularly discussed by staff with pupils and, where appropriate, with parents.
- Pupils’ needs and subsequent requirements are identified early in the key stage and teachers and pupils share high, but realistic, expectations of their performance.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to learn about healthy eating, drug abuse, road safety and their own general well being through a structured PSE policy and programme.
- The sex education policy follows national guidelines and is taught in the context of marriage, relationships and family life. The school nurse works with Y6 pupils on more specific aspects of pupils’ development.
- Child protection procedures are well established and there is a good policy based upon the LEA child protection guidelines. Staff are alert to the issues and have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities. There is a designated teacher for child protection in the school.
- Effective measures and appropriate policies are in place for the elimination of all forms of oppressive behaviour, including bullying and racism. Pupils, staff, parents and governors understand these procedures.
- There are appropriate health and safety policies and the school undertakes risk assessments in school and prior to visits. Three members of staff have been trained in

first-aid. Arrangements for the supervision of pupils before school, during breaks and at lunchtime are very good.

- Effective procedures are in place for ensuring the safety of pupils and staff in the event of a fire. Termly fire drills are timed, logged and reported to the governing body.
- There is wheelchair access to the school building, which facilitates the school's policies for equal opportunities and inclusion. The school building is secure.
- All accidents are recorded in the accident book. Staff involved in dealing with minor accidents follow appropriate procedures. The school prospectus informs parents/carers of the school's strategies for taking care of pupils if they are ill or following an accident.
- There are very good liaison and transition links between the school, the adjoining nursery and infants school and Radyr Comprehensive School, to which the majority of pupils later transfer. These provide effective support for pupils' confidence and sense of well being when moving from one phase of education to another.

5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN

The quality of the provision for pupils with SEN is very good.

- The school's policy and procedures for SEN conform to the requirements of the Code of Practice.
- There is a named governor who is very familiar with SEN registration and statementing processes and provides good support to the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) overseeing the implementation of the policy and pupils' progress. The SENCO organises a programme of support which is based on some withdrawal sessions together with in-class support.
- Pupils with SEN work successfully alongside their peers in mainstream classes. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that work is well matched to their needs and they make progress in line with their abilities. The tracking of pupils' progress ensures that, when appropriate targets are met, they are set further challenging tasks.
- Individual education plans are of very good quality. They include appropriate learning objectives and clear targets. They are monitored and reviewed regularly and used effectively as working documents. Detailed records are kept on pupils' attainment and progress, and arrangements for discussion with parents are effective.
- Pupils with SEN receive very good support in class, both from class teachers and support staff. Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into the life and work of the school and are given access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school's inclusion policy is fully implemented and is relevant to the needs of all the pupils attending the school.
- Resources to support pupils with SEN are of good quality and used well.
- Liaison with parents is good. They are kept well informed by the SENCO and are involved in any decisions regarding their child's education. Regular review meetings are held and time is set aside whenever necessary to discuss progress or concerns.
- Staff plan collaboratively with the SENCO to ensure that classroom tasks are differentiated to meet the needs of the individual. The needs of the more able are met by provision of suitable learning programmes.
- Links with outside agencies are good and effective use is made of the advice and guidance provided.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

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

- The vast majority of parents are appreciative of the work of the school and endorse its high expectations. They particularly value the smooth transition between key stages and the approachability of the headteacher and all staff.
- The quality of written information provided to parents is very good. Regular newsletters and other communications keep parents well informed about the life and work of the school. Half-termly curriculum information sheets provide parents in each year group with useful information about subjects and topics being taught.
- The ‘School Watch’ and Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) newsletters provide further interesting and useful information about activities and events. There is very good daily informal contact between staff and parents where information is exchanged.
- The prospectus issued to new parents is informative but there are a small number of omissions and, together with the governing body’s report to parents, does not fully meet the Welsh Assembly Government requirements of circulars 14/01 and 15/01 respectively.
- A significant number of adults regularly assist teachers in classrooms and accompany pupils on out-of-school activities. They provide very good quality support that is highly valued by the school and helps to raise the standards pupils achieve.
- The very active PTA organises fund-raising and social events that provide substantial financial support. Monies raised are used to purchase luxuries such as the wooden seating, playground markings, and furniture and equipment for the recent extension.
- The school is very proud of its links with the community. For example, Y5 pupils work with the Sealed Knot society on their Civil War topic. Year 6 pupils gain a deeper understanding of the causes and effects of World War II through their interviews with veterans and former nurses who served on the battlefield.
- Pupils entertain to tea at the school, people who live in nearby sheltered accommodation. Pupils from the school also regularly visit a local residential home. Community groups, such as football clubs, use the school premises. Social occasions and celebrations are open to invited members of the community and are very well attended.
- There are close links with the adjoining infant school. The headteachers serve on each other’s governing body. There are good links with other primary schools and the receiving secondary school. Year 6 pupils are involved in cross-phase transfer projects in the core subjects.
- Although the school provides valuable work experience for secondary students, there is no formal partnership with an initial teacher training institution. Staff have therefore not benefited from professional development in the role of student mentors.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Although there is no written policy, the quality of partnership with industry is good.

- The professional development of three teachers has been enhanced through their involvement in industrial placements.
- Pupils throughout the school are involved in a planned programme of visits and visitors that enrich the curriculum and help to raise their awareness of the world of work both past and present. They are closely linked to the subjects being taught. For example, Y3

and Y5 pupils' work on the human body is enhanced through working with medical professionals such as a doctor, nurse and dentist.

- Pupils' skills in art, music and dance are enhanced through working with professionals. Their experiences include making the mosaic in the main reception area. They participate in dance festivals and audition for parts in the ballet. They benefit from specialist sports coaching in tennis, football and rugby.
- The 'School Watch' committee is involved in mini-enterprise projects throughout the year that help develop their self-confidence and knowledge of business. They manage their own bank account and make decisions on spending.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- The school has a wide range of effective procedures to evaluate standards achieved and the quality of its provision. A self-critical culture has been successfully established.
- Governors and members of staff, as well as the headteacher, are fully involved in the self-evaluation process and draw on first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. Pupils and parents are not formally involved, but their views are taken into account informally.
- Following their self-evaluation, the headteacher, staff and governors identify relevant whole-school priorities, set targets and agree criteria for success within a realistic timescale. These are recorded in the SDP.
- The headteacher carefully monitors progress towards the achievement of targets in the SDP and regularly reports to the governing body, which then reviews progress. The professional development of staff is closely linked to whole-school priorities.
- The school's analysis of assessment data is very good and is effective in enabling it to set realistic and challenging targets to improve the performance of all pupils. There is a comprehensive system for tracking pupils' progress and appropriate support is planned for those whose performance is less than expected.
- National and local data are used to compare aspects of the school's performance against that of other schools and to ensure the school is performing as well as it can.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The quality of leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and governors is very good.

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear sense of direction to the school. Other members of staff with management responsibilities ably assist her and a warm, mutually supportive team spirit pervades all aspects of their work.
- The school's ethos and sense of purpose are very good. Its aims and values and commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils are reflected in its work.
- Governors are well informed and actively involved in the school. The 'governor of the month' scheme enables them to assess and monitor, on a regular basis, the quality of education provided by the school. They are fully involved in major spending decisions and in the evaluation of their effectiveness.

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- Subject leaders monitor teachers' planning, scrutinise pupils' work and observe lessons in those subjects for which they are responsible in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement. They report annually to the headteacher, when resource implications for planned improvements are discussed. They conduct trials of new approaches before introducing them throughout the school.
 - The school is well resourced and available resources are managed very efficiently, within the confines of the cramped accommodation. Staff are deployed very effectively, according to their strengths.
 - Governors and the headteacher manage the budget very efficiently in the light of future planned expenditure and in line with priorities identified in the SDP. For example, funds were allocated to enable temporary teachers to work for a few weeks alongside permanent members of staff who were due to take maternity leave, to ensure a smooth transition between teachers.
 - The outcomes of major expenditure, such as the investment by the school in a new extension, are evaluated to ensure best value for money and to check that the extra space is put to optimum use, for the benefit of the pupils.
 - The school secretary provides very good support, and routine administration and organisation are very efficient.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The quality of staffing and learning resources is very good. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory.

- The school has a sufficient number of teaching and non-teaching staff for the delivery of the curriculum. They are appropriately qualified and deployed effectively. The school has a number of job share positions in Y3 and Y6, which are very well managed.
- All staff have job descriptions and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The staff, both teaching and non-teaching, work well as a team and provide a secure, happy and industrious environment. The school's performance management and appraisal systems are effective. Targets for development are appropriate for all staff.
- Peripatetic teachers attend the school to teach music and Welsh. They contribute positively to pupils' standards of achievement, as do two LSAs and two adult helpers who provide valuable support.
- Arrangements for the continuing professional development of staff are good. The in-service training programme reflects individual and whole school needs, allied to the school's self-evaluation programme.
- Attractive and stimulating displays throughout the school enhance the learning environment and have a positive effect on standards of achievement. They reflect a sense of pride and a feeling of belonging to the school. Displays are informative, support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements.
- The accommodation is satisfactory. The design of the building often necessitates pupils passing through one learning area in order to access another learning area or the school hall. This can be disruptive for pupils and staff. The school hall is shared with the infant school and this can lead to timetabling difficulties.
- The learning areas are compact in size, though a recent extension to the upper KS2 area has provided more flexibility of working space. Generally, however, the restrictive accommodation impinges upon the teaching strategies available to staff and the learning

opportunities available to pupils. Curriculum activities and pupil groupings are consequently constrained.

- Staff and pupils work very hard to reduce the impact of the size and design of the building upon the standards achieved in the school and are broadly successful in achieving this.
- The caretaker and cleaning staff ensure a high quality of cleanliness and orderliness in the school. The lunchtime catering staff manage to serve a large number of pupils in the time available efficiently and smoothly.
- Outside, the playground is marked out for games and the school has a large, well-maintained playing field. The environment has been developed by establishing gardens, planters and outdoor seating areas, which are used and enjoyed by the pupils.
- Resources are generally very good in both quality and quantity and are continually being replaced and extended. However, although there is a good selection of books in class libraries, a significant number of pupils feel there is insufficient choice for their personal interests. Nevertheless, resources are successfully managed and accessible to staff. Their use has a positive effect on the standards achieved by pupils in the school.
- Issues raised by parents about the accommodation have been discussed with the school.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

English

Standards of achievement in English are good overall. In Y6, they are very good.

Good features

- Throughout the school, pupils listen and talk confidently in a range of contexts. They particularly enjoy listening to stories and their responses to questions show a good understanding of key points. They increasingly adapt their talk to the needs of the listener and according to the degree of formality of the situation.
- By Y6, pupils observe the conventions of debate and take an active part in discussing controversial issues to a very good standard. Pupils show considerable maturity in offering well structured, persuasive arguments and some of their contributions to the debate are outstanding.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing their reading skills. They read a good range of literature, including texts from other cultures. They read aloud with confidence and accurately follow a text when others are reading. They increasingly engage in independent research.
- In lower KS2, pupils identify different facets of characters in stories and develop their understanding of ways in which authors communicate these to the reader. They know how to use contents pages and indexes and most of them can scan a page to retrieve specific information.
- Pupils in upper KS2 increasingly support their views with reference to the text. In Y5, for example, they discuss sensitive issues raised in their reading, such as racism. In their discussion of relationships in the class novel, 'Goodnight Mr Tom,' most Y6 pupils can infer underlying meanings.

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- Pupils write in a wide range of genres and many of them enjoy writing. Regular practice of spelling and punctuation, and development of their knowledge of grammar, enables pupils to write interesting factual and imaginative pieces that are accurately spelled and punctuated.
 - The standard of handwriting and presentation of pupils' work throughout the key stage is very good. Pupils take pride in the appearance of their work.
 - Pupils in lower KS2 understand the role of description in bringing a story alive and use it to good effect. By Y6, pupils produce well crafted openings to stories that capture the reader's attention and create an air of suspense. Their writing of non-fiction shows a secure grasp of the main features of different forms.
 - Some of the writing of pupils in Y6 is outstanding. For example, in response to photographs of World War II and interviews with members of the community who lived through it, pupils wrote poems that showed great empathy with people's experiences through imaginative choices of ideas, words and images.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement are good.

Good features

- Pupils consolidate and develop their knowledge and understanding of number work very well through the key stage.
- In lower KS2, pupils display a developing recall of number facts. By the end of the key stage, pupils use them quickly to derive accurate answers using a range of mental strategies. Pupils display growing confidence in tackling problems in mental mathematics. They respond well to challenging questioning and are ready to examine different strategies when completing work related to money, weight, length and capacity.
- Many pupils confidently calculate using the four rules with numbers to 1,000 and beyond. Older pupils recognise place value to a million, calculate accurately to two decimal places and recognise the equivalence between decimals, fractions and percentages.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of probability. They show good knowledge of concepts such as halves, doubles and quarters. They make good progress in applying their knowledge to solve real-life problems. They extend their understanding of the number system to include negative numbers. Their use of correct mathematical terms and vocabulary is consistently good.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and some of their properties. They identify lines of symmetry within two-dimensional shapes. Older pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of space, shape and measure. They understand the concept of symmetry, including rotational symmetry, and know how to calculate perimeter, area and volume accurately.
- Older pupils have a very good knowledge of angles and the properties of irregular shapes. They name and measure a variety of angles with confidence. Pupils understand and use the language associated with angles, including obtuse, acute and reflex. They apply their knowledge of co-ordinates effectively in other subjects, such as geography.

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- Pupils recognise and use the eight-point compass accurately. They understand an appropriate range of mathematical vocabulary and can find objects on a simple grid using the points of the compass.
 - By the end of the key stage, pupils show a very good understanding of a broad range of numbers, including negative and square numbers, factors and prime numbers. They find patterns in their work. Older pupils enjoy the challenge of investigative work and they share their ideas and findings with each other using precise mathematical vocabulary to explain patterns and recognise and extend number sequences.
 - Pupils collect and collate data, plot and analyse graphs and pie charts, which become progressively more difficult. They develop a good understanding of scale.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Science

Standards of achievement in science are good overall. In Y6, they are very good.

Good features

- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of science. They conduct good investigations and know what is meant by a fair test.
- Younger pupils in KS2 have a good understanding of life processes. They recognise the relationship between a good diet and a healthy lifestyle, identify teeth as molars, incisors and canine and realise the importance of dental care.
- Pupils in Y3 know the functions of a skeleton and that muscles work in pairs to effect motion. They learn that pulse rates can vary and that, during vigorous exercise, these will rise. Older pupils in Y5 name the major organs of the body such as the heart, lungs and kidneys and explain their function.
- In a controlled experiment with cress seeds, pupils conclude from the outcomes that plants require water, light and heat to grow. Using coloured water and white carnations, they observe that the transportation of water in a plant is upwards from the root. All pupils label parts of a flowering plant with authority.
- Pupils display an understanding of the different properties and purposes of materials and that they can be natural or man-made, absorbent or impermeable, transparent or opaque. They know that there are thermal and electrical conductors and insulators. They observe that materials can change by heating or cooling and that some of these changes are reversible and temporary and others irreversible and permanent.
- Pupils in upper KS2 understand that sound is made through vibration and the length of the vibrating column affects the pitch. They explore the properties of light, discover that it travels in straight lines, can be blocked by objects and reflected by shiny surfaces. They apply this knowledge to a study of how a periscope works.
- Across the key stage, pupils develop a very good understanding of electricity and magnetism. They experiment with circuits and understand that they need to be complete for electricity to flow. Older pupils in the key stage construct series and parallel circuits and use their knowledge when constructing a quiz board.
- Older pupils study forces and learn that a force can make an object move, stop, change its shape or speed. They understand the mechanics of floating and sinking and the opposing

forces of gravity and water upthrust. In Y6, they investigate the forces of friction and discover that worn trainers offer better resistance to sole slippage than newer ones.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Welsh second language

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

Good features

- Pupils understand basic commands, convey greetings and respond well to teachers' instructions. They are able to identify the names of colours, parts of the body and clothes and can count in Welsh.
- Pupils ask and answer questions about the weather and their interests and activities. They satisfactorily take part in simple, structured dialogues and role-play to build up knowledge and understanding of the language. They respond confidently to a range of questions such as '*Pwy wyt ti?*' '*Sut wyt ti?*'.
- They regularly practise using every day words and phrases and make satisfactory progress in acquiring an appropriate vocabulary relating to '*Y Tŷ*' and their likes and dislikes. Older pupils respond positively when introduced to new language patterns such as '*Ble mae..... yn eistedd, o flaen, ar, tu ôl, ar bwys*'.
- Pupils enjoy learning and singing Welsh songs. They sing Welsh hymns during assembly with good pronunciation.
- Pupils' ability to pronounce Welsh words is developing satisfactorily and they are gaining in confidence, reinforced by reading out aloud words and phrases as a class, in pairs and individually.
- Pupils' writing is based on class topics and mainly consists of simple sentences and dialogues. Older pupils use familiar sentence patterns and basic vocabulary satisfactorily when writing about things within their own experience.
- Pupils use Welsh incidentally during registration periods and throughout the school day.
- Pupils' well-developed listening skills are put to effective use when involved in Welsh lessons.

Shortcomings

- The standard of reading and writing in Welsh is variable and pupils do not write for a range of different purposes and in different genres.
- The standard of pupils' use of incidental Welsh is variable, lacks progression and is not consistently used in classes across the school.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement in design and technology are good.

Good features

- Pupils make good progress in producing original designs. In Y3, pupils use simple prompt sheets giving reasons for their choices in making pneumatic monsters. By Y6 they independently design slippers from a number of different perspectives.

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- They use a good variety of techniques, materials and components to make a range of products. For example, pupils in Y4 make money containers from materials as diverse as plastic, fur and fabric and test fastenings such as Velcro, buttons and zips to see which are the safest. They select joining techniques using glue, staples or stitches that are appropriate for the material and the product.
 - Pupils' evaluations are often perceptive and show a good ability to identify ways of improving their products and to explain deviations from their design intentions.
 - A good feature of their work is that they generate ideas independently, vote on the best one, and then collaborate to make one product as a group. A good example of the result of this process was seen in the 'Appliance of Science' display of Y6 pupils' work where they used pulley and belt mechanisms to invent moving advertisements.
 - Pupils are alert to the health and safety hazards in their activities. For example, in a lesson in Y5 where pupils were observing the process of extraction when making hot drinks, they followed instructions very sensibly in order to ensure that there were no accidents with boiling water.
 - Pupils use ICT effectively for a range of functions, including control technology.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings, but pupils do not consistently, where relevant, indicate proposed dimensions on their designs and have acquired limited knowledge and skills in working with wood.

Information technology

Standards of achievement in information technology are good overall. In Y6, they are very good.

Good features

- Pupils develop confidence when using computers. Their development of skills is progressive, suiting their needs as learners, and supporting other areas of the curriculum.
- Younger pupils use appropriate word-processing packages to develop their editing skills. They understand that data can be stored and organised so that it helps answer questions. Pupils interrogate CD-ROMs about the human body and are introduced to simulation and graphics programmes to enhance their understanding and extend their work.
- Later in KS2, pupils change font size and style, underline text and make it bolder. They word-process their swimming pool rules using these skills. Pupils begin to send and receive simple e-mail messages and review, edit and return poems from a local school.
- Pupils in upper KS2 develop their knowledge of spreadsheets and can change the information in cells to match the column title. They then interrogate the spreadsheet for information on children's purchases and on a birthday celebration at a fast food outlet.
- Pupils are increasingly aware of the value of the Internet for research purposes. They use the 'Living Library' to great effect, are able to bookmark sites, use search engines and develop strategies to narrow their fields of search.
- Information and communications technology is used in a number of curriculum areas. In Y5, an electronic microscope is used to examine pollen grains. In Y6, pupils send word-processed English work as an attachment to another primary school. Digital cameras are used to record work, the whiteboard is used as a learning and teaching tool and links to the community are enhanced by access to the community website.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings. However, pupils' development in ICT is restricted by limited access to computers and the constraints of the building.

History

Standards of achievement are good.

Good features

- Pupils have a good awareness of chronology. They understand the purpose of time-lines and discuss them intelligently.
- Pupils' experiences of visiting places of interest, such as the Celtic Village at the Welsh Folk Museum, make a good contribution to their historical understanding. Year 3 pupils, for example, successfully compare the Celtic Roundhouse with homes of today.
- Pupils have secure factual knowledge and can recall historical information accurately. They are aware of differences between past and present. For example, they successfully compare the food and eating habits of the Romans with the present day.
- They use historical sources effectively to explore changes in Cardiff Castle in the 19th century. They are aware of the lives of the people and the types of occupations they followed from their study of the census return of 1891.
- Older pupils have a very good understanding of the Victorian age. They successfully compare life in a Victorian school with schools today and record similarities and differences in the clothes worn, the appearance of the classrooms and school routines of children then and now. They understand why the 'Welsh not' was introduced.
- Pupils' investigative skills are developing well and they make good use of a range of primary and secondary sources in their research, for example, in their local study of Radyr and the development of Llandaff Cathedral and its locality. They have a good understanding that change occurs over time and are beginning to sequence key events.
- Older pupils have extensive knowledge of the Tudor period. They make comparisons between the lives and clothes of the rich and poor, buildings, crime and punishment and customs of the age. They know the importance of the voyages of Sir Francis Drake.
- Pupils are beginning to understand the causes and consequences of major events. Older pupils have a very good understanding of the characteristic features of life at different times in the past, such as World War II. They begin to understand differences in the way the past is represented and interpreted and suggest reasons for these.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Geography

Standards of achievement are good.

Good features

- Pupils have a good understanding of routes and maps in relation to location and places. Their skills in interpreting maps are progressively developed throughout the school.
- Pupils effectively use atlases and globes to locate different countries, continents and oceans of the world. The majority of pupils use co-ordinates confidently. They acquire a relevant geographical vocabulary and know the meaning of symbols representing the

main physical features on maps. They can measure map-to-ground distances and understand the notion of scale and have a good understanding of direction using the eight points of the compass.

- Pupils have a good knowledge of rivers and accurately describe the various stages of river development. They have a good understanding of weather patterns and weather symbols on a map and a developing understanding of the Beaufort scale.
- Younger pupils develop a good understanding of their local area. Older pupils make an in-depth study of Cardiff Central, noting the human and physical features of the area, and produce a graph of the tourist attractions visited using ICT. They learn about the changes that recently came to the city and the developments in Cardiff Bay. They record their work well with some very good examples of extended writing.
- Pupils successfully compare their own locality with Wick. Older pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of a contrasting area. They can identify some of the human and physical features of Pembrokeshire, noting similarities and differences with their own locality. They are aware of some of the advantages of living in Pembrokeshire and make suggestions as to why people from city areas wish to holiday there.
- In their study of the features of a less economically developed area of India, Chembakolli, Y4 pupils show a good understanding of the main differences in education, weather, houses and lifestyles between families in Chembakolli and their own.
- Pupils show, at appropriate levels, a good knowledge and understanding of the character and identity of Wales and its relationship with other people and places.
- In their study of Ecuador, older pupils demonstrate very good geographical enquiry skills in their research about the rainforest and are well informed about endangered species. They are aware of the effects of erosion and pollution, of dangers to the local environment and the wider world and of the importance of sustainable development.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Art

Standards of achievement in art are good overall. The quality of pupils' painting is very good.

Good features

- Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of artists from a variety of cultures and periods and use their knowledge effectively to experiment with some of the methods they used. They make very good progress in their understanding and use of colour, pattern, tone and texture in their paintings.
- In Y3, pupils mix paint and glue with materials such as rice, flour and lentils, to achieve a very good range of textures. They draw very well on their knowledge of the work of Matisse and Klee in order to select backgrounds of contrasting colours, either picking out and matching a detail in the foreground or creating a total contrast. They use the 'sgraffito' technique effectively to create patterns.
- Pupils use ICT well to develop their work in art. For example, Y4 pupils used art software in order to experiment with tones of one colour in the style of Mondrian.
- Pupils use the knowledge gained in other areas of the curriculum very successfully to inform their work in art. For example, pupils in Y6 created some beautiful and intricate

Islamic patterns using their knowledge of symmetry, gained in mathematics, and the artistic traditions of Islam, gained in religious education.

- Visiting artists enrich pupils' experience of art and enable them to reach a high standard in using stained glass, fabric and a variety of print techniques. With their help, a very attractive mosaic was produced for the entrance hall from pupils' original designs.
- Inspired by the paintings of their own teacher, as well as photographs of the natural and man-made environment and examples of the work of other artists, pupils in Y6 produce paintings in an Impressionistic style. These paintings are outstanding and illustrate the culmination of the school's work in developing pupils' painting skills.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Music

Standards of achievement in music are good.

Good features

- Pupils sing clearly, confidently and with good diction, and most of them sing in tune. Both boys and girls enjoy participating in solo singing auditions for the St David's Day concert and all pupils take part in the choir competition for the school Eisteddfod. They sing a variety of songs from different times and cultures.
- They make good progress in their understanding of musical elements, such as tempo, pulse and pitch. For example, pupils in Y3 identify differences in mood and tempo in two contrasting pieces of dance music. By Y5, pupils recognise and describe ascending and descending changes in pitch.
- Through regular practice, they play tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments with increasing accuracy and control of the musical elements. Year 5 pupils, for example, improve their ability to play two beats, or the first beat only in a bar, to accompany their rendition of 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?' during the course of the lesson.
- They also make good progress in composing music and record their ideas using simple graphic notation that distinguishes between the musical elements. They develop and organise their ideas well, often to very good effect.
- They listen well to their own and others' performances and identify good parts and points for improvement, and difficult parts that they need to practise.
- In one very good lesson in Y6, pupils composed and arranged music to represent the moods and feelings evoked in poems about World War II that they had written. Pupils who play recorder, flute, piano or other instruments helped to lead and organise their groups so that their resulting performances were very musical and atmospheric and reached a high standard.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings, but pupils do not sufficiently vary their control of tone and dynamics when singing in large groups.

Physical education

During the inspection, it was not possible to observe the full range of work in physical education. No gymnastics, athletics or swimming were observed during the inspection.

Standards of achievement in dance and games are good.

Good features

- Pupils dress appropriately and understand the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise. They lift, transport and use equipment safely.
- In dance, pupils respond readily to instructions and make good use of space. Pupils display good skills in dance. They use contrasting body shape, direction and speed in response to music. They display a growing self-esteem and confidence in their movements when working individually and co-operate well as members of a group.
- Pupils evaluate their own work and the work of others and offer suggestions for improvements. They demonstrate their skills to others with energy and enthusiasm.
- Pupils' use of games skills and techniques, particularly in batting, throwing or catching a ball, are developing well. They work well in groups and in pairs. They have a good awareness of space and use it well. Pupils enthusiastically participate in outdoor games and develop a good understanding of fair play.

- Pupils attend swimming lessons at a local centre and the school reports that they make good progress.
- Discussions with pupils indicate that considerable pleasure is gained from a range of extra-curricular activities. These make an important contribution to the development of pupils' skills.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Religious education

Standards of achievement in religious education are good.

Good features

- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in religious education.
- In lower KS2 pupils understand that the Ten Commandments are a set of rules. They develop their own rules and write two laws which they believe are important.
- Pupils develop an understanding of Christian beliefs and practices and the symbolism of a Christian place of worship. They know that festivals such as Christmas and Easter mark the cycle of the Christian calendar and their knowledge is enhanced by visits from the local clergy and by visits to local places of worship.
- Throughout the key stage, pupils develop their knowledge of world faiths. They learn about Islam, the Jewish faith, the beginnings of Buddhism and Sikhism and Hindu beliefs and symbolism. In Y6, they develop an understanding of the place of pilgrimage within life and produce a very good brochure providing Muslim pilgrims with information regarding the Muslim Hajj.
- In upper KS2, pupils begin to understand the causes and effects of persecution and prejudices in religious beliefs. Through their work on World War II, they know of the life of Ann Frank. They recognise that people follow their faith in caring for others and realise that, throughout the world, there are many people in need.
- Acts of collective worship strengthen pupils' sense of community and make a good contribution to developing pupils' knowledge of religious education.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings. However, pupils' knowledge of major world faiths is constrained by limited arrangements for visits to religious centres such as a mosque or synagogue. The school is aware of this and preparations are in hand for such visits to begin in 2005.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues for improvement identified when it was last inspected in 1998.

The last inspection report identified the following key issues:

- 1. Improve standards in aspects of those subjects identified as satisfactory i.e. geography, music and religious education.**

Good progress. Standards in geography, music and religious education are now good.

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2. **Improve consistency in the marking of pupils' work in order to clearly identify how pupils can improve.**

Good progress. The quality of marking of pupils' work is now good.

3. **Allow pupils to exercise greater initiative in developing their own ideas and consequently challenge the more able pupils.**

Good progress. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their own ideas and there is a good level of challenge for more able pupils.

4. **Continue the development of the role of the subject leader through a structured approach to the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' standards of achievement in the foundation subjects.**

Good progress. The role of the subject leader is well developed and includes the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' achievements in the foundation subjects.

5. **Maintain the current high standards of care and good quality relationships between pupils and teachers that are characteristics of the school's pleasant ethos and family atmosphere.**

Good progress. High standards of care and good quality relationships continue to be characteristics of the school's ethos and atmosphere.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The governors, headteacher and staff now need to:

- improve the quality of teaching and standards of achievement in Welsh;
- maintain the good standards achieved in all other subjects.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Danescourt Junior School
School type	LEA maintained/community
Age-range of pupils	7-11
Address of school	Danescourt Way Llandaff Cardiff
Post-Code	CF5 2SN
Telephone Number	02920 552421

Headteacher	Miss Julie Hudd
Date of appointment	September 1981
Chair of Governors	Mr Mark Norris
Registered Inspector	Ms Stephanie James
Dates of inspection	5-7 July 2004

B School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>					
Year group	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	60	48	55	55	218

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	4	9

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

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>		
Term	KS2	Whole school
Summer 2003	94.6	94.6
Autumn 2003	94.8	94.8
Spring 2004	94.7	94.7

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

END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2003

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2003								Number of pupils in Y6: 56					
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	56	32	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	23	70	0
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	5	12	38	40	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	55	30	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	19	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	46	45	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	18	42	33	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	42	56	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	72	0
		National	0	2	0	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:	82	In the school:	85.7
In Wales:	71	In Wales:	70

- D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996.
 A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence.
 N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.
 B Pupils not entered for tests because they are working outside the levels of the tests.
 W Pupils who are working towards level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The school was inspected over a period of three days by a team of four inspectors, the equivalent of 10 inspector days at the school. During that period:

- Forty-five lessons or parts of lessons were observed;
- Pupils' work was discussed with the pupils themselves and with class teachers;
- Examples of pupils' work from all classes were inspected;
- A number of extra-curricular activities were observed;
- A number of pupils were heard reading;
- Video recordings of pupils' musical experiences were watched;
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff with management responsibilities, governors, LSAs, non-teaching staff and pupils;
- Sixteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 66 returned completed questionnaires, which were analysed;
- The full range of documentation made available by the school was studied;

- Attendance registers and pupils' assessment records and reports were examined;
- The school's budget was scrutinised;
- Inspectors were present during assemblies.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Ms Stephanie James	Rgl	Context Main findings Standards achieved in subjects Standards in key skills across the curriculum Quality of teaching Curriculum Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement Leadership and efficiency Progress since the last inspection Key issues for action.	English design and technology art music
Mrs Caterina Lewis	Lay	Attendance Partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry	
Mr Martyn Davies	Team	Behaviour and attitudes Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	science information technology religious education
Mr Mervyn Lewis	Team	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment, recording and reporting Provision for pupils with special educational needs	mathematics Welsh second language history geography physical education

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