

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

DARRAN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Brook Street
Ferndale
Rhondda Cynon Taff
CF43 4LE**

School Number: 674/2112

Date of Inspection: 21st – 24th February 2005

by

**MR MICHAEL T. RIDOUT
W180/78730**

Date: 1st April 2005

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/164/04/P

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Darran Park Primary 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 Darran Park Primary School took place between 21st and 24th February 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr. Michael T. Ridout 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 of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who 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. Darran Park Primary is a community school, for boys and girls aged from three to eleven years. The school is organised in nine mainstream classes, including an early years class for the under-fives, and the local education authority (LEA) provides a learning support class for up to eight pupils with special educational needs (SEN). These pupils come from a wide area. In total, there are 256 full-time equivalent (fte) pupils on roll. The average class size in mainstream classes is 30. The school employs 10 full-time and three part-time teachers (11.3 fte) and five assistants.
2. The school is situated in Ferndale, in the Rhondda Fach, about four miles north of Porth. It serves the town of Ferndale and receives pupils from two nearby infant schools at the beginning of Y3. The area has many traditional terraced homes with a mixture of privately owned and rented housing. The school confirms a number of families have disadvantaged circumstances. About 23% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is above national, and below local, figures. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. English is the predominant language and the school teaches Welsh as a second language.
3. The school receives pupils from the full range of abilities. A range of assessment data confirms this. Around 35% of pupils have SEN. This proportion is high when compared with that found in many similar schools. No pupils have statements of SEN. The school was previously inspected in February 1999.
4. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark and holds the Investors in People Award.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The work of the school is built around the motto, 'Together we learn and grow.' A mission statement and a series of school aims that are published in the prospectus support this.
6. Appropriate targets are set for end-of-key-stage attainment. The main priorities identified in the school improvement plan (SIP) 2004-7 focus on:
 - raising standards in English by improving the quality of teaching and learning;
 - improving children's personal and social skills so as to impact on their learning;
 - developing teaching and learning policy.

Summary

7. Darran Park Primary School provides well for all its pupils. The provision in the early years class and the learning support class is, quite simply, outstanding.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

8. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
9. The under-fives quickly develop independent learning skills. This is an impressive feature.

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 1	Grade 1
Personal and social development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 1	Grade 1
Creative development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Physical development	Grade 1	Grade 1

10. In 38 lessons, or parts of lessons, pupils' standards of achievement overall were judged to be:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
21%	53%	26%	0%	0%

11. Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected at Key Stages 1 and 2 are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 3
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 3

12. In English, mathematics and Welsh as a second language, pupils achieve well in both key stages. They are well supported in developing bilingual competence.
13. In KS1, pupils achieve well in design and technology and geography. In KS2, some shortcomings remain in the development of knowledge and skills in these subjects.
14. In KS2, the scrutiny of pupils' work across subjects shows relatively little evidence of research and enquiry skills. Opportunities to promote independent learning skills are not always fully exploited, thus hampering the progress of the more able pupils in particular.
15. Slow learners and pupils with SEN make good overall progress in relation to age and ability, especially in basic skills.
16. Progress in the learning support class is good and sometimes very good.
17. In KS1, pupils acquire and use basic and key skills well across subjects. In KS2, the extent to which pupils enhance their learning through using key skills is variable.
18. In KS1, the most recent National Curriculum (NC) results for 2004 confirm that performance in English, mathematics and science is well below national figures and also below those for similar schools having between 21 and 24% of pupils entitled to free school meals. Results over the last three years show a trend of improvement.
19. In KS2, the NC test results for 2004 are well above national figures in English, mathematics and science. Overall performance in the core subjects is well above average when compared with similar schools.
20. Pupils are well behaved, well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. The very good relationships among pupils are particularly evident.
21. Although pupils increase their knowledge and skills well, their capacity to study collaboratively, solve problems and gather information from a variety of sources is not yet consistently developed in KS2.
22. Levels of attendance average 93%; pupils' punctuality is generally good.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

23. Pupils show good development in their personal, social, moral and wider development.
24. Pupils are developing an appropriate understanding and respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions in society; their understanding of citizenship within the school is developing well.
25. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is well reflected in the life and work of the school.
26. Throughout the school, pupils conscientiously undertake appropriate responsibilities, such as acting as reading partners. This provision enhances their personal development particularly well.

The quality of education and training

27. In 38 lessons or parts of lessons, teaching was judged to be:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	55%	21%	8%	0%

28. The teaching and support provided in the early years and the learning support classes has many excellent features.
29. Across the school, teachers set high expectations, have very good relationships with pupils and manage lessons well. However, on occasions in KS2, teaching is over-directive and progress slows because the learning tasks are not closely enough matched to pupils' needs.
30. Lesson planning identifies learning objectives well, although learning is not always sufficiently differentiated. This is linked to a lack of consistency in the use of day-to-day assessments. This sometimes results in able pupils needing more challenge and less able pupils finding it difficult to access the task.
31. Good use is made of the data from standardised tests and other assessments, to track pupils' progress and set realistic and challenging targets.
32. The curriculum is broad and suitably balanced. There are progressive and detailed schemes of work in all subjects and areas of learning.
33. The provision in the Early Years and the Learning Support Class is excellent.
34. In both key stages, there is strong emphasis on the development of basic skills. The school is developing its provision to promote key skills well.
35. The provision for pupils' personal development is good; the school offers a wide range of extracurricular activities.
36. Pupils' learning is enriched through effective links with parents, positive partnerships with other institutions, and with the wider community.

37. The quality of pastoral care, support and guidance for pupils is good. The school has an effective policy and procedures for Child Protection and gives high priority to the general safety and well-being of pupils.
38. The provision for pupils with SEN is well managed, although the impact of support staff lacks consistency. In the Learning Support Class, the provision linked to individual educational plans (IEPs) is exemplary. In mainstream classes, planning is not always tailored closely enough to the targets in pupils' IEPs.

Leadership and management

39. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, skilfully provides clear direction for the school's work. This is a strong aspect that is developing very well indeed.
40. The aims and values of the school are well reflected in its work.
41. There are good systems to inform target setting and shape priorities targeted through the school improvement plan (SIP).
42. Leadership is particularly skilful in prioritising a small number of goals that are carefully chosen to maximise the impact of improvement strategies across the school.
43. Governors are strongly supportive of the school and acknowledge the need to enhance further their role in monitoring. The governing body (GB) complies with statutory requirements.
44. Subject managers are becoming better informed about quality and standards in the areas for which they are responsible.
45. The school is developing effective systems to promote self-evaluation. The SIP is a well structured document, although it is too early to judge the full extent of its impact.
46. In a relatively short time, the headteacher has enabled good practice to flourish, such as in the early years and the learning support class.
47. The school is well staffed and very well resourced. The accommodation is impressive, although the classrooms for Y6 pupils are rather small.
48. Spending is well matched to the school's priorities and needs. The school provides good value for money.

School improvement

49. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The systems and initiatives currently in place are beginning to impact further on the standards achieved.

Recommendations

In order to improve standards and the quality of learning and teaching further, the school should continue to implement its SIP, placing particular emphasis on:

- R1. raising further standards in design and technology and geography in KS2 and continuing to develop opportunities to promote basic and key skills across subjects;
- R2. developing learning and teaching styles in KS2 so as to build on pupils' good capacity to study independently, work collaboratively, solve problems and gather information from a variety of sources;
- R3. ensuring lesson planning is well differentiated and effective use is made of assessments to set appropriately challenging work, especially for the more able and less able pupils;
- R4. continuing to build on the targets in pupils' IEPs in mainstream classes;
- R5. continuing to develop the role of subject managers across the school.

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

50. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
51. In 38 lessons, or parts of lessons, mainly in the subjects inspected, standards were judged to be:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
21%	53%	26%	0%	0%

52. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
53. The under-fives make good progress in the basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT).
54. In English, mathematics and Welsh as a second language, pupils achieve well in both key stages. Around a quarter of pupils begin from a low base in Y3. The setting of pupils by ability in English and mathematics classes in KS2 provides a sound framework to enable pupils to achieve their best.
55. In KS1, pupils achieve well in design and technology and geography. In both subjects, pupils successfully gain knowledge and skills through a good range of practical tasks.
56. In KS2, pupils enthusiastically develop basic skills in designing, making and evaluating in design and technology (DT). However, most pupils' knowledge of the processes in DT and their ability to develop sufficiently original products is at an early stage. In geography, pupils study a good range of topics but seldom develop enquiry skills to the full.
57. In KS2, the scrutiny of pupils' work in religious education, history and geography shows relatively little evidence of research and enquiry skills. Opportunities to use reading and writing skills to develop learning are not always fully exploited, thus hampering the progress of the more-able pupils in particular.
58. Slow learners and pupils with SEN make good overall progress in relation to age and ability, especially in basic skills. They benefit from well-targeted support and intervention strategies. Progress in the learning support class is good and sometimes very good.
59. Across the school, pupils consistently make good progress in lessons where they have a clear understanding of the learning and are well guided in building on previous work. Progress is more variable and pupils achieve less success where the learning experiences lack sufficient relevance and challenge.

60. In KS1, pupils acquire and use basic and key skills well across subjects. In KS2, sound progress is evident in pupils' basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Improvements in lesson planning identify suitable opportunities to promote key skills. However, the extent to which pupils enhance their learning through using key skills is variable. In particular, some good opportunities for using writing remain under-developed in subjects such as science and the humanities. During the inspection, there was limited evidence of the use of ICT within lessons.
61. Pupils are well supported in developing bilingual competence. They respond positively in both key stages. During the inspection, there was limited evidence of the use of incidental Welsh in some KS2 lessons.
62. In general, pupils achieve similar levels of success, whatever their background. By the end of Y6, pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and preparing for the next stage of learning.
63. In KS1, the most recent results for 2004 confirm that performance in English, mathematics and science is well below national figures and also below those for similar schools having between 21 and 24% of pupils entitled to free school meals. Results over the last three years show a trend of improvement. In 2004, 68% of pupils attained level two or above in all three subjects. These results include the data for a small number of pupils with SEN. The figure for mainstream pupils only is broadly average.
64. In KS2, the NC test results for 2004 are well above national figures in English, mathematics and science. Overall performance in the core subjects is above average when compared with similar schools. Figures in English and mathematics are well above average. The proportion of pupils attaining level four and above in the three core subjects (80%) is well above average. A good proportion attain level five.
65. The school exceeded its end of key stage targets in 2004. It has identified differences in the performance of boys and girls and successfully implements strategies to minimise the difference.
66. Pupils are well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to work hard and they ask questions and provide answers with enthusiasm. The majority sustain interest well but, in some instances in KS2, pupils' ability to work productively with a measure of independence is not fully exploited.
67. Pupils are well behaved in and around the school. Very good relationships among pupils are particularly evident during breaktimes and lunchtimes. The staff have positive relationships with pupils; pupils are friendly and courteous to each other, and to adults including visitors. This is a distinctive feature of the school community.
68. In the early years, children quickly develop independent leaning skills. This is an impressive feature. In KS2, the older pupils behave maturely and are sensitive to the needs of the younger ones. Throughout the school, pupils conscientiously undertake appropriate responsibilities, such as acting as reading partners. This provision enhances their personal development particularly well.

69. The average level of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is 93%. Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual at the start of the day.
70. Although most pupils increase their knowledge and skills well, their capacity to study collaboratively, solve problems and gather information from a variety of sources is not yet consistently developed.
71. Pupils show good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. The school provides effective personal and social education and maintains a supportive learning ethos. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's expectations of them. A range of policies is well implemented to support pupils' personal development. For instance, pupils understand that bullying is unacceptable behaviour and are confident any misbehaviour reported to an adult in school will be dealt with immediately.
72. Pupils are developing an appropriate understanding and respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions in society, and their understanding of equal opportunities issues is developing well.
73. Pupils' understanding of citizenship within the school is developing well and this is enhanced through activities in the community. A large number of visitors to the school such as from the local church and community organisations, as well as sports events and visits to local places of interest, help to broaden pupils' understanding of their own community and the workplace.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

74. The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question Grade 2.
75. In 38 lessons or parts of lessons, mainly in the subjects inspected, teaching was judged to be:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	55%	21%	8%	0%

76. The teaching and support provided in the early years and the learning support classes has many excellent features.
77. In KS1, teaching reflects high expectations and there is effective teamwork in the use and direction of support staff to enhance learning.
78. There is some variation in teaching across KS2. Teachers set high expectations, have very good relationships with pupils and manage lessons well. However, on occasions teaching is over-directive, the pace of learning drops and progress slows because the learning tasks are not closely matched to pupils' needs.
79. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge, and the provision of professional training opportunities enables them to update their practice, such as in the use of ICT.
80. Lesson planning is well supported through progressive schemes of work in all subjects. The content of lessons closely reflects the requirements of the scheme of work, and planning identifies learning objectives well.
81. On the one hand, teachers explain the learning well but, in some instances in KS2, pupils do not fully understand the task and require more carefully focused teaching or support, to enable them to achieve their best. In the most effective lessons, such as in Y5/6 when pupils identified bias in a text, learning is well guided and involves the pupils effectively. A strong feature of such lessons is the plenary session.
82. Across the school, a good range of methodologies and resources is used to engage pupils in learning. This good practice, however, is not yet sufficiently disseminated to ensure that pupils experience an appropriate variety of learning styles.
83. Although the 'setting' arrangements in English and mathematics reduce the range of ability in classes, this is not always matched with sufficient differentiation in the tasks and the teaching. This is also a feature of some mixed-ability classes in other subjects.

84. On the whole, teaching promotes equality of opportunity well. However, on a few occasions, gender bias and stereotyping are inadvertently reinforced.
85. Teaching provides well for pupils' language needs. This is particularly evident during reading sessions where pupils support their partners well. The school's ethos promotes pupils' bilingual skills well and complements the teaching of Welsh as a second language effectively.
86. Teaching frequently responds flexibly to pupils' learning needs. This is a consistent feature in KS1, for example. However, there is some variation across the school in the effectiveness of using day-to-day assessments to tailor the learning to pupils' prior knowledge and needs. This sometimes results in able pupils needing more challenge and less-able pupils finding it difficult to access the task.
87. There are systematic arrangements to monitor and review pupils' progress. The tracking sheets in use enable teachers to access the information with ease. Good use is made of the data from standardised tests and other assessments, to track progress and set realistic and challenging targets. The school's procedures comply with statutory requirements.
88. The involvement of pupils in evaluating their progress and deciding how to focus their efforts is at an early stage. There are examples of developing good practice in using the marking of pupils' work to evaluate achievement. However, the evaluation of progress against key learning objectives is not yet securely established across the school.
89. The planning frameworks used by teachers provide the opportunity to focus evaluations of learning but this aspect is at an early stage in most classes.
90. Written reports inform parents appropriately about their children's progress. The best examples denote gains in knowledge and understanding and identify areas for improvement. However, in some examples, the emphasis is on the work covered rather than what has been learned.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

91. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
92. Schemes of work have been updated in line with Curriculum 2000. The planned curriculum is broad, suitably balanced and generally offers equal opportunities and access to learning opportunities well matched to pupils' needs. This provision meets statutory requirements.
93. The provision in the Learning Support Class is excellent. IEPs and well-differentiated work linked to the six areas of learning and broad topics suit the varied individual needs and abilities of the pupils particularly well.
94. There are suitable policies and detailed schemes of work in all subjects and areas of learning. The Early Years curriculum includes a wide range of high-quality first-hand practical activities across the six areas of learning. This provision is excellent.
95. In both key stages, schemes of work in all NC subjects and religious education provide for suitable progression in pupils' learning. The school is continuing to develop its planning for design and technology and art. Class timetables reflect an appropriate allocation of time across most subjects.
96. In KS2, pupils are 'set' by ability in English and mathematics. Differentiated work at a suitable pace meets the particular needs and abilities of most pupils well. However, work is not always sufficiently differentiated to ensure pupils of differing abilities maintain good progress.
97. There is strong emphasis on the development of basic skills. The school has a Key Skills Policy, and opportunities for developing the key skills are identified in teachers' planning.
98. The curriculum is significantly enriched by visits to museums, galleries, and environmental centres and by visitors such as theatre, music, sport and environmental groups. The school offers a wide range of extracurricular activities such as folk dancing, choir, rugby, football, netball, recorders and a gardening club.
99. The provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school plans to formalise its Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme in the SIP. Pupils' spiritual development is positively enhanced in KS1, Y3 and Y6 through 'circle time' activities. In particular, more-able pupils at the end of KS2 have very good opportunities to reflect on their own and others' lives and beliefs. Daily assemblies incorporate an appropriate act of collective worship.
100. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities such as being playground carers and undertaking various jobs as monitors. The school has identified its

commitment to developing class and school councils in its SIP. The PSE programme is enriched through the 'All Wales Police Programme' and agencies such as 'On Track', health professionals and sports coaches.

101. A strong sense of pride in being Welsh is fostered and pupils' awareness of Welsh heritage is promoted well through the Eisteddfod, Welsh assemblies, folk dancing and the school choir's link with a local choir.
102. The school is currently annotating its schemes of work to ensure curricular opportunities to promote the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* are well planned. There is currently very good work in English and history. The school also plans to build on its prestigious success in the Welsh Heritage Initiative.
103. Pupils study other cultures through mathematics, geography, music and religious education. Participation in the 'Comenius' initiative ensures pupils learn about the legends, games, music and dance of five European countries.
104. Pupils' learning is enriched through effective links with parents, positive partnerships with other schools and colleges, and with the wider community. The school continues to develop these links.
105. Parents are strongly supportive of the school and have ready access to the headteacher and staff. The school promotes an 'open door' policy. Strong pastoral and administrative links are maintained with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer.
106. The school has applied to establish a partnership with an initial teacher-training (ITT) institution in Cardiff and awaits inclusion in the ITT programme. There are currently no links with employers to support staff training and development, such as through teacher placements.
107. The school promotes pupils' bilingual competence well. Displays often clearly reflect the culture and heritage of Wales; *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is well embedded in the life and work of the school.
108. The school tackles social disadvantage well through its inclusive approach. In most activities, stereotyping is discouraged but a few *examples* of promoting gender typing were observed.
109. The school appropriately promotes education in sustainable development; it is proactive in recycling, energy saving and promoting healthy eating and has plans to develop the school environment further in working towards Eco School accreditation.
110. Pupils have some good opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills through charitable and other fund-raising activities. The school is developing its provision in line with national priorities.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

111. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 1.
112. The school offers a safe and secure environment for its pupils. There is much evidence to show that the quality of pastoral care, support and guidance is good. The school has recently revised its values and vision statement. This is displayed around the school.
113. Recent parental questionnaires and the inspection questionnaires show positive responses. The school communicates well with the parents through twice-termly newsletters that cover all aspects of school life.
114. The school has well-established induction procedures. Home visits and visits to school are made. The Prospectus and 'welcome packs' are regularly updated and are easy reading. 'Link up' meetings for nursery parents, visits to feeder schools and visits to school are effective. Well-established procedures exist for pupils' transfer to secondary school, ensuring good academic and pastoral transition.
115. The staff provide high-quality support and guidance for pupils. The quality of relationships is very good between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves. Pupils engage in a good range of activities that promote their Personal and Social Education well. This provision includes valuable contributions from health and other professionals.
116. The monitoring of pupils' attendance and behaviour is good. The school has comprehensive procedures for ensuring good attendance and behaviour, with positive reward systems in place for both.
117. Patterns of absence are systematically monitored using a database. The school refers pupils with persistent absences to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). Registration procedures are good and fully comply with NAW Circular 3/99.
118. The school gives high priority to the general safety and well-being of pupils. There is an effective policy, and staff and pupils demonstrate an appropriate awareness of health and safety around the school. Risk assessments are completed routinely, such as for educational visits, and appropriate arrangements are in place for pupils who are unwell or have had an accident at school.
119. The school has an effective policy and procedures for child protection and takes account of the most recent national guidance. The headteacher is the designated staff member responsible for child protection. All staff are given guidance and training, they are made aware of the procedures to follow should a concern be identified and understand their responsibilities in this area.

120. The school has recently updated its procedures to identify and support pupils' learning needs more effectively. These procedures reflect the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice and are well understood in the school. A range of professionals provide effective advice, including the use of diagnostic assessments.
121. The school has a small SEN team, led by the headteacher who is the designated co-ordinator, which manages arrangements well.
122. The provision of IEPs and work to match the targets set in regular reviews are exemplary in the Learning Support class. Every opportunity is taken to liaise with parents or carers and celebrate pupils' successes.
123. In mainstream classes, pupils have IEPs appropriate to their needs and there are sound arrangements to keep parents and carers informed. Most pupils with particular learning needs in literacy benefit from well-targeted teaching sessions in withdrawal groups. However, for lessons with the whole class, planning is not always tailored closely enough to the targets in pupils' IEPs. As a consequence, some pupils have difficulty in accessing the learning.
124. The school makes sound arrangements for pupils with special needs. However, the impact of support staff is variable. Where staff are well briefed about the focus of their work throughout the lesson, the support is most effective.
125. The school recognises and values the diversity of all pupils regardless of their race, gender or disability. Its aim is to open the minds of all in the school community to the needs and achievements of all pupils through the curriculum, school systems and the everyday running of the school. The school is successful in this regard and guides pupils well whatever their background.
126. The school promotes awareness of racial diversity well through aspects of the curriculum. It takes great pride in its work in the Comenius project.
127. In mathematics, pupils study the Rangoli patterns of Hinduism, investigate the patterns and sounds of African drumming in music and learn about world religions other than Christianity in their religious education.
128. Appropriate procedures are in place for the recording of racial incidents and reporting any occurrence to the Governing Body.
129. The school has a well-considered anti-bullying policy. It believes every child has the right to feel safe in school and be spared the oppression and humiliation caused by bullying. The PSE programme includes bullying issues and how to handle or avoid such situations. Resources such as videos and visits from theatre companies raise awareness, and pupils know that they can report any concerns in an atmosphere of trust.
130. The school welcomes pupils with disability and ensures that they have an entitlement to the full curriculum. The school has an accessibility plan to develop this area further.

131. The school, through its processes, recognises and respects diversity. It does not as yet have a visually displayed policy but has identified the need to review the racial equality policy and develop an action plan as a priority in its Areas for Development.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

132. The findings of the inspection match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
133. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, skilfully provides clear direction for the school's work and is effectively building a culture of self-evaluation where 'success breeds success' as the staff develop greater ownership of well-chosen improvement strategies.
134. In a short time, the effective leadership of the headteacher has enabled good practice to flourish, such as in the early years and the learning support class. Educational leadership is a strong aspect of the school that is developing very well indeed.
135. The aims and values of the school are well reflected in the school's work. A caring and supportive ethos that promotes success is evident throughout the school and there is strong commitment to provide further equality of opportunity in learning for all pupils.
136. In planning for improvement, the school takes good account of national priorities and locally-based initiatives.
137. There are good systems to inform end-of-key-stage target setting and to shape priorities and improvements targeted through the SIP. The targets and goals set for the school are both realistic and challenging. Leadership is particularly skilful in prioritising a small number of key goals that are carefully chosen to maximise the impact of improvement goals across the school.
138. Arrangements for performance management and developing the role of individual staff are securely established. Roles and responsibilities are systematically reviewed including the effectiveness of managerial structures such as the school management team.
139. Whole-school improvement initiatives, individual performance targets and arrangements for the continuing professional development of staff, are well linked to the SIP.
140. The senior staff ensure the GB is well informed regarding the school's strategic development. Governors are strongly supportive and consider a wide range of information before endorsing the school's strategic direction. This includes a commitment to develop the role of governors in monitoring the school's work.
141. The GB ensures statutory requirements are met.

Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

142. The findings of the inspection match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
143. Subject managers are becoming better informed about quality and standards in the areas for which they are responsible. There is an annual cycle for monitoring which prioritises and focuses the whole-school programme and provides a sound basis to gather first-hand evidence.
144. The headteacher systematically contributes to monitoring through classroom observation, scrutinising planning, sampling pupils' work and talking to pupils and staff.
145. The developing role of subject managers is most evident in the identification of areas for improvement in subject action plans that feed into the SIP. However, shortcomings in the role remain, such as the limited impact on teaching and learning styles. In several subjects, the whole-school overview of quality and standards is not securely established. Subject managers have a positive impact in resourcing subjects but judgements of quality and standards are less well informed.
146. A collegiate style of leadership is well promoted by the head and deputy headteacher; this is having a beneficial impact on standards and quality in parts of the school, although the impact of the school management team is currently under-developed.
147. The school is making good use of questionnaires to seek out the views of pupils, parents and staff on aspects of school life.
148. The school is developing a culture of self-evaluation based on well-considered systems. The headteacher, staff and GB have worked well together through the processes of self-evaluation to produce its self-evaluation report and the SIP.
149. The self-evaluation report is comprehensive and well focused. The SIP is a well structured document. The SIP is monitored and reviewed termly by all stakeholders. The plan forms a well-structured basis for securing further improvements in teaching and learning, although it is too early to judge the full extent of its impact.
150. The focus on developing the role of governors in monitoring, continuing to enhance the role of subject managers and developing the leadership role of the SMT is wholly appropriate. The school has made good use of outside agencies to verify judgements in its self-evaluation.
151. The school's priorities are well supported through the timely allocation of resources. Initiatives such as the 'Catch up' programme, and the extensive range of opportunities for continuing professional development are beginning to

impact on teaching and learning, such as in the development of narrative writing and the use of ICT.

152. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The systems and initiatives in place are beginning to impact on standards.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

153. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school judged this key question as Grade 1.
154. The school has sufficient qualified, experienced staff whose strengths and expertise are fully utilised. Specialist teachers are used well in music and to support pupils with SEN.
155. The procedures for teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) and performance management are closely linked. For instance, the school has identified the development of different learning styles as a priority in the SIP, and training is planned to raise teachers' awareness of and ability to promote more varied teaching styles and methodologies. These arrangements are well conceived.
156. The school has recently increased its provision of learning support assistants (LSA) and, where they have received appropriate training such as the nursery nurses and in the 'Catch up' programme, there is a positive impact on standards. The school plans to ensure, through further training, that all LSA are aware of their supporting role, in order to improve the overall efficiency of this resource.
157. The school is well supported by efficient and effective administrative staff, and the caretaker, cleaners and midday supervisory staff help contribute to the caring and happy ethos of the school.
158. The school is very well resourced. The use of resources is regularly reviewed and subject managers identify needs to inform the SIP. Recent spending on interactive whiteboards, language and PSE resources is beginning to impact well on learning and teaching. The ICT suite has succeeded in raising both teachers' and pupils' skills.
159. The accommodation is impressive. Spacious, light teaching areas and colourful displays of pupils' work provide very good stimulus for learning. The Early Years and KS1, indoor and outdoor areas effectively enhance learning opportunities that enable pupils to become independent learners. Space is limited in Y6 classrooms. This can limit the effective development of hands-on and practical learning experiences.
160. Although the school has no room set aside as a library, good use is made of the bay areas in the corridor, where both fiction and reference books and artefacts are attractively displayed. The hall has the added benefit of a curtained stage that enhances the many successful school productions. The school playgrounds are spacious and attractively decorated with both painted and ceramic murals. The school makes good use of the adjacent Darran Park for both sporting and environmental activities.

161. There are efficient administrative procedures in carrying out daily routines and dealing with financial matters, which all contributes to the smooth running of the school. The school uses its budget allocation and physical resources to good effect in providing good-quality education. Spending decisions are well matched to the school's priorities and targets. The school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Early Years

Language, literacy and communication skills

Nursery	Grade 1: good with outstanding features
Reception	Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

162. Nursery children's speaking skills are well developed. They talk confidently to adults and to each other about themselves, their families and what they do in school.
163. Reception children's realistic role play such as in the Doctor's Surgery shows an increasing fluency and sophisticated, mature vocabulary.
164. Both Nursery and Reception children listen intently to the teacher and to each other. They answer the registers naturally and confidently in Welsh.
165. Nursery children enjoy looking at books and 'reading' with each other and teacher and understand that words and pictures convey meaning. They know some initial letter sounds.
166. Reception children show an increasing recognition of letter sounds and the very able read fluently with understanding.
167. Nursery and Reception children practise their writing skills using pencils, felt pens, whiteboards and brushes by 'writing' letters to Santa, medicine prescriptions and describing their best friends. They write on paper and cardboard, and take pride in displaying their 'writing' on the lower classroom walls.
168. Reception class children's writing skills continue to develop well. The more able write about events in personal experience and incidents from familiar stories, applying their phonic knowledge and sight vocabulary well.

Personal and social development

Nursery	Grade 1: good with outstanding features
Reception	Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

169. Nursery and Reception children understand the daily routine well. They show increasing independence. They hang up their own coats, dress themselves at home time, zip up their coats, and take responsibility for tidying resources and taking the register to the office.

170. Reception children show that they are becoming independent learners as they select their own materials to complete tasks.
171. Both Nursery and Reception children pay attention well. They show positive attitudes to learning and concentrate well on their tasks. They choose activities and take turns when working in a group.
172. Reception children play co-operatively in the role-play corner, sharing dressing up clothes and equipment well.
173. Children congratulate each other on their successes and enjoy clapping the teacher's effort!

Mathematical development

Nursery	Grade 1: good with outstanding features
Reception	Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

174. Nursery children can count objects and order numbers, order the days of the week and sequence daily events. They recognise numbers and are beginning to trace and form numbers.
175. Reception children add and subtract within 10, and understand the concept of more than and less than; with the more able volunteering that two lots of 3 make 6. Reception children begin to form numbers; with the more able writing and understanding place value in tens and units.
176. Nursery children can sort according to colours and size, they understand the concepts of tall and short and Reception children develop this further by using comparative terms such as 'smaller than' and 'bigger than'.
177. Both Nursery and Reception children recognise and name squares, circles and triangles.
178. Nursery children can match teddies to a pattern and sequence patterns of 2 by threading beads and using pegboards. Reception children sequence patterns of 3 and 4. The more able create their own sequencing patterns and confidently explain what they have done.
179. Nursery and Reception children explore capacity through sand and water. They understand the concept of full and empty and the more able can order containers according to capacity.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Nursery	Grade 1: good with outstanding features
Reception	Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

180. Children know the roles of the Doctor, Nurse and Receptionist in a surgery and understand that medicine makes you better. They know that a pilot flies a plane and talk about flying to their holidays. They recognise that the kitchen and office staff play an important role in the school.
181. The children understand that people celebrate in different ways and at different times of the year. They celebrate Chinese New Year through making dragon masks, lanterns, tan gram pictures and a great Chinese Lion head, and celebrate Lent through making and tasting pancakes.
182. Children have a developing understanding of the seasons. They look for the shoots of bulbs peeping through the snow in January. They predict that ice melts when brought indoors and know that water is left. They recognise that our climate has considerable rainfall and experiment with materials to find the best for a raincoat and umbrella.
183. Reception children have a good understanding of the growth of a bulb and the functions of a bud, petal and leaves.
184. Nursery and Reception children show increasing confidence in using ICT. Nursery children show good mouse control when drawing pictures of themselves and completing jigsaws. Reception children use the tool bar with confidence, they can amend their work and print off independently and they use a digital camera to create a snapshot of the school.

Creative development

Nursery	Grade 1: good with outstanding features
Reception	Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

185. Nursery and Reception children show an increasing independence and inventiveness by choosing from a wide range of materials and media to create very individual, attractive pieces of artwork.
186. Children's performing skills develop well. Nursery children make their own puppets and 'perform' to an audience in the puppet theatre. Reception children's improvisation skills in role play in the Doctor's Surgery are exceptional.
187. Both Nursery and Reception children recognise and follow pictorial notation and enjoy making music with body percussion. Nursery and Reception children enjoy singing songs and rhymes in both English and Welsh and they show appreciation when listening to music.

Physical development

Nursery	Grade 1: good with outstanding features
Reception	Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

188. Nursery children's gross motor skills develop well. They show good control when pedalling, pushing and pulling ride-on toys and climbing and balancing on large equipment. Both Nursery and Reception children show very good spatial awareness by moving and jumping to the beat of music. Their co-ordination skills are very good. They curl, stretch, march, gallop like horses, tip-toe, hop and skip.
189. Fine motor skills are well developed. Nursery children make cakes; fish and worms with play dough. Nursery and Reception children's pencil, felt pen and paintbrush control develops very well. They trace, colour in and cut out with increasing accuracy and use the computer mouse with increasing control and dexterity.
190. Both Nursery and Reception children handle equipment confidently. They tidy away large and small equipment with care.

English

KS1 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings KS2 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings
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Good and outstanding features

191. Pupils in both key stages listen well to their teachers and to each other in whole-class situations and during less formal pair and group activity times.
192. In KS1, pupils comment, make predictions and answer questions clearly with increasing confidence, about the stories they read and their experiences in and out of school.
193. In KS2, pupils speak with confidence to adults. They can articulate instructions well and recount stories with enjoyment. At the end of the key stage, pupils can recall the features of information sheets and biographies. The more-able pupils argue a point very skilfully, showing mature thinking, by questioning whether a particular piece of text is the truth or is biased opinion.
194. Across both key stages, pupils make good progress in achieving reading skills, relative to their age and ability. In KS1, pupils use a range of strategies to read and make sense of new words. In Y2, pupils read together well with varied intonation. Many recognise and understand the use of the exclamation mark, speech marks and why bold capitals are sometimes used for emphasis when reading aloud. They enjoy books and most can name the author and the purpose of the blurb.
195. In KS2, pupils read a wide range of literary and non-literary texts fluently, with increasing accuracy, expression and understanding. Pupils' skills improve through structured opportunities such as group reading sessions and reading to teachers, learning support assistants and volunteer adults. Pupils show good

interpretation of the text and make good use of dictionaries to support their learning.

196. In both key stages, pupils make good progress in their writing skills. In KS1, pupils use their phonic knowledge to spell and the more able use rhymes as models for their writing. Pupils make good use of prompt cards and lists to support their spelling and writing skills. Many pupils write simple, well sequenced stories with and without pictorial prompts. Pupils also use their writing skills well when copying school signs and noting positions of class names on a plan of the school.
197. At the beginning of KS2, pupils use their knowledge of the components of a story in their writing. They use planners well to structure stories such as 'The Magic Seed.' They understand and are able to sequence instructions, such as how to clean a hamster cage and how to build a snowman. Many make good use of time connectives and adjectives to describe differences in appearance and personality.
198. At the end of the key stage, pupils improve their writing by using alternative verbs and adjectives. They write good 'list' poems that articulate their fears well. Pupils use a range of writing for different purposes effectively. They write arguments for and against corporal punishment, making good use of statistics. Other good examples of writing include newspaper reports and stage directions for plays.
199. Across the key stage, there is much evidence of poetry writing in several forms where pupils use the devices of alliteration and onomatopoeia. Pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible. The choice of different fonts in word-processing often enhances pupils' displayed work.

Shortcomings

200. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematics

KS1 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings KS2 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings
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Good and outstanding features

201. In KS1, pupils count to 50 and have a sound knowledge of number bonds and sequencing to 10. They confidently add and subtract within 20, recognise odd and even numbers and readily sort objects into sets using simple criteria.
202. More-able pupils explain why 15 comes before 17, for example, and demonstrate a good knowledge of place value to tens and units, and some understand hundreds.
203. By the end of KS1, pupils estimate and measure lengths accurately in centimetres and recognise the hour and the half-hour on the clock face. They

know the mathematical names for common two and three-dimensional shapes, describe some of their features, use measurement skills well and show good progress in problem solving.

204. In Y3, more-able pupils are competent with basic number calculations, using the four operations with numbers less than 100. They have a sound knowledge of the two, three, five and ten times tables and develop an understanding of terms such as 'greater than' and 'less than'. Less-able pupils recognise 'one more' and 'one less'.
205. More-able pupils in Y4 have a sound knowledge of simple fractions and confidently complete calculations with brackets. Less-able pupils use 'counting on' strategies well when investigating methods to calculate the surface area of regular and irregular shapes.
206. In Y5, pupils make good use of mental skills such as 'doubling', 'halving' and 'rounding'. More-able pupils have a secure understanding of place value including decimals and percentages; they apply their skills well in more complex number calculations.
207. By the end of the key stage, pupils develop good skills in working with angles, co-ordinates and investigating the properties of shapes. They estimate and measure length accurately in centimetres and metres, know the features of regular polygons and identify lines of symmetry.
208. The majority use appropriate mathematical terms correctly and have a good knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, including rotational symmetry. They have a good understanding of areas and perimeters, and the different types of triangles.
209. The more-able pupils know how to use a protractor to measure acute and obtuse angles to the nearest degree, and calculate area by using the appropriate formulae.
210. By the end of Y6, pupils have a good knowledge of number, such as multiplication patterns; they answer questions about graphs and charts well, and have a good knowledge of the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages.

Shortcomings

211. There are no major shortcomings but pupils in some KS2 classes respond less confidently when asked to explain their methods of calculation and suggest alternatives.

Welsh second language

KS1 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings
KS2 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

212. All pupils show enthusiasm and are proud of their developing ability to communicate in the language. All pupils answer both the attendance and dinner registers naturally, clearly and confidently stating their presence and their lunchtime requirements. Most pupils respond instinctively to a series of familiar commands associated with the day-to-day running of a classroom and school.
213. In KS1, all pupils respond well in the affirmative to a range of questions about themselves, how they feel and what they like. Many can ask questions about feelings and colours.
214. They use a developing vocabulary to name parts of the body, colours and classroom equipment. They can sing songs with actions to demonstrate understanding.
215. Most pupils can follow the text of a 'Big Book' and read with very good intonation, pronunciation and confidence.
216. At the beginning of KS2, pupils build on known sentence patterns to extend descriptions of their feelings, clothes, families, addresses and telephone numbers. They can describe and ask questions about animals and recognise the written names of zoo animals.
217. Pupils can read mixed-up sentences and sequence them correctly and they can count from 1 to 12.
218. In the middle of KS2, pupils can tell the time in Welsh using the quarter and half-hour and place times correctly on a clock face. Many pupils can say what they do at certain times of the day, such as have breakfast or play in the yard. They enjoy playing 'What's the time, Mr Wolf?' in Welsh, both formally in the classroom and informally during playtimes.
219. At the end of KS2, pupils have good recall of known phrases and sentences and are able to repeat and learn new vocabulary and sentence patterns correctly and clearly. They are able to use the negative response to many questions. They follow a Welsh video play with understanding and enjoyment, with many appreciating the humour.
220. Pupils read confidently and with fluency and understanding. They rehearse language patterns well in pairs and groups, using dialogue and role-play situations. They consolidate their oral work by completing a variety of written tasks such as worksheets.
221. Pupils' writing skills show progress in Y6. The more-able pupils are able to write independently, presenting their work well and using a range of sentence patterns with correct spelling and punctuation.

Shortcomings

222. There are no important shortcomings. However, in KS2 few pupils have a wide enough range of sentence patterns and verb tenses to enable them to have

spontaneous, realistic conversations in the language with their peers or with adults.

Design and technology

KS1 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

KS2 Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

223. In KS1, pupils successfully develop knowledge of joining and hinging methods through processes such as making a face with sliding eyes and articulated figures using hinged joints with split pins. Pupils are encouraged to make oral evaluations of their products.
224. Pupils further their knowledge and skills in making through investigating toys and identifying parts such as wheels, axle and chassis. They learn about control using the 'roamer' and produce their own designs for a vehicle using construction kits. They try out different ways of assembling wheels and axles and joining them to the chassis. In designing their model vehicle, pupils disassemble a package in order to find out how to form a 'net'.
225. Across KS2, pupils appropriately develop designing, making and evaluating skills through a series of structured topics. In Y3, pupils further their cutting and joining skills when making a picture frame and investigate designs for carrier bags and a desk-tidy. They enthusiastically demonstrate sound making skills when assembling a prototype.
226. Pupils in Y4 use ICT to create postage-stamp designs and produce well-presented products, including Viking jewellery and long boats. They develop designing and making skills well through making land yachts and enthusiastically evaluate their models through testing them.
227. In Y5, pupils find out about products and packaging and record well detailed designs. They suitably reinforce their assembly skills when making a tool-tidy for kitchen utensils.
228. At the end of the key stage, pupils develop sound knowledge of control systems in everyday life, such as through incorporating pneumatics or a pressure-pad-operated alarm into well-crafted and varied models. They use ICT well to set up and amend control systems using a multi-media program.

Shortcomings

229. There are no important shortcomings in KS1.
230. In KS2, pupils have insufficient understanding of the processes of designing and making; their knowledge of mechanisms, for instance, is under-developed and their products lack sufficient originality.

231. Pupils' skills in researching, preparing designs, recording requirements and evaluating their products are at an early stage.

Geography

KS1 Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

KS2 Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

232. In KS1, pupils develop a good knowledge of place, such as through exploring the school. They use maps, draw and annotate plans to locate features and identify signs around the school, for instance. They discuss features in the school environment and suggest improvements such as seating.

233. During KS1, pupils study the contrasting village of Newton and visit Porthcawl.

234. In Y3, pupils further their knowledge of local features such as housing. They can identify places on a map of the Rhondda Valley. Using an aerial photograph, they identify physical and human features and they develop appropriate map skills when annotating a map of the locality.

235. Pupils in Y4 gain a basic knowledge of a contrasting area through a study of a village in India.

236. In Y5, pupils develop a sound knowledge of the local environment. They identify sources of pollution, plot such sites on a map and develop a sound understanding of environmental change in the valley.

237. At the end of the key stage, pupils visit and study Cardiff Bay; this provides good opportunities to develop enquiry skills, increase geographical vocabulary, learn about human activity and physical processes, and record geographical information using writing, and graphical and ICT skills.

Shortcomings

238. There are no important shortcomings in KS1.

239. In KS2, geographical enquiry skills are under-developed. Pupils rarely gather evidence from a sufficient variety of sources, form conclusions and answer geographical questions in sufficient depth.

School's response to the inspection

The governors and staff are glad that the inspection findings recognise that the school has made good progress since the last inspection and continues to maintain high standards; particularly the improved standards in English, mathematics and Welsh as a second language. We are very pleased that the findings commend the provision in early years and the learning support class as outstanding and that we continue to ensure performance in the core subjects at KS2 remains well above average.

We are pleased that the inspectors found the school very welcoming and that our pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, are well behaved, well motivated and enjoy taking responsibility. Credit is given to the very good relationships throughout the school, this element being a distinctive feature. In addition, the care and support systems are recognised as being of a high quality, which ensures the pupils' personal and social development is good and the high expectations that teachers set in lessons contribute greatly to the pupils' learning. The skill, dedication and care demonstrated by all staff members are duly acknowledged.

Most importantly, the inspection report confirms the elements that make our school what it is. In particular, our aims and values are reflected in the school's work and we provide a happy and secure environment where pupils are developing a love for learning. It also confirms that there is clear direction, priorities are chosen to have maximum impact on improvement and that the developing culture of self-evaluation ensures that success breeds success.

An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report. We feel confident that we can address the raising further of standards in design technology and geography at KS2, developing learning and teaching styles, ensuring effective differentiation in planning for the more able and less able pupil and further develop the effective use of pupils' IEP's. These aspects have already been identified in the SIP, as has the continuing development of the role of the subject managers.

Where it is possible to do so, the staff and governors will address the recommendations during the next academic year. The development of the learning and teaching styles will be a priority and more opportunities will be provided for staff to increase their knowledge and skills in geography and design technology so that they can help the pupils achieve even higher standards.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making on the inspection recommendations and updates will appear in the parents' newsletter.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Darran Park Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Brook Street Ferndale Rhondda Cynon Taff
Post-code	CF43 4LE
Telephone number	01443 730450

Headteacher	Mrs P. O'Malley
Date of appointment	1 st November 2003
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs J. Richards
Registered inspector	Mr M. T. Ridout
Dates of inspection	21 st – 24 th February 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	8	20	14	18	48	63	41	44	256

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	3	11.3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	26 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	14.5 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	3 : 1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	30.25
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.13 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	U5s	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Autumn 2003	92.00	94.53	93.87	93.47
Spring 2004	93.76	94.85	94.28	94.29
Summer 2004	88.74	91.65	93.12	91.19

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	23.3
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: in the school 2004 and nationally 2003			Number of pupils in Y2: 22						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	14	14	68	5	0
		National	0	0	4	14	63	20	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	14	64	9	0
		National	0	0	4	14	55	27	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	14	68	5	0
		National	0	0	5	14	69	11	0
EN: Oracy	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	0	86	0	0
		National	0	0	3	12	63	22	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	18	55	14	0
		National	0	0	2	11	63	24	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	14	9	68	9	0
		National	0	0	2	10	66	22	0

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

In the school:	68%	In Wales:	79%
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- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

**NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS
END OF KS2:**

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: in the school 2004 and nationally 2003								Number of pupils in Y6: 55				
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	13	49	33
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	7	35	53
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	5	12	38	40
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	16	36	42
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	46	30
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	9	29	58
		National	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	18	42	33
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	33	60
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	29	62
		National	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	9	48	39

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:	73%	In the school:	80%
In Wales:	70%	In Wales:	71%

- D Pupils who are exempted 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
B Pupils not entered for the tests because they are working outside the set levels of the tests.
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three inspectors who worked for nine inspector days (over four days) gathering first-hand evidence. In total, 38 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and graded. Inspectors evaluated the pupils' work.
- The headteacher took the role of nominee, ensuring effective communication with the inspection team. The nominee attended meetings with inspectors and contributed fully to the discussion of inspection evidence.
- Inspectors observed registration sessions, school assemblies and break-times. All teachers were observed teaching. Discussions were held with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, representatives of the GB, parents and others both during initial inspection visits and during the inspection.
- All the available work and records of a representative sample of at least three pupils from each class, together with the work of a sample of pupils with SEN, were scrutinised. A representative number of pupils were heard to read both formally and informally. Inspectors sought the views of a number of pupils in discussions with them.
- A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection.
- No lessons in design and technology took place in KS1 during the inspection. Evidence is drawn from pupils' previous work and discussion with the teacher.
- The registered inspector held a meeting attended by 19 parents before the inspection and considered 102 parents' responses to a questionnaire.
- The judgement of standards in subjects is informed by discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of previous work.
- At the end of the inspection, the main findings of the inspection were discussed with the headteacher who informed the staff. A short time after the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior staff, the staff and the governors to report the findings of the inspection.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr M. T. Ridout Registered Inspector	Context Summary Recommendations Key question 1: How well do learners achieve? Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment? Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management? SEN aspect of Key question 4 Mathematics Design and technology Geography
Mrs A. Williams Team inspector	Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? Early Years English Welsh second language
Mr S Hammond Lay inspector	Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? Aspects of Key questions: 1, 3 and 4.

Name and address of contractor

E.G.I.S.,
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Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, staff, parents and pupils of the school for their co-operation, assistance and courtesy before and during the inspection.

DARRAN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
FERNDALE

INSPECTION

21st – 24th February, 2005

SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR:
MR. MICHAEL T. RIDOUT
(W180/78730)

Inspection under Section 10 of
School Inspections Act, 1996

1st April, 2005

Darran Park Primary 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 children's schools. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. **The full report can be obtained from the school.**

The inspection of Darran Park Primary School took place between 21st and 24th February, 2005. An independent team of three inspectors, led by Mr. Michael T. Ridout, 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.

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The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgments 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.

Summary

1. Darran Park Primary School provides well for all its pupils. The provision in the early years class and the learning support class is, quite simply, outstanding.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

2. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
3. The under-fives quickly develop independent learning skills. This is an impressive feature.

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 1	Grade 1
Personal and social development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 1	Grade 1
Creative development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Physical development	Grade 1	Grade 1

4. In 38 lessons, or parts of lessons, pupils' standards of achievement overall were judged to be:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
21%	53%	26%	0%	0%

5. Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected at Key Stages 1 and 2 are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 3
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 3

6. In English, mathematics and Welsh as a second language, pupils achieve well in both key stages. They are well supported in developing bilingual competence.
7. In KS1, pupils achieve well in design and technology and geography. In KS2, some shortcomings remain in the development of knowledge and skills in these subjects.
8. In KS2, the scrutiny of pupils' work across subjects shows relatively little evidence of research and enquiry skills. Opportunities to promote independent learning skills are not always fully exploited, thus hampering the progress of the more able pupils in particular.
9. Slow learners and pupils with SEN make good overall progress in relation to age and ability, especially in basic skills.
10. Progress in the learning support class is good and sometimes very good.
11. In KS1, pupils acquire and use basic and key skills well across subjects. In KS2, the extent to which pupils enhance their learning through using key skills is variable.
12. In KS1, the most recent National Curriculum (NC) results for 2004 confirm that performance in English, mathematics and science is well below national figures and also below those for similar schools having between 21 and 24% of pupils entitled to free school meals. Results over the last three years show a trend of improvement.
13. In KS2, the NC test results for 2004 are well above national figures in English, mathematics and science. Overall performance in the core subjects is well above average when compared with similar schools.
14. Pupils are well behaved, well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. The very good relationships among pupils are particularly evident.
15. Although pupils increase their knowledge and skills well, their capacity to study collaboratively, solve problems and gather information from a variety of sources is not yet consistently developed in KS2.
16. Levels of attendance average 93%; pupils' punctuality is generally good.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

17. Pupils show good development in their personal, social, moral and wider development.
18. Pupils are developing an appropriate understanding and respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions in society; their understanding of citizenship within the school is developing well.
19. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is well reflected in the life and work of the school.
20. Throughout the school, pupils conscientiously undertake appropriate responsibilities, such as acting as reading partners. This provision enhances their personal development particularly well.

The quality of education and training

21. In 38 lessons or parts of lessons, teaching was judged to be:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	55%	21%	8%	0%

22. The teaching and support provided in the early years and the learning support classes has many excellent features.
23. Across the school, teachers set high expectations, have very good relationships with pupils and manage lessons well. However, on occasions in KS2, teaching is over-directive and progress slows because the learning tasks are not closely enough matched to pupils' needs.
24. Lesson planning identifies learning objectives well, although learning is not always sufficiently differentiated. This is linked to a lack of consistency in the use of day-to-day assessments. This sometimes results in able pupils needing more challenge and less able pupils finding it difficult to access the task.
25. Good use is made of the data from standardised tests and other assessments, to track pupils' progress and set realistic and challenging targets.
26. The curriculum is broad and suitably balanced. There are progressive and detailed schemes of work in all subjects and areas of learning.
27. The provision in the Early Years and the Learning Support Class is excellent.
28. In both key stages, there is strong emphasis on the development of basic skills. The school is developing its provision to promote key skills well.
29. The provision for pupils' personal development is good; the school offers a wide range of extracurricular activities.

30. Pupils' learning is enriched through effective links with parents, positive partnerships with other institutions, and with the wider community.
31. The quality of pastoral care, support and guidance for pupils is good. The school has an effective policy and procedures for Child Protection and gives high priority to the general safety and well-being of pupils.
32. The provision for pupils with SEN is well managed, although the impact of support staff lacks consistency. In the Learning Support Class, the provision linked to individual educational plans (IEPs) is exemplary. In mainstream classes, planning is not always tailored closely enough to the targets in pupils' IEPs.

Leadership and management

33. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, skilfully provides clear direction for the school's work. This is a strong aspect that is developing very well indeed.
34. The aims and values of the school are well reflected in its work.
35. There are good systems to inform target setting and shape priorities targeted through the school improvement plan (SIP).
36. Leadership is particularly skilful in prioritising a small number of goals that are carefully chosen to maximise the impact of improvement strategies across the school.
37. Governors are strongly supportive of the school and acknowledge the need to enhance further their role in monitoring. The governing body (GB) complies with statutory requirements.
38. Subject managers are becoming better informed about quality and standards in the areas for which they are responsible.
39. The school is developing effective systems to promote self-evaluation. The SIP is a well structured document, although it is too early to judge the full extent of its impact.
40. In a relatively short time, the headteacher has enabled good practice to flourish, such as in the early years and the learning support class.
41. The school is well staffed and very well resourced. The accommodation is impressive, although the classrooms for Y6 pupils are rather small.
42. Spending is well matched to the school's priorities and needs. The school provides good value for money.

School improvement

43. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The systems and initiatives currently in place are beginning to impact further on the standards achieved.

Recommendations

In order to improve standards and the quality of learning and teaching further, the school should continue to implement its SIP, placing particular emphasis on:

- R1. raising further standards in design and technology and geography in KS2 and continuing to develop opportunities to promote basic and key skills across subjects;
- R2. developing learning and teaching styles in KS2 so as to build on pupils' good capacity to study independently, work collaboratively, solve problems and gather information from a variety of sources;
- R3. ensuring lesson planning is well differentiated and effective use is made of assessments to set appropriately challenging work, especially for the more able and less able pupils;
- R4. continuing to build on the targets in pupils' IEPs in mainstream classes;
- R5. continuing to develop the role of subject managers across the school.

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.

Acknowledgment

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, staff, parents and pupils of the school for their co-operation, assistance and courtesy before and during the inspection